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Teach

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Author Bio

Amy Butcher is a junior at Gettysburg College. She is double-majoring in Creative Writing and English and recently completed a semester abroad in Aix-en-Provence, France. In addition to serving as co-production editor for the Mercury, Amy is a Gettysburgian staff writer and a tutor at the Writing Center. She enjoys traveling, cooking and her Jack Russell terrier. Upon graduating, Amy plans to continue her education and pursue writing at the graduate school level. She aspires to be a Creative Writing professor and freelance writer when she grows up.

Teach

(after Philip Schultz's "Sick")

Every Wednesday afternoon for one fall
I volunteered in an elementary school
For children whose parents couldn't get them right away.
Seven- to nine-year-olds, they wrote about
Palms caked in grease, mothers swatting at bottoms
To scare the devil away, fishing behind the post office
For rainbow trout and rusted cans of tuna,
Why envy came in Pokémon cards and orange sneakers—
Until the program ended, and when I asked, "What happens to the children?"
The principal smiled, faintly, as if to say, "Oh dear, you're done. Be done."
"The vision is dying," I said to him, "Please, taste the truth."
But his eyes glazed over from lack of sleep, or lack of hope,
And I left feeling I might've helped them
If only I had asked to stay.