



LITERARY FESTIVAL 2022

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NATIONAL INSTITUTE
OF ALLIED ARTS

2022 ANTHOLOGY

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This is the longest running of the four festivals run by the NIAA. This festival, which is open to students from Grade Two to Form Six and also adults, is designed to inspire candidates to create outstanding pieces of work in the genres of prose and poetry. Each year, the festival culminates in the award of prizes to the best performing students. The Literary Festival is sponsored by **Deloitte**.

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Creativity is intelligence
having fun.

Albert Einstein

**Congratulations to the 2022 National Institute of
Allied Arts Literary Festival winners.**



LITERARY FESTIVAL 2022

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2022

JUNIOR LITERARY AWARDS

GRADE 2 PROSE – Winner

Grace Henson
Ruzawi School

GRADE 3 PROSE – Winner

Victoria Mharadze
Bryden Country School

GRADE 4 PROSE – Winner

Zawadi Kaunda
Westridge Primary School

GRADE 5 PROSE – Winner

Divine Nkala
Montesorri Zimbabwe

GRADE 5 POETRY – Joint Winners

Sanna Bhaskar | Hellenic Primary School *and*
Shona Bususu | Learning Planet Academy

GRADE 6 PROSE – Winner

Lucinda Matambo
Ariel School

GRADE 7 PROSE – Winner

Fatima Adam
Bishopslea Preparatory School

GRADE 7 POETRY – Winner

Quinton Dongo
Hartmann House

TROPHY AWARD – BEST JUNIOR WRITER

Fatima Adam
Bishopslea Preparatory School





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PICTURED: Literary 2022 - Junior Award Winners



2022

SENIOR LITERARY AWARDS

FORM 1 PROSE – Winner

Ndakaziva Mushauri
Arundel School

FORM 1 POETRY – Winner

Vernon Mangweni
Eaglesvale High School

FORM 2 PROSE – Winner

Zuvarashe Nyawata
Falcon College

FORM 2 POETRY – Winner

Kendal Nakwa
Lomagundi College

FORM 3 PROSE – Winner

Lily Flett
Southern Lights Trust

FORM 3 POETRY – Winner

Charlotte de Bruijn
Chisipite Senior School

FORM 4 PROSE – Winner

Catherine Nyangu
Dominican Convent High School

FORM 4 POETRY – Winner

Michaela McNab
Chisipite Senior School

FORM 6 PROSE – Winner

Cindy Usayi
Arundel School

FORM 6 POETRY – Winner

Zahrah Abdoola
Chisipite Senior School

TROPHY AWARD – BEST SENIOR WRITER

Zuvarashe Nyawata
Falcon College





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PICTURED: Literary 2022 - Senior Award Winners



2022

JUNIOR LITERARY AWARDS

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GRADE 2 PROSE - WINNER •

Grace Henson (Ruzawi School)

WRITING PROMPT: *"I look out my window, and see the stars shining in the sky. I wonder what I can make to fly up into the sky!...." Tell your story.*

I look out my window and see the stars shining in the sky. I wonder what I can make to fly up into the sky.

When I knew what to make I went to the shed and I found my old umbrella that my granny gave me then I started to open it then.

I saw two yellow eyes and I got a big fright and I jumped into the flowerpot and it was just a bat. It flew away and when I jumped into the flowerpot I found a piece of glass to put on my funny aeroplane and I was looking for some red paint.

I tripped on some tins saw some red on me and that is how I found the red paint.

After many hours of banging and hammering my aeroplane was finished. I waited until dark and I shot into the night sky. I saw some shooting stars and I made lots of wishes.

I flew to the moon and found some purple rocks. I took off again and went back to earth. I showed my friends my space rocks what an adventure!



GRADE 3 PROSE - WINNER •

Victoria Mharadze (Bryden Country School)

WRITING PROMPT: *"I look out my window, and see the stars shining in the sky. I wonder what I can make to fly up into the sky!...." Tell your story.*

One night I looked out of my window and could see the stars shining in the sky. I started to wonder what I could make to fly into the sky. I started to make a helicopter with big wings using metal and cardboard. I struggled to make the front of my helicopter. So I called two of my friends to help me.

I got ready to fly like a bird. I fastened my seat belt and set off like the flash. It took me a day to reach the planet Mars. I put on my space suit but it took me four hours.

After four hours I went out of my helicopter and shouted, "I am the first girl to step on Mars."

On Mars it was shining red and it was very dusty. Then I got back into my helicopter and set off to go to the planet Saturn.

I got to Saturn and I realised I had to go back home because it was past my bed time so I got back into my helicopter. I was very lucky because my parents had gone to South Africa. When I got home I was just in time because my parents had just got home. At ten o'clock my mom and dad said did you have fun? "YES LOTS OF FUN."

I did not tell them what I did while they were gone. It was my little secret.



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GRADE 4 PROSE - WINNER •

Zawadi Kaunda (Westridge Primary School)

WRITING PROMPT: *"Plant a tree to save a forest."*

Have you ever sat on a wooden chair and thought what type of a tree was cut down to make it? You know, the reason most beautiful trees are very rare now is because literally all your chairs and all your fancy fashion (wooden) drawers came from trees.

Most terrible and ruthless people already litter everyday and every second, but now they cut down trees? I don't get it. Most forests are already in grave danger. Like the ones in Australia that keep having bushfires. And yet no matter how toxic the environment gets people still work against nature and not with nature.

Some places are lucky enough to have all the nature they need and more. But some places have nothing but dry grass. If you plant one tree to save a forest today, you can make a big difference for the next generation of human-kind.

When there are no trees wildlife struggles as well. So think about yourself, your friends and family and the animals before you cut a tree and kill the environment. So try to take care of your surroundings.



GRADE 5 PROSE - WINNER • Divine Nkala (Montesorri Zimbabwe)

WRITING PROMPT: "Plant a tree to save a forest."

One cold winter morning, I stumbled out of bed. I quickly wiped misty windows and to my surprise, I saw my father chopping down trees.

I bolted out of the house and shouted, "Stop! What are you doing? You are ruining our environment."

He answered, "I am preparing for the winter and I am not the only one doing this."

My face was full of disappointment and rage. I paced through the house thinking of possible solutions, and wondered who else would do such a horrible thing. I decided to go for a walk to calm myself down. I thought of a fantastic idea! I wanted to help save my environment. I frantically ran

from one store to another in search for seeds but, there was nothing to be seen. I panicked and slowly lost all my hope.

I strolled down an alley and saw an old man who began to beg me to trade something with him. I was curious so I asked the old man to see what he had. The old man showed me what he had. Which were all sorts of things but one thing in particular caught my eye, he had a bag of seeds. I was full of excitement and accepted the trade.

The old man just wanted some food so I quickly ran to the grocery store and got him a few things to eat. I rushed back to him and we exchanged our needs.



On my way back home. I came across an abandoned forest. I stopped and thought of what I should do. For a moment, I wanted to plant all the seeds in my back yard but when I saw the abandoned forest, my mind instantly changed and instead I wanted to plant all the seeds in the forest.

As I ran to the centre of the forest, I placed my hand into the bag of seeds only to notice that it was

completely empty. My heart began to pounce faster than a roller coaster. I started to worry only to realise that I had dropped the seeds, along my way to the centre, meaning that my job was done all that was needed was rain to help them grow.

I visited the forest every weekend and three years later, the trees I had planted were fully grown and the forest had come to life again.



GRADE 5 POETRY - JOINT WINNER •
Sanna Bhaskar (Hellenic Primary School)

WRITING PROMPT: *"Listen to the words of the songs I sing,
They will help you to understand the joy I bring."*

Listen to the words of the song I sing,
They will help you to understand the joy I bring

I've got sunshine in my pocket and disco in my feet
No matter how I rock it, you'll sure enjoy my beat.

Cause people in this world are starting to lose their taste,
I'm singing this song hoping to brighten up this place.

Listen to the words of the song I sing,
They will help you to understand the joy I bring.

I've got sparkles in my smile and funny jokes to tell,
I'll get everybody laughing to make them come out of their shell.

Come on everyone its just not worth all the worries,
I'm singing this song to tell you to forgive all the sorries.

Listen to the words of the song I sing,
They will help you understand the joy I bring.

I've got magic in my words and dazzles in my eyes,
Its electric when I shuffle I'm telling you no lies.



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So everybody lets just help each other out,
We've only got each other so lets make every second count.

Listen to the words of the song I sing,
They will help you to understand the joy I bring.



GRADE 5 POETRY - JOINT WINNER •

Shona Bususu (Learn Planet Academy)

WRITING PROMPT: *"Listen to the words of the songs I sing,
They will help you to understand the joy I bring."*

The inviting warmth of the South African sun
The swishing sound of the ocean waves
Tropical flavours popping my mouth
Join me on the seas of the mystical South

My feet sinking into the sunbaked sand
The cooling sensation of seawater on my hands
Delicious rays of the golden sun kissing my nose
While curious crabs are greedily snipping on my toes

Glistening seashells on the sandy beach with palm trees
Swishing gracefully in the evening breeze
A delectable popsicle melting in my mouth
While the seagulls tell stories from the mystical South

Dolphins and seahorses frolicking in the sea
The mischievous cackles saying "you can't catch me"
Tranquil waters calming my soul as the sun slides out of reach
Oh how love to daydream about the beach



GRADE 6 PROSE - WINNER •

Lucinda Matambo (Ariel School)

WRITING PROMPT: *"When walking through the forest, don't pick up their gifts, don't listen to their whispers, and don't leave the path, no matter what you do!"*

The evening was still yet cold. The moon shone as bright as a new penny. The mice were squeaking, the owls hooting sending chills down my spine. The sounds were haunting and I was filled with fear but I had to find my way out of the dark attic, as my flashlight had just gone off.

I bumped into a large box containing several books and on it was my grand-father's name. It had no lock, so I opened it to find only a collection of his old library books. I picked one which seemed like an old English textbook then I flipped a few pages and put it back. I reached for another book and I picked this one which had an interesting title which was the 'Black Pearl'.

The book had a gold glowing page and out of curiosity to find out what was written on this page I opened it

up and suddenly I found myself in a dark and creepy forest.

I looked around and our home was nowhere in sight. I tried to run but I was not moving. As I opened my mouth to scream, I heard a voice saying, "When walking through the forest, don't pick their gift, don't listen to their whispers, don't leave the path, no matter what you do." My heart started beating really hard and fast. So I took a deep breath and started walking. I heard the tree branches crackling, I didn't scream but instead I hushed.

In terror, I felt weak in the knees but I forced myself to keep walking. Out of nowhere a green goblin just popped up with a very appetising plate with a slice of a Belgium pure chocolate cake with a strawberry top. My mouth began to water and the



Lucinda Matambo (Ariel School) (continued)

goblin kept insisting but I quickly snapped out of it and walked on. That was a really creepy and unusual thing to be seeing.

The darkness was thick yet time and again tiny lights shone and disappeared. I was very afraid as I walked on. Thoughts of scary things that could happen clouded my head, I trembled. Then I saw a flash, among the trees so I decided to follow and see what it was. As I got closer it seemed as if the world was getting smaller and smaller, dimmer and dimmer.

There appeared a woman in a black pirate hat but to me seemed a little invisible. Of course you would get quite a fright but I tried my best to stay put. The old woman asked me if I would come with her and see one of the beautiful and most mysterious

part of the forest. She began to talk about the white box in the centre of the forest and the treasure in the box. This was a very interesting place to visit, but if I was to follow I would have to leave the path.

So I decided to put a little trick on her mind and I told her that I was one of the treasures in the box and I had come out to look for food. She didn't believe me so I told her to go back and check if there was still anything in the box and waited for my chance to run away.

When I got my chance to run away, I tripped on a flag pole that was written 'Black Pearl'. I wondered what that was and where it came from. I decided to pick up the pole and walk with it. As I walked on, hearing the clashing of the trees and the howling of the wind I heard



whispers. A black carriage with tiny mice strolled past my feet then several more empty carriages began to follow by my feet as well. I heard a whisper, 'Black Pearl'. That made me recall that I had a pole written exactly the same thing in my hand.

An unusual person came to me and because he was very kind I followed him. He said that I would find a white box and I was supposed to pick up the contents in the box and they would become mine. I jumped, jumped in joy and excitement but what depressed and worried me was that if I was to go and follow what he said would I survive? I was too happy and hyper because I wanted to own the contents that were in the box. I found myself standing in front of a huge ship written 'Black Pearl' but it was missing a flag pole. It made so much sense why the woman I had

met was wearing a pirate hat and was invisible because she was a ghost, the ship she was on had sunk under the sea but reformed on a mystical forest sandy bay.

I saw a white box big enough to fit a whole eight year old child. It was on a high platform and when I moved closer and closer the trees clashed, the mice squeaked, the owls hooted and the wind roared.

As the box opened I saw golden treasure and as I reached for it a voice said, "Hey sunshine, are you in there?"

It was my grandfather looking for me in the attic. When he saw me holding the 'Black Pearl' he said, "Life is not just a dream," in a wicked voice.



GRADE 7 PROSE - WINNER & BEST JUNIOR WRITER TROPHY
WINNER • Fatima Adam (Bishopslea Preparatory School)

WRITING PROMPT: *"When walking through the forest, don't pick up their gifts, don't listen to their whispers, and don't leave the path, no matter what you do!"*

Something unexpected and exciting happened as I foraged through the forest for the famous four leafed clover.

Surely I was a lucky girl but just as I began squealing with excitement on finding it, a bright light shone from a crack of a rock, that was supposedly resting on a huge tree trunk. I went over to investigate and the last thing I remember was the boulder opening and in I fell.

I hit my head so hard, I thought my skull cracked in two. When I finally managed to open my eyes, one slit at a time I was not sure if I was really conscious or concussed and imagining everything. For years I rode my bike around this abandoned farm and I believed I knew every nook and cranny of this large farming expanse of land, but well not this particular...

cave? Hole? I was not sure at this point where I was.

I closed my eyes for a bit as my head hurt so much. Somehow shutting my eyes made the excruciating pain a bit bearable. As I opened my eyes the second time, still laying on the moss covered ground, there was no sign of sunlight, but there was a natural light whose source I had not identified yet, which revealed a childlike figure. Huge eyes occupied most part of the not so bad looking face. Warm lines of kindness made me want to reach out, but the small mouth looked a bit mean and held me back. I tried to croak a question out of my parched lips and just then an eerie sound came from behind the child. It was a shriek that shook me to the core.

Goosebumps covered my entire body. I shot up for a moment forgetting my



pain and just then I realised I was not alone. The moss where I lay was in the middle of a cave and they were all staring at me and not moving.

One of them yanked the child from my line of sight and just then I felt like my lifeline had left. I was terrified and somehow I heard it: the child's voice. "Don't believe what they say, the first chance you get run for your life!"

I closed my eyes and summoned my loudest scariest scream, and just then it happened... they all closed in on me gaping. I could feel the stench from their breath and the nauseating sweat from their bodies. As I shot up in a flash for a minute forgetting my pounding head, I was received by a horrific panting sound from behind me. I swivelled to scan it. A groan from the corner of the cave distracted me just before a howl made me fall

in fear, a creepy hand or was it a paw grabbed my ankle.

I had seen and heard enough. An earth shattering shriek was heard as if coming from a distance. It took me a while to realise it was coming from somewhere within me. The last thing I saw before passing out was their horror stricken focus as they paused to identify me, the new exotic species whose ghostly sounds attracted them, as they felt victorious on their new capture.

Their happiness soon transitioned into horror, as they watched me slowly slipping through their fingers going down into the bottomless swamp. Nothing seemed to make sense and no sense would come out of it, as the mosquitoes were delighted to devour on my powerless, succulent flesh.



GRADE 7 POETRY - WINNER •
Quinton Dongo (Hartmann House)

WRITING PROMPT: "Daydreaming"

I'm in wonderland roaming around,
I walk and trip, there are lollipops on the ground.
Sloping ice-cream mountains fill the wonderful looking land,
Under the shade of bright pink candy-floss trees, I stand.

On unicorns backs people are riding,
I glance above me and popcorns wing-gliding.
A handful I take of the lickerish grass.
My limo awaits there which is made of gold brass.

I take a bite of the sweet-smelling fruit,
It grows back again! the bite disappears I see.
A gust of candy powder mist fills my sight,
There is only peace and no sign of a fight...

Something huge and blurry blocks the toffee sun,
In my mind I question, who took away the fun.
The creative shouts, "I'll teach you a lesson!"
It pulls on me with great aggression.



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I want to stay here forever,
This land is much more finer.
I love it here and... Wait!
"Jack! We are in school."

Now I'm stuck with the headteacher,
I pay no attention and back comes the dreamer.
All in a daydreamer's day!



2022

SENIOR LITERARY AWARDS

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FORM 1 PROSE - WINNER •

Ndakaziva Mushauri (Arundel School)

WRITING PROMPT: "War and Peace"

I felt the ichor of mankind leave me,
like crows to a falling oak. A radiant
crimson red lay beneath me, the
world turning to a dreary void. My
consciousness sluggishly vanishing
while my ears had a strident ring.
I had a sensation as if I were falling,
an angel carrying my soul to heaven.
I felt a sudden jolt like electricity
and my eyes shot wide open.
My memories came rushing back,
realization hit me back to reality.
I wondered how I was still alive.

9.10pm, the ground shuddered,
a deafening sound rung in the air.
A substantial eruption came from
the ground, millions of fragments
soaring. They shot down like acid
rain, deadly and prepared to kill.
Immeasurably more came soaring

down like bullets accompanied by
dynamic incandescent flames.

Lifeless corpses lay scattered
stranded as they were empty shells
left to perish. The smell of demise
surrounded me partially narrowing
my throat. I didn't know how much
I lost, but how much was left, none.
Deathly inky smoke had settled into
the atmosphere containing lethal
toxins and chemicals. Each breath
felt as if scorching fire lay present in
my lungs.

My skin grew into a florid shade
with ghastly bumps growing on my
extremities. I was already down on
my knees and fell into deep slumber.
Except it wasn't ordinary, I was in a
coma.



Ndakaziva Mushauri (Arundel School) (continued)

It had been a few years and I had awoken from my slumber. Everything around me was still and quiet. I slowly walked out of my tiny tent.

The sun rays felt refreshing on my skin and the soft breeze cooled me down.

Everything was restored and everyone was in peace with everyone. There was no more fighting and screaming and dead corpses on the ground.

Peace was everywhere, I couldn't ask for more.



FORM 1 POETRY - WINNER •

Vernon Mangweni (Eaglesvale High School)

WRITING PROMPT: *"Listen closely to the songs I play
Because the lyrics speak the words I fail to say"*

"A silver lining in a dungeon"

O'er the imagination peaks
My imagination roars and speaks
What to see, what to feel, what to hear
Merlin's magic in my mind draws near

Ancient Scribbles seen as gold
Flying fish I wasn't told
Bright and majestic in the darkest hour
My dream, on earth, meteors to shower

Into a world of fairies and beasts
My dreams, unstoppable
A double rainbow, there's nothing improbable
My eyes see gold, others are old

The multiverse ebulliently in my hands
The human race recreated
Profoundly sophisticated
Day dreams, all are simple dreams



Vernon Mangweni (Eaglesvale High School) (continued)

A dungeon, dark and deep
Filled with images and creeps
Shall be showered by my imagination
My dream!

Floating in space, I can feel it
Dreaming during day time
The sun shines, but I see darkness
In my mind, I could be the smartest
My dream!



FORM 2 PROSE - WINNER & BEST SENIOR WRITER TROPHY
WINNER • Zuvarashe Nyawata (Falcon College)

WRITING PROMPT: *"Each step was careful, deliberately matching her footprints with his. Her racing heartbeat was the only sound above the howling wind, until she heard the snap of a branch behind her."* **From PROMPTUARIUM.**

Dominic Brenstock drove swiftly on the exhausted tar. The bright lights of oncoming cars shot through him like x-rays, exposing his innermost desires.

The cold Nebraska night hugged his arms in goosebumps. His dark skin almost invisible within the surroundings of the dark vehicle. The sporadic dwellings stood out in the desolated fields of snow. The wheels, towards a petite wooden cottage. There was almost no light apart from his headlights around the cottage, but the lights within gave away the appearance. Dom lit a torch of his cellphone and reached between the two front seats to get a black duffel bag. The contents of

the bag clinked against each other as Dom forced the bag forward. He killed his headlights and engine, then proceed to unbuckle his seat belt.

Amma was pouring herself a cup of coffee before being accompanied by a knock on the door. In this part of the country there were almost never any visitors, so it came as a surprise to hear such a sparse sound. She looked through the window and noticed footprints leading to the front door.

Her hand enveloped the cold steel handle as she pushed it down. The door swung open revealing a man. He was dark-skinned and had coal-black eyes. He was as tall as the door



Zuvarashe Nyawata (Falcon College) (continued)

frame and had mid-length locks. He smelt similar to old leather. He was wearing a green leather jacket and was clearly in need of another for his body had taken to a shudder.

"Good Evening," the words left his mouth in a breath leaving a trail of fog in the air.

"Hi, how may I be of service," Amma spoke.

"I need a place to stay for the night, this was the first house I saw," he replied.

For a few seconds silence watched Amma scrutinize the stranger.

"What's your name?" Amma asked.

"Dominic Brenstock."

"Nice to meet you Dominic, please do come in, you must be freezing."

"Thank you, Miss – "

"Amma. Amma Brown."

"Thank you, Amma."

As soon as he set foot on the wooden tile, Dominic could almost immediately feel a vast change in temperature. Amma's small yet cozy living room was lit up by a warm fire within a fire place and a weak orange ceiling light. The orange light on the wooden tiles gave the room a welcoming aura. There was a small wooden coffee table which had a



cup of freshly made coffee and a vase of flowers. All along the ledge of the fireplace stood picture frames of what Dom theoretically assumed to be relatives of Amma. In majority of the frames he could make out a younger version of the woman who had invited him inside.

On the edge of the ledge there was a frame with a photo of Amma and an older woman. She was almost identical to her actually; same dirty blonde hair, same emerald green eyes and same plump pink lips. They had a number of differences though, for instance, Amma had freckles and the woman didn't, the woman had a beautiful unibrow, Amma didn't. Dom studied the setting of the photo, they were standing in front

of a newer version of the cottage he was in now.

The grass was instead of white, green and the sun saturated their rosy cheeks and white straight teeth. They were a lovely pair. Mother and daughter he thought.

Amma exited the room and Dominic took a seat opposing the radiating fire place. He heard muffled voices in the neighbouring room. He stared through the dark corridor which sat next to the fireplace. A few seconds later two figures appeared in the corridor. One being Amma, the other an old aged woman. An older version of the one he'd seen in the picture frame. They stepped into an opposing room from the one they'd



Zuvarashe Nyawata (Falcon College) (continued)

just exited, and after a while Amma accompanied him in the living room.

"We've set up a room for you, down the corridor to your left," Amma spoke.

"We've?"

"My mother and I."

"Thank you."

"It's my pleasure," she replied, picking up an hour old cup of coffee. It was probably cold, Dom thought.

Amma took a sip and her wringed up eyes confirmed his theory.

"Let me make you a fresh cup," Dominic offered, reading the room.

"It's ok, really I –"

"No. I insist," Dom said cutting her off demandingly.

"Ok," Amma spoke. A red blush painted her cheeks against her will.

Dominic ascended into the low ceiling, gently unraveled the mug from Amma's fingers and made his way to the kitchen. The kitchen was a small pink room at the end of the house. Dom found a kettle, filled it with water and set it to boil. He emptied the mug that Amma had previously used and rinsed it with tap water. He proceeded to make a basic coffee recipe retrieving the scattered ingredients from all over the kitchen. He then stuck his



hand in his pocket and pulled out a plastic pouch labelled Halcion. He opened the sachet and put a couple overflowing teaspoons of the crushed white powder into the mug. His special ingredient. He stuffed the pouch back into his pocket, washed the excess off his hands and retrieved the kettle.

"Thank you, very much," Amma said hugging her hands around the heated cup.

"My absolute pleasure." It was. "I'm going to head on to bed," Dom added.

"Sleep well."

Dominic sat upon the bed of the

cold, lifeless guestroom. He switched on his laptop and immediately felt the sting of the bright computer screen against his weak red rimmed eyes. He was greeted by the date and time, he then opened Google and clicked the small arrow against the search bar. 'How long does it take for Halcion to kick in?' He stabbed the enter key and stared at the screen.

'Ten to twenty minutes.'

Fifteen minutes had gone by and Dominic found himself back in the living room. As soon as he entered the room he noticed Amma lifeless in the same spot she was conscious about half an hour ago. The Halcion had begun its task.



Zuvarashe Nyawata (Falcon College) (continued)

A sudden sound from behind caught Dom's ear, causing his body to rotate. The old lady from earlier stared cautiously at him then at Amma. Her eye lids began to widen. She suddenly turned around and ran towards the bathroom. She banged the door behind her. Dom walked slowly towards the door frame and banged the door behind her. His hand hugged the cold steel of the handle and pushed it down.

Amma slowly lifted the weight of her heavy eyelids. As her neck lifted her head she could feel a pounding upon the back of it. The living room was lit up by the daylight and the faint golden rays of sun formed a box, square to the window. The room had a faint unpleasant scent

to it. She heard the song of a choir of birds she often heard in the morning. Amma carefully got up and immediately felt the strain in her muscles. How long had she been asleep for? She stumbled out the living room, down the corridor and stopped in her tracks. The nose-pricking odour she'd smelt in the living room was more dramatic the further down the corridor she walked.

Amma walked cautiously down the corridor and her body halted in front of the bathroom. The door was open and the stench was coming from within.

She stood paralyzed from her eyes down. Her small frame distinct in the



door's. There was almost no light to show but the revolting stench that circulated the confined room was enough of a verification, closely after the bullet holes tattooed in the walls and the drawn curtains. Though in an unresponsive state of schizophrenia, her eyes never left the putrid corpse laying in the centre of the bathroom, most of the skin perforated by the tile debris. Thick crimson blood flooded the floor, gliding through the cracks. She walked towards the body and her own body desensitized as she scrutinized the face. There was a dime-sized penetration right in the middle of her face, bisecting the unibrow.

The sight galvanized Amma against her will. She ran out the bathroom,

down the corridor, through the living room and out the door, pounding against the exhausting wooden tiles. Tears blurred her vision as she spurted down the front veranda. She caught sight of a trail of footprints in the snow leading towards the end of the house. She instantly remembered her visitor. A thought of worry washed down her as she also remembered her most recent discovery. She mentally prayed for his safety. A thought appeared in her head. The footprints resembled the ones Dominic had made when he had first arrived. Without a second thought she ran towards the trail of footprints.

Each step was careful, deliberately matching her footprints with his.



Zuvarashe Nyawata (Falcon College) (continued)

Her racing heartbeat was the only sound above the howling wind, until she heard the snap of a branch behind her.

Amma froze in her tracks, unable to move. She felt a cold metal being placed right at the back of head. Before she had the chance to rotate, Dominic emptied the gun into her.

The deafening outcome of the trigger echoed through the deserted landscape. The morning birds that once sang a song were now up

above. Dominic relieved the trigger of his finger and watched as Amma's body inconspicuously fell to the ground, flattening the snow beneath it. Her crimson red bold dyed the white snow. The morning sun glistened upon the snow like red crystals. Dominic dropped his arm and stared at the lifeless body of Amma Brown, as he had done her mum. Mother and daughter, he thought.

They should have known the nearest inn was only ten minutes away.



FORM 2 POETRY - WINNER •

Kendal Nakwa (Lomagundi College)

WRITING PROMPT: "Plant a tree to save a forest."

Listen closely to the songs I play,
Because the lyrics speak the words I failed to say.
The words that could have changed the day,
The words that could have inspired you to stay.

A melody so bitterly sweet,
That was yours to keep.
But you completely disregarded it,
And you crushed it under your feet.

A symphony so soft,
A symphony you could listen to when you are lost,
A symphony you would protect at any cost,

The strings of my heart yearn,
Because the love I have for you still burns,
The love that pleaded for you to learn.
The love that you failed to return.

The tears like tides of diamonds, I got of crying.
A family once prominent, slowly dying.
All because you were lying
And eventually, you stopped trying.



Kendal Nakwa (Lomagundi College) (continued)

You left me shattered, like the glass on the floor
With not much to live for
Stay. Stay. Just for a little more;
My sobs you ignored and you walked out the door.

All I asked was for you to notice me.
A disappointment is all you see.
No matter how hard I tried not to be.
I was just another useless key.

Leaving home without a trace.
You left me in a dark place.
It has been aeons since I saw your face.
Someone like you shall not be replaced.

Someone as cruel and selfish as you.
Who had everything to win and nothing to lose.
How to love. You hadn't a clue.
Narcissistic, cold, angry and untrue –



Days of yelling, tears and pain.
Years of guilt. Feeling as if I was to blame.
A stain. Your last name.
Walking away, hoping that things shall never be the same.

This ballad is not about a boy,
It is about a man, a father.
A father who was shallower than water.
A father who spared no love for his daughter.

You left mom with little to survive,
You were never present in my life,
You probably aren't even alive,
I don't hate you but I can't love you.



FORM 3 PROSE - WINNER •

Lily Flett (Southern Lights Trust)

WRITING PROMPT: *"The necklace wound around my hand of its own accord, like an affectionate snake. "The whole city is looking for that," said the goldsmith, "but it seems to like you best.""* **From PROMPTUARIUM.**

Travelling on an old fashioned train is thrilling. The perfect curves in the dark oak-wood, wide, square-framed windows, suited the passing landscapes perfectly. It's a painting; but so much realer that anything the imagination could muster. It's as if you are given new bright vibrant eyes to look at the world.

Red velvet seats cover the bankettes in the compartment and racked shelves are fixed above. Lights fill the corridors of the train, illuminating the train beautifully, creating a vintage, magical feeling. It's like a time machine.

I wake up feeling the firm bed beneath me and the pillow's soft

fluffy feathers prickling and tenderising the side of my face. My eyes blink a few times to adjust to the bright morning sun shining through the window, glaring at me to wake up. Shouts, loud shouts, shoot into my ear. A few seconds later, my younger sister, Ludel, springs to my side.

"It's time to get your sleepy face up and out of bed, Fears I picked out your dress already. Now get up!" Ludel screams at me.

"I just woke up. Five more minutes. It's only..." I check the time on my phone. "8.30am. Chill out we have enough time," I say slumping back down onto my pillow.



My stomach growls at the word
'breakfast.'

Walking out of the compartment,
searching for the lady with the
heaven that is baked croissants and
crispy, yet soft, sandwiches. I spot her
near the end of the corridor. I jog
towards her, not seeing anything else
but a beautiful chocolate croissant.

Abruptly, I collide with a figure. I
look down to see an astonishingly
short old man with a long, thin, white
beard, a fragile and lean figure,
sapphire blue eyes and wearing a
long black robe which covers
everything but his head and neck.

"I'm so sorry, sir. I didn't see you
there," I say sounding breathless

and eyeing the food on the cart.

The old man laughs a little and
responds with an Irish accent, "It's
alright, lovely. It's hard to see me
anyway," he laughs to himself again,
while smiling softly and kindly at me.

Suddenly, his smile drops as he spies
the mysterious necklace around my
neck.

He reaches for my hand and holds
it with both of his. "Oh, this little
necklace will suit you well, but tread
with care, love. The whole world is
looking for this. They're coming far
and wide creeping ever closer to it,
every waking moment." He releases
my hand, letting it flop top my side.
"Be careful, Feara warrior, of old



Lily Flett (Southern Lights Trust) (continued)

Maldivestiar. Watch the lights of the eyes." Then, he's gone just as quickly as he came.

There is a second of peace before Ludel yanks me out of bed, "Get dressed. Now!"

I get up and slowly make my way to the shower room where Ludel has laid my clothes on a seat – a blue navy dress with little white flowers scattered across it, the dress' long sleeve hanging off the chair. On top is my favourite blue denim jacket. I enter the shower room and pick up my clothes. Something drops from the pile of clothes – a necklace.

I hear the 'tingle' of the necklace as it hits the paneled floor. I reach for

the necklace's leather band. It is a pendant, made of pure silver, which shimmers with each sway of the band, like a grandfather clock ticking down the seconds. Gripping the circular present I turn it in my hands examining it. On the back are engraved plant-like shapes in perfect symmetry. The front is engraved with three wolves; dramatic wolves with long fur and gleaming eyes – alive and aware. The eyes are deep ocean blue with forest green edges – a truly magical sight.

I finish scrutinizing the necklace, place it on the marbled stone sink, trying to push it out of my mind. It's probably a pendent from Ludel given as a surprise, I weakly try to convince myself. Running my hand through my



coal black hair. I comb the knots from
it's wild curls, which lay in perfect
contrast to my olive skin.

I lace on my dress, jacket and slip the
necklace around my neck. I leave the
bathroom.

Ludels runs in past me immediately
I open the door, "Go get some
breakfast! The lady is in the corridor!"
she shouts, her brown hair whipping
my face.

I blink twice thinking I'm crazy. "Am
I imagining things? Is this one of my
'too close to reality' dreams?"

Screams pierce my ears stinging
them slightly. I quickly turn to look
down the corridor, searching for any

indication of where the screams are
coming from.

Running down the corridor. I stop at
my compartment door. The scream
comes, again. Ludel! With my hand
shaking and heart thumping against
my chest and in my ears. I start to
slide open the door...



FORM 3 POETRY - WINNER •

Charlotte de Bruijn (Chisipite Senior School)

WRITING PROMPT: "Daydreaming"

To anyone else, these are just markings on a page,
But to a musician, they are the escape from a cage.
Bottled up emotions flood through music sheets,
Where the treble clef highs and base lows meet.

The explosive crotchets power the piece,
Broken only by a quaver rest; pause and release.
Biting low tearing through suffocating silence,
Expressing rebellion, rage, acts of defiance.

Refuge only found through songs and solos,
Musicians fleeing life through the stark keys of pianos.
Standing out, forced into a concerto of uncertainty,
The world allowing no individuality or diversity.

But the semi-breves bring quiet tranquility,
The chance to speak through audience captivity.
Emotions locked behind loaded gazes;
A million words said in the space of music phrases.

Crescendos, diminuendos; following performance directions,
Mimic the feeling of pride, disappointment and life corrections.
To the untrained ear, the true meanings of music are missed,
But if you listen closely, conflicting feeling coexist.



FORM 4 PROSE - WINNER •

Catherine Nyangu (Dominican Convent High School)

WRITING PROMPT: *"The necklace wound around my hand of its own accord, like an affectionate snake. "The whole city is looking for that," said the goldsmith, "but it seems to like you best.""* **From PROMPTUARIUM.**

"Where is it?" he bellowed. Sharp daggers were directed in my father's way.

The sound of real flesh and thin leather meeting echoed through the hall, but father never even omitted a squeak. A shell. That's what he was. He was only a light washed out character of what he once was.

"We have to go before they realise we're missing," mother whispered in between her soft cries and hiccups.

She appeared smaller than usual as she hugged herself, finalising the painting of an inconsolable child who seemed to have lose her favourite boy. Completely and utterly pathetic.

I swiveled around and took brisk steps towards the large oak door sworn to secrecy behind the lifeless painting. Mother slowly padded into the pits of the cloying darkness that characterised the tunnel, just before bolting the door, "Slice off his head; I want it on a platter. Feed it to the hounds." The icy voice filtered into my ears and on its own accord my heart shattered into tiny fragments.

I awoke with a start, drenched in sweat. Every night the same images plagued my mind. The trees around awoke a bitter gust of wind, turning every last limb into an icicle. An unwelcoming feeling of loneliness crept up chilling what was left of my heart into a cold impenetrable rock.



Catherine Nyangu (Dominican Convent High School) (continued)

I pruned my mind away from unwanted thoughts and tried to conjure up a plan.

I'd never been in the woods. Had barely even left the palace gates, this was uncharted territory. One I knew I'd have difficulty mapping out. I picked up the once blue blanket now buried under filth and specks of the blood. Mother's blood. Images of mother collapsing in a heap after the soft piercing of her flesh plastered themselves in my mind.

A distraction. I pleaded for one. Anything! Frantic eyes fled across the mass of trees until a glint like a ray of sun ignited my curiosity. It was almost tentatively peaking out from

a newly discovered pocket on the blanket. I snatched it from its hiding place and analysed the gold chain embedded with small rubies and emeralds. A manic laugh bubbled from me, pushing past my lips, slicing through the once silent atmosphere.

Even dead, my parents still managed to find ways to torture me. In a flash I tossed the devilish ornament as far as I could into the thick vast darkness. One step. Two steps. Clunk! It wound itself around my neck like ivy strangling a pillar. I tugged as hard as I could, but the necklace had a mind of its own. Why me? Why did I have to be born to psychotic parents? Most importantly what was I to do now that this unmerciful link of metal, the very reason for my



parents demise had now decided to plaster itself onto me?

Hurriedly designed sheets of paper cling onto the walls of the rough brick walls I moved past. To reward, the papers exclaimed to those who'd allow their eyes to see. He wanted my head and most importantly the newest decoration decorating my neck.

The faintest hint of a smile etched itself onto my face, after skimming through the well rehearsed lie about the necklaces importance. It was token of gratitude from a witch to a king, a most powerful weapon that came with gifts of eternal life, to whoever it permitted to embellish themselves with. Immortality.

However, the poster only told fables about a royal family heirloom. I marched onwards to a small dilapidated shop, the only one I recognised. Not bothering to knock, I swung the barely attached door, escaping the unforgiving night and possible recognition. The necklace wound round my neck on its own accord like an affectionate snake.

"The whole city has been looking for that," the goldsmith said, "but it seems to like you best."

"Look I need this off me now," I rasped out, "before they find me. Please." I begged.

A cynical smile graced his cracked lips as he took a slow deliberate step



Catherine Nyangu (Dominican Convent High School) (continued)

into my direction. "And why would I do that pretty flower. May be I want the reward, I could use the money. I could even become a respected citizen," he said.

He slowly reached out and hooked a finger under the cool metal. I had little time to react to the revolting contact before the door shattered into splinters behind me. Instantly I knew it was the king.

My heart shattered. My mind tripped. I couldn't move or speak; the only thing that seemed to work were my eyes, as the goldsmith twisted me around to fully absorb our new company. His tall figure crowded the space and the glint that sparked in his eyes, detonated every possibility and plan of surviving. He resembled a tiger, with his wild crazed eyes and to my absolute dismay, I was his prey.



FORM 4 POETRY - WINNER •

Michaela McNab (Chisipite Senior School)

WRITING PROMPT: "Daydreaming"

Shivers erupt through my brain,
Not sore, a good kind of pain.
My body is stone, dormant and still,
But my soul is running free at its own will.

Dancing on stars and soaring through space,
The world in my mind, I feel is my place.
Vibrant colours wash over my eyes,
From far away I hear distant cries.

I'm running on a path that never seems to end,
Looking for the distraught cries I wish to mend.
I feel consumed and in a trance,
I have to get back, it's my only chance.

Wailing sirens filling my head,
How I wish I was really in my bed.
As I awoke from my trance, what did I see?
My angry teacher shouting at me.



FORM 6 PROSE - WINNER •

Cindy Usayi (Arundel School)

WRITING PROMPT: "War and Peace"

Staring down a dragon's throat, Tawana Zvobgo considers herself to be the first person in human history to have awoken with a mythical creature by her bedside. Its dark-green snout shoots mucus that flies towards her face. She tumbles out of her sheets and narrowly avoids the sting of legendary snot.

Lying upon her rug, Tawana observes the enormous, scaly beast that cramps up her tiny oasis. Her knees scrape against its disk-like scales as she attempts to flee. Blood sprouts to the surface of her skin. When goosebumps pock-mark her neck, Tawana barely has enough time to duck before a ball of flames soars above her.

It is then she sees it – her life flashing before her eyes in a string of reasons she could not hand in her homework. First, she was pushed into Lake Chivero by a particularly vicious wind. Indeed, a dog did consume her English essay. Today of all days, with a glorious project upon her stand, she faces a fire-breathing monster!

Another tsunami blazes towards her. She breaks out in a cold sweat. There is nowhere left to run. Rolling across her carpet, Tawana presses up against the dragons tail for safety. She experience a similar emotion to when she read 'War and Peace'. Tolstoy's words bounce around her head. "There is no greatness where there is not simplicity, goodness,



and truth." Truly, there is no greatness in her current predicament.

Tawana believes she must be dreaming as she watches her astronomy project go up in flames.

It starts with the sun who consumes little Mercury. Mercury eats up Venus, Earth and Mars – all connected by a ring of flammable oil paint around a metal wire. When Jupiter explodes, Tawana's world ends. The solar system burns. Fury takes the place of hopelessness. The steady rise and fall of the dragons merciless scales tells Tawana that the monster is satisfied by its work.

With the dragon in a state of lapse, Tawana launches her counter-attack.

A wave of energy courses through her bones. She ascends to her feet and pulls out her rug from beneath the dragon's torso. It falls.

"Roar!" the beast growls while tumbling onto its back. Picking up wind, its tail knocks Tawana to the ceiling and back down again. Rage numbs Tawana's pain.

"That took me twelve hours to complete!" she shrieks as she lunges at the dragon and rips out its scales. Tawana's chequered pyjamas are painted green with the blood of a monster.

A low rumble erupts from the back of the creature's throat. Sobriety washes through her body. She realises what



Cindy Usayi (Arundel School) (continued)

she has done and nearly falls to her knees to beg for mercy. The ground and walls shake as the dragon rises to its full, terrifying height. Tawana wishes she could join the engulfed solar system if it means escaping a mythical intimidation.

She does not have to wish for long.

The dragon, from its perched position – touching the ceiling with its glorious back – unlocks its jaw. Once again, Tawana finds herself eye to tonsil with a dragon. However, this time, heat comes to an orange boil for her to witness.

The taste of fire preludes on her tongue. Already she can see herself go up in a blaze of excruciating glory.

Her nostrils flare, mimicking the dragon's shout that successfully douses her in mucus. As she thought it is cold.

Finally the flames come to a dazzling summit and spew out between the dragon's razor sharp fangs. Tawana closes her eyes and accepts defeat.

Death is calmer than she believed it would be. There is no pain. Tawana does not feel the flames as they chew and gnaw at her. She simply ... is.

Cracking her eyes open, Tawana's heart flips into her stomach. She turns this way and that, lifts up the fluffy rug she left dumped on the floor, but alas! The dragon was nowhere to be seen!



**LITERARY
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Deloitte.



Hope sparks deep inside of her. She
darts her eyes to her night stand. The
sparks die out. Just like the dragon,

her astronomy project is nowhere to
be seen.



FORM 6 POETRY - WINNER •

Zahrah Abdoola (Chisipite Senior School)

WRITING PROMPT: "War and Peace"

The end was not poetic, nor was it heroic.

It was an act of hubris and of selfishness;
ending with a man burying his lover,
in a soul-soaked ground.

He remembers when her boots were pure,
unstained as her hands.
Her body soft and lush; unmarked as he is.

She does not remember when he left his weapons,
or retired his uniform.
He was left forgotten; only remembered to be missed.

The soldiers adorned their uniforms,
the quiet was pushed away;
bullet-fire was music, distant explosions were fear.

She had run amok,
through the quiet towns, over the still mountains,
making a mess of his serenity.



He had to follow her through battlefields,
over bodies she left in her wake.
Blood pooled in her footprints.

Scars like badges, burns like medals
cratered her body and the land she stood on.
She waited for both to fall apart.

He watched from afar;
Her rank ascended with every weapon dropped,
and every soldier to grace their knees.

He decided, then, to preserve her memory,
with the marks she had already made,
and no more.

It was an act of love and of loyalty;
ending with a man laying his lover to rest,
in a land purified of ruin.

The beginning was hopeful, his end was heroic.



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