

# SHE



FATEMA TUZ ZAHURA

She nods  
She's scared  
She's got  
A lot of things to share

She smiles  
She cries,  
As she stacks her inhibition on a pile.

She flies  
She dies  
Remembering  
She has to pay the price.

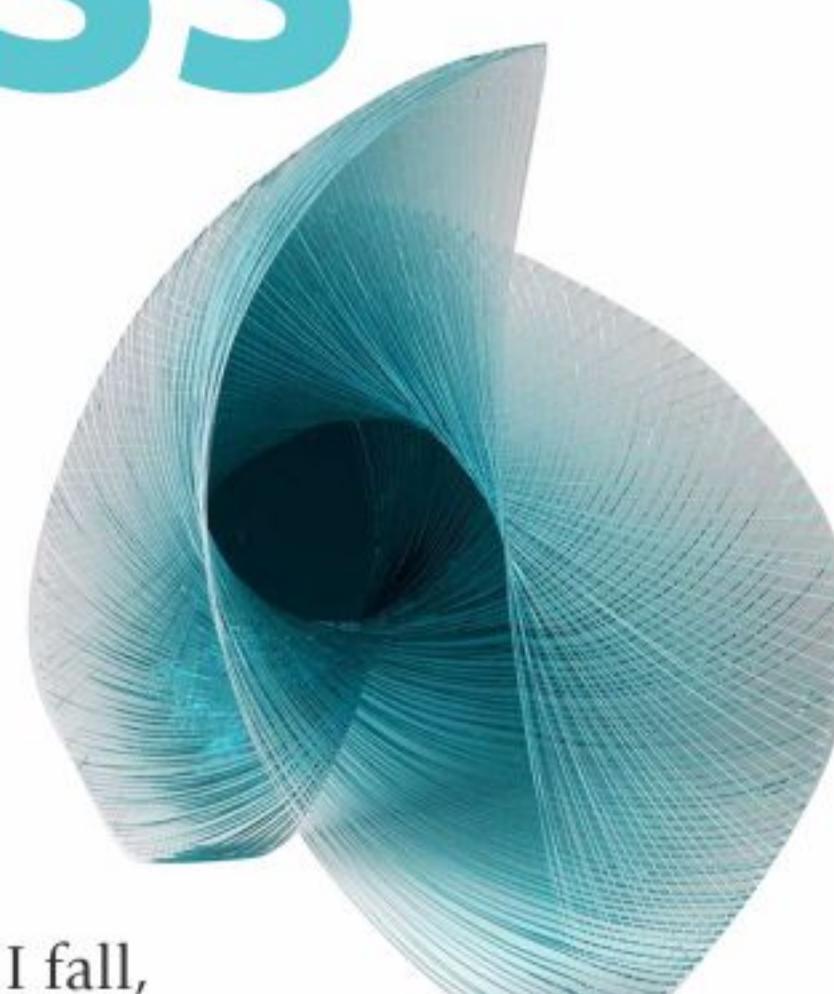
But she knows,  
She's gonna make it out alive.  
She's got a house and a pond,  
To built up her life.

*The writer is a grade 7 student of Maple Leaf International School.*

# GLASS

NASHEETAH HOSSAIN

Like glass,  
I am fragile  
And weak enough,  
That when I fall,  
I break and shatter  
Into pieces irreplaceable.



But like glass,  
And if you are the reason I fall,  
I am strong  
And fierce enough,  
That I will cut through your skin  
And draw blood  
Leaving behind a deadly scar.  
A scar in memory  
Of my vengeance  
Merciless and unremitting.

*The writer is a grade 7 student in Sunbeams School.*



## Honour and orphans

ZARIN REZWANA

He sat on the cracking cot – the memories were fluid and vivid, and somehow, even after such a long time, they had the authority to make him lose sleep at night. The fan hadn't been working some time now, and he wondered if they felt too much of a discomfort sitting there.

Clearing his throat, he prayed that he could calculate the words he was going to use, to avoid scaring the little hearts that sat in front of him.

"Every now and then, there was an attack on our camp that had to be fended off. We trained, we held notice of the announcements on the radio, and had alternate turns for night watch. Our limbs were so worked up day in, day out, that when we lay in our tents at night, the pain was so unbearable, we wished we could have been amputated right there and then. The small rations that we received through the generosity and courage of the village people was the fuel to our fire – not because food was necessary for survival, but because of the fact that the only ones left in the villages were the elderly, women and the youngest of children, making it our duty to shield them from whatever harm was to befall. Most men had joined our troops and found it too risky to be with their families or were positioned somewhere else. I felt their pain, after all."

He sighed. He could remember the first time he went back home – the walls were stained with dried blood. Everything was rummaged through; he now stared at one of the two things he could salvage – a photograph that now hung from the wall of his small room.

He sighed before continuing once more, "I had been waking up every day with the hopes of going home and consoled myself thinking that my family

was under the same sky as I, praying for the same conclusion of the scenario as every other true blood across the country."

"We had already lost so much that most of us had nothing to lose but our dignity – we found a brotherhood through the struggle, acknowledging that for us to return home and have a life like before, the chances were thin – thinner than the facade of courage the children wore, to hide their scared trembling, for when they came to us with news, we had the ability to feel their hunger, their pounding hearts, and their hard will to not break into their rawest emotions of fright. We knew it all, but decided not to show, nonetheless, facing our enemies brought out similar set of feelings in everyone."

"Where we were stationed, there were a few small attacks before the one that left us devastated. I do not know whether to feel fortunate or cursed, but it was also the very last one. It was like a storm that hit us in the darkest of night – gunshots and screams filled the air. A blind encounter, as you might call it; we did not know what the outcome would be in the morning when the attack died out. I ended up with a bullet in my right leg and a scar that still reigns on my face. The smell of death made the air heavy but soon enough victory was announced."

And just as his memory played the words the radio had shouted out, the bell rang. It was time for the children to go back to their classes but the curiosity on their faces had not found closure. As the children reluctantly walked out of the principal's quarter, the latter looked at the history teacher, and saw the small girl, a few years younger than his daughter, who hid in the cupboard of his lifeless home, almost five decades ago. He had lost a lot, but somehow, his faith had been restored as he still found someone, just as orphaned as himself, to call family.

## Paper Plane

SHAH TAZRIAN ASHRAFI

I ride on a paper plane  
From morning till night.  
I glide through the fusty, peanut smelling mouth  
Of every subway.  
My plane cruises through the winds that I swallow as air  
And it hardly crashes and folds.  
It bears many letters on it-  
Discarded draft of an attempted masterpiece  
It flies and flies and flies  
Through the city of dust and smoke.  
It's wonderful;  
How a mob of it can inject a dose of hope within you.

