

I AWOKE IN THE SKY

SARABANDE WRITING LABS, VOL. 7

SARABANDE WRITING LABS

An Arts Education Program from Sarabande Books

Sarabande Writing Labs is an arts education initiative created by Louisville-based nonprofit publisher Sarabande Books. We partner with social service organizations to promote writers in under-resourced communities through free workshops and literary events.

Visit our website for photos, updates, and upcoming events:
www.sarabandebooks.org/swl

ABOUT THIS VOLUME'S COMMUNITY PARTNER:

Wellspring promotes mental health recovery by providing housing and rehabilitative services to adults with severe and persistent mental illness. As a private, nonprofit agency, Wellspring operates crisis stabilization centers and supported housing programs in addition to affordable housing options in Jefferson and Shelby Counties.

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CONTENTS

I AWOKE IN THE SKY	<i>Sam O.</i>	7
POETRY	<i>Samantha F.</i>	8
LIKE THE JEFFERSONS (MOVING ON UP)	<i>Charity J.</i>	9
A DOOR TO GO IN AND OUT	<i>Carol M.</i>	10
GOLDEN BROWN	<i>Tanya R.</i>	11
HELP COMMUNITIES GROW	<i>Vanessa P.</i>	12
DARK/SHADY	<i>Charity J.</i>	13
THE LOST CHILD	<i>Jennifer T.</i>	14
ART IS	<i>Horus</i>	15
THE FINE PRINT	<i>Sam O.</i>	16
DARK THOUGHTS	<i>Danielle B.</i>	17
BEING FREE	<i>Sebra B.</i>	18
RED SKELETON FLOATING	<i>Tanya R.</i>	19
WHAT IS TRUE	<i>Patricia S.</i>	20
MORTALITY, MAYBE	<i>Sam O.</i>	21
MY STORY	<i>Charity J.</i>	22
MY FRIEND I'M IN LOVE	<i>Horus</i>	23

I AWOKE IN THE SKY

I AWOKE IN THE SKY

Vanishing sparks of lava
A cemetery of dead men appear
I won't I can't I flew
leaving lost, useless organs behind
I awoke in the sky
no longer in the dirt of the dead
tired of darkness & singularity
excited by air & light
Come back, they shouted
down in the sun's reflection
that revealed corpses
missing me

—*Sam O.*

POETRY

The choice is yours

Poetry is simple

31 days

free

no commitment

—*Samantha F.*

LIKE THE JEFFERSONS (MOVING ON UP)

to international barbeque, BB King, Isaac Hayes, and don't forget about Elvis and his black maid driving a brand new pink Cadillac! The barbeque flavor of those Memphis ribs went all the way to the bone. Reflecting on loved ones who have crossed to the other side, enjoying tea with the angels in that heavenly tide. Me, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Peter, and my brothers Lewis & Willie C guarding the door from the skies. Heavenly doves flying below. A flower is my gift for all these endurances I know.

—*Charity J.*

A DOOR TO GO IN AND OUT

I started drawing
in school many
different things

a woman in a wig
explaining things

sun shining people
enjoying the water

being in a town
other than Louisville

been born to
be fed

looking at something
different I'm close

a door to go in and out

being happy

a vase with flowers in water

—*Carol M.*

GOLDEN BROWN

It was like being at the tanning bed
without the bed.

No. It wasn't.

It was like Tanya with a tan.

No. It wasn't.

It was me being myself.
Of color. Golden brown.

—*Tanya R.*

HELP COMMUNITIES GROW

plus get a free canvas tote with your paid subscription
postage will be paid by addressee
think about what they're up to

thank you to our dedicated volunteers

we invite you to jot down confessions
the younger you are when you apply
no charge for events

enable progress and help communities grow

—*Vanessa P.*

DARK/SHADY

Sometimes I get just a little even
Sometimes I get a little uneven
And sometimes they both get together

Even is justice, uneven is distance
Justice (my evil childhood) distance (the past
does not reveal me)

God saw that my dark side was not my fault
so he took it (I get shady with the devil)
Even & uneven

—*Charity J.*

THE LOST CHILD

It was like the shadow of man
who was around me
who I couldn't see.

No. It wasn't.

It was like the desert
where the sun doesn't shine
on the other side.

No. It wasn't.

It was the death of my father
who I long not to let go.

—*Jennifer T.*

ART IS

the closing of a

golden door I'm going
through

our bodies are passing
through the sun the unleashed
has fallen and broken

art is geometry is universe

as above so below

—*Horus*

THE FINE PRINT

Price includes one server, fifty pops

Get out of Kansas

Plus get a free canvas tote

Things we need more than ever

Along route 66

Here lie the secrets

Take the next stop now

—*Sam O.*

DARK THOUGHTS

Pondering thoughts of misconstrued notions. Not knowing when my mind will quiet. No stillness in my thoughts, one idea to another, thoughts that make no sense. Then a dark cloud encompasses my brain. And there is nothing but a man. Thoughtless moments. A dark cloud covers my brain, an empty feeling. Makes the world outside feel like it does not exist. One moment nothing but noise. Then everything comes to a halt. A dark cloud covers my brain.

—*Danielle B.*

BEING FREE

Letting go of all my baggage
at peace with myself and others

Children being free! No
worries! Happy, joyous, and free!
My bones not being in
pain.

Protection from the wolves
that are in our way.

Hiding from the evil of the earth!

God opening all the doors for me to enter! He's
just waiting for me to enter
through!

Seeing all of God's glory.

Finally no pain no stress
just love and serenity! Stronger than
evil!

—*Sebra B.*

RED SKELETON FLOATING

I see a red dress with yellow and white
in color. Floating on the river.
I see a man who's drowning
himself. Because of his job,
thinking of his life. He's on
a ship seeing different things
that happen while living. He
stops to smell the flowers and
see the birds. He gave his
life up. All I see are memories
of what I see.

—*Tanya R.*

WHAT IS TRUE

The sun stays searching
them out in the earth. They saw the sun
through a telescope which is
definitely true.

They were anxious. They could notice
in the way I talked.

—*Patricia S.*

MORTALITY, MAYBE

A woman sleeps & her mind

contemplates her mortality. Well, maybe—

The woman on the left is the red woman & she might be seeing herself

Worn down & old, someday in the future.

No one can interpret a dream. No one knows how the mind works.

What is an egg on a table made of body parts?

Who is the white man in the distance?

—*Sam O.*

MY STORY

Lost
forever
under the stars

Two lies, him + her

Silent. I am known
My way is clear

Half circle moves
many attentions
not really there

My story—that garbage

—*Charity J.*

MY FRIEND I'M IN LOVE

looks like my friend I'm in love
with

the wind blows so fine
the kids play in the sunshine

I am king tut I am king tut

been through so much as a lil girl
wow I want to rule the world
eye of the tiger

give a dog a bone they always come back
home

go to sleep exhausted wake up a goddess

my higher power is awakened

magical to the other side can't wait
to see what's inside

—Horus

