

# *Ode to Scholastic*, by Alondra Uribe

2019 National Student Poet

Dear Scholastic,

I never owned a shelf, so all my books would be stuffed in my sock drawer and hanging off the bedside table. After all having your house overflowing with magic is the right way to keep bad spirits away. You have allowed me to teach myself the reworkings of a house into a grand library if you blink fast enough.

How would you describe the color of a page? Chestnut white? Extremely watered-down coffee with milk? The new shade of tan on your white sneakers after a run in a dirt field? How would you describe reading a book? Would it be like gripping the back of a speeding train to ride your skateboard? Or like diving head first so deep into the ocean, you find the lost city of Atlantis right before blacking out? I think it's more like cranking open God's third eye with a crowbar and demanding to see the world through a third dimension. Where it's all big red, and spell casting, silver keys and gold medals, and elevators where you have to press the number of what floor you're going to before actually getting on it. I think that if you go to 557 Broadway and get lost the right way you might end up floating above New York City.

I never owned a shelf, so all my words would be spilling over the edges of the Bronx and sneaking their way into the train cars with no metrocard. Dear Scholastic, you didn't know I never actually bought books at your book fair until now but that's okay, because I made up for it in this ode.