

Who Am I Now
by Nina Johnson
Student Poetry First Place

the ebony sky is thick with

car exhaust

laughter

the smell of fresh cannolis from two doors down

and acrid, overflowing dumpsters,

and silent, pounding threats,

the sensation i'm being

watched

i walk fast,

head down, breath quick.

a man stands on the corner

shrouded by the absence of a streetlight.

“who are you”

he says, reaching out

to stop me,

he has crooked teeth and

a leer

i was, the girl

who jumped in puddles that had the little rainbows

made from gasoline

who could beat my brothers in an arm wrestle

who had grit

and liked that word

who had scabbed knees and a chin stained with

cherry popsicle juice

that ran down my wrists in the summer

i wasn't scared of

the world

should've been scared of

me

who am i

now

Nina Johnson is an aspiring writer based in Marblehead, MA and a rising junior at Marblehead High School. Other than writing, Nina enjoys reading, SCUBA diving, playing violin, tennis, and basketball.