



The Truth of Change

December 2012

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The Centre for Literacy of Quebec
Le centre d'alphabétisation du Québec



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Life

Life is like a spider
every road is like a leg
We shun the one that is long and black
Like a widow in her dread

Revenge is like a cockroach
it creeps on you from behind
If you don't turn to crush it
it will nibble at your mind.

Fear is like a scorpion
don't let it get too close
If you're bitten by its stinger
it will fill you with some woes

Hope is a beautiful butterfly
wrapped up in a cocoon
A loving metamorphosis
will free it one day soon.

Amanda Widawski

The Girl

(girl holding wire fence, photograph by Dorothea Lange 1939)

As she looked down on herself,
I can see the pain she endures
I can smell the fear of life,
The fear to live,
Isolated by love,
Can't speak
Can't Breathe
Lost in a world of Uncertainty
For ever Mis under stood.

Nelica A.T. Scott

The Crossing Over

*Child and her mother, Wapato, Yakima Valley, Washington 1939,
photograph by Dorothea Lange*

Is it me?
What should I do?
They don't grasp it!
Pain, Anger, Love, Pride,
They think they know me
They say I'm crazy,
In this faze,
Not sure what's happening,
Trying to accept
the things I can't change
Missing you,
Your presence,
Your grace
Not sure how to live
Am I in denial?
I hope they know I will miss them.
See you on the other side.

Nelica A.T. Scott

The Way of Life

Imogen & Twinka, photograph by Judy Dater

The Pride I have,
Can't not comprehend to the Joy I endure.
The sleepless nights,
The Many exorcists of fluids
The Hours in Pain,
The formation of the skin
The ups & the downs.
So Tiny & helpless
Destined to be great Every touch,
Every Smile,
Makes it all worth
A Daily Reminder
THAT
I Earned My Stripes

Nelica A.T. Scott

Saturday Night Special: Denial 2, photograph by Fiona

1.

I know I am the best looking, coolest person in this family.
I love to stand out so people don't think I'm freaks like them.
I'm perfect cause I don't have to wear glasses.
I can't believe he's topless and I have to wear this boring dress.
I wear this cocky look so people don't know how sad I am.

2.

I see a very unhappy family.
I see a family that doesn't like each other.
I think this father needs a shirt.
I see a family with different personalities that probably clash.
I see a girl that thinks she is all that.
I see a father that probably drinks too much at night --
he doesn't pay attention to his family.
I see a boy that doesn't know where he fits in.
I see a girl that wishes she was anywhere but here.

Kate Borg

Saturday Night Special

Saturday Night Special: Denial 2, photograph by Fiona

can't run away
I have to stay
I am stuck in the ground
can't run away
an odd moment between us all
they don't know I feel or talk at all
the man with no shirt looks like a drunk
he abuses the family so they don't talk
the girl hides her feelings she cuts herself
when no ones looking the other two are
really shy and they feel hurt inside
I listen to all and see everything
people come to talk to me
does anyone remember I exist
I'M THE TREE!!
LISTEN TO ME!!

Amanda Widawski

Cold Day

Two Sisters, painting by Paul Vincent Gauguin

A darkness is brewing, unraveling pain
how could this happen again and again
I never knew this world to be so cruel
All these children alone
It's hard to live, without a doubt
without giving hope to children in need
two sisters as alone as can be
fire brewing in our hearts
helping people in need.

Amanda Widawski

Black, Blue and Red Everywhere

Blackness is all I know
blue is what I feel
Red blood drips from my face.

Why did you leave us? Now life is so hard.
I grew up without you. You left when I was 9 months.

Because of you I was beaten, raped and
Starved. Why did you have to leave me? Why?

Black, Blue and Red is what I feel when
I think of you.

Black, Blue and Red everywhere
Blackness is all I know
Blue is what I feel
Red drips from my face

Natasha Desmarais

The Transformation

Being none existent.
Too small & fragile.
Growing day by day.
Inch by inch.
In Darkness I wait.
Then, I saw the light.
It was a glorious light.
Adjusting to change,
Difficult at times
Step by step
Touch, Listen, Understanding.
Then, with each passing time,
Feelings aroused
A Unique Mind & Soul.
One's True Self
No longer Wondering.
The Joy that pushes me
Day by Day.
All for Her.
I can be me
The Best me
Nurture, love, protect,
Care, Respect.
My Light in a Dark Cave.
Together we can be.
Who am I
I am me

Nelica A.T. Scott

Mermaid

As I woke to find I couldn't breathe, I looked around to find out Why?
I looked down to see I no longer had legs.
I saw I was near water, I slowly slithered into the water.
All of a sudden I could breathe and could move fast through the water.
I had such speed with what replaced my legs.
I had an underwater kingdom to explore. I couldn't wait.
As I swam around I saw fish and sharks, and for some reason
I could communicate with them.
I keep wondering how and why I ended up this way. I couldn't complain,
it's what I always wanted.
I finally saw someone like me and asked if they knew how I became what I did.
They said there is a good witch that grants people their deepest darkest desires.
He said the only way you can become human again is to fall in love with a
human.
I asked if I had to?
He said no you could always fall in love with me and stay here forever.
That is when I awoke from the best dream ever.

Kate Borg

Baby

Awake in the morning
I start to cry
The bars are blocking me
I wonder why
everyone else walks tall and free
everyone except me
I am trapped
an angel comes to pick me up
and I get a kiss
I am loved for all around
I'm not allowed to touch the ground
As I shut my eyes again
the angel stares at me
and holds me till I fall asleep
Who could that angel be?
None other than Mommy

Amanda Widawski

Beautiful Babies

Boys
Girls
Happy
Angry

Every baby is different
Beautiful Babies
Girls are priceless
And Boys are too

Babies
Happy
And
Angry
Not every baby is the same

Pink
Blue
Angry
Sad too

Every baby is different
Pink
And Blue
Angry when not given what wanted
Blue when not loved too
Babies

Natasha Desmarais

Happiness

Happiness all the time everyday
Tears of Joy
Laughter
Smiles
Happiness every day and all the time
When I am with you!
Tears of Joy when you came into my life
Laughter of Love when you Smile
Smiles when I look into your Beautiful eyes.

Happiness

Tears of Joy
Laughter
Smiles.

Natasha Desmarais

Where Do I Come From?

I'm from a city called Toronto, Ontario Canada.
It's the one place in the world I hate more than anything.
It brought about the bad side of me. It brings
about the bad side of everyone sadly.
People don't care about people, they only
care about personal gain.

I remember the smells of piss and vomit
from all the drunk homeless people. I remember
the yellow mushy snow. I remember the crazy
colours from all the ravers downtown. Then
the boring bland colours of all the boring
business men and women.

The lights were always bright cause they were
trying to be New York. You couldn't really see
the stars cause the lights were always
on.

I played with my mom's friend's kids. They always put us together, thinking we would be fine while they went off and drank, then they puked.

I couldn't play with my toys unless I was by my mother's side, was so scared of being left behind.

My cousins were like my brother and sister cause our parents drank together, so we were always together.

I went to church on Christmas while I was up north with my grandparents. I did love it there, peaceful country. Their dogs always protected me when scary animals were near me. I do remember camping each year with my cousins and aunt and mom. They were some of my best and worst years. I went to a sleepaway camp as a kid but something bad happened each year. Yet it's still one of my favorite places.

The only thing I was every truly scared of was being alone. I always seemed to go to bed alone and wake up alone. I don't know if I ever really trusted anyone. They all seemed to hurt me.

Things have changed so much. I left the cold vile place where everything went wrong. I now have the world's best son, and finally believe I have a reason to live. No more depression, no more tears, no more cuts, no more drugs. Only smiles and being the best mother ever.

Kate Borg

Miracle

Floating around in a marvelous mind.
Filled with Ideas & beautiful designs.
A Cry for Help,
A Tender Voice
True & pure, filled with love
I could not ignore
As I ventured off to the unknown.
A little girl lost with no Home.
The wretched clothing
The pain in her eyes
Unbearable!
Not wanting Riches
Not wanting Gold
Not wanting shoes
Not even a Home
Of All the things,
I could be.
Mother, she cried.
I need you be.
The sadness I felt
Too much to speak.
A, mother, A House.
Now they can rest in peace.

Nelica A.T. Scott

Love

ouch the pain
I'm hurting again
love where?
I see knives, and blood
Where oh where is the love?
pins and needles up ad down my spine
hurting in pain from your lies
I never knew you to be so cruel
Walk out, Turn
I say goodbye
you cry why?
Don't go, I'll change
but everything remains the same
I Love you I do!
I even love you too!
but all the pain I feel inside
only gets pushed aside
Everytime you say a lie
you don't know how I feel inside
it's over I'm gone
I walk out the door
I LOVE YOU, I LOVE YOU
He screams more
In the end love conquers all
I come home to bed
And it happens again

Amanda Widawski

My Isle

As fresh as the sea
As Rough as the Oceans
The Smell of flowers.
The adventures into the Forest.
Sun, Rain, Sun, Hot, Cool
All these felt upon my skin.
Bright & effervescent
The sounds of flip flops
The flow of dress & skirts
Morning Calm & Clear
Mid-day Hot & Bright
Evening Mellow & Cool
Looking up at the many Stars
The moon I can almost touch.
The 24 of 26 cousins I love dearly.
My NaNa I miss truly
Lucky may he R.I.P. my Best friend a girl could have
The long Sundays, Praising my God.
The walks on the mountains tall & strong.
By Black & White Sandy Beaches, the warmth of the Sea.
The Fresh Water Upon my skin.
But those two...
The two who should of been there forever.
Looked into my eyes and hurt me
That Man,
That Man I looked up to, I wish I could kill you.
But I leave you in God's hands.
Noone else, I only Trust myself.
Change: I left

Nelica A.T. Scott

True Pain

Curse you, I hope you Burn in Hell, You two
Having always to look & watch my back
It all started.
My innocence, my beauty,
I guess that's why they couldn't stay away from me.
I trusted you. But you betrayed me.
I can't sleep
Can't eat
Felt like I could not Breathe.
Paralyzed for eternity.
Pulling me down Ripping me apart
Tearing me open
Scratching my insides
Die, Die, Just Die
That Man
You came so sweet, a Father to me,
My Real Dad & I not so close.
At first was happy.
Then you showed your true colours.
He would wait till she left.
Told me to hush, just be a good girl that I am.
Don' move he said
And I listen
Fearful not for mine but my mother's life
I obeyed and it was the same two all over again
6-15 was the hardest years of my life, But I'm strong now.
TOUCH MY CHILD & I KILL YOU DEAD
NO REGRETS

Nelica A.T. Scott

I Wonder

how many drinks did she have tonight?
Did she even come home?
Did she pass out in her puke again?
Did she hit me again while drunk?
Did she yell so hard the cops were called again?
I wonder if one day she will die from
drinking too much?
I wonder if she ever got raped cause
she was always drunk in clubs?
I wonder why she started to drink?
I wonder if she would of stayed sober
if she never had me?
I wonder, I wonder, I wonder?

Kate Borg

Song

Don't cry my princess
Momma is here to keep you safe
To take all your bad dreams away
Don't cry my princess
Everything will be just fine
Don't cry my princess
Momma is here...
Don't cry...
Don't cry...
I love you, momma's princess
Don't cry...

Natasha Desmarais

The day you walked into my life was what I thought was the best day in my life. I thought I found my best friend and soul mate. You understood me so well. You made me smile while I was in the shadows. We grew to be the best of friends, till we figured out we liked each other. We became so madly in love so fast. Till the day I first found out you cheated on me. I couldn't believe it. It killed me so much. I couldn't breathe, I couldn't think straight. I ended up spiraling hard downhill. I did everything I shouldn't have, I just didn't want to be. The day you wanted me back I jumped at it, I was so in love. It didn't last long. I ended up watching you date my cousin, my good friends, all well I stayed alone and sad. I was scared to move on to try loving again it always ended up badly. We stayed friends for awhile till we lost touch. You showed up at my door with your G/F one day. I took you in cause I felt bad. She ended up having your first kid. Then she left. I thought we were going to get back together. We fucked, only for you to date the younger girl the next day. That girl left you too, then ended up killing herself years later. I ran away to Montreal, thinking I would finally get over you. I got played hardcore here. You came back into my life. I let you come down. We ended up getting pregnant. I lost it 2 months in. That broke us up again. Then a couple months later you came back. I moved you in. We fought a lot, and I drank too much. I ended up in the hospital for cutting too deep. I kicked you out the day I found out that you were going to bath houses and sleeping with men. You did me wrong again. We stopped talking again. Then I heard you were living a block away dating the one girl I hated so much. Then you contacted me. I was weak and still in love with you. I took you in the day she kicked you out. We ended up pregnant again. You ended up leaving me a couple days later. You went to her. I thought I lost the baby. We stopped talking till the day he was born. Then you asked for me back. I said yes, but tested you. Then I found out you were still with her the whole time. I felt so stupid. Everyone told me how you would never change. Even your family begged me not to take you back. Jude has given me the strength to finally get over you and never take your lying cheating ass back. I'm done and a better person for the pain you caused me.

Kate Borg

Pain in my Ass

You stabbed me in the back
said everything would be fine
Why do you lie? Why?
Why say I love you?
Now it's just a word
It's been said so many times
and I have heard it all before
Why do I cry?
Why do you lie?
try to fix it Why?
You broke my heart again and again
It may have been done to you
You should know how it feels
don't hurt someone who loves you deeply
and will always be by your side
Why won't you make time?
I feel like the weight is all on me
how did that come to be
I Love you, you I Love you, I love you
and...
YOU STAB ME IN THE BACK!

Amanda Widawski

My noisy brother

I have a little brother
he's smaller than me
hasn't been any quiet
since he came to be
screaming, crying
all the time
they have no time for me
my very noisy brother
he is only 3

Amanda Widawski

Shivers

I keep you warm when you go to sleep
When using me you don't make a peep
You take me everywhere you go
and keep you quiet for the road
When you accidentally leave me behind
knowing you will start to cry
Mommy tries to come and find me
When she does we see you smile
and we go to sleep
and feel all better

Amanda Widawski

Language of Love

There are so many ways to say I love you
I love you. Je t'aime
Ane ohevvet atta, te amo
is that enough?
What does it mean?
the language of love
from High above.
How many of us feel the love?
What is the symbol of the white dove?
do you cry? Why?
Can love solve it all?
Has the thought of money, cars, and houses taken over?
I'm not sure the love is felt all over
Would you try to find your love?
Yet there are still so many ways to say I love you
Does it mean anything anymore?
Do you care?
Have you felt the love?
Is it just a word?
Your boyfriend, family?
What does love mean to you?
is it an emotional rollercoaster?
do you follow your heart?

Amanda Widawski

Villanelle

Look into my eye, tell me what you see
Nothing more than what I am
My life's a song, like a symphony

It hits me hard. It's reality
Why? Why Sam?
Look into my eyes, tell me what you see

My life's a curse, it brings me to my knees
Knocked me over, like a Ram
My life's a song, like a symphony

The hatred I feel, as I write in my Diary
You chopped me up, Dice and Sliced like ham
Look into my eyes, Tell me what you see

Run away, Let me be, flee flee
Oh, No Oh No Damn
My life's a song, like a symphony

Days go by I see no company
I am what I am
Look into my eyes, Tell me what you see
My life's a song, like a symphony.

Nelica A.T. Scott

Haiku

1.

Feelings of the hot sun beaming bright
Raining Pouring down hard
Blooming Beautiful Red Roses

2.

Strawberries
Oh So
Red and Sweet

3.

Swimming in the Bright blue Sea
Yellow Sun Beaming Bright
Sweet fishes Swimming all Night

4.

Swimming in the Bright Blue Ocean
Yellow Bananas are Delicious
Monkeys are funny.

Natasha Desmarais

A Wish

Star of lightening
a wish appears
world peace

The Beach

Foot prints on the sand
Cool fresh air upon my face
jump in and relax

Spring Water

Harvest Moon
Buckets awaiting
Sparkling water

monkeys

Swinging monkeys on a tree
eating bananas
looking out on sea

Nelica A.T. Scott

Winter Day

footprints on the ground
knowing it's cold, cold day
let's stay out and play

Clean

So mom can stay calm
I help out around the house
I'd rather be gone

Monkey Trouble

eating bananas
purple monkey in a tree
looking down on me

Amanda Widawski

Haiku

1.

Jude is amazing
His smile lights up the whole sky
Thanks for being you

2

Being a mother
Is one of the best jobs around.
I get to watch you grow

Kate Borg

Jude

I am like an angel when I fall asleep
When I do I don't make a peep
When I awake for goodness sake
I'm Jude in a mood
The only person that can make me happy
really quick and very snappy
Is my mommy who I love very much
She could never lose her touch
As I get older I won't show it
but I love you so much and you know it.

Amanda Widawski

My Darling Jamie

When I awake I see your eyes
Sometimes it makes me want to cry
I Love you Jamie with all my heart
We shall never be apart
I wish you all the best in Health
always remember to share the wealth
Mommy & Daddy love you so
We will never let you go
a fight, a struggle as time goes by
but we will never say goodbye
Our love for you will never fade
It will never go away

We love you Jamie.

Love, Mommy & Daddy

Amanda Widawski

Cough Cough!

She didn't get Tina sick
It was Jamie, it was Jamie!!
Now he's all better
he was under the weather
he got everybody sick
Natasha, Paul, Alexa
Holly and Mommy too
We did not know what to do
so we were quarantined in our rooms
waited on hand and foot
never took advantage
the shape we were in
It's cuz the staff love us
with all their hearts
Hollie and Alexa don't want to leave at all
Imma lock you in there till you tell me how old U are
She's going to miss all the trouble we cause

Amanda Widawski

Yummy Goodies

I want that cake.
Dark Chocolate melt in your mouth cake.
That Cake looks good.
I want to devour that cake.
Then I'm gonna get fat off that cake
Than I'm gonna get lazy off that cake.
Oh...
Cookies...
I want some cookies
Chocolate chip cookies
Yummy goodies
Love my cookies

Nelica A.T. Scott

The Beginning

Me...
The Old Me...
The Defeated, tired, Reckless me
The Height of the smoke
The Blurr of the Love drug
The intoxicated nights
The smell of sweat
Fun times?
Overload...
Too much to bear
Then I died..
I came back
As pure as I could be
The best me.
Death is only the beginning.

Nelica A.T. Scott

Rosie

Never had the chance to say goodbye
I believe I was only five
Looking back
I see you setting the table and putting us to sleep
The last night I saw you
when you babysat me
I still remember all the fun we used to have
We love you
You will always be in our hearts
my darling Rosie
One day we will see each other again.

Amanda Widawski

Brooke

April 02 2012 was the day they came
Garbage everywhere
Dirty dishes all over
on the floor

April 02 2012 was the day
you left

Feces on the floor
Dirty dishes
Garbage everywhere

Should have never let it get this way

April 02 2012 is the day they came
to take you away

Garbage
Feces
Dirty dishes
Hazard Danger
April.
I'm sorry and I miss you.

Natasha Desmarais

Tears from above

I am running and running
You can't catch me
Goodbye!
Not tonight
I'm leaving
I can't take all that shit you put me through
I am gone tonight
As I run out the door and say goodbye
you can stand there and cry
but it's not going to change my mind
I just want to say goodbye
so don't cry

Amanda Widawski

I'm sorry

I'm a mother of three
I have one daughter
I'm sorry I was not strong enough
So innocent...
To feel you moved
Wondering what you would become
Voices in my head...
But not my Own.
A life of regret I live
I'm Sorry
See you Both Later or Sooner
They say it's for the best
I was only 15.
I have your Sister
They say it's for the Best
I ask what about the Rest
I Love You Both
I'm sorry
Love: Mom

Nelica A.T. Scott

Cross our Fingers

December 21st 2012, today is the
day, the day you come home with us.

Counting down
the seconds.
the minutes.
the hours.

December 21st will be the greatest
day of our lives
When we will always have each other

December 21st

Counting down every
second.

minute.
hour.

December 21st 2012, today is the
day, the day you come home with us.

The day I get you back
will feel like I won the lottery.

December 21st 2012 is the day
seconds.
minutes.
hours.

I can not wait till that day
When we will always have each other

December.

Natasha Desmarais

The Day

Come into my life looking so cute. Why oh Why? We started dating, things were all right at that time. We continued with the relationship. Stupid me. I didn't know you were a cheat. Things then got tough and difficult. I was pregnant with our son and we fought a lot. You beat me everyday. I got tired and gave up on you. I thought you were my everything until you kicked me in my knees. That's the day I said goodbye. I was 4 months pregnant. That was the best day of my life.

Natasha Desmarais

The Next Chapter

Dec. 14th I will be walking through Elizabeth House doors for the last time as a client. I am moving home to live with my son's father's family. This is one of the best, but also scariest days of my life. I have spent 6 months of my life here. Some of my favorite moments and worst moments happened here. I know I'll be taking a lot of stuff I learned from here on to the next chapter of my life. I thank every staff and client I met here, for both the good and bad memories. You each have helped me try and become a better person and wonderful mother. I know I will be keeping in contact with Nelica and Nyé, they really truly became part of my family. Thank you everyone for preparing me for this next chapter. I respect each and every one of you for different reasons. Good-bye and I will miss you dearly.

Kate Borg

Gold

Bees work very hard
To produce their nectar
But it makes Paul Vincent sick

A.S.

Comfort

I'd love to cuddle with you
In a lacey duvet
Of bubbles and lather

A.S.

In the dark

Someday, a dark silhouette will creep into your light
Putting a shadow on you, like a black veil on a widow's face

You try reaching for a torch lamp, a candle, anything
But the saving light is coming rare as you get drowned
Slowly, by the shadows

And then, when hope as almost turned into a fugitive
A soft and strong hand grabs and pulls you
To a place of warmth and well-being

There, everything is peaceful, green and blue
The best foods grow at your feet
The sun caresses your skin
And every sound around
Creates a symphony of serenity
Helping you catch your breath back

A.S.

Metamorphosis

As a cold breeze pulls me from my home
Away from my friends and all my loved ones
I float and twirl in a crimson spiral
And land in your hand as you stare in wonder

Keep me between your fingers for I need a little warmth
Before the snow comes and buries all my world

A.S.

The bush

Seriously? All this hair is getting on my nerves!
I'm trying to eat this wonderful, delicious chocolatine
But the crumbs keep sticking to the furry piece above my lip

It itches and stings her perfect skin
As I try to kiss her goodbye
And keeps growing back no matter what

Unless I shave and then the poem will be over
Boo hoo! the end.

A.S.

Yin and Yang

Rattled by spiders
Cherished, cocooned in warmth
Cherie – maternal, safe, protected
Hunger – Waif, size 0, sick beauty celebrated
Opposed, stubborn, challenging
Heard, respected, understood

Tina Pallotta

Unfinished

Writing, moving, not sure what to write right now!
Just letting the pencil slide and squeak across the page.
Pausing to think of the next line.
Power line, landing, delicately
Claws grasp, release, grasp, release
Jump, free fall, faster, diving

Paul Vincent

E.H.

*Try to love the questions themselves
Like locked rooms and like books written in a foreign language*

(Rainer Maria Rilke)

As you move from house to house
Entering and opening doors and ignoring others
Swing from vine to vine
Letting go of one safety for another possibility

Is it exciting or stressful, a reward or a mistake?
You are where you are and this is something
Plus or minus, be proud.
Record your presence.
Scream from buildings
Write your name on the walls

Rest assured that no one else
Can write their name in the same spot that you did
Be proud that you are where you are.

Paul Vincent

1.

Oh silly haiku
You are making me crazy
I wish you were done

2.

The orange is round
But round is not an orange
Complicated fruit

3.

If Remy's cake would
Eat cake it would eat itself
Cannibalism

4.

Alexa in the emergency room

Alexa and eggs
Are like oil and water, but
Chocolate is fine

Paul Vincent

M.A.

Heart beating, breath halting, eyes darting at any movement. She is too close. Will I be able to move in time? My hands try to casually remove sharps from the table. Does she notice? She does. Her anger increases. She has the right. I would be mad too.

Broken promises, expectations unmet. I sense movement. Eyes focus. Too slow. All is a blur. I only see the cereal box as it hits the ground. My head stings. Room falls silent.

The anger begins to grow. Stomach bubbles rising and rising. Tense muscles. I am annoyed. First reaction is punitive. Remove all privileges. No community time. No computer time. Special restricted program. The individual is removed. I remove myself. I stop. Breathe .stop. breathe. Think. Annoyance fades.

Understanding returns. Soon I will be called to process the issue. We will discuss. We will listen. We will laugh. Until the next time...

Paul Vincent