

**Bianca Denise Layog**

Age: 17, Grade: 12

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Category: Poetry

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### **Requested Anger**

I wonder, sometimes, what you would've done  
had I kept that Tupperware container of rice,  
or that plate of strawberry bread, or the glass  
of chocolate mousse I left in my minifridge  
for weeks. Out of spite, you know. Out  
of emotional immaturity. I didn't, though—  
that bit's yours to show. Occasionally I wake  
to read my horoscope for the day and forget I can't  
send it to you anymore. I still stay up late  
into the early hours of the morning, sipping  
from my Hydroflask until all that's left is the silver  
bottom staring up at my crossed eyes. I shake it  
once, twice, think about calling you to help me  
fill it up again. Think about that email you sent  
me at midnight on boundaries, on equality, on reasons  
why you don't give a fuck about anyone.  
Think about the girls who sat in an elevator  
and listened to Mitski's *Nobody* on loop, who stretched  
themselves out on the elevator floor and stared  
at the fluorescent lights to distract themselves.  
Think about you: purple cowboy hats and horror  
movies and shitty card games, you in your red flannel  
and holed-up sneakers, you staring off into space  
as if both eyes had gone blind. I was doing laundry  
the other day. The machines were whirring and a boy  
was in the adjacent room screaming at thin air,  
and I was thinking about inspirational quotes,  
disconnected telephone calls, stupid Halloween  
costumes to make the kids laugh, girls crying  
in the basement over blue eyes, and that Richard  
Siken poem where he wrote: *How much can you change  
and get away with it, before you turn into someone else,  
before it's some kind of murder?* And now I'm glad  
that I haven't patterned myself after you. Now  
I'm looking at the fluorescent lights in my bedroom,  
waiting for my morning alarm to ring, and hoping  
I can take the rest of your ghost out of myself.