

# Spark

## Young Writers Magazine

Featuring writing by young writers in the West Midlands



**Issue 15 October 2018**



# Spark Young Writers Magazine

When I was asked to be guest editor for issue 15 of the Spark Young Writers magazine, I couldn't believe my luck – and I was right to be pleased. It's been a joy and a privilege to read the pieces submitted. Even the ones that weren't selected this time are all worth working on, and I hope that their writers will do a bit of editing on them and try again.

One thing I'd like to note, though. If you look at recently-published books of poetry, you'll see that very few poems start each line with a capital letter. Nowadays this way of writing poems looks rather old-fashioned, but most of the poetry submissions were written like this. Your poems would be easier on a modern reader's eye if you used capitals only where you would in prose, i.e. at the beginning of a sentence. If you do this, you'll probably need to pay more attention to the punctuation, though!

But many thanks to everyone who submitted pieces for this issue. It seems a shame to me that some of the best pieces of writing might be missed by new readers, so I've also included my pick of three particularly great pieces from the last year of Spark Young Writers' Magazine.

**Brenda Read-Brown**  
Guest editor



Spark Young Writers Magazine is a publication of Writing West Midlands. We support creative writers and creative writing across the region. More information about us can be found on our website: [www.writingwestmidlands.org](http://www.writingwestmidlands.org).

This magazine features writing from children and young people aged 8 - 20 who live in the West Midlands of the UK and across Europe. It is also available to read online at [www.writeonmagazine.org](http://www.writeonmagazine.org).

Copyright of all pieces featured in this magazine remains with the contributors. Writing West Midlands - Company Registration Number: 6264124. We are a Charity - Registered Charity Number: 1147710.

Co-funded by the  
Creative Europe Programme  
of the European Union



Supported using public funding by  
**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**

# Contents

- |    |                                                                 |    |                                                                                     |
|----|-----------------------------------------------------------------|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4  | <b><i>History Will Not Repeat Itself</i></b><br>Maryam Alatmane | 22 | <b><i>Light and Shade</i></b><br>Eliza Howe                                         |
| 6  | <b><i>Final Battle</i></b><br>Aliya Waseem                      | 23 | <b><i>Knife Angel</i></b><br>Iona Mandal                                            |
| 8  | <b><i>Crossing the Barrier</i></b><br>Sayandeep Das             | 24 | <b><i>She Wears a Crown of Blood,<br/>Sweat and Tears</i></b><br>Nayantika Chaudary |
| 10 | <b><i>Pray for the Perpetrator</i></b><br>Juliet Allarton       |    |                                                                                     |
| 11 | <b><i>The Man from a Faraway Land</i></b><br>Sayandeep Das      |    |                                                                                     |
| 13 | <b><i>Impressions</i></b><br>Kimaya Garg                        |    |                                                                                     |
| 14 | <b><i>The Secret</i></b><br>Ina Ross                            |    |                                                                                     |
| 16 | <b><i>The Library. Temple of the Story</i></b><br>Laurie Archer |    |                                                                                     |
| 17 | <b><i>Missing</i></b><br>Abbey Pickess                          |    |                                                                                     |
| 18 | <b><i>To the Ocean</i></b><br>Maryam Alatmane                   |    |                                                                                     |
| 19 | <b><i>Silence</i></b><br>Benedict Christmas                     |    |                                                                                     |
| 20 | <b><i>Keepsake</i></b><br>Iona Mandal                           |    |                                                                                     |
| 21 | <b><i>Glory</i></b><br>Juliet Allarton                          |    |                                                                                     |



# History Will Not Repeat Itself

## Maryam Alatmane

Jim Crow laws, 1877-1965:

You must not  
attempt to mix with us.  
You need to understand,  
we are Separate  
but equal.

Mexican Deportation, 1929-:

You must not  
bring your drugs and crime  
into our pure country.  
Don't take it personally,  
We just want to  
make America great again.

Holocaust, 1933-1945:

You must not  
pollute our streets.  
This yellow star  
Shows that you  
are not one of us.

Apartheid, 1948-1991:

You must not  
step where you are  
Not Welcome.  
The land of your ancestors  
no longer belongs to you.

Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, 1948-:

You must not  
protest for freedom.  
This country is not yours  
Anymore.  
We cannot live as equals.

Berlin Wall, 1961-1989:

You must not  
cross to the West side.  
We will only hold you  
in the grips of communism,  
force you into a beige life.

Rohingya Crisis, 2015-:

You must not  
live in peace.  
Stay here in your  
cage without a roof.  
We shoot on sight.

Today:

We must  
strive for acceptance  
and equality;  
Not for  
segregation  
and hostility.

Let us make true the lie,  
history will not repeat itself

# Final Battle

**Aliya Waseem**

It isn't only me anymore, even my Queen is completely fed up of this unnecessary bloodshed. All we do, day after day, is prepare for battle and launch back into the war that King Marth caused. I do not understand how someone can be so bloodthirsty - he has taken down many kingdoms in Erilea, must he conquer us as well to feel satisfaction?

War does not prove anything. Millions of people die, yet that unruly King must be blissfully unaware or just too insensitive to care.

I have suffered greatly on these battle lines, having fought hundreds of battles now. However, the one who has suffered the most is our courageous Queen Athena. Unlike any other monarch, she too has taken to the battlefield and has commanded us with extreme efficiency. Despite only being in her late twenties, she has fought in many more battles than I wish to. The only reason I have continued to participate in these battles, is to make sure that my Queen has at least one loyal Captain whom she can rely on.

Once I was fully armoured, I left my tent and adjoined to the battle field. My unit and others, including the Queen, were already there.

Time for unnecessary killing.

I slashed and slashed, tearing my way through enemy units. One by one, bodies continued to fall and I would just plough onwards. I searched relentlessly for the other Captain, once he is taken down, this section of the war is over.

Hours later, most of the opposing army had died and only few were left. On my insistence, Queen Athena, had retired and only myself and a group of men were left on the field.

One man stood out on this battlefield, he seemed to hold an aura of great skill and experience. I had drawn my sword. Once I had reached attacking range, I raised my sword, waiting for an attack. Nothing.

"I can't do this anymore. He just makes us keep on fightin' and I keep survivin' every damned battle. I continue hoping to die, but I always live. All he says is Cap'un Amyr get back in battle. You look like a Cap'un are ye one?"

"Yes, I am."

"Please, if ye have any mercy, end mi miserable life. I cannot service a King like him any longer. Please, Sir, end me."

"That is what I am meant to do..."

"Then do it."

I had never faltered in the moment of killing, I may have hated it, but never faltered. I just... don't feel like I have the capability of killing him. On the other hand, I understand his misery. It is always horrific to murder someone, but his death would prove to be a benefit to the both of us. Our enemy will lose an important soldier, and he would be free from this chaos.

I raised my blade.

"Thank ye."

His head bounced on the floor and came to a stop.

Captain Amyr had been killed.

# Crossing the Barrier

**Sayandeep Das**

Belen looked through the barbed fence of Nicosia, capital of Cyprus. He had imagined the world as a joyous, happy place to be.

Belen was a lonely Greek Cypriot boy with few friends at school. His mother was constantly busy and worked hard in a shop to provide for the family. His dad had gone many years earlier to work abroad. The innocent eleven-year-old had only seen his dad in pictures and talked to him on the phone. He spent his time reading ripped paperbacks he had read many times before. He didn't have the greatest life but tried to make the most of it.

He came to the same place everyday, the place where his grandfather was assassinated by Turkish Cypriots. Every day he prayed for him and his eyes filled with tears. He thought about the Turkish occupied part of the town on the other side called 'Lefkosia' and his heart sank.

Today was different: Belen was exploring the fence while his mum was trying to pacify his crying little brother, Johannas. Suddenly, Belen saw a tiny frame of a little girl crying and running desperately towards him. Tears were flowing like little rivers out of her dark eyes. Belen heard desperate screams of:

"Mummy?" her voice grew higher pitched

"MUMMY!!" she shouted for everyone to hear.

She saw Belen in the corner of the fence and asked: "Have you seen my mummy?"

"No, but where do you live?" Belen asked.

She shook her head and burst into fits of tears again. Belen knew it would be futile to try and soothe her. He took the little girl, Sanem, through a little gap in the fence that he knew from years of exploring. When he brought her home, his mum was initially shocked but a kind caring, person like her would never say no. When their neighbours saw the girl, they advised Belen's mother to leave her on the street as it was a criminal offence to care for a Turkish child. But Belen's mum was having none of it and said she would rather go to prison than let any child die. She treated the girl as if she was her own child and cared for her intensely. Sanem still yearned to go home but she was hopelessly unsure of where she lived.

"Le... Le... Le... LEDRA!!" Sanem suddenly said, her miserable face lighting up merrily.

"You live on Ledra Street?"

Sanem nodded gleefully and the three of them secretly slipped through the gap in the fence and walked the length of Ledra Street until they found her home.

Sanem's parents' red-rimmed eyes, white knuckles and wrinkled faces disappeared as soon as they as they saw her, and they bounded out of their rundown house and started crying in joy.



They looked up at Belen and his mother and they all hugged while they thanked them over a thousand times.

Sanem jumped into Belen's arms and smiled.

Belen was overjoyed. He had finally found a friend.

# Pray for the Perpetrator

**Juliet Allarton**

Today we mourn a tragic loss.  
So unexpected! So soon,  
In someone's mind, they've paid the cost  
Of turning arms maroon.

The punches they've thrown have ricocheted,  
And knocked them six feet down  
They've lost the sickening game they played  
The mocker became the clown.

Tragic, however, this day will be.  
As we remember nobody's friend,  
But it's all alright, as now they're free  
Of having to pretend, that

They're not like the rest of us.  
With problems back at home  
They wished, just once, their dad would call  
But he never touched the phone.

So we can understand, can't we?  
That there are many reasons to miss  
This soul, but even now I speak  
To an empty  
Church service.

# The Man from a Faraway Land

**Sayandeep Das**

I met a man from faraway lands,  
many decades ago.  
When the world was so very bad,  
And life was full of woe.

I got to know him well  
and he talked about his life.  
He told me about the stories,  
of how countless words  
pierced him like sharp knives.

I asked him to explain,  
he said many people were bad.  
That they said words to him,  
that were often so, so sad.

He said he had left his country  
thousands of miles away.  
His family had been killed in a brutal war,  
going on for many a day.

He tried to save himself,  
but much to his dismay,  
he saw that people from my country,  
turned him down as a castaway.

He lived off the street,  
and begged for food and money.  
He had nowhere to go,  
and nowhere to live,  
and when he asked for "a spare penny,"  
his skin colour meant,  
no one had anything to give.

I felt horrible for him,  
and guilty about myself,  
I had all the comforts in the world,  
but when I heard his story,  
The horrible truth was unfurled.

Why is the world so evil?  
Why is the world so bad?  
Why is there so much war?  
Which makes so many people go mad.  
Why is the world such a fearful place to live?  
Why can't we just reside in peace?  
Why is there so much slaughtering?  
Which makes the population,  
slowly decrease.

Maybe one day there will be a cure.  
Maybe one day we will know for sure.  
Maybe one day the pain will go away.  
We might resolve our problems one day.  
Maybe one day we will be okay,  
Maybe one day...

But sometimes in the world today,  
there are some people who do fulfill,  
the wishes of happiness and good will.

They do not see skin colour in their eyes  
and no gender to them applies.  
For whom you should love and whom you should despise,  
follow those people I should advise.

These people love multicultural communities.  
So they can embrace other's diversity.  
These people take and love you for who you are,  
not if you have a fancy watch or a nice car.  
These people cannot bear to see you suffer,  
they will try and help you,  
so your life doesn't become tougher.

Be like these people I would suggest  
And the world would not be a place of  
Such sadness, fear and despair.

# Impressions

## Kimaya Garg

Malorie Blackman is one of the most celebrated children's authors in Britain. Aged 54, she has written a vast number of books and short stories. Adding to this she also writes television drama aimed at children and young adults. She has won a number of awards for her eminent work and contribution to English literature.

Born to Caribbean parents, Malorie Blackman shapes her literature to tell stories about racism and create awareness about social and ethical issues. She adds a twist to many books like her series 'noughts and crosses' displaying social issues in a parallel universe. Displaying these issues through her stories creates a whole new level of social awareness amongst children.

When reading one of her books the reader is shifted into the thoughts of the characters: they are allowed to explore the characters thoughts as if their own, avidly connecting to the book. Malorie Blackman has won an outstanding number of awards for her books. I felt the intense connection to Lydia, a character in Thief. She has won the Excellence/Write Thing Children's Author of the Year Award, the Children's Book Circle's Eleanor Farjeon Award and the Kitschies Black Tentacle for "outstanding achievement in encouraging and elevating the conversation around genre literature.

This demonstrates her capability to write effectively with such simplicity in her language that children can understand it yet it having such complexity in the effect her prose has on the reader.

Alongside the awareness that her narratives and novels bring, her language is what makes her books so popular, leaving the hundreds of children that read her books inspired and eager to stand up to social issues. Turning her pen into a sword against racism and bullying, she has made a great contribution to English literature for many generations of eager readers to come.

# The Secret

Ina Ross

I crunch on my too-dry toast. Nan and Granddad are heavy sleepers so no need to worry about waking them. The morning sun spills into the once-dark kitchen. I'm usually still in bed when Nan gets up to feed the cats, but I couldn't sleep.

Nan's footsteps skip down the stairs. She's always so happy in the morning, unlike Granddad, who you should avoid at all costs before he's had his coffee. Opposites attract I suppose.

"Up early again, kitten? You ok?" she chirps as she strolls into the kitchen.

"Morning Nan, I fed the cats for you," I answer, trying to avoid the question and failing miserably. She can always tell when something's up. I haven't fed the cats since before Mum and Dad left.

They left when I was four. Nan told me they couldn't take care of me, that they were good people, but I've gone past the point of worrying about them anymore. I'm happy with Nan and Granddad – well, we'll see about that after today.

She clicks on the kettle then sits beside me. I fiddle nervously with my bracelet. She puts her arm around me and I snuggle into her, breathing in her scent just like when I was young.

"Got anything you want to talk about, kitten?" she says softly, petting my head.

Our shared love for cats is how I got the nickname. We would lie on the couch, curled up into each other, and chat about all the cats we'd own. She would pet my head and call me her 'favourite little kitten.'

I know I can talk to her about anything. I take a deep breath.

"I met someone, Nan," I murmur, eyes locked on the floor. No turning back now.

"Ah, and what's the lucky boy's name?" she replies, still rubbing my head. Just say it, I think to myself, it's now or never.

"Jess, Nan, her name is Jess," I whisper. She stops rubbing my head and gets up to make the coffee. She puts three mugs down onto the table and sits back down beside me. She exhales, and turns to me.

"Look at me, kitty," she says.

I turn to look at her, the nerves welling up inside me.

She smiles gently, putting them at ease. "That's what been bothering you? You were afraid to tell me you had a girlfriend? I love you no matter what, you know that right? When do we get to meet her?" She smiles through it all.



A wave of relief washes over me. She doesn't care. She still loves me. The happiness bubbles in my stomach. I throw my arms over her and squeeze her as tight as I can.

"I love you too, Nan," I cry, failing to hold the tears back. All the worry and fear finally subsides.

As we prepare for Granddad to come bounding downstairs, moaning and groaning about anything and everything, Nan hums a little song. I feel closer to her than ever before.

# The Library. The temple of the story

**Laurie Archer**

Where word weavers gather to share ideas, compare writing and be inspired.

Where book lovers come to pick up their latest tale of crime, romance or comedy.

The guardians of the book world gather here. Their lanyards clearly stating their position of power.

The authors make their magic here as word after word flows from their soul and onto the page or screen.

In the library's heart are the readers. Scanning their eyes over word after word and then blogging about it.

The wizard stands tall as he pours out the words of a classic children's book, inspiring and amazing all the baby dragons.

The temple of the authors, the book worms and the word nerds.

The meeting place of the magicians and sorcerers of the written text.

The school of the story and the college of the grammar.

The library. Temple of the story. Temple of the world.

# Missing

## Abbey Pickess

Butterflies in my stomach, heart racing, brain all a whirl, I head into the court. My dyed red hair is all in a knot from the hours I spent alone in the cell. I can't think straight. The judge is speaking to the small cluster that is the jury and suddenly he's addressing me.

"Molly Hoppingdol. You have been accused by an individual, who shall rename nameless, of kidnapping this young girl," he indicates a photo of a little girl with blond hair and freckles, "Louisa Lows. Do you plead guilty or not guilty?"

"Not guilty," I reply quickly. Too quickly?

I don't know what happened next. I was staring at the floor. There was a lot of talking. Suddenly the judge declared: "Not guilty." I stared at him. After a whole sixteen years of lying, the first truth I tell saves me. As I leave the court, I wonder how I was accused and why I wasn't charged. I think that what made a new question come to light, where now?

Louisa Lows. The name rings a bell. Ignore me. I'm not going forward, I'm heading back, back to the start of Molly Hoppingdol. Molly was never born.

She came when I was six. I ran away from home. How or why is a mystery to me now and so is my whole past life, actually. I don't even remember my name. Only one thing stuck: my address. I can't forget it. It's like the remnants of my old life, staying forever to haunt me. I stayed around for a bit but then 'Missing' posters starting appearing and I ran off. That's when Molly began. It was just the name to start with but soon enough I dyed my hair and began to cover up my freckles.

Nothing's changed. Molly stuck and I forgot my real name but the address still hovered there, a never-tired ghost. Apart from this new feeling. The only feeling I've ever felt before is being lost.

But now I've got a longing, a longing for home. Not my flat. Home, home. Mum, dad etc. I don't remember any siblings but I could have hundreds for all I know. But I can't go back. I'm two people now: if I go Molly will go missing and if I stay whoever I was will never be found.

I'm too young to make that decision. I've kidded myself around me that I'm eighteen but really I'm young, sweet sixteen. But I'm not getting older. I'm getting younger, like I said, going back... The next thing I know I'm there. Yes, there, there. At that address, at that doorstep. My hair is back to blond and my freckles are on display. Deep breaths. My finger reaches out and knocks. I want to run away but I'm glued down.

An old lady answers it. Her mouth drops open.

"M... Mum?" I stutter,

"Louisa?" she breathes back. And then – click – the last piece of the puzzle falls into place, I'm Louisa Low.

# To the Ocean

**Maryam Alatmane**

The waves are dangerous. Most know this already; some, are yet to find out. I stand, staring out at the vast ocean that stretches further than any eye could ever hope to see. Water laps against my feet as I walk in, wading deeper. The sea, it calls to me, drags me further- icy water reaches my calves, my knees, mid-thigh, until my lower body is submerged. Then I stand, and I listen.

Nature is its own music; far from shore, I hear the crash of waves slapping sand, the gentle lapping of water around my body, the soft silence before the sea resumes its attack. This is what peace sounds like.

The waves are dangerous. One drags me down, under the water and I fumble, open my mouth, swallow salty water, gasp, close my eyes, reach for the light and the sweet, sweet air with flailing limbs until finally. I break free and rise, spitting out a mouthful of sea, rubbing my eyes. The waves are dangerous, yet the ocean entices me, and I find myself running back, always running back.

It's funny, I muse, how scared I was of the waves, when I was a child. The fear was not unfounded when what seemed like walls of water were engulfing me, but now I am in love with the danger.

I am in love with – no, mesmerised by – the strength that drags water from water and lifts it up, lifts me up with it, if I'm lucky. I settle into a slow front stroke, one limb after the other, blunt blades cutting through water. A wave, then another, hoists me up and carries me on its way to shore.

I dive under an incoming wave; close my eyes as the water streams past me. I emerge, fling my flowing hair back from my face and laugh. The rushing water is a melody to my ears. I push my hands through the water, feel the pulsing, living beat of the ocean; I fling my hand in the air and watch as the spray falls, like a sprinkling of crystals.

As I wade out, the sea tries to pull me in. I will be back; the whispered promise tumbles out of my mouth and shocks me with its conviction. Ankle-deep in water, I turn and marvel at the power of the sea, of the waves. The waves are dangerous, it's true. But that is no reason to be afraid of the sea.

~ To the ocean, a declaration of love

# Silence

## Benedict Christmas

A great day at the beach.  
The sun shining through the empty blue sky.  
Strawberry ice creams melting gradually on the cement floor.  
Silence was all absent.  
Mark and Kate lay together on the warm sand.  
Sun reflecting off their bare backs.  
Gulls squawking and swooping down to them.  
Slurping up their melted ice cream.  
Joined by the heavy cacophony of other people.  
The sand darkened,  
Mark's queries joined their puzzled looks.  
"It's the clouds Mark."  
Oh, yeah. The clouds.  
The clouds from the empty sky.  
Their mound of ice cream shone heavy rays onto the couple, their backs rapidly turning scarlet.  
"Ow, ow!"  
"So hot!"  
As it got darker and blacker.  
As the sun died, melted and vanquished.  
As the ice cream shone.  
As the noise muffled.  
The silence was so absolute.  
It was like you could reach out and touch it.  
The silence of no people.  
The silence of no waves.  
The silence of no seagulls.  
Silence.

The silence was interrupted suddenly –  
"And then there were 2."  
"Finally."

A great day at the beach.  
The sun vanquished like flames.  
Dark black sky.  
Strawberry ice creams shining, melting on the cement floor.  
The silence was now completely absolute.  
No noise  
No people  
Just...  
  
Silence.

# Keepsake

## Iona Mandal

We held hands and collected love spoons  
In those quaint fishing villages  
Where antique shops traipsed in  
Merged in with casinos  
Betting places and gambling clubs  
The ones where bulky, heavy Cockney-accented men  
Trudged in, arms patterned with tattoos like  
“Let Us Compare Mythologies.”  
Or “Words Fail, Music Speaks.”

I remember how you stared disapprovingly  
At their false gold teeth  
Sniffing or coughing every time  
You saw a metallic ring on a finger or a baseball cap turned  
The other way round

And now I hear  
The alarm on my phone ringing  
Reminding me to pick you up from the pub  
After your hour long chat over a pint with your mates

Because I know  
I know you'll be too drunk to find your way home  
No  
Instead you'll be at the antique shop  
Collecting knives.



# Glory

**Juliet Allarton**

Glory is not reason enough  
To experience the pits of hell.

No giving up  
And no turning back  
Inspires us all to kill.

Who made it normal to kill a man?

To watch death and not care?  
The humbling sight of a bullet wound,  
and to know you put it there.

Watching my gun turn from black to maroon  
While rats scuttle over my friend  
But it's all okay, we'll be home soon,  
And believe this was all just pretend.

Living and knowing you murdered men  
Is no easy feat.  
We may be winning our fight now,  
But this will always be defeat.

# Light and Shade

## Eliza Howe

Three descriptive passages:

I: It was dark and empty of life here. Thick, barbed limbs of bleached skeletons of dead trees dominated the landscape like ghostly stooped figures. Ivy choked the twisted trees that had roots like enormous wooden tentacles. Everything was covered with the mist's frosty breath. Rotting leaves and dead branches littered the ground, a carpet of decay. A dark, tangled maze of tunnels and secret paths strangled the pathway and pressed in on all sides. Thorns knotted amongst trees and bushes grasp at your ankles like bony fingers. An eerie, greenish gloom shone with patches of misty light.

II: A magnificent forest of tall trees like a crowd of vivid green umbrellas. Bright red rhododendron flowers framed the deep blue sky. Lilac Budlias were covered in butterflies surrounded by dew-soaked grass like a field of liquid diamonds. It was dotted with flowers like a carpet of jewels – rubies, sapphires and opals.

III: Her smile was as hollow as a cavern and she had her usual sly look in her demon-haunted eyes. She had a splinter of ice in her voice as her mocking tone said the words. Her unblinking eyes burned with a cruel light. She beckoned the girl to her with a tense jerk of her pale fingers. It was obvious that she had given orders many times before, as her tone was a cold one, and one that wanted to be obeyed without question. Her order was given in a low, viperish tone. She stared with eyes that sparkled like frost – cold and dangerous. Her expression suddenly changed to a dramatic one of obvious mock concern and sympathy, and then all of a sudden, she glided away like a dark ghost into the shadows. She turned and directed a look of pure venom and cold, arrogance at the girl's retreating back.

# Knife Angel

## Iona Mandal

You were balancing on a knife edge  
Like a tightrope  
Trying not to fall beneath  
In case the daggers awaited  
To pierce your back

Your mind often flashed back  
To the metal scrapyards  
You visited  
To atone  
About your hands moving in too deep  
Below the victim's skin

The junkyard haunted you  
For endless days  
And nights  
The Knife Angel staring down at your sins

Every speck of blood  
Stained on the metal edge  
Every drop of platelet lost  
Scarring permanently  
Her angel face

Tonight, as you rose  
From the unlocked, open gates  
Of the same metal scrapyards  
Recycling 'stainless' steel knives  
And tins for cars

To drive home  
In your second hand car  
So did the man beside you  
Stuck in traffic jam

But neither of you knew  
Whether your car  
Evolved from a disposed tin can  
Or from a mangled, weather-beaten knife  
Marked by the smell of bleach  
Washing away, the sins that killed  
The Knife Angel.

# She wears a crown of blood, sweat and tears

## Nayantika Chaudary

Bloody, beaten and bruised.  
Her scars tell a story no one can refuse.  
There,  
Etched in every pulsing fibre of her skin.  
A voice that roars against the din.  
Pushed down seven times.  
But she stood up eight.  
Her heart knows not how to wait,  
Because of the fire that runs through her veins.  
She's the oddity the universe's rulebook never explains.  
She is not made of human blood, but a brewing storm instead.  
Clawing her way back to the very place from which she once fled.

A dragon in her heart,  
Constellations in her eyes,  
Bruises she wears like emblems on her thighs.

Paving her path through the stinging nettles and burning brambles,  
Ignoring the outside world that ambles  
Around her.  
She doesn't listen to the rest of the world,  
Because she is too busy  
Carving her name in the voids between the stars.

# Spark Young Writers Magazine

Featuring writing by young writers across Europe



Co-funded by the  
Creative Europe Programme  
of the European Union



READ ● ON

**For more information about the work Writing West Midlands  
does with young people, please see  
[writingwestmids.org](http://writingwestmids.org)**