

Chicory x Bard



June 2022

On May 19th, 2022, students from **Bard High School Early College** in Baltimore visited the main branch of the Enoch Pratt Library to visit the archives of **Chicory Magazine** to attend a poetry and art workshop led by Melvin E. Brown. Mr. Brown was the publication's longest serving editor, and he graciously lent his time to introduce students to the archive. The purpose of the workshop is to support the **Chicory Revitalization Project**. The work produced from the session is presented to you in the form of this 'zine to support the traveling exhibit.

In the session, Mr. Brown asked students to respond to a series of poems curated from the collection, and invited them to think of questions they might ask the author about the motivations behind their work. Then students participated in an impromptu writing workshop in which they either created original work in response to what they read or brought existing work to share. Mr. Brown offered students one-on-one guidance as to how they might develop their work further. What follows are the fruits of that session.

Enjoy!

Patrick Oray
Faculty in Literature
Bard High School Early College



My Own

I am my own own woman
I don't need a helping hand
I can carry my own bags
I will not smile to hide the pain that's inside
Because I am my own woman
I don't need a fancy dress and cute pearls
I like sneakers and girls
I am not your puppet and I won't be mute
Hear my cry or the hell with you
I refuse to be ignored even through my shout
I am my own woman, hear me now
Don't ask me how just know why
You can't break me no matter how hard you try
I'm stronger than your stereotype and I'm not about to hide
I am my own woman, and this is my life!

Naya White, Year 1

Wonderland

The room was silent, the small light dimly lit up the room. The smell of mold filled the girl's airways as she sat at the rusted table; her hands cuffed. Nothing or no one in sight, for the girl was all alone. She sat there reflecting on her previous decision, which only brought her pain and regret. The air felt cool and filled with disparate mixed with tension that she felt building up. Someone was coming.

The door opened with a slight creak, the masked people came in. The ears of the bunny masks hit the door frame as they walked in, pulling up chairs to the desk. She had her head down, crying for God to spare her life; for she did not know what was going to happen to her. The masked people chuckled at her tears. Silence fell again. Agonizing and painful for the girl to watch the people who decided her faint in front of her. The masks sent chills down her spine.

"Do you know why you're here?" The masked person on her left asked her. The soft yet masculine voice gave her a strange feeling of comfort. She stayed quiet, not daring to say a word. She shook her head slowly; tears still falling. "Shhh, Don't cry! We won't hurt you" The masked man said while stroking her brown skin. The others stayed quiet, watching them.

The man was strange, asking her about her interest, her favorite movie. Things of that nature. Her head still down taking in every word he said, but not answering. The man grew impatient. He reached for something in his back pocket. "Look up" He commanded the girl. She looked up. A silver revolver was held in his hand. Her face went pale, afraid of what he might do next.

The man took off his mask. His curls fell to his shoulder, his tan skin gleaming in the brightness of the dim lighting, and his strong jawline that captivated her. Everyone followed by taking off their mask. They all gave her an evil smirk, turning her stomach to the point of almost vomiting. The captivating man stood behind a mild aged man pointing the gun to the back of his head. She quickly looked away knowing what was gonna come next.

A shot went off, followed by another, then another. Five shots in total. The girl covered her ears and slid down to the concrete ground, hands still cuffed to the legs of the table. She sobbed heavily into her arm, looking up only to have been met with blood from the table. It was just him, her, and her sobbing that filled the room. She started reciting the song "Alice" from the film "Alice In Wonderland" The man chuckled and bent to her level while putting his mask back on. "Oh sweetheart, you're not Alice, and this isn't wonderland."

Natira Ferguson, Year 1

Embers

Embers...

Burning fires infernal but raging through forests, ocean and sky

Blood boiling, spanning continents spreading hellacious seeded embers

Ash and soot covering your body as you emerge through those horrid circumstances.

As strong as you ever were although you should've never had to be...yet

You rise and walk through fire...yet

Weakness scares you..yes

You fear all things you were taught were weakness

You fear your emotions and hide from them masquerading in masks all throughout your days like A never ending mardi gras

When you stop hiding you cry...You

Feel alone child so you cry...see

You have to be strong child because you have no protector...Who

In this world is strong for you?

Kelvin Best, Jr. Year 1

New World

*Reborn in a world different than my past residence,
It makes sense for my aura to be so hesitant,
Having left everything I knew, with little-to-no knowledge at all.
Going unwillingly with the flow,
and succumbing to the fall.*

*Reborn in a world different than my past residence,
I was adopted by a family that was not my own.
The new house I lived in proved not to be my home.
Spending time with a family that was not mine,
Yet still as chaotic and bad with time.*

*Reborn in a world different than my past residence,
Running around shared front yards of apartments didn't exactly
Feel the same as my old home,
And city air was a lot different than the humid and salty country air.
But, the people were more welcoming, despite not knowing my name.*

*Reborn in a world different than my past residence,
I was never one to go out of my way,
To go out with the neighborhood kids and play,
But, they begged me until I came outside anyway.
I was forced out of my comfort zone,
Just like I was forced to make this new place my home.
Forced to make due with all the folk in my 'hood',
All for the greater good.*

*Reborn in a world different than my past residence,
I made friends of all ages,
And memorized many faces.
I lost some people, met some more,
And even made friends with the owners of my corner stores.*

*To be born in a world
different than my previous home
was an adjustment.*

*But, to reside in a place surrounded by connections and love makes
it all worth it.*

Londyn Pinkett, Year 1



You Got This

I say it everyday, all day
At any time, at any moment

You got this...

No matter how many people hurt you,
You got this...

No matter how much you've been through,
You got this...

No matter how much of a struggle your childhood was,
You got this...

No matter how many people left,
You got this...

Don't ever forget, and it bet' not ever slip
From those fingertips,

And every time you think you don't got it
Girl, you better get it cuz you always will have IT

Remember...
You got this.

Amaiya Massie, 9th Grade

Just the Two of Us

Baby, I miss you, but I can't
Just keep on running back
Everytime I cut it off with you
Hole in my heart ever since I left
Your love was leading me to death
But I still wanna spend my life with you
Just the two of us

Ezra Morrow, Year 1

Middle of the Night

Looked at the moon
And asked for you
Next day, I got exactly what I wanted
Effortlessly
Put love on me
I try to leave, but you got my heart
Now, I don't know
How I'm feeling
But I gotta go
In the middle of the night (x2)
I fight for this
Running out of strength
In the middle of the night (x2)
I toss and turn

I want to return to the tenth

Ezra Morrow, Year 1

Black Man's Ballad (excerpt)

O, say can you see by the dawn's early light
What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming?
Whose broad stripes and bright stars thru the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watched were so gallantly streaming?
And the rocket's red glare, the bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there.
O, say does that star-spangled banner yet wave

O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?
O, say can you see by the rioters blight
We so proudly display,
and are surprisingly outright
And the people go forth to the perilous north
With outrage from the south, slurs from every mouth
O, say do you not know what flag scars you
O'er the land of false Decree and the home of the Slave?
Ode to America's Red, White, and Blue
The Stars, The Stripes, The Cross that bears you
Ode to the Eagle, pristine in its shine
In god we trust, but in darkness we writhe

Ode to the X of America's great past
Not the man but the Symbol of slavery's caste
And Ode to System of 400 years past
For now we rebel, and this time is your last
Now do as we have done and sing
Sing, with a thunderous voice begging to the heavens for
salvation
Sing, for a reckoning, for the souls of injustice past and present
Lift every voice and sing, and come together in unity and
prosperity

Salah Z. Abdurrahman,
BHSEC Class of '22;
Howard University freshman

Black

Excellence



Cohen Croslin

Year 1





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