Ashley Duraiswamy

Bio: Ashley Duraiswamy is an eighteen-year-old from Princeton, New Jersey, and an incoming freshman at Yale University. Her work has appeared in *The Apprentice Writer* and *The Daphne Review*, and she owes much of her growth as a writer to programs at Kenyon College, the University of Iowa, and Middlebury's Bread Loaf School of English. In her spare time, Ashley enjoys teaching creative writing classes at local elementary schools and playing ping pong with her dad.

Pods We agree that Beans spill from sea-green pods: Hard, lacquered, Shining the way our feet shine As we trail them through the pond. When I say "we," I mean "I"— When you say "I," you mean everyone Who leans against you on damp pond sand, Flicking your toes with theirs Like silver fish spilling from sea-green pods

Together, but hard, lacquered.

What This Has Done You were slow to walk, but Mother fixed you. Her hands slid up your arms and pulled: Nails against baby flesh, Lullabies muttered like prayers, penance, Basslines for your sobs. Father found the marks— Moons sliced into your skin-And you cried because you didn't know What they were. I don't know what this has done to you. You were slow to write, but Ms. Shapcott fixed you.

She bent over your chair, hair tickling

Your cheeks, stomach curved

Against nape of your neck.

You mixed up love and leave,

So she taught you more words,					
Lips sticky					
Against your ear:					
Ungrateful					
Retarded					
Broken					
You thanked her because she swore					
She was helping,					
And you wanted to believe her.					
You don't know what this has done to you.					
You were slow to laugh, but Jonathan fixed you.					
He was ten and a day; you were nine and two months.					
You'd walk home together, palms pricked					
With playground splinters like constellations					
No one else had seen—just you and him.					
They say it's unfortunate you saw his body.					

