

## Student Sampler: Poetry Project #1 Drafts and Toast Exercise

In each sample below, you will see a student's original draft, then a bolded version with some possible edits—not in any way mandatory or the only possible edits!—just to see how some changes feel. In some cases I show you a clean re-write without my markings.

Again, this is just a way of showing you possibilities—what happens if you make certain moves & revisions.

The samples are chosen at random. If yours is not discussed below, please extrapolate and apply what I say to your own. The issues I raise are all common, and my comments are meant for everyone.

### The Wonder of Toast Exercise

Your soft, spongy texture fades.  
That warms that exudes only change you more.  
The clicking only passes with time as its turns;  
Your state from the floppy soft frame you hold.  
As your bronze turns to charcoal your aroma  
Fills the room. Your ends brittle. They stand strong  
As if the bitter taste will fight against my tongue.  
The loud abrupt ding lets me know you've reached  
Your full potential. Your center looks like goosebumps.  
You feel like soft sandpaper on my fingertips  
And then on my tongue.  
The sound you make reminds me  
Of walking on dead grass.  
Opening my eyes your clumsy crumbs  
Have fallen to the floor.  
As I continue your rough texture turn soft as  
They travel down to my stomach.  
From there I am satisfied.

-Elizabeth Labuhn

### The Wonder of Toast Exercise

Your soft, spongy texture fades.  
That warms that exudes only change you more.  
The clicking only passes with time as its turns;  
Your state from the floppy soft frame you hold.  
As your bronze turns to charcoal your aroma  
Fills the room. Your ends brittle. They stand strong  
As if the bitter taste will fight against my tongue. oh oh oh nice. "Brittle" as a verb! Also the interior rhyme of "brittle" and "bitter." Music doesn't just happen with end-rhyme. It can be suffused all through a poem.

The loud abrupt ding lets me know you've reached **Abrupt ding is great—it sounds and feels like, well, an abrupt ding!**

**Your full potential. Your center looks like goosebumps. I would never have thought of this. The surprise of it wakes me up, makes me see in a new way.**

You feel like soft sandpaper on my fingertips

And then on my tongue.

The sound you make reminds me

Of walking on dead grass. Nice

Opening my eyes your clumsy crumbs

Have fallen to the floor.

As I continue your rough texture turn soft as

They travel down to my stomach.

From there I am satisfied.

-Elizabeth Labuhn

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**lara Henneman**

I can feel the heat radiating off the toaster.

This is a weird toaster though; it looks like a dinosaur printer.

I put a piece of soft white bread on the rotating belt

It's as white as a baby's bottom

I watched it slowly disappear

I can hear the sizzling of the bread as it's cooking

I am watching the rotating grate spin around and around

It doesn't really have a smell other than the crumbles of the previous pieces of bread burning in the bottom

The toaster is making this weird sound

Kind of like the oven when you just turn it on

2Oh my gosh this is taking forever!

I feel like I have been standing her for an eternity

I look in the bottom to see if it's out

And sure enough its stuck in the bottom

I stuck in a fork so I could reach it and pull it out without burning my hand off

The bread is now toast

It's black around the edges, it's basically charred

When you set a marshmallow on fire while making a smore

That is what the crust of my toast looks like

The middle of one side is tan like my skin in the summertime

The other side it white but it has prison bar black marks going across it

I picked it up with my hands and I could feel the stiffness

It's not flimsy like it was before

It's hard and crinkly to the touch

When I pick it up and start to move it around in my hands there are a million tiny crumbs falling off down to the plate below

It's not hot, it's luke-warm

Like when you have been sitting in the bathtub for too long.

I'm eating it now

I take my first bite and I hear the crunch sound in the back of my head.

As I am chewing it's getting softer

Like cotton candy as it melts on your tongue

But it is still desert dry

I can feel it lingering in the back of my throat as I try to swallow.

The middle is a lot softer than the crust

It's like only the outside of my bread got toasted

So I had half bread and half toast

The taste is pretty bland and boring

Like oatmeal without brown sugar

It definitely needs some peanut butter smothered across the top

All I will say is that this dinosaur printer looking toaster did a mediocre job at making me toast

**lara Henneman**

**I can feel the heat radiating off the toaster.**

**This is a weird toaster though; it looks like a dinosaur printer.**

**I put a piece of soft white bread on the rotating belt**

**It's as white as a baby's bottom**

**I watched it slowly disappear**

**I can hear the sizzling of the bread as it's cooking**

**I am watching the rotating grate spin around and around**

**It doesn't really have a smell other than the crumbs of the previous pieces of bread burning in the bottom**

**The toaster is making this weird sound Love how natural and real this sounds; just someone talking**

**Kind of like the oven when you just turn it on**

**Oh my gosh this is taking forever!**

**I feel like I have been standing her for an eternity**

**I look in the bottom to see if it's out**

**And sure enough its stuck in the bottom**

**I stuck in a fork so I could reach it and pull it out without burning my hand off**

**The bread is now toast**

**It's black around the edges, it's basically charred**

**When you set a marshmallow on fire while making a smore**

**That is what the crust of my toast looks like**

The middle of one side is tan like my skin in the summertime

The other side it white but it has **prison bar black marks going across it** **Great, surprising metaphor**

I picked it up with my hands and I could feel the stiffness

It's not flimsy like it was before

It's hard and crinkly to the touch

**When I pick it up and start to move it around in my hands there are a million tiny crumbs falling off down to the plate below**

It's not hot, it's luke-warm

Like when you have been sitting in the bathtub for too long.

I'm eating it now

I take my first bite and I hear the crunch sound **in the back of my head.** **Cool; never thought crunch could be felt like this**

As I am chewing it's getting softer

Like cotton candy as it melts on your tongue

But it is still desert dry

I can feel it lingering in the back of my throat as I try to swallow.

The middle is a lot softer than the crust

It's like only the outside of my bread got toasted

So I had half bread and half toast

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All I will say is that this dinosaur printer looking toaster did a mediocre job at making me toast

Larissa Blazek

The Wonder of Toast

Inspiration from the game:

*I Am Bread*

1.

I am bread

I had long awaited this moment

Taken from my family in the bag

It was my time to do what all bread longed for

The softness of my body touched the cold metal brackets

I relaxed though, letting my body slouch against the metal

There were wires beside my cage, black and quiet **Whoa!**

But it did not stay that way for long

I heard several clicks, something moving in the machine

Then I felt my cage lowering and it clicked into place

I saw the wires go from black to orange to red

It got really hot in my cage

I winced inwardly as the heat began to burn my softness

It felt like my outside was becoming stiffer

No more squishy softness

Instead, crunchy, stiff, crispy

Then it was getting to be too much

Too long, can't be much longer or I'll be black

But then freedom came faster than I was expecting

The machine gave a sudden jolt, my cage bouncing upward

I jumped into the air slightly from the momentum

I settled back into the cage after I fell

My skin is still so hot, burning to the touch

But then I'm removed from my cage and I can finally see myself

My skin wasn't white anymore

Instead it was a beautiful array of golds and browns

It looked like I was a wheat field in the mist of changing to ripe

My edges were singed black though, from being in the heat too long

Now out of the cage, I could finally feel the air touching my skin

It cooled me down, no longer burning to the touch  
I was still very warm though  
It was then that something was being rubbed on my rough skin  
Cold blade, with something even colder on it  
Yellow slab of butter being dropped on me  
It sunk into my warm skin, moistening my crunchy exterior  
It felt wonderful  
It is official now  
I am no longer bread  
I am toast

**Larissa Blazek**

**The Wonder of Toast**

**Inspiration from the game: *I Am Bread***

**I am bread  
I had long awaited this moment  
Taken from my family in the bag  
It was my time to do what all bread longed for  
The softness of my body touched the cold metal brackets  
I relaxed though, letting my body slouch against the metal  
There were wires beside my cage, black and quiet Whoa!  
But it did not stay that way for long  
I heard several clicks, something moving in the machine  
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Too long, can't be much longer or I'll be black  
But then freedom came faster than I was expecting  
The machine gave a sudden jolt, my cage bouncing upward  
I jumped into the air slightly from the momentum**

I settled back into the cage after I fell  
My skin is still so hot, burning to the touch  
But then I'm removed from my cage and I can finally see myself  
My skin wasn't white anymore  
**Instead it was a beautiful array of golds and browns Nice**  
It looked like I was a wheat field in the mist of changing to ripe  
**My edges were singed black though, from being in the heat too long** Suggests a larger subject, beyond  
toast. What, in our experience, or in the writer's experience, has really "been in the heat too long"?  
Now out of the cage, I could finally feel the air touching my skin  
It cooled me down, no longer burning to the touch  
I was still very warm though  
It was then that something was being rubbed on my rough skin  
Cold blade, with something even colder on it  
Yellow slab of butter being dropped on me  
It sunk into my warm skin, moistening my crunchy exterior  
It felt wonderful  
It is official now  
I am no longer bread  
I am toast

**Seriously feels as though I have been toasted! The experience is described that *closely*.**

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1.

### **The Dismay of Toast – John Paul Stroh**

Pitch black morning, cold dark glow,  
the gathering of wheat taken for granted by those who never sow.  
Plastic bags unraveled, for the soft touch of grain,  
comes the simple, pure and deliciously plain.  
Plop, click and set. A transformation from bread.  
Many remember their hunger but soon forget, the warm ticking and red.  
Hot coils clinching, offering their work of the day,  
all the while this one slice is changing.  
With a pop that could scare anyone during the silence of early hours,



out comes toast, hardened by barely a minute,  
feeling individually empowered.  
Gold brown with darkened crust,  
seems to have forgotten who he first was.  
When consumed upon the very first bite,  
toast shouts and grumbles in dismay of his might.  
For once so soft and flimsy, toast thought he now was firm and strong.  
He comes to terms that, he is brittle.  
The plastic bag, first unraveled was where toast first belonged.

2.

### **The Dismay of Toast – John Paul Stroh**

Pitch black morning, **cold dark glow**, **Nice**  
the gathering of wheat taken for granted by those who never sow.  
Plastic bags unraveled, for the soft touch of grain,  
comes the simple, pure and deliciously plan.  
Plop, click and set. A transformation from bread.  
Many remember their hunger but soon forget, the warm ticking and red.  
**Hot coils clinching**, offering their work of the day, **Oooh! I would never thought of “clenching,”**  
**but that is exactly what they do.**  
all the while this one slice is changing. **Cool to remember that fire transforms something.**  
With a pop that could scare anyone during the silence of early hours,  
out comes toast, **hardened by barely a minute**, **Great notion. In a sense, we are all “hardened” by**  
**minutes, time, experience.**  
feeling individually empowered.  
Gold brown with darkened crust,  
seems to have forgotten who he first was. **Now the subject is transforming into something more**  
**than toast; it’s about the self, the speaker.**  
When consumed upon the very first bite,  
toast shouts and grumbles in dismay of his might.  
For once so soft and flimsy, toast thought he now was firm and strong.

**He comes to terms that, he is brittle.**

**The plastic bag, first unraveled was where toast first belonged. This poem is full of resonances, and is ultimately not just about toast. It's about change, regret, nostalgia, and more. In other words, it's about something human, or being human. John finds a larger subject lurking under the one he started with.**

**One way to think about this is that the poem engages a special "sixth sense." Some alternate faculty in our psyches wakes up, and that is where poetry is.**

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Makenna Quesenberry

The Wonders of Toast

I open the squeaky cabinet to pull out the full untouched loaf of bread that has been waiting to be eaten. I unwrap the bag, it crinkles loudly as I untie it. I drop the single piece of toast into the toaster, and as I wait in the silent kitchen the smell of the freshly made toast starts to fill the entire room as though if I closed my eyes I would open them and actually be inside of a bakery. The lean over to see how much longer I have to wait and the warmth of the toaster wafts up to hit my cheeks and at that moment the toast pops up making a loud enough noise to scare me and disturb my peace. I take the toast in my hands it is light like a feather as each grain that makes it up it so tiny. Every individual piece of the toast is toasted in a horizontal blayage of tan to dark showing which side of the toast was farther down in the toaster. The crumbs fall off of the crisp fresh crusty toast as I raise it to my mouth. It unfolds and slowly melts in my mouth warm and now soft and mushy. The taste that before filled my nose now takes over my mouth the bread is almost in a way tasteless but somehow also tastes like a fresh crisp fall morning waiting for the day to begin.

**Yellow = I like!**

**The Wonders of Toast**

I open the **squeaky cabinet** to pull out the full untouched loaf of bread that has been waiting ~~to be eaten~~. I unwrap the bag, **it crinkles loudly as I untie it**. I drop the single piece of toast into the toaster, and as I wait in the silent kitchen the smell of the freshly made toast starts to fill the entire room as though if I closed my eyes I would open them and actually be inside of a bakery. **Nice** The lean over to see how much longer I have to wait and the warmth of the toaster wafts up to hit my cheeks and at that moment the toast pops up making a loud enough noise to scare me ~~and disturb my peace~~. I take the toast in my hands **it is light like a feather as each grain that makes it up it so tiny**. Every individual piece of the toast is toasted in a horizontal blayage of tan to dark showing which side of the toast was farther down in the toaster. **I don't know what "blayage" is or if it's a typo. But you know what? I DON'T CARE! LOL. Seize the accident. Make words up. It may or may not work in a particular poem, but be aware that accidents can result in fabulous stuff if you notice and grab them.** The crumbs fall off of the crisp fresh crusty toast as I raise it to my mouth. It unfolds and slowly melts in my mouth warm and now soft and mushy. **The taste that before filled my nose Fabulous; taste in the nose!** now takes over my mouth the bread is almost in a way tasteless but somehow also tastes like a fresh crisp fall morning waiting for the day to begin. **Oooh. Nice images. Lots of SENSORY material in this poem—all senses engaged: sight, touch, sound, smell, taste.**

Ashley Peifer

Personal Memory Poem

### Ashley Girl

My phone stayed dark; it never flashed in my face to notify me.

The glass scraped against my cold fingers as it had shattered the night before.

Silence. It was never this quiet at night in my house.

Every crackle, click, wind blow, was intensified,

insignificant sounds suddenly become all I can hear.

I didn't want to hear them.

I wanted to hear her.

A simple call every night became so routine from her.

I had missed the ring the night before.

Cleaned my room, did my homework, watched late night TV,

All things I despise, but helped me pass time.

I need to make her proud.

What can I tell her I did today?  
Oh, and yesterday since I didn't get the chance.  
Shoot. I didn't get the "A" my parents wanted me to get.  
She would understand though; I have nothing to worry about.  
Tapping my feet and twiddling my fingers like the impatient person I am,  
Maybe she fell asleep for the night.  
It wasn't like her to be this late,  
She's early to everything.  
Bum, bring, ding, bum....  
Finally! my phone lights up, the ring blaring,  
A sound I thought I'd never be so happy to hear.  
It wasn't from her though,  
"Hi dad" I said.  
I couldn't say another word to him after what he just told me.  
The silence turned into a ringing in my ear  
Like I had just been sitting next to a bomb that went off.  
I heard nothing. I felt nothing.  
Although the middle of May, I was numb.  
Regret. The only feeling I was capable of.  
I remembered, she always left a voicemail in the rare occasion I wouldn't answer,  
My device felt like a dumbbell, the screen resembling my heart now.  
I push play.  
Water starts dripping down my face  
The hardest part is about to come as if it already hadn't.  
Holding my breath, the static recording comes through clear at the end  
I love you, Ashley girl. she said.  
I... love.... you, Grandma. I whispered.

Ashley Peifer

Personal Memory Poem

Ashley Girl **Absolutely fab title**

My phone stayed dark; it never flashed in my face to notify me.

The glass scraped against my cold fingers as it had shattered the night before.

Silence. It was never this quiet at night in my house.

Every crackle, click, **wind blow**, was intensified, **Nice**  
insignificant sounds suddenly become all I can hear.

I didn't want to hear them.

I wanted to hear her.

A simple call every night became so routine from her.

I had missed the ring the night before.

Cleaned my room, did my homework, watched late night TV,

All things I despise, but helped me pass time. **Great details about one's personal quirks and habits**

I need to make her proud.

What can I tell her I did today?

Oh, and yesterday since I didn't get the chance.

Shoot. I didn't get the "A" my parents wanted me to get.

She would understand though; I have nothing to worry about.

Tapping my feet and twiddling my fingers like the impatient person I am,

Maybe she fell asleep for the night.

It wasn't like her to be this late,

She's early to everything.

**Bum, bring, ding, bum.... Oh mama. I love this.**

Finally! my phone lights up, the ring blaring,

A sound I thought I'd never be so happy to hear.

It wasn't from her though,

"Hi dad" I said.

I couldn't say another word to him after what he just told me.

The silence turned into a ringing in my ear

Like I had just been sitting next to a bomb that went off.

I heard nothing. I felt nothing.

Although **It was** the middle of May, I was numb.

Regret. The only feeling I was capable of. **Don't label your feelings; it just diminishes their complexity and interest**

I remembered, she always left a voicemail in the rare occasion I wouldn't answer,

My device felt like a dumbbell, the screen resembling my heart now.

I push play.

Water starts dripping down my face **Avoid melodrama; too many tears. Writing it "colder" can be more powerful**

The hardest part is about to come as if it already hadn't.

Holding my breath, the static recording comes through clear at the end

I love you, Ashley girl. she said.

I.... love.... you, Grandma. I whispered.

**3. Some of the ending could probably be trimmed because the info here is already strongly implied. Let implied meaning do its work. It can be much more powerful than explicit meaning in some cases! Also, letting some silence and space in wakes up your reader's imagination and they engage with the poem more deeply.**

Ashley Girl

**Re-written with the possible cuts suggested above:**

My phone stayed dark; it never flashed in my face.

The glass scraped against my cold fingers as it had shattered the night before.

It was never this quiet at night in my house.

Every crackle, click, wind blow.

A simple call every night.

I had missed the ring the night before.

Cleaned my room, did my homework, watched late night TV,

All things I despise, but helped me pass time.

What can I tell her I did today?

I didn't get the "A" my parents wanted me to get.  
She would understand though.  
Tapping my feet and twiddling my fingers.  
Maybe she fell asleep for the night.  
She's early to everything.  
Bum, bring, ding, bum....  
Finally! my phone lights up, the ring blaring,  
"Hi dad" I said.  
The silence turned into a ringing in my ear  
Like I had just been sitting next to a bomb that went off.  
I felt nothing. It was the middle of May.  
I remembered, she always left a voicemail.  
My device felt like a dumbbell. I push play,  
the static recording clear at the end:  
"Ashley girl."

**Here's yet another, severely condensed version of the final third. It could even be interesting to think of this as its own poem! You might compare to Greg Orr's "Litany." Remember that one? A short, really spare poem about shooting his brother?**

### **Ashley Girl**

for my grandmother

It's never this quiet at night in my house.  
Every crackle, click, wind blow.  
Tapping my feet and twiddling my fingers.  
She's early to everything.

I had missed the ring the night before.  
Cleaned my room, did my homework, watched late night TV,  
All things I despise.

Bum, bring, ding, bum....  
Finally!  
"Hi dad" I say.  
The silence turns into a ringing in my ear.  
It's the middle of May.

**I associate May with green grass, freshness, positive change, sun. So the ending is really powerful; it contrasts dramatically with what I know/intuit the speaker to really be feeling. Blows my head off. Sometimes it's better to be quiet and let every word do its full work on the reader.**

**Here's one more:**

### **Grandmother**

It's never this quiet at night in my house.  
Every crackle, click, wind blow.  
Tapping my feet and twiddling my fingers.

I had missed the ring the night before.  
Cleaned my room, did my homework, watched late night TV,  
All things I despise.

Bum, bring, ding, bum....  
Finally!  
"Hi dad" I say.  
The silence turns into a ringing in my ear.

**The problem with this version is I hate to lose "Ashley Girl"! But the extra compression makes me hear the two different "rings"—the one that she missed, and the one that grips her in the end.**

---

Sydney

### **Breakup**

Sometimes you meet someone  
And it is so very clear your paths were meant to cross.  
As lovers, as friends, as enemy's  
You know it was meant to be  
Eventually, you fall blindly in love with them,  
Believe everything they say,  
Bow down to every idea they have  
It becomes routine,



Routine to neglect your own thoughts  
Your own feelings and beliefs.  
For fear of sparking a blaze.  
Friends and family notice the smile on your face fading  
They see how you act around this person  
They notice this person has changed you  
The words have become poison  
I think of how we used to be  
And wonder who those people were.  
A distant time,  
A distant memory  
We were 15 when I closed my eyes  
You took my hand and I let you  
I will never wish the memories away  
They will stay near my heart.  
I now just see how naive I was,  
A child.  
I am a woman now,  
I am strong  
I opened my eyes  
I saw the path you were leading me down  
I decided to speak up  
To stand up for myself  
To be my own person  
You taught me so many things  
I learned what I wanted  
And what I did not  
You showed me how to love  
How to care

How to heal

How to grow

Thank you for everything

It's time for us to let go.

## Breakup

Sometimes you meet someone

You fall ~~blindly~~ **stupidly blankly bafoonishly monkeyishly** in love ~~with them~~, **Try really original, fresh, suprising word choices. Your experience is original to you; you want to do it justice.**

Believe everything they say,

Bow down to every idea,

a routine,

for fear of sparking a blaze.

Friends and family notice.

We were 15 when I closed my eyes

You took my hand and I let you

That will stay near to my heart.

But I saw; I decided to speak up.

You taught me to stand up for myself

To be my own person

So many things

I learned what I wanted

And what I did not

You showed me how to love

How to care

How to heal

How to grow

Thank you for everything **Terrific irony, even sarcasm! Might be a better ending?**

**It's time for us to let go.**

**A version just to see what severe minimalism would sound and feel like:**

### **Breakup**

Sometimes you meet someone.

You fall bafoonishly in love,  
Believe everything they say  
Bow down to every idea—

a routine,  
for fear of sparking a blaze.

Friends and family notice.

We were 15 when I closed my eyes.  
You took my hand and I let you.  
That will stay near to my heart

But I saw;

I decided to speak.

---

*Melaine Koffi Poem 1/15/2020 Tunnel Vision*

*Project 1 "The Luminous Personal Memory Poem"*

*These folk's words will not cripple or hinder your success, he said to me.* Are you listening to me!

"Yes." Are you truly listening? You can't say you're when you're not! "I'm Listening". When those feel like they have the power to abuse you and mistreat you and it works they keep doing it. He began to say....

*-When God crafted the black woman, he surpassed his definition of unique, the only beings he made perfect from their heads to their feet*

-Some are sweet as a Georgia peach; others are as sour as a beautiful wild flower

-I knew she was special and I knew she had power when I see lightning on her thighs while in-between her legs she held thunder shower

-She embodies in essence what it means to have presence, the silky-ness of her touch shifts your whole life's perspective

-When she touched me I knew I'd never forget it, she loved a neglected soul who knew he was a prince but lived like a peasant

-She had fire in her eyes and desire in walk, her mind was her money-maker and she couldn't be bought

-She was spiritually serene and supernaturally a queen, her crown was invisible because the only things that are eternal is that which is unseen

-She wasn't the whole movie, but she was definitely the scene... because without her involved the earth wouldn't look as it seems

-She's the nurture, the care, the spiritual healing for hurting men, and the right one can make sure you never hurt again

-Her hips have curves that only God could sketch and her lips are unequivocally the best

-Her voice could make the hair raise all over your skin, just a whisper from her could make you fall into sin

-Her curls are creative and her texture is triumphant, when she goes to speak it resembles that of an angelic trumpet

-She can be your peace and she can be your calm, ain't nothing like a black queen...for she holds love in her palms

-And she was simply.... a smile

-The one that peered through my attitude because she was worthwhile

-She was different from the rest, seemingly what I needed in the now because I was broken & she was floating, I know she was an angel that seen me through the clouds

-See I had a reputation that spoke volumes about my love life, a complex man who specialized in one nights but preached having one wife

Unfinished one but she was broken, broken enough to not give me the love I wanted and longed for...

*As she whispered.... I refuse* to give myself to one, because one can't understand my thoughts, but as soon you make that two your whole statue changes like torn page in a book that can't be replaced.

Because your emotion belongs to him and your body belongs to another! How do I share something that isn't meant to be shared? But I'm considered the bad guy...I should be clearer! So, I tell myself stop but I can't stop...the unruly behavior...That continues to live within me. As I love one and care for another! But they both say the same thing while I have the third one on the line! Telling him to wait so that he doesn't cross the line. Give me time to figure out which one is mine. But when I'm done choosing which one is mine you can have the others.

As we both prayed before letting go

Lord give her clarity and understanding

Help her to grow spiritually and realize

That you are her source and all others are simply a resource.

Father I decree and declare that the plans you have for her will

Manifest despite whatever obstacle and struggle may rise.

I speak life, Life in abundance and overflow, shower her with

Your spirit father, for we have not been given a spirit of fear

but of love, peace and a sound mind.

I break every yolk of mental bondage over her life right now, I come against depression

and suicidal thoughts and I cast them down into the

pit of hell from which they came.

In Jesus name, amen!

**This piece is utterly fantastic, it blows the hair off my head! and I almost want to just let it be. It's good to think about possible revisions, though; it's the only way our work gets better and more powerful.**

**My main concern is that it's almost *too* raw and stream-of-consciousness. It sort of falls into and out of rhythm in ways that don't work in spots. Such shifts can be totally cool. The jaggedness is beautiful. here and there this poem kind of shifts from almost comical and Dr. Suess-like to Biblical and profound. We all have a million voices in us, and that is NO problem in a poem—but it helps to really hear and make sure that the jaggedness is fully working throughout.**

**So, without destroying the energy and rawness of the piece, I can see trimming it down at least a bit, attending more closely to the rhythms and how they shift to be sure they express the feelings we want them to express.**

**This would be a great spoken-word or slam poem, BTW; and that's another good reason to think about rhythm: when you perform in front of an audience, your body and your audience's bodies feel every right moment and wrong moment in the rhythm.**

**This is all kind of a big topic in poetry. Maybe I'll turn it into a class exercise soon 😊**

**In the meantime, fantastic piece.**