



# SPARKS WILL FLY

SARAH ANJUM BARI

The dancers were all getting ready. The boys had already reached and were busy taking pictures with the group while popping a “fuchka” every few minutes. The girls were going over the steps one last time and then again running back to be included in the selfies.

The place filled up slowly; guests trickling in, music blaring up, lights ablaze and flowers adorning a gorgeous stage and marquee. It was her wedding night, and it looked every bit as magical as she'd always imagined it to be. They were all there – her closest relations excited to see the family's baby girl as a bride, her best friends at the ready to execute every wedding dream she'd had since high school, her parents at once ecstatic and on the verge of tears. Everyone so happy, so ready.

The night was a success. The dancers outdid themselves onstage. Of course, she hadn't expected any less from her group of

friends- they took their dancing seriously. The food was splendid and the music made everyone's hearts beat just a little faster. It was so perfect, so colourful. She'd always wanted a firework of a wedding and-  
 “You're next.”

With a gentle shake of the arm, her cousin snapped her back to reality. This was reality – a dreary waiting area before you got called in to be pronounced married. Murky walls, damp air, splintered wooden chairs and the sole source of support from her family by her side. The only dancers were the butterflies in her stomach, and the buzz of distant traffic the closest thing to music.

As she gathered her thoughts—*Not the wedding I'd planned since Grade 9*— he held out a hand to help her get up and enter the room together. She glanced up and saw him looking down with a half guilty and half excited smile. She saw the reason behind the way things stood at present, but she saw so much more. She saw her wedding; and all the fireworks she'd ever need.

# GOODBYE, KIDS

BENJAMIN HASAN

Green, green sixteen,  
 The boys were so mean.  
 Red, red very dread—  
 Colour of Fred.

Purple, slurple gurp,  
 Grey matter dies.  
 The boys eat fries—  
 Colour of Death.

Salmon, lemon water,  
 Drinks so clean.  
 The boys still unseen—  
 Colour of Breath

Pink, drain sink,  
 They found the link!  
 The boys, they wean—  
 Colour of Dread.



# STONE COLD MAN

SABRINA SAMREEN

Stone cold man,  
 Hiding deep within some strange loathing,  
 This coldness, she wondered if it was just for her,  
 His lone, perplexed daughter.  
 He smiled warm and bright,  
 That coldness lingered like a foreboding devil she was destined to fight.  
 What had gone wrong?  
 What walls had sprung in between, overpowering and strong?  
 What had she done?  
 Flummoxed, she wondered at the blood that ran through her vein?  
 Where did she belong?  
 Shuddering, indignant, she was in denial of the love he had to feign.  
 Stone cold man, lovely, caring father.  
 That trace of hostility persisted, made her falter.  
 Driven by some selfmade pact on his part, to frown and cringe at her.  
 Discouraged, hurt, angered by the mute disapproval,  
 She wondered if she would ever be good enough.  
 Angry, defiant, she wished he would rather be vocal.  
 Of his hidden loathe, disapproval.  
 Father - daughter both on one track.  
 He, half - heartedly and she, craving his attention.  
 Wondered what she had done wrong, what made him shun?  
 That flickering light of dislike, grudge,  
 Masked by love and warmth, but ever present.  
 Pricking her, persistant loathing, resent.  
 Acceptance came over, she knew she would never be good enough.  
 His love was a pretence, a sarcastic bluff.  
 Father—daughter, drifting apart,  
 Swollen pride, inflated ego, unanswered questions shrouded,  
 He must have wished for a son, deep down inside his heart.

