

## Short Story by Samantha Hay 11LN

It was the last day of winter for Mary, a grandmother of four and nobody's wife. Like all winters, she found that the cold was mean, like dogs, and bit away at her joints until they were limp, and the freedom of her lungs. She'd say, 'leave me be, all my children are gone', and winter left her tucked between the planks and the blankets. She'd lived alone for the longest time but could not deny that she didn't want to go like this.

A young robin discovered her windowsill. Sat upon it, like a leaf of autumn it settled.

"Lady, you look lonely. I am sorry. Let me sing you my song for company," it cooed from its perch, in a tongue she knew not.

The old granite statue stirred from her stillness. She could not crack open her chords, not even for surprise. Like always, words failed, but her eyes watched keenly.

The robin did not wait for her to come to her senses. It could open its throat to sing to her, so it did.

It weaved its song through its beak. A gentle melody left its chest and swam across the room.

Its trill was melodic, soft like the sun breaking spring, the snow eaten by newborn grass. Marigolds swept up her vision and the sky cracked open blue again. The fields ran emerald-green in her mind, and the autumn leaf on the sill crowned it. She was there again, just briefly in the prairie, where the sun went to die beyond the hill after painting the world gold.

'Thank you,' murmured her mind. This was closure.

The robin's symphony settled into the floorboards. With the silence growing back like moss in her room, she breathed a final time – and let a promise of spring lull her into a sweetened, singing black.