

Book Review: I Gotta Tell You Something showcases novice poets



The 34 poems in *I Gotta Tell You Something* are the result of a three-year-long creative writing workshop run by award winning writer, B Lucy Stevens. The workshop, which consisted of 13 participants between the ages of 18 and 60, met weekly. The participants didn't have much writing experience, so Stevens got their creativity and confidence flowing by using various warm-up exercises. What resulted was beyond anything Stevens could have imagined, so she published their work to share it with the world.

Each author writes what they know, and the poems are honest takes, ranging from funny to heartbreaking that give a view of their personality and a glimpse into how they became who they are. Some sound like free-flowing conversations while others have a poetic flow.

The authors all bring something unique to their writing. Wayne Rankin and Gabe Mouradjian write about their childhood and accidents that changed the course of their lives. Nick LeBlanc describes feelings with an honest wit. Wil Valcourt lets the reader in on one of his fears while adding a smile-inducing ending. Carol Gable's poems pour emotion. Benvinda Gomes writes about misunderstanding and others' view of her. Tom Fiori and Jahnoy Skerit talk about traveling, adding a humorous spin.

Victoria Rossi and Nissah Armstrong write about being happy and free. Tyler St. Vincent puts the reader into the head of a species that is being bullied. Amber Tariela writes about her love for her dog. Edna Maniche describes a hilarious interaction with Jesus that also features the most beautiful imagery:

“There were angels outside
They looked like butterflies”

There are themes throughout the books. Animals are written about often, whether it be a pet or a type of animal that they identify with. Growing up and family are themes that come up repeatedly, as are happiness, sadness, hopes and dreams. The biggest theme is the desire to be accepted for who they are. This adds an extra layer of power to the book as a whole.

The rawness is the best part of the poetry. The words are simple, but the content is real. The authors open a window, giving the reader a quick glimpse into part of their soul. The vivid imagery puts you right there in the thick of what is happening in each poem. Their message lies in the title. These authors all have something important to say, and the readers are lucky enough to have been invited into their world.