

Three (3) Poems (poems poems poems)

By Elise Chen

WHY I LIKE IT: *Poetry Editor HEZEKIAH writes... 'Elise Siregar Chen is currently a 11th grader.' Holy snapping arsenals, this schoolgirl's a sniper! And I have never seen the point in exclamations until now! "Remember the Saggy Baggy Elephant? / whose golden spine / was plucked from the yellow shelf..." I better brush up on my Kathryn and Byron Jackson. "tuck your neck while you tumble," "sway and hum along." "Oh dear wood fairy / Can you hear my knocks on wood?" 'Rally Up.' Believe her OR NOT, I just hope she has at least turned 17 by the dated of this publication...(Spacing, format and font is poet's own.)*

Ode to the Neighborhood Library

Remember the little free library?
with fresh yellow paint
and a bright red roof
Remember your small hands?
covered in dirt from the park
reaching out
to open the glass door
Remember the *Saggy Baggy Elephant*?
whose golden spine
was plucked from the yellow shelf
like a perfectly ripe
peach
Remember the tall bushes?
that envelop the fences
lining the sidewalk you walk on
making your own adventure
Remember the fire red leaves?
the ones that crunch under your feet
as you tried to flatten them
on the sidewalk
on the way into the larger library
they surround
Remember the dark green grass?
slightly wet from morning dew
wrapping around the library
like a little forest of its own
guarding the treasure within

Remember the smooth mahogany chairs?
scattered around inside
where you could sit for hours on end
where you could meet your friends
like an office
you wanted to grow up fast

Do you see the overgrowth on the fences?
left to run wild
they have swallowed the fences whole

Do you see the old mahogany chairs?
their sharp red color
now faded from the many people
who sat to rest

Do you see the little free library?
whose yellow paint is faded
and red roof chipped
though it's glass window still intact
and hinged door still functioning

Do you see *The Magic Treehouse*?
whose pages are slightly worn
from the many times you've read it
it now sits on the faded yellow shelf
alongside *The Saggy Baggy Elephant*

In the little free library

Skipping Stones

Rock-a-bye baby
in the curved wood's loose embrace
sway and hum along

Follow the music
stuck in the wind it shoves you
Feel the salty breeze

crash and crunch on sand
tuck your neck while you tumble
stand on stones on toes

Smooth black skipping stones
Nested inside your pocket
its gold now tarnished

chained to your pocket
It counts it's time stuck inside
Masked it waits alone

the siren's breeze comes
To the roof it flings the stone
the shingled sea shakes

Climb up the rooftop
here a mask long forgotten
The light overwhelms

beep beep in the sky
Hawk-like eyes stare down at you
dishes tilt their heads

concave it absorbs
the sweet words sent from above
convex times sits still

Superstitions

Oh dear wood fairy
Can you hear my knocks on wood?
Where did my luck go?
Protect me from the grey wolves
And from the true beasts, humans

THE POET SPEAKS: *Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, I have had the opportunity to spend more time exploring my own neighborhood. I have been taking strolls around my block for my daily dose of fresh air, and one day, I was greeted with a familiar sight: I had passed by the library I always used to visit when I was younger. Seeing the library inspired me to reflect on my past and how much I have grown since those formative years spent checking out books by Shell Silverstein and Emily Dickinson. Through my poems, I hope to convey heartfelt emotions that foster a connection with my readers and inspire them to self-reflect. Recently, I have been experimenting with different types and styles of poetry. I decided to use an ode for this poem, not only to celebrate this library that impacted my early life, but also the experiences I've gained and my personal growth. Poetry allows me to offer others a chance to see through my perspective, as well as open my own eyes to see through the lenses of other poets. Each poem I read is a window into someone's ideas, emotions, and perceptions of the world. In that way, poetry bridges the gap between our differences and helps everyone understand each other better.*

AUTHOR'S BIO: Elise Siregar Chen is currently a 11th grader. She loves English literature and enjoys writing poems and short stories. Elise also likes to draw: her favorite contemporary artist is Yayoi Kusama. She is an ambassador for Girls Helping Girls Period, where she helps and raises awareness for girls who do not have the means or access to personal hygiene products. She has published poetry in *Euphamism*, and *Poetry Quarterly*.

Rally Up

Do you feel my breath?
Help, it wavers through the wind
My voice blown away

Quiet, but I hear
It tickles my ear and calls
Running with the wind to you