

Final Exam

POETRY

Nell Choi, Grade 10, Writopia Lab, Washington, D.C.

Rita Feinstein, *Educator*; Region-at-Large, *Affiliate*.

Gold Medal, **New York Life Award**

1. a parallel line

- a. is the same distance from another at any given point / moves in identical directions / never intersects
- b. was 6 feet apart / on opposite sides of the street / mirroring light blue masks / waving at you walking your dog / fearing that the gap between us/ would remain forever
- c. is thinking I knew you / and your love of cats / remembering the scratch that we never talked about/ wondering if we'd recognize each other / in the next life
- d. is a two-way highway interstate / cars speeding 70 mph / rushing past / headlights blurred with tears / pressing down the gas / running from / whatever the hell is tailgating me

2. a perpendicular line

- e. intersects another line at a right angle
- f. was why we met / in September 2017 / when I walked beneath the welcome-back-to-school banner / and your smile bathed me in sunshine
- g. is my thoughts / drifting downstream / dwelling in silt deposits / while my head is nodding / at my friend / who chirps about the beautiful boy she met / how i am simultaneously existing / in two places / at once
- h. is a dusty desert crossroad / voices pulling / left or right / this or that / where horses' hooves kick orange fog in my face blurring the existence of choice

3. a transversal line

- i. is a line that crosses two lines in the same plane/ at two separate points/ an indication of their parallelism
- j. was sitting on your front steps / sipping mugs of homemade duck broth / shivering and laughing / in the december wind / not sharp enough to slice / this last moment / holding us together
- k. is driving down the icy road / past your neighborhood / pressing forehead to cold window

/ warm blobs of breath fog / my finger spelling /
“i miss you” / as if maybe you are watching

l. is the slash slicing/ through an equal sign/
reminding me / to give more/ to smile at the
school janitor / to greet them the same way you /
greeted me / on the first day of school

4. a tangent line

- m. is a straight line that passes through a curve at a single point
- n. was our necessary ramble about soup dumplings and the superior movie-theater snacks / laughing like normal / a conversation so utterly unrelated / to the chemo / slowly tarnishing your smile
- o. unraveling / strings of memories / your fuzzy sweater hugs and happy birthday singing voice / drifting gently like crimson leaves / on a fall morning
- p. extends / away from where it's tethered / moving towards the next sunrise / never forgetting the moment where we began ■