

## Quondam Writing Prize 2018

Junior Category Entry Winner: Amaya Collier-Wright

### Embedded

Silently,  
I am here.  
Standing all alone.  
I am steadfast and tall.  
My branches are thick and firm.  
My roots go beyond the core.  
I stand firmly on the ground  
on the land where I was born.

I long to see the ocean  
for I heard the nightingale sings.  
It hums the great beauty  
of the majestic blue sea.  
But my roots are deeply embedded.  
Can not be moved, I just stay still.

Under the scorching sun  
the children run towards me  
I shield and I protect them  
through my tinted green leaves.  
How I wish I could cradle them  
when they are in pain and tears.  
But my roots are deeply embedded.  
Can not be moved, I just stay still.

The squirrels creep  
through the bushes,  
playing hide and seek.  
They climb up my long trunk  
with nuts and conkers for their tea.  
How I wish I could freely play along  
But my roots are deeply embedded.  
Can not be moved, I just stay still

My friend came back  
from its journey  
In a jolly tone he said  
"the world is great, my pal!"  
So many big buildings,  
The hills are perfect,  
The sky so clear.

My dear friend is so lucky  
for it has a pair of gorgeous wings .  
So proud and mighty, it can fly free.

How I wish I would have legs  
Like a human walking  
through the lavender fields.  
How I wish I have a voice  
Like the nightingale  
so I can sing.  
How I wish I have wings  
Like my friend  
so I can fly with the wind.

But I am a tree  
that is deeply rooted  
in the land where I was born.  
I stand firm on the ground  
Can not be moved nor restored.  
I don't want to be just a witness  
for decades of the same scene.  
I long for my roots to break free.  
And live behind the shadow of me.

Then, one stormy day  
When the sky seemed angry,  
I heard a familiar sound  
but the tone was depressing.  
A man holding a piece of steel  
inside it, was my friend.  
Crying for hope,  
for its wings were now powerless.  
In that small cage, its freedom was lost.  
Hoping someone will hear him,  
No one knows except me.  
But I can't do anything.  
My roots are deeply embedded.  
Can not be moved, I just stay still

Then I realized,

Am I a prisoner of myself  
For there so many things I want to do  
Or am I a symbol of strength indeed?  
I have witnessed so many things,  
In peace and chaos I exist.  
I survived a lot of tragedy.  
I am still here, well built.  
I share the same moon and stars.  
With the creatures of land above  
Like you, I am protected  
By the endless blue sky.  
Yet, freedom is my question  
Will I ever experience it  
or am I blindly living it?

In my own territory,  
I have my purpose and dreams.  
I cannot be moved because I am strong.  
I stay still for this is my home.  
Being embedded is my freedom all along.

I am a tree.  
I am here.  
I am free.

Free in my own world.

In my thoughts, I have recalled.  
I may not move but I stand tall,  
I may not fly but I can soar,  
I may not run or walk or play  
but I can gracefully sway  
beneath the glorious breezy day.  
I may not see what lies  
behind the mountain's furred  
But where I am is my own world.  
My vital role on why I exist  
is to sustain life for others to live.  
Having a purpose is life  
and being alive is being free.  
No one can take this away from me.

Freedom is something  
We are all born with.  
Yet through time  
It is not granted but earned indeed.  
Once it is taken  
It will be lost and forgotten.  
Like love, like life,  
Like my caged winged friend,  
Without aspiration  
Without hope  
It will be insignificant and a frustration.

So I wake up in reality,  
That in fact I am living happily,  
For my roots are deeply rooted  
Where my source of life exist.