Aja Mack
Age: 16, Grade: 11
School Name: Homewood High School, Homewood, AL
Educator: Amy Marchino
Category: Poetry

7 stages of loving you

- Denial and standing in this love all alone: Out here, in the middle of nowhere

Out here in the middle of nowhere,
I’m trying to convince everyone that I have my shit together.
Out here in the middle of nowhere,
I’m trying so hard to convince people that I’m happy.
When in actuality,
Out here,
In the middle of nowhere,
I’m falling apart.
I fall slowly, painfully, and silently.
I don’t make a sound until I hit the floor and glass goes in every direction.
Suddenly, slowly turned into instantly, and all at once.
I suffer at the hands of my brain, as my pencil communicates my pain on paper, in broken cursive and riddled english.
I suffer as the sun sets and the moon rises.
She mocks me with her glow, as she outshines everything in the night sky.
She knows I could never.
Even out here,
In the middle of nowhere,
I fall apart.
I fall apart as you read the words I wrote about him, out here, in the middle of nowhere.
The moon mocks me as you fall in love with the words I wrote about him and I’m still broken glass, sharp on the floor.
I’m falling apart out here in the middle of nowhere.
And you watch with heart eyes, she watches with stars by her side.
She’s up there in the sky,
You’re hiding behind your heart eyes,
And I’m stuck.
Out here, in the middle of nowhere.

- Anger and a teaspoon of acceptance: Even they don’t have the answers

Even Father Time couldn’t heal what you did to me.
All he and Mother Nature could do was sit there and watch as I broke my own heart over you.
I listened as they called Cupid and asked him to shoot me with another arrow.
But even with his expert marksmanship, I dodged every single one.
Because I didn’t want to fall in love with anybody else.
I mean why would I?
I wrote such pretty things about you.
Such loving words that I know you’d never ever read.
It broke Father Time as he watched me break my heart over you.
It hurt him more than it hurt you,
Because time was supposed to heal anything.
So he made sure that every word I wrote about you lived longer than we did, spread through time, given a beautiful
everlasting end.
Mother Nature planted a tree with the love I had for you.
She nourished it,
She watched it blossom and grow more than our love ever would.
Ever could.

Because nature always found a way.
Cupid promised that every arrow he shot from then on would be in honor of me.
In honor of the words I wrote about you.
Every arrow was filled with the same love I had for you, filled with the magic my words were intertwined with.
He hoped, no, he believed, that one day someone would value the love I had for you.
He blamed himself for choosing me for you and not the other way around.

Because love was supposed to be the answer to everything.
Even they couldn’t fix what you did to me.

- Bargaining and tarnishing your image of me: Kill me now

Kill me now.
And when you do it,
Do it slowly,
Intimately,
And make me beg for it.
Prove to me one last time,
That nobody could do it quite like you.

- The climax, the high, the summit, and my tipping point: Set in stone

My love for you is set in stone,
Carved in marble,
Etched in concrete,
Written in the stars,
And a constant topic of conversation among the Gods.
A tale passed on from generation to generation, a love so pure that nobody believes is real.
A fairy tale,
A legend,
A fantasy.
A love doomed from the start only set to persevere in my dreams and in the words I write about you.
The words that are set in stone,
Carved in marble,
Etched in concrete,
Written in the stars,
And a constant topic of conversation among the gods.
I’ve never seen two people more made for each other.
We march to the beat of the same drum,
We heard the song the angels hummed,
And the fire inside us burns the same,
We are the only good version of a twin flame.
But we are both so afraid of what might come next.
I’m afraid to say I love you, and you’re afraid to hear it from me again.
My ‘I love you’ is encased in stone,
Trapped in marble,
Buried under the concrete,
Hidden behind the stars,
And a secret, never brought up by the Gods.

- Depression, well… more like a watered down, misinterpreted version: Living was a mistake

Living was a mistake.
Walking through days like I constantly made a mistake.
Mistakes.
Breathing in the way that your heart sounded the same
Constant and not meant for me in any way.
Living was a mistake.
Fighting the change that I so desperately wanted to make,
But couldn’t because I would without a doubt see your face.
See the way it naturally lit up the whole place.
Searching for a reason the same way I would always search for your face.
Looking in places it wouldn’t be placed,
Feeling stuck in the same space,
Forgetting space is all we have,
Because living was a mistake.
Living was everything I learned to hate.
And this is where I apologize.
I’m sorry for wasting your time,
But I must clarify that I meant ‘loving’,
Loving was a mistake.
Loving was a mistake.
Walking through days like I constantly made a mistake.
Mistakes.
Breathing in the way that your heart sounded the same:
Constant and not meant for me in any way.
Loving was a mistake.
Fighting the change that I so desperately wanted to make,
But couldn’t because I would without a doubt see your face.
See the way it naturally lit up the whole place.
Searching for a reason the same way I would always search for your face.
Looking in places it wouldn’t be placed,
Feeling stuck in the same space,
Forgetting space is all we have,
Because loving you was a mistake.
Loving was everything I learned to hate.
And despite what I said, loving you could never be a mistake.
But loving without you?
Would surely bring love itself to its grave.
Loving you is my favorite definition of mistake.

- Acceptance, or better yet, choosing my only option Dagger in my hands

I did the one thing we’ve been dancing around for years.
I killed my love for you.
And you didn't think I could do it.
You placed the dagger in my hands and all I had to do was kill it.
You didn't think I could do it.
You didn't think I would do it.
I could see it on your face,
Hear it in your voice,
And feel it in the space between us.
So, I did it.
And as I did, I looked into your eyes.
I saw tears spill from your eyes as you glanced between me and your blade through my heart.
I could feel my love for you spilling out.
It was hot, and red, and it harmonized flawlessly with my blood.
And I smiled.
I smiled because I did it.
For somebody who didn't love me you were holding on too tight and trying to stop the bleed.
I thought you loved the color red.
And I always thought you looked breathtaking in it.
You knew the only way my love died was if I did too,
Yet you still put the dagger in my hands.
I guess you never truly had a plan.

- Bittersweet end that tastes like lemon and sin
  Here’s to the stone we were set in

There’s nothing you can say to convince me that somewhere in the multiverse you and I aren’t together.
I know that we have met in every single one of our past lives.
The love I feel for you is in no way just my own.
For it is too strong,
Too wide,
Too sure of itself,
And too divine.

It is impossible for it to hold only the love from this life, this world, and this reality.
I once wrote that our love was set in stone, carved in marble, etched in concrete, written in the stars, and a constant topic of conversation among the Gods.
I said that it was a fairytale, a legend, and a fantasy.
You and I have fallen in love in every single lifetime,
On every single planet,
In every single version of any and every reality believed by man or not, we have been together.

It’s fate.
But I don't want a fate where you don't choose me.
It has to be your choice.
If it’s not your choice, I do not want it.
All I have ever wanted is for you to be happy.
You don’t have to fall victim to the prophecy like I did, but even then, I chose to love you first.
You are not bound to the ancient foretelling, not if you don’t love me, simply because I won’t have you that way.
I chose fate,
But don’t choose me if you don’t already love me.
Choose you, and whoever makes you happy, even if it’s not me.
If it’s between you or me,
I hope you’d pick whichever one of us made you happy.
Fate is blind,
Love is blind,
And I could never hate you for seeing.
In fact,
I understand you not picking me.
If you weren’t it,
I’d pick the glitter and finer things.
So,
Here’s to the stone we were set in.

- The final step, facing the present: And now

And now, I’m still wishing on dead stars.
I’m falling off the cliff of our love and I am doing it all alone.
I’m writing things I’d never be able to say to your face
And I’m letting go in all the wrong fucking ways.
Being in love with you is my favorite game.
A dance between 2 ghosts.
A waltz danced through centuries, lifetimes, worlds, and realities.