

Izzy Sellers

Age: 14, Grade: 9

School Name: Altamont School, Birmingham, AL

Educator: Katherine Berdy

Category: Poetry

The Perfect Student

She lived to please

The smile from her teachers
When they said her work
Was good made her heart
Squeeze

Because the work, the
Smarts, was all she had

She never really noticed
When it started to get bad

Pulling all nighters to get it
Perfect because otherwise
It wouldn't be worthy
Enough to submit

Then she joined sports and
Said it was because she
Wanted to stay fit

She couldn't say the honest
Truth; that she wanted the
Body all those other girls
Seem to have

It was when she heard a
Giggle at lunch that she realized
She couldn't remember
When she had last laughed

There were bags under her
Eyes and a black cloud
Permanently situated over
Her head

But her grades were still
Perfect, and that is all that
Mattered, even if she had
Didn't get to live

A year later, she slowly

Started to give in to the
Tiredness her brain
Expressed

And she realized she
Eventually became less
Stressed

The A's became B's and she
Was okay with that

Because the dark cloud
Lifted, her smile became
Wider, and she spent more
Time on herself

She started reading more
And did more of the things
She adored

She ignored the texts
Messages and finally
Realized she had just
Needed to restore
The little girl who didn't
Care so much

And who was carefree and
Happy and wasn't afraid of
Failure