

# Shelter In Place:

STORIES AND WORDS FROM  
THE SOCIALLY DISTANT  
FRONT LINES OF **HOME**

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QUARANTINE ANTHOLOGY PROJECT  
VOLUME 1, 2020

**Read and Write Kalamazoo** exists to  
celebrate and amplify youth voices  
through the cultivation of reading and writing skills  
via **joy, creativity, equity, and access.**

On March 25th, almost two weeks after Michigan schools closed and one day after the statewide stay-at-home order began in response to COVID-19, RAWK launched the Quarantine Anthology Project:

*“Hello RAWKstars! We hope you are all settling in, taking care, and staying creative during the school closure! We’re all in the same situation. Stuck at home, missing our school routines, and our friends. And we don’t know what to expect next, so we have to wait. Now is a great time to write and create, of course! Not only will you keep your skills sharp, but writing about these uncertain times could help get through these next few weeks with kindness, empathy, and gratitude.”*

Little did we know, the conditions necessary for the Quarantine Anthology Project would extend through the summer and beyond. During this same time, we’ve seen and experienced a revolutionary wave of uprisings for Black lives met by police riots.

RAWK’s mission has always been to celebrate and amplify youth voices, but the past six months have underscored why we exist and why we’re going to keep working and adapting to support the young people of Kalamazoo. Now more than ever, young people need space to process and express, to explore and grow, and to step into the inherent power of their words and stories.

...

The writing collected here was completed between March 25th, 2020 and August 30th, 2020.

RAWK would like to thank **Anne Hensley** for the time and creative efforts spent in the editing of this anthology and **Jason Conde** for the conception and title.

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# Shelter In Place

Stories and Words from the Socially  
Distant Front Lines of Home

# **Black Lives Matter**

*by Amani Hill*

When I heard what was going on in the world right now,  
it made me feel sick to my stomach.

Not just because I'm Black.

But because it is not right.

The news has been blowing up

I saw the video.

It was frustrating to see a person

that is equal to all

being hurt because of his skin.

I remember in AT classes, last year, learning about this

My teacher said, "Racist people still exist."

I was just thinking, "I don't know about that. I haven't  
heard about it in a long time." Now I know that it is true.

Actually, I remember feeling misplaced last year

because I was the only black person in AT classes.

Think about this:

What does Target, Family Dollar, and other businesses  
have to do with this?

Our world is getting changed into a warzone

Whites vs Blacks again

Why do we have to bring this back up?

How many times is this going to happen?

We have been silenced throughout the years

it's our turn to protest and say what is right

but all of a sudden

it's a problem.

# **I Want Things to Change**

*by Cecilia Puente*

I get really mad sometimes.

Like really mad.

Like I want to yell.

I want to scream.

I want to throw a fit.

I want to break things apart.

## **I WANT THINGS TO CHANGE**

People shouldn't be afraid of who they are

Or what they look like

Or the color of their skin

Afraid that one day they'll be killed by people

Who are being paid to protect to them

## **I WANT THINGS TO CHANGE**

You say Black people cause more trouble?

Have more fights?

That's because you're in their neighborhoods

Watching them like a hawk.

## **I WANT THINGS TO CHANGE**



When a White person kills a Black person, it's self defense.

When a Black person kills a White person, it is murder.

### **I WANT THINGS TO CHANGE**

It's like those old time movies.

People only see Black and White.

Why can't they see what actually matters?

### **I WANT THINGS TO CHANGE**

I don't want people to look at me and just see the color of my skin.

I want them to see me.

For who I am.

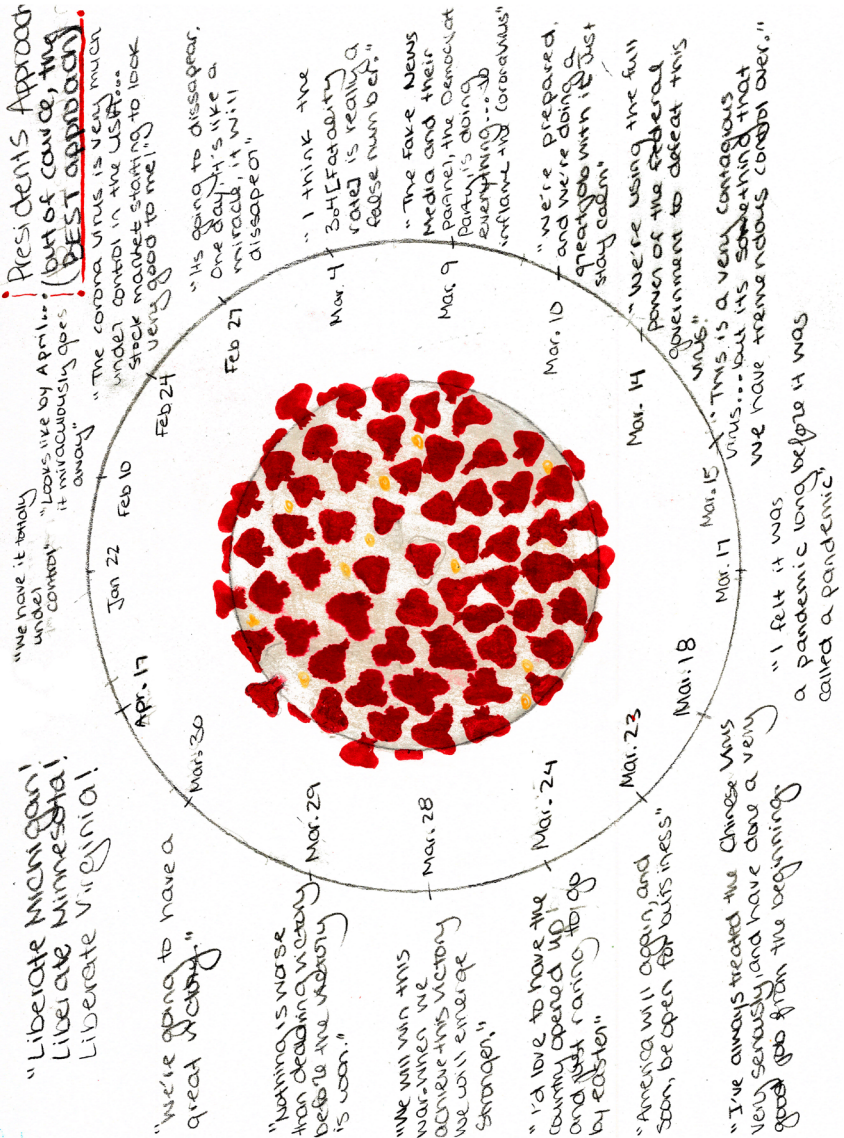
### **I WANT THINGS TO CHANGE**



# President's Approach (but of course, the BEST approach)

by Ana Dunfee

age 15, Loy Norrix High School



## **An Ode to Pizza**

*by Darek J. Roberts*

Pizza, oh, pizza

Your warm embrace keeps me alive and calm

I want to have it everyday and every night

You keep me happy and make me think about life

Pizza, oh, pizza you fill me with delight

Delivery, frozen oven baked

Fresh — just right!



## Protests Poem

*by Hannah Boothby, grade 8*

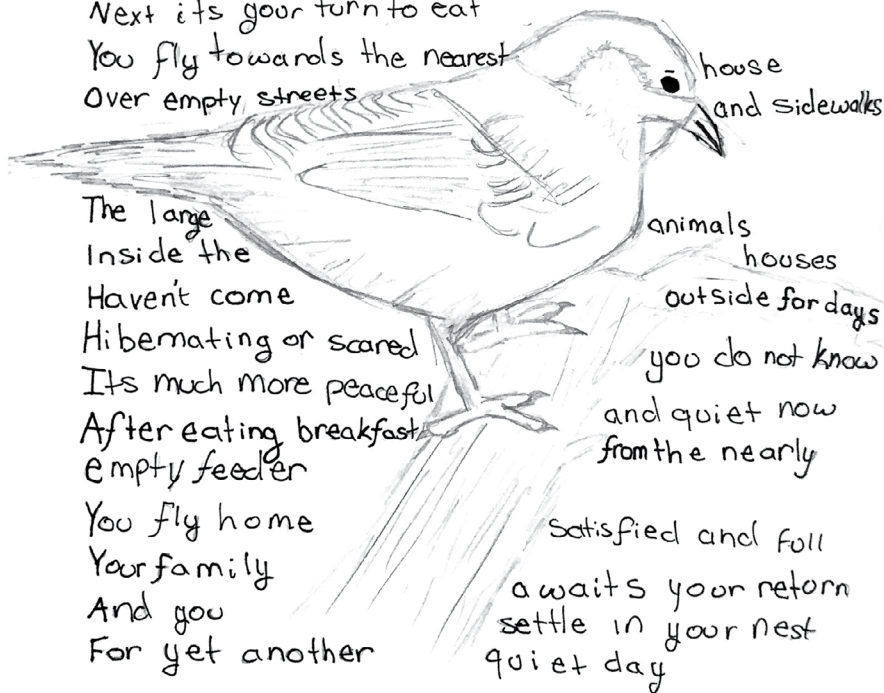
I marched in the protests,  
when memory fades,  
I'll never forget these horrors.  
I'll remember the history,  
because it's my history,  
'cause not so long ago,  
we shouted and marched,  
down through the streets,  
hoping to change our world.  
They had their guns,  
and they had their dogs,  
but we had our dreams and our hope.  
Our voices were stronger  
than weapons they carried,  
and so the laws were changed.  
I see the protests,  
when we pass away,  
history remembers these horrors.  
The future will not  
forget what we did,  
oppressors and the oppressed.  
So we shout and we march,  
down through the streets,  
tired of hate in our world.  
They have their guns,

their gas and their bullets,  
but we have a say in what's seen.  
Our voices are stronger  
than weapons they carry,  
so we don't let go of our hope.

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# In The Eye of a Chickadee

Waking up to Peeping chicks  
Hungry in the morning  
Flying around and catching bugs for their breakfast  
Next its your turn to eat  
You fly towards the nearest  
Over empty streets



By: Eloise Dunfee

# List Poem

*By Jeydon White*

I live in a house  
not a hotel  
not an apartment  
a house  
4 bathrooms  
2 kitchens  
2 refrigerators  
3 showers  
2 man caves  
4 bedrooms  
1 washer  
1 dryer  
2 cars  
2 tvs  
0 dogs  
0 cats  
and 1 microwave  
3 stories  
1 porch  
1 balcony  
4 sinks  
1 dishwasher  
1 fireplace  
and 8 loved ones  
In 1 big house

## **Troubled Treadmill**

*by Johanna VanLandegent, 15 years old  
Gull Lake High School, Richland, MI*

Last year you said you were done  
That you were too busy to run  
So what's happened now?  
You came back somehow  
Since when has running been fun?

Don't get me wrong, it's been grand  
To finally be in demand  
But your poor treadmill's tired  
Would you check my wires?  
All this use is just too much to stand

You've been talking about a disease  
That quarantine helps to appease  
But you're losing your mind  
Stuck quarantined  
I guess running helps your unease

I think I at last understand  
I'm happy to lend you a hand  
As scary as this seems,  
When we work as a team  
There's nothing that we can't withstand



## **The Poem About Nature**

*by Mackenzie Lepisto, 7 years old*

Flowers blooming, birds chirping.

Nature is beautiful!

I hope that summer will come again so we can play  
outside

Because we are sick of inside.

Because it is winter and I'm sad because we are inside.

Yay! Yay! Yay!

Finally it is summer, yay!

We get to play outside

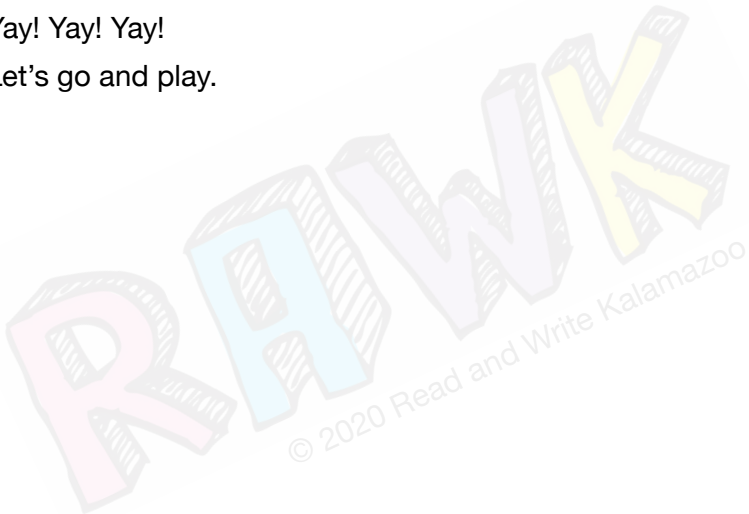
It is fun when it is summer!

Because it is the best thing in the world.

So let's play outside!

Yay! Yay! Yay!

Let's go and play.



## **Will the Outbreak Leave Me in Darkness?**

*by Mahbuba R Sumiya, 16 years old*

*Benjamin Carson High School of Science and Medicine,  
Detroit, MI*

Last September, I imagined myself revising the last few notes before I sat to take the SAT. I thought everything that I planned would work without any disruption. Just like all high school juniors around the nation, I felt the anxiety when I first heard school would be closed for several weeks due to the coronavirus. My email was bombarded with a lot of event cancellations. As each day passed, the condition was getting worse, and I was losing hope. Before the coronavirus took over, I used to check Twitter once every day. As the tension and anxiety were rising, I realized that I was checking Twitter every hour, and it did not feel normal to me. It felt that I was starving for answers.

The world seems to shut down around me.

I stopped watching the news because the way it is presented feels politicized for normal people who do not like politics. It's terrifying to imagine how the schools, states, and individuals will cope with the lasting impact of the coronavirus. There are many big scary questions I ask myself, and I am not able to find any clear answers to any of them. After a couple of months, I will have to decide which college I want to apply to. My initial plan from the beginning of the junior year was to visit colleges over the summer, but I guess coronavirus wanted to close the

college doors for me before the summer even arrived. I can't even decide whether I should consider myself lucky for the opportunity to do everything online, or unlucky for missing out on college visits, college application preparation, and one-on-one academic instructions. Every day feels like living in darkness and uncertainty because of how out of control the whole situation is.

Lately, I have been receiving one type of email in my inbox: "We are closely monitoring the coronavirus (COVID- 19) situation, and we are not able to give a final thought." I never imagined that I would ever live in a historical event and would be lost the way I am now.



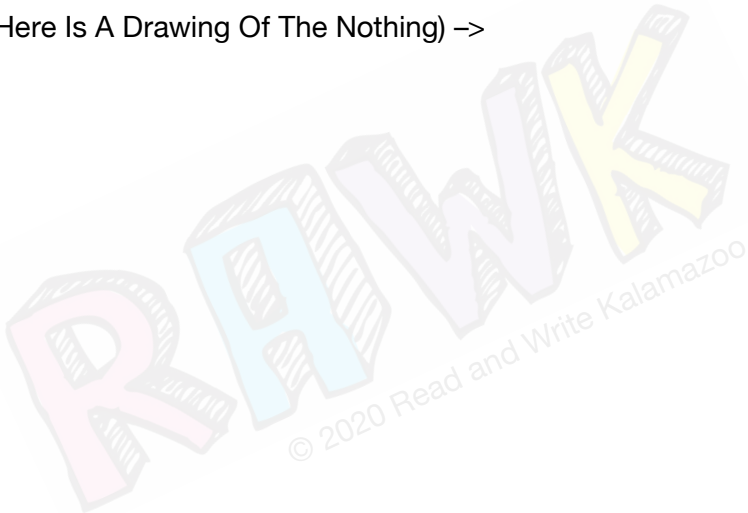
# Lifetime Supply

*by Nate Fowle*

Welcome, welcome. You now have a lifetime supply! What's that? Oh, you want to know what you have a lifetime supply of ... Well, you have a lifetime supply of nothing! I'll tell you how you got this privilege. You started your subscription for receiving free nothing when you read the first word in this story! You get your nothing every ten seconds ... So you can go ahead and claim the nothing that you have earned while reading this story, I'll wait ...

... Ok, you've had enough time to collect it. I hope you like your free nothing, and continue to collect it. Goodbye! I have to go waste somebody else's time now!

(Here Is A Drawing Of The Nothing) ->



## **Eraser Poem**

*by Olivia Brooks*

Erase my mistakes

Fix my problems

But I'm on the bottom

The tiniest of all everyone else is tall

Bigger than me

Happy with glee

Still me at the bottom

With lots of problems

But then the shortest of girl picks me up

And erases it all



# Ice Skating Poem

*by Oliva Brooks*

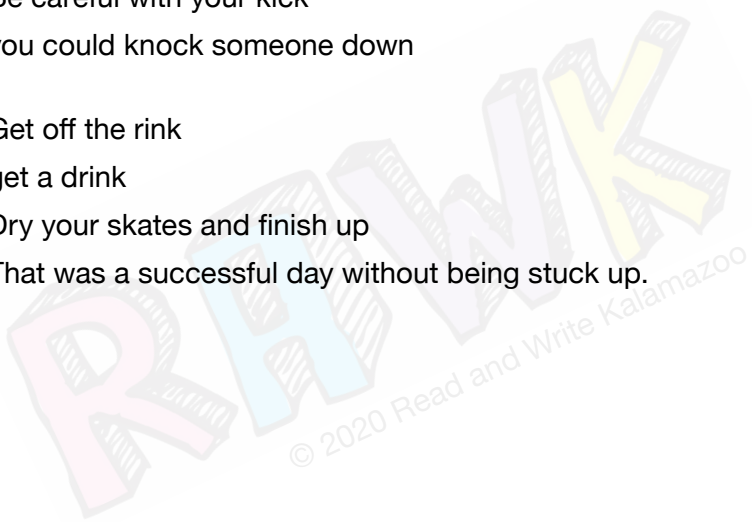
Tie me quick.  
Hurry up!  
There's no time to be stuck up

Just let me get onto the ice  
You don't want to see me get into a fight  
Sign in, request a song, it's time to get your boogie on

Scratch ... Scratch

don't crash  
Spin around, touch the ground  
Be careful with your kick  
you could knock someone down

Get off the rink  
get a drink  
Dry your skates and finish up  
That was a successful day without being stuck up.



## Untitled

*by Sagan Barber*

It only takes a spark,  
A single flicker to ignite the poised tinder of an open mind.  
As the fire spreads, so does your voice,  
It becomes ignition for others' action.  
A forest fire of wild thoughts,  
Burning trees that whisper for the fight.  
People douse us with waterlogged insults,  
Sordid attempts to put us out,  
They haven't realized that attempts to strangle us,  
Only make us tower higher;  
The unstoppable burn of active action.  
Some people won't survive,  
The opposers are too scared of us and smother them.  
We fight for them, their deaths will never be in vain.  
We fight even when the fire is smoldered,  
Nothing left but embers growing dim,  
But if there's even one minuscule light left,  
We'll rage on again and again,  
Coming back brighter and bolder than times before.

# Stripes

*by Zanaya Wilson*

A Tiger drinks water

A Tiger eats all the meat

A Tiger is ferocious

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# **StrongWind**

*by Zanaya Wilson*

I am Strongwind  
I blow hats off of people  
no one can catch me  
no net will not do it  
no jar will not do it  
I am the wind

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Kalamazoo

YOU can support the work of celebrating and amplifying youth voice and assure that more young people in Kalamazoo County get to see their words in print by heading to

[\*www.readandwritekzoo.org/how-to-help\*](http://www.readandwritekzoo.org/how-to-help)