

2017 MCC Creative Writing Contest

Poetry Category

Honorable Mention: “Sixty Seconds Too Late” by Kaylee Bush

In just one minute
I could leave
Leave this bench
I could throw myself into the river
Drown out all of my sorrows
All my pain created
The water filling my lungs
And letting me leave this world
On this bench in just one minute
A car from the street and I could collide
Crushing me
I n t o p i e c e s
My heart
My body
And my soul
In just one minute
A fire from a building nearby could
Swallow me up
BURN ALL MY HOPES AND DREAMS
In just one minute
A meteor could strike the earth with a mighty

BLAST

And kill us all
The seconds are ticking by fast
55
56
57
58
59
60 seconds are gone
And the only thoughts I had were all the ways
I could die
In the next 60 seconds

Teen suicide is on the rise. Awareness can save a life. We can't be afraid to ask for help.

JUDGE'S COMMENTS:

The poem represents the interior monologue of a person contemplating suicide. It uses line structure and typography inventively to reinforce the meanings of lines, as it catalogues the diverse ways one could die within sixty seconds. Some seem more likely than others, but the reader senses that the overall mood of the poem is more important than whether the methods are plausible, as the poem is to be read as a cry for help.

Dr. Joel R. Brouwer is retired from teaching English and Communication for 47 years, the last 21 on the faculty at Montcalm Community College. During that time, he taught creative writing and mentored numerous aspiring authors. He also coordinated the statewide LAND Creative Writing Contest for many years. For an example of his writing, consult his travel blog, <https://hippieroadtrip.wordpress.com>