

a broken system

i keep catching myself drown from the weight
of debt
trying to fit myself in the system is like
playing a broken tape where you only get to
watch the tragic parts of a film
the part where i wake up with tears racing
down to my hairline
The part I pickup what's left of me and go to
work to stitch my life back
"keep going"
i insist to myself
they danced on my rib cage as if I was created
to endure their abuse
no remorse was shown when they ruthlessly
tried to demolish my worth with labels like
"impoverished"
"poor"
somehow these labels reduce my value as if
we are born with price tags latched onto us
these labels are sounds echoing through the
air
weightless and celestial at the same time
sounds that are deliberately used to crush us
but little did they know
i am an empire born out of the wreckage of
the past
a tree does not demand to be watered with
consistency
it is the accumulation of raindrops it manages
to soak up on the good days

You thrive on your bad days too

Sama Ab

Artist Statement:

As a recent graduate student at Mount Royal University, I had the honour of exploring the systemic issues impacting those who are often left uninsured or underinsured, due to financial challenges and other contributing factors. Although my poem does not directly speak to the “insurance” portion of my research, the above poem tries to capture the struggles of individuals that are financially underprivileged. As a systems thinker, I am always encouraged to imagine life from the viewpoint of others.

The writing of my poem was inspired by Rupi Kaur, a Canadian poet, known to many for her unconventional approach to poetry, which includes the absence of capitalization and punctuation. I aimed to enforce "lowercase poetry," challenging traditional norms in writing and encouraging readers to focus solely on the words themselves, rather than on grammatical conventions. This style is characterized by its raw emotion, simplicity, and accessibility, which I believe to be a cornerstone of the Catamount Fellowship. By this, I aim for the reader to solely focus on identity, loss, and empowerment, placing a direct emphasis on the words.