

A Selection of Four Poems

Canadian Authors

I Love You

By Evelyn Lau

1 Fifty times a day you said it.
2 Anyone else would have died of boredom,
3 but for me it was the hook that slid under skin,
4 buried itself in bone.
5 Each time I tried to leave,
6 the line stretched taut
7 so I stumbled in the open doorway.
8 you said it in your sleep
9 and woke me from dreaming about you,
10 your father-face gazing down
11 upon my child-face.
12 You wrote it on my back
13 with a finger dipped in acid,
14 substituting the words
15 with a heart and a horseshoe.
16 You left love notes in every room,
17 so many stacked around me I gasped
18 for breath like an asthmatic.
19 I'd waited my whole life for you,
20 a man with mirrors instead of eyes,
21 and arms like lifelines for the drowning.
22 But your love couldn't be traded for milk or eggs.
23 I couldn't weigh its worth,
24 calculate its market value.
25 I couldn't spend it in the stores,
26 or build a big house with it in a good neighbourhood.
27 No, not even a small house.
28 In the end it was too much, yet not enough --
29 it was beyond measure, like the soul,
30 so light that when the body gives it up
31 it vanishes like it never was.

Poetry Thought Collection

A Graphic Organizer

Poem Title

What is the poem about?

How do you know?

Key Plot Points from your Poem

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Most Important Line in the Poem (Why?)

One thing that Surprised me in the poem

Text-to-self connection with this poem

One question I have about this poem

Parable of the Eagle

David Alexander

1 An eagle egg fell into a farmer's chicken shed
2 and when it hatched the farmer gave it chicken feed
3 even though he was the king of birds. The farmer

4 clipped the eaglet's princely beak and raised him
5 as a chicken. When he grew large, wildlife control
6 called on the farm. "It has the heart of an eagle,"

7 said the public servant. "It will fly." And the farmer
8 asked, "What if he likes it here with all the chickens?"
9 As they spoke, the birds crept off to don disguises.

10 Soon they couldn't tell the eagle from the hens
11 so they carried the strongest-looking bird to the
12 farmhouse balcony and said, "You're a regal eagle

13 not a lowly chicken. Go find your place in the sun!"
14 And they tossed one bird into the air together every
15 night until they fell in love, the farmer and the guy

16 from wildlife control, and got so hungry that they
17 ate roast eagle under a chicken-dotted sky.

Poetry Thought Collection

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Coffee Time

Dane Swan

1 If the sign did not say
2 *Patrons have a 20 minute time limit*
3 we would not feel welcome.
4 (We should have higher standards.)
5 Maybe we can push our luck,
6 stay here for 40,
7 see if the retiree behind the counter
8 points to the sign, shows us the door.
9 I remember when nefarious types
10 filled this place, now a few
11 seniors shoot the breeze –
12 about why they quit their crappy jobs.
13 4 coffees, 3 doughnuts, 1 beef patty.
14 Our table sits below the lone wall clock.
15 Making the most of our 20 minutes,
16 we slink into warm old conversations,
17 play three games of hangman
18 with misspelled words,
19 eat our food, drink our coffees, and go.
20 The old man doesn't seem to mind
21 we took our time.

Poetry Thought Collection

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The First Day

Joseph Dandurand

1 When I was five I was put on a bus
2 and sent to Catholic school
3 not unlike my mother who was five
4 when she was put on a train
5 and sent to residential school,
6 both feeling that gut feeling
7 that this was not going to be
8 a place we would like.

9 My parents told
10 my older sister
11 to watch over me
12 but she had long ago
13 grown to not like me,
14 let alone protect me.

15 As we waited to go in
16 that first morning
17 a group of boys decided
18 they did not like my brown skin
19 The biggest of them came at me
20 but I was prepared
21 as I had already been beaten up
22 when I was four, again
23 because of the colour of my skin.

24 So the big kid and I scrapped
25 and soon the sisters were on us.
26 We were sent down the hall
27 as all the other kids
28 and their glorious uniforms
29 went down into the classrooms
30 to begin their first day.
31 The big kid and I were told
32 to stand against a brick wall
33 and the main Sister Superior
34 of all the sisters told us
35 if we wished to punch,
36 then punch the wall.
37 So we did.
38 As my five-year-old fists
39 smashed against the wall
40 and soon blood formed on
41 my knuckles and the Superior
42 smiled and praised the Lord.
43 She told us that was enough
44 and I kept swinging
45 as the big boy cried
46 and said he was sorry. But I wasn't.
47 The sister again told me to stop
48 and I threw one more punch
49 at the wall for her and one more
50 for Christ who the whole time
51 stared down from his cross.
52 And that was the first day
53 of my time with the Lord.

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