

First Place Poetry – High School

The Mad Writer's Manifesto: Inspired by 'The Mad Angler's Manifesto' by Michael Delp

By: Michael Whennen

Grade: 12

School: Boyne Falls Public School

I speak with the voice of writing
book, poem, paper, and pen,
for the rough drafts in sewn notebooks,
engraving morals, every place,
where the thoughts of mind gather
to remind me of the power of words.
I speak with the name of ink
with the gentle caress of motivation
even the ink which fortifies each stroke
every drop another transition from soul to paper.
I invoke the masses of words to take over the world,
to begin the thoughts and writing sure in the fact
that tomorrow another poem will rise, another story begin,
another writer will tire of their own words,
and seek inspiration within mine,
running up my paragraphs and diving into my worlds

I praise the writer's toolbox,
the metaphors, the careful
extensions laid throughout a piece,
the webs of interconnected words

coursing through bulky paragraphs.

I write in stanzas, multicolored stages,
my poem a living marker for how I crest pages,
multi-step fanboys, two-sided kennings and infinitive phrases.
When my eyes fall on blank pages I praise their potential,
my creativity shaping onto them words and worlds alike.

Writing is my heart searing across a white page
my soul aching to translate words, the secrets of gods,
into metaphors and three-dollar words on the cusp of an idea,
sifting themselves out in a dream.

I praise for the comfort of writing,
the feelings manifesting, converting that love and hatred to
words across a page. the sudden drive to write a poem
in the dead of night, words snatching me at the edge of sleep.
I embrace the hush of a pen dancing, the litany of holy singers:
Shakespeare, Poe, and Whitman.

I trust only the sweet smell of crisp paper
the scent of words festering with ideas,
the thoughts rising in my blood like an illness, a fever sent by
Erato to make her presence known, worlds jolting
through the veins to replace the words. the book that broke
the New York Time's bestseller list, the soul trader I most likely have become.