



# 2011 Love Poetry Contest



## Love Poetry Contest Winners

**In Touch**

**By**

**Ellen Savage**

***1st Place  
Adult Resident***

In this brain-boiling summer  
I feel like an outcast--  
You, a long-suffering Catholic  
never waver at my whines  
for air conditioning, so I am stuck  
silent in all the heat-talk,  
for if I feel bold and let on to the truth  
of cold showers, fans and curtained windows--  
the most awful, silent, stares.

But, while neighbors sit indoors  
losing touch, we're lounging out back  
where the orange skipper goes about  
his secret in the glimmering grass  
and the hummingbird noses  
in the pines for spider mites.

As we laugh about losing count  
of the laps that crazy butterfly took  
around the yard, in a flash I see  
our past, present and future  
in your simmering green eyes.



Ed Kaufman, Photographer

## Lunching

By

**Tom Roby**  
*Chicago*

*1st Place*  
*Adult Non-Resident*

Water reflections fracture  
the surface, blur the bottom  
of the pool where shadows  
of elms, leaves, sunlight lie.

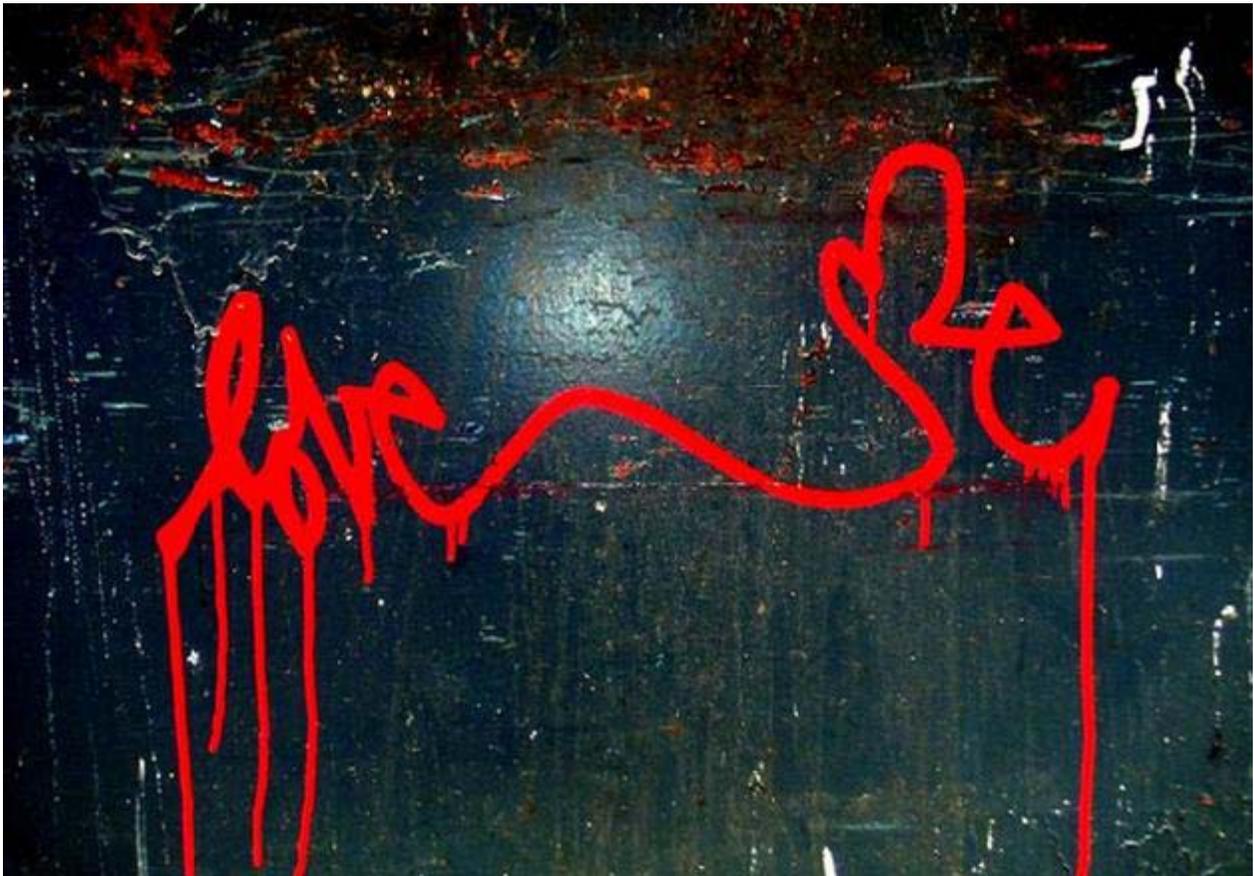
You sail late to my table,  
white dress billowing over  
black fishnet pantyhose.

You're hungry. I propose  
salmon salad. You order  
chopped steak, then you

say you won't go to Crete  
with me. A gull creaks in  
sudden fog like a rusty mast,

you leave a half-eaten  
hamburger, I choke on  
a fishbone while Carl  
Milles' Merman drowns

in the Art Institute's  
garden fountain.



James Paradiso, Photographer

## Writer's Love

By

Maya Behn

*2nd Place  
Adult Resident*

The syllables fall neatly into place  
To script loose ends and braid rough edges frayed.  
No scratching pen can mar the pretty face  
Of permanence and structured ink inlaid.  
Ideas to pen, to paper freely flow  
From open mind and open heart alike.  
All words can cause a quick response, ergo  
The scream, the desperate breath, the pulse's spike.  
But poetry is often times applied  
When love is sought and wooed in gentle ways.  
In gardens do the bleeding hearts reside,  
For letters keep a strong and steady gaze.  
Of anyone, the writer surely knows  
The heart will always beat iambic prose.



James Paradiso, Photographer

## Never Gone

By

Colleen McManus Hein  
*Riverwoods*

*2nd Place*

In the dream we're at a family  
gathering, a backyard barbecue, and  
you're alive. You smile sheepishly, one  
hand tucked in your pocket, embarrassed  
by the mistake, everyone thinking  
you were dead. I want to grab you,  
but no one else seems to know  
that you were ever missing, so I

***Adult Non-Resident***

just eat you with my eyes. I follow  
your familiar gestures like the best

theater; pushing up your glasses  
with one finger, wrinkling your nose,

the way your eyes narrow in mirth as  
the corners clench in cleft crinkles. I

want to say it hasn't been any good  
without you, but it doesn't matter now.

You're back. You used to be the  
nameless ache when I awoke. You were

the moment between moments of a  
dropped call, when you realize there's

no one at the other end. I used to  
wander in the fog between where you

went and where I was, my hand held out  
like empty headlights, blind palms

scanning the labyrinth of framed  
dead-end memories. But now,

you're back. We exchange secret  
smiles, tilt our heads shyly,

agreeing to pretend  
that you were never gone.



Heidi Betts, Photographer [www.birdwatchinglady.com](http://www.birdwatchinglady.com)

## **Frosty, Delicious**

**By**

**Judith M K Tepfer**

***3rd Place  
Adult Resident***

*First published in East On Central*

Like the soothing sense of cold,  
when first teeth try to puncture gums,  
and Mommy offers the frosty ring  
right out of the freezer;

or the child's first  
moments in the snow,  
as he lifts a portion of  
the soft, white mystery  
to his curious lips,  
the elusive substance melting  
down the thumb of a red,  
woolen mitten;

or the taste of a sundae  
on a brutal July day,  
slaking the fever that  
began at the brow,  
flushed the face  
and settled in the teeth;

or the iced latté  
I now sit and sip,  
awaiting your imminent arrival;

this is my anticipation:  
the delicious heat of your lips  
on mine.



Ed Kaufman, Photographer

## Cyber Sonnet

by

**Pamela Larson**  
*Arlington Heights*

*3rd Place*  
*Adult Non-Resident*

At twenty-five I've given up on fate,  
no god has sent "the one" running to my arms.  
I'll enter a profile, try an online date,  
tone down my nerves while I turn up my charm.

*A painter looking for honesty. Please  
respond. We can chat for hours on end.*  
The odds of finding someone has increased,  
if I don't find her, I might like her friend.

I've fallen deep. I cannot believe she  
is everything I want. A love that's true.  
I suggest it's time we meet. Maybe coffee?  
She says we can meet at Café Ballou.

Now I have to figure out how to ditch her,  
cause she looks nothing like her profile picture.



Lorraine Brown, Photographer

## To My Only Child

by

**Susan B. Auld**  
*Arlington Heights*

**Honorable Mention**  
**Adult Non-Resident**

*First published in Visiting  
Morning and Other Quiet  
Places (The Tradewinds  
Company, 2008)*

I zipped your blue jacket  
that early fall day and sent  
you outside to play

your red bucket with the yellow handle  
dragged across the concrete patio  
as you carried it toward the yard  
crowded with oak-woods

I watched you collect scattered acorns  
each one carefully tucked into your pail  
each one touched like a treasured friend

and when your red bucket overflowed  
you stuffed them into your pockets  
eager to save them all  
eager to fill yourself full of their company

afraid to leave

even one

alone



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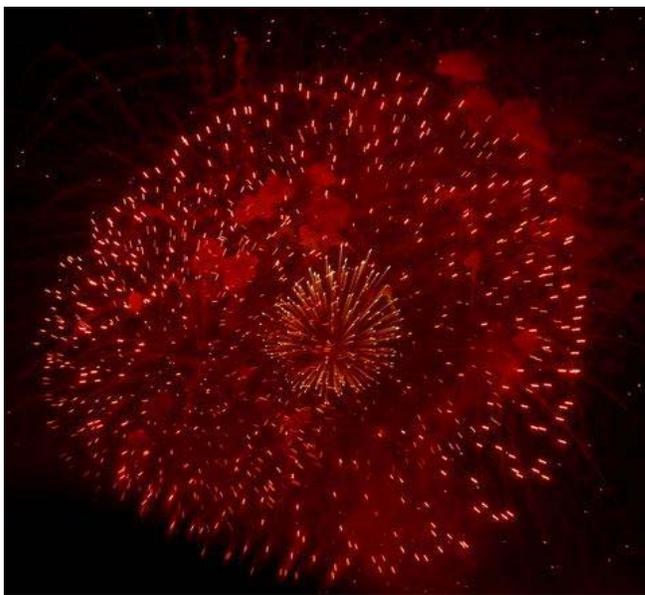
**It's All Been Said  
Before**

by

**Carol Spielman  
Lezak**

*Honorable Mention  
Adult Resident*

What is there to say of love  
that's not been said before?  
It hurts. It heals. It scars. It bonds.  
You're empty; you're fulfilled.  
You embrace it, then push it away.  
A mass of contradictions.  
Who needs it? Sign here.



Ed Kaufman, Photographer

**Moonstreams**

**by**

**Marilyn Peretti**  
*Chicago*

*Honorable Mention*  
*Adult Non-Resident*

Moon made a difference  
across the log bed,

slightly lighting the dark  
we shared, bathing

the floating sheet  
in soft powdered white,

its smooth globe unintrusive  
but delicately delivering

pale streams of consent.



James Paradiso, Photographer

**To My Father**

**by**

**Marjorie Rissman**

*Honorable Mention  
Adult Resident*

Snow falls  
Upon familiar fields  
And sends  
An icy silence through the air.  
So cold  
So crystal clear  
I kneel  
To brush away  
Your fate.



James Paradiso, Photographer

**Love, What Makes Me Free**

**by**

**Maggie Stewart**

*Lake Forest*

*Honorable Mention  
Adult Non-Resident*

This is what I'd do for you if I could,  
I would be embodied in someone you care about  
more than me, in a different way.  
And I would see you in the hall and stop you and  
tell you how beautifully you play guitar.  
How your fingers move as softly and surely  
as low tide against pink shells.  
And I would talk this way until your shoulders straightened

and your head lifted and you walked away  
as sure as you play that guitar.

If I could, for you,  
I'd talk an angel into appearing in front of you.  
I'd pluck one out of the Heavens with lacy wings and long hair and bright eyes.  
Not at night when you are under the blue down comforter.  
But maybe at 9 a.m. while you're pumping gas at the Shell by the entrance ramp  
on a dirty, grey February day.  
- Just to make sure there is no doubt. That, really, you'll see -- You can talk to angels. See -  
They are by your side even when you put 25 bucks in the tank and grab a Diet Coke.

For you, I would take back  
all the times I've thought "you're annoying," or screamed "Shut up" in my mind,  
or given you a roll of the eyes behind your back  
Because I know you read these things on my skin,  
quietly and to yourself as I stir the pasta.

If I could, for you.  
while you are at your desk alone,  
I'd move your hand to your head and let you dream.  
I'd free up your messages, paper work, your doubts. And let you dream.  
Keep your hand to your head  
because this is what make me free.  
This, if I could do for you.