

A Sense of Hope

by Sherone Rogers

Hope tastes like the first sweet synthetic lick of a dripping orange Creamsicle on a hot summer day. Looking forward to the melding of the icy orange and creamy vanilla flavors as they become one. Hope even tastes like the pulpy wood of the Popsicle stick, which you gnaw on thoughtfully after carefully licking the stickiness from your fingers. You taste the sweetness that has become a part of your gnarled piece of wood like grass stains become a part of the knees of your jeans, and you wonder what you'll be when you grow up. An artist? A writer? Maybe both.

Hope smells like spring rain, moist soil, the promise of flowers yet to bloom. The smell that accompanies you as you run across the quad between classes and writing workshops... the smell that tells you someday your stories will be published in "The New Yorker." Like those flowers, you have yet to bloom, but you have hope.

Hope feels like paper: like the slick pages of magazines where other authors have already bloomed; like the cottony perforated check and stub you receive for your first piece sold at the Art of Recovery, reminding you of long-lost childhood dreams; like the heavy cardstock cover of a journal— reigniting the passion of a writer in you, reminding you that it's not too late for "The New Yorker;" and like the pages bearing your name that represent the first time you've been published in decades.

Hope sounds like your voice. The voice that makes you cringe when you hear it recorded. The voice that first belonged to your mother, but it is the same voice that told your story at the Beacon of Hope and that educates as a Shore House ambassador, and that found the courage to share your writing with strangers at "Expressions of Hope."

Hope looks like many things but, most of all, hope looks like you.