

Madison Bratley Age:12
Skinner West Classical School

Fountain Girl

I have heard of the people who swim in the lake. *Splash!* Their hands cup above their heads and they leap from the ground before penetrating the surface of the liquid with the precision of a feather. Paddling tranquilly in any direction and speed I choose until becoming tired is a dream. My life is like a river rapid. The waves push you and throw you around like a leaf in wind. They tell you when and where to go, crushing your wishes with their icy foot. The rapids have pushed me into a van multiple times unexpectedly, not telling me if I am stolen or only moving locations. It makes me feel like the grey clouds above me. The sunlight of compassion is devoid in the sky. My bronze eyes stare into the chalice in which I am to forever grasp. Water drips from the bottom, feeding the stone basin beneath me like a fast-food meal, meant now for only the grungy dogs. The zooms of a car and the footsteps of a tourist continue like my wish for an acknowledgement. *Turn Around! Here I am!* My lips desire the ability to cry my lion roar. The bronze legs and feet below me want to chase the falling leaves in the autumn, the summer butterflies, the dandelion puffs of spring, and the winter snowflakes. My imagination smiles as I taste the mind candy until a toddler shrilly cries, "Zoo! Zoo!" I want to be a *Zoo!* I want to be "*Fountain Girl!*" No, I am "*Fountain Girl?*" My whole body is built with the dull color bronze. I am the size of the average six year-old, and the sound of water trickling is easily covered by the race of a car. My reflection in the water ripples away from me as a lone raindrop makes its home. *Boom! Clap!* The last tourists dart to the shelter of a taxi. I am a filler; a replacement. The girl who preceded me is happily in statue heaven while I stand, waiting for the rapids to push me to a new place.