



SUSQUEHANNA STORY

a series of poems



Fire Red Crunching Leaves

Autumn in the Susquehanna

Fire red, sunset orange, and sun yellow leaves falling to the ground

S G S
L E O
O N F
W T T
L L L
Y Y Y

Floating on the river

Illuminating the banks

Crunching in symphonies as children dance around the laughter of their parents

Glistening water through speckled leaves

creating constellations through the rapids

Pixled fish sitting watching listening
to every laugh, word, and splash of a distant fisherman.

Lazing under the slightly westward 2pm sun

unaware of the

invigorating

refreshing

crisp air

and my rosy red nose.

As I wade left and right on the water

listening as the dancing children and laughing parents leave for home

I see the reflection of the moon, a thousand diamonds.

The air becomes frigid and bitter
as the fire red, sunset orange, and sun yellow leaves disappear.
Falling into a breakable brown.
Susquehanna autumns are unlike any other.

While the banks become eerily quiet the river's motions are calming.
While the banks empty the Pig Iron fills
with laughter
joy
entertainment
and drunken giggles.

A Small Town's Confusion

Drunken giggles fill the autumn night

losing track of time
rising to the first winter snow.
Blizzards command frozen streams, lakes, and fishermen gracefully walking on the ice.
Creating imperfections on the white banks
searching for the first catch on the frozen river.

With a fire in my fireplace and a hot chocolate in hand
I watch the fishermen with large gloved hands create circular holes on the river.
Casting their lines waiting.

An hour passes

Then two

Three

and many more.

Rosy red noses turn into angry red faces.

Worried eyes stare at one another... have they not caught one fish?

Through the snow-covered window, the warmth of my fire, the tranquility of my home,
disrupting fear begins to settle,

what if the fish are gone?

Fear

Evaporating fish leave the river bare
water levels drop near the Safe Harbor dam
what is next?

Shrinking Constellations

Farms continue to flourish

The towns people

have not.

Remembering the young teen witnessing the worried fishermen

I've turned into a young woman watching our beloved bass

be destroyed by tumors so large the river feels small.

constellations no longer created in polluted water,
our unfamiliar home.

Selfish

Flourishing farms were **warned**.

Warnings

ignored due to a lack of intelligence removed by a few green Benjamin's.

Mixing our water, our fish, our river,

our paychecks

with their insecticides.

Their paychecks

fatten

Unsympathetic to our displacements.

Nothing More

The irony in an empty river during a gray frigid day.

Children no longer dancing in symphonies

Parents no longer laughing.

Bars no longer filling.

I am no longer watching.

No fishermen on the wide mouthed river's ice.

There. Isn't. Even. Ice.

An empty vast of frozen mud, impossible to skate.

Awaiting pleasant weather to collect fish bones.

A small-town yearning for rehabilitation.

Will there be laughter again?

Eviction: Effective Immediately

Home.

Large shelter decorating it as one's own.

Embracing with closeness through strong arms

Strolling on the North West River Trail in Marietta

Destroyed.

Through out of business signs,

eviction notices,

and environmental blindness

Reflection

Places

Creating a sense of place in environmental writing is crucial. Due to this I decided to open my series of poems with a piece that used vivid descriptive language to set the place. To do this, I used the seasons. Using seasons to set up a place is a personal preference because it is what I enjoy most. However, I also used it to create a sense of emotion through the audience.

For example, the line, “Crunching in symphonies as children dance around the laughter of their parents,” allows the audience to vividly picture what this scene looks like. In addition, audiences who grew up in areas with different seasons can easily remember playing in leaf piles as a child. My intentions on using this description is to have the audience remember a specific moment in their childhood. By doing this it is my hope to have the audience be more and immediately engaged.

Another example is the line in my second poem, *Confusion: Where are They?*. I chose to create a cozy winter atmosphere to have a calming affect on the audience. The line is, “through the snow-covered window, the warmth of my fire, the quietness of my home.” As the writer I felt that this line was crucial to set up the rest of the poem, continuing to discuss the fear of the unknown. More specifically, I wanted to create a feeling of calmness before the storm.

Pig Iron Brewing Co.

The Pig Iron Brewing Co. is located between the Susquehanna and downtown Marietta, not too far from the Turkey Hill Experience. This is a small indoor/outdoor brewery and restaurant. The food is amazing, and the atmosphere is even better. I decided to add this into my poem because it is a personal favorite but also pinpoints the area I am describing in my poems. In addition, it is near the North West River Trail and would, most likely, be one of the places affected if something happens to the river.

Safe Harbor Dam

Choosing the Safe Harbor Dam as a place in my poems was a team effort between Skyler, Shelby, and I. Due to not being familiar with the area, I asked them what dams they knew about. After listing off a few different ones I thought Safe Harbor Dam flowed very well with the lines.

North West River Trail

The North West River trail felt like a perfect fit in my poems. Not only did it add an exact location, it is located right next to the Pig Iron Brewing Co. In addition, adding this was a personal choice because I would like to explore this trail. In addition, this trail runs right next to the Susquehanna.

Apocalyptic Narrative

I found the reading by Killingsworth and Palmer to be one of the more interesting readings we have had in class. I think this is because I enjoy reading dystopian literature. Normally when I write my poems they do not go together: each poem tells their own story.

Originally, I wanted to write a short story; but I decided to challenge myself and create a dystopian type or apocalyptic narrative type series of poems.

Nature as Eden

In addition, I chose to use elements of William Cronon's lens Nature as Eden. When it comes to environmental discourse William Cronon reviews writing through six lenses. Susquehanna Stories focuses on the lens Nature as Eden; referring to the biblical Garden of Eden. Those who look at nature and do not wish to preserve it is pure evil.

I did not use this lens to gain the audiences attention. I used the concept of nature is perfect on its own to choose my word choices in describing the scenery.

Line Breaks

Line breaks in poetry are often used for emphasis or exaggeration. I chose to use line breaks for both emphasis and exaggeration. When looking up the technical use of line breaks I could not easily find an answer, so my claim is based of a poetry class I took with Dr. Judy Halden-Sullivan.

To add to the environmental requirements of this piece I decided to have three words mimic falling leaves. The description of the air to be broken up into parts that mimic movement from the wind.

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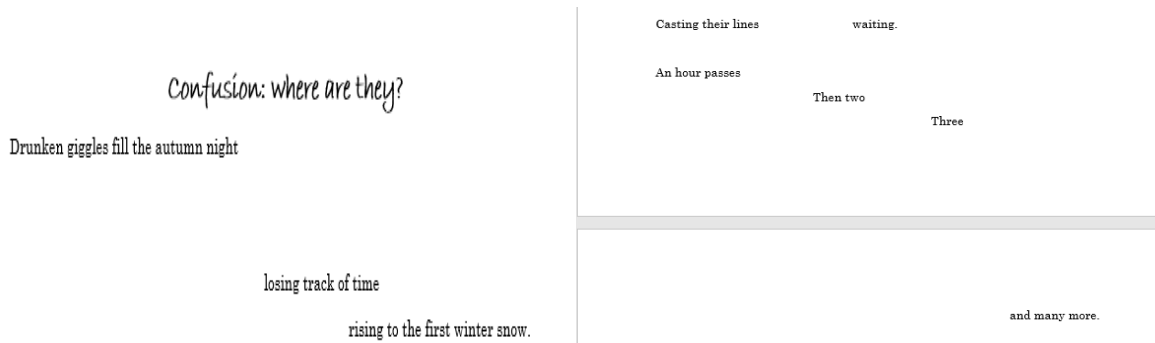
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In addition, I used line breaks to create emphasis and realism to my writing. This can be seen when the poems discuss any essence of time. Using line breaks forces the reader to pause and wait for what the next line will bring, much like the fishermen in the poems wait for the fish. Another way I add emphasis and realism into the poems is through large line breaks when



referring to time change. Much like waiting for the fish the reader is also waiting to learn about what will happen after a night of drinks.

Lastly, I used line breaks for emphasis. When I wanted a word or a line to resonate with the audience for a longer period I used a larger space. Sometimes I clicked the space bar a few extra times, or I used the tab button, or I used a combination of the two.

Overall Reflection of My Work

Strengths

One of the many strengths I had while writing this was my previous experiences with poetry: I began in middle school and have kept up with it ever since. In addition, I found the content I was writing about to be easy to draft. Shortly after this project was assigned I knew the general theme I wanted to write about, as well as, the format in which to do so.

Struggles

The main struggle I had while writing this was figuring out how to create a space. I struggled with this because I have not written in a style that called for a vivid description of an environment. I relied a lot on using a thesaurus to create the scenes I wanted.