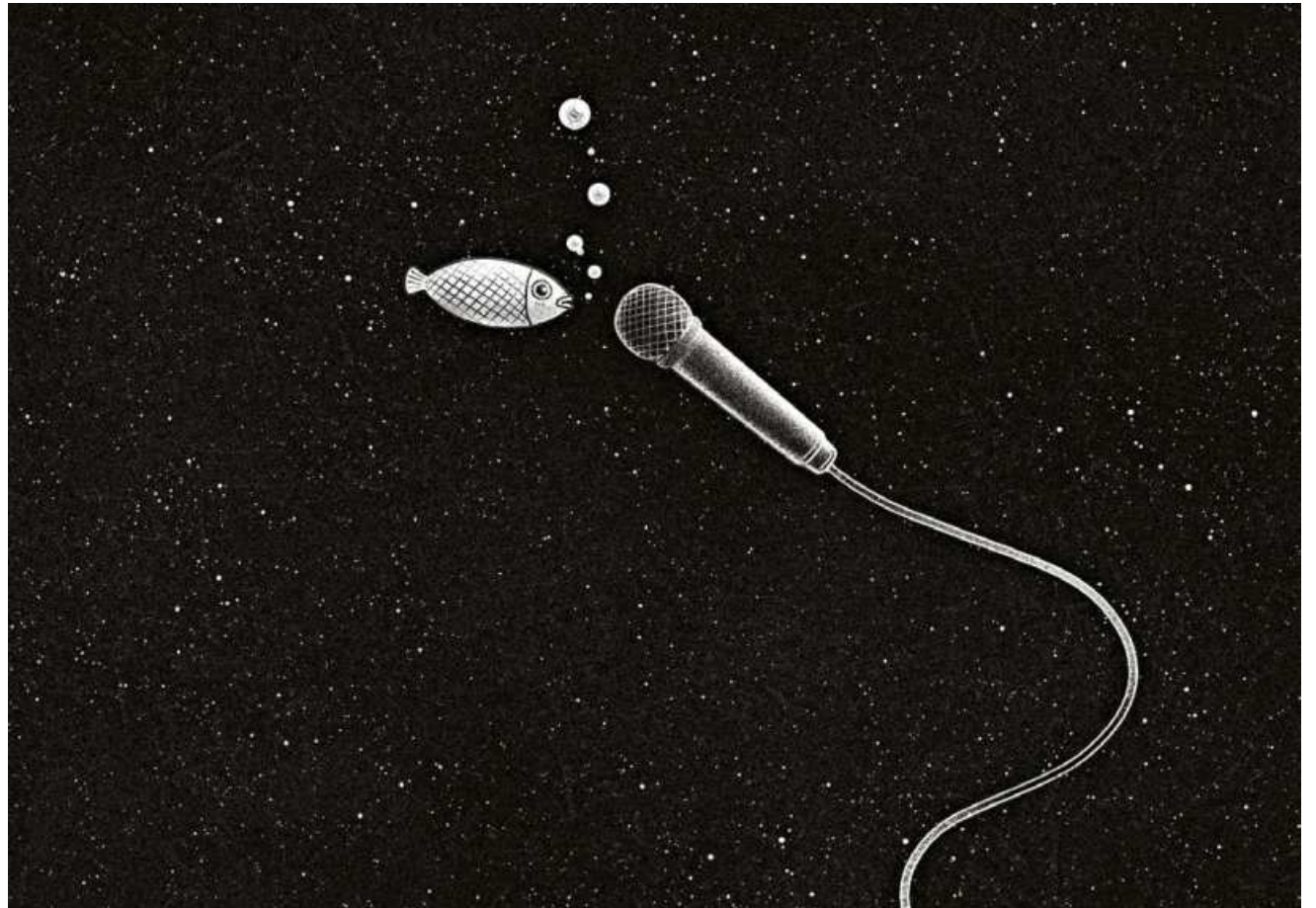


Did You Sing?

FYROZE SHAFIQUE

Do hearts have strings?
For, Lord! They can play!
At the jazz of the neurons
And at the scent of wet clay.
My sense is just a feather
When it pretends to quote the symphony.
The realities penetrating truths
As fresh as a wound from agony.
Lord, my beats do flow, with every
Leap of faith on the reed flute,
The harp, the tune, the center of the moon
The earth is the tree, lullaby is her fruit.
My soul, its case and everything that accompanies,
Dream in golden when hums come true
Befitting raindrops shatter on the notes
The universe is singing and so are you.

The writer is a freshman at the University of Toronto.



Memories

AFSARA KHAN

"How long will the whole procedure take, doctor?"

"A couple of hours or so, depends on how your brain responds to the treatment."

"It's painless, right?"

"Yes of course, you won't feel a thing."

I reassure myself that everything will be okay. Technology is so much more advanced now, how bad could it be? Anything is better than having to live like this; being chased by those awful memories all the time. I know memories make us who we are and erasing them completely might have repercussions but it's a risk I'm willing to

take. If this operation is successful, I can finally be free. No more staying up all night, playing those memories over and over in my head. I just want it to stop. I just want peace.

"Ma'am? Come with me, we'll need to get you on the chair," a nurse calls me. I follow her into the quiet, cold room full of machines, the smell of disinfectants is nauseating.

"Okay, we're all set. You ready?" the nurse asks. My miserable life flashes before my eyes once again, a sense of nostalgia washes over me. *Am I really ready?*

Afsara Khan studies Architecture at North South University.



THE INTANGIBLE CEILING

ANANDITA HUSSAIN

The most wicked standards are the ones we create for ourselves. With every step, the ceiling gains altitude, I am left reaching higher.

Making up the old excuse,
Someone may be better.

A dream to live, my years to give
Towards a timeless cause.
To make myself more worthy,
A minute can't be lost.

The leaders, artists, teachers,
All have *their* goals in sight
And work so hard to reach them,
While trapped in their own plight.

For people are rather strange
In the way we view ourselves,
A win may no longer apply if
Another acquires a trophy as well.

I wonder if the day will come,
When I choose not to compare
My work and my whole life to those
With an experience I do not share.

Until then I will keep working,
To raise the roof so high –

And hope that I do not end up dead,
With a heart that sighs in discontent.

The most wicked standards are the ones we apply to ourselves.

The writer is a student at Battlefield High School, Virginia, USA.