

Still I Rise

By Maya Angelou

You may write me down in history
With your bitter, twisted lies,
You may trod me in the very dirt
But still, like dust, I'll rise.

Does my sassiness upset you?
Why are you beset with gloom?
'Cause I walk like I've got oil wells
Pumping in my living room.

Just like moons and like suns,
With the certainty of tides,
Just like hopes springing high,
Still I rise.

Did you want to see me broken?
Bowed head and lowered eyes?
Shoulders falling down like teardrops,
Weakened by my soulful cries.

Does my haughtiness offend you?
Don't you take it awful hard,
'Cause I laugh like I've got gold mines
Diggin' in my own backyard.

You may shoot me with your words,
You may cut me with your eyes,
You may kill me with your hatefulness,
But still, like air, I'll rise.

Does my sexiness upset you?
Does it come as a surprise
That I dance like I've got diamonds
At the meeting of my thighs?

Out of the huts of history's shame, I rise.
Up from a past that's rooted in pain, I rise.
I'm a black ocean, leaping and wide,
Welling and swelling, I bear in the tide.
Leaving behind nights of terror and fear, I rise.
Into a daybreak that's wondrously clear, I rise.
Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave,
I am the dream and the hope of the slave.
I rise... I rise... I rise.

A Picture of Me

By Ramona Young

Vivid, lively, and imaginative,
Smiling, laughing,
Caring, sharing, and loving,
Always putting others before herself,
Always helping other in any way she should,
Friends and family are her pride and joy: #1 priority,
As a matter of fact, through her actions,
she shows that they come before her.

She is her own Woman,
She's a nonconformist,
Her clothes: a vivid formulation of the passionate color of purple,
A style that is unique to her and only her,
She's not about styling and profiling,
She dresses for her, it must comfort her,
No validation is needed but hers,
The decision to change is hers and only hers,
She does what she wants when she and only she wants to.

To understand her,
Nobody does,
She's like a puzzle of many pieces,
Only she has them all,
Everybody else just has a few pieces,
So they can't see.

What they can't see,
Is that the pieces are all in the pictures of her.
It's not in the pose, it's not in the hair,
It's not in the clothes,
It's not in her eyes,
It's not that she is conceited,
Every set of eyes has a different story,
A story of growth,
That only she knows and only she can see.

Ability

By Selina E. Matis

Ability is to look at a blank page,
And create a poem.
Ability is to stare into the eyes of fear,
And come out stronger because of it.
Ability is to walk into a room of strangers,
And come out with friends.
Ability is to admit you are wrong,
When you are wrong.
Ability is to get back up,
When you fall down.
Ability is to believe,
When everything seems lost.

Ability - a simple word, with complex meaning.
For many, ability is never found, but for all ability is within.
Ability stares everyone in the face at one time or another.
Whether your ability is how well you shoot hoops,
How well you flip at dancing,
How smart you are at school.
You have ability.
For some, ability is lost by never trying.
Whether never trying to shoot one more time,
Never trying to bend a little more,
Or never trying to score higher in school.

Ability is within.
Ability is yours.