

Junior Division, Poetry
Jade Collins, Gambo
Red, Reclaimed

Red was the fear in my eyes when He told me He was not okay,
And nothing changed.
Red was the promises He made,
The promises He broke,
And the colour of His anger when I dared to disobey.
Red was the colour I missed when I was under so much stress that my menstrual cycle became
unpredictable.
I've never wanted to bleed so much,
Never desired to see red more than I did then,
Because if I saw red ,
Then everything had to be okay.
If I saw red ,
I could savour my peaceful illusion.
I could say I was happy where I was,
Because if nothing was out of place,
Neither was I.
Red was the colour of the lipstick He couldn't appreciate,
The lipstick He'd never let me kiss Him in,
Because He was afraid of the stain I might have left on His lips.
Red was the colour of the roses He brought me,
As if He could use their beauty as a shield to mask the things He did.
He knew they were my favourite.
They aren't anymore.
He made Red into a villain who captured me and scarred me,
And so I became afraid of Red.
Red was anger.
Red was fear.
Red was pain.
Red was years spent,
Years wasted,
Years I will never get back,
Because they were used up on Him .
Red was the monster in the closet that tries to take me at night,
And I hide under my covers,
In hopes that it'll be adequate protection for the things I have seen,
The things that have hurt me,
The things that try to steal me away from the recovery I've made.
Red was tarnished.
And I was scared of red .

As the years went by,
I continued to dye my hair that gruesome colour,
To hide from everyone that the shade I once loved had become dulled and faded.
I missed the flames it once ignited in me,
How it sparked something that only I could harness
Because it burned too bright for anyone else.
But as time went on,
And I picked myself back up,
And my heart began to heal,
The fearsome colour took on a new hue.
I was afraid to see red in a new light.
I was afraid to let it back in my life.
But I did.
And now,
Red is the colour of the dress I love so much,
The one that makes me feel so pretty and full of life,
The one that reignites my spark,
The one that He will never put His hands on again.
Red is the colour of the hearts I draw in my notebook, thinking about him.
Red is the colour of the passion in his kisses,
The colour I see when he tells me he loves me and means it.
It's the colour of the love I feel when I see him smiling and I am reminded why I want to spend
the rest of my life with this boy,
Because with him,
Red is no longer fear,
Anger,
Pain,
Or years of regret.
Red is warm,
Red is bright,
Red is the bold promise of a future free from the imprisonment of a toxic love.
Red is the colour of the string I severed,
The one that tied us together,
The one that held me His captive, and I am His captive no more.
Red is the colour of the fire in my belly when I'm fighting,
Fighting and winning and shedding the blood of the monster in the closet that seeks my blood
but will never taste a drop.
Red is the colour of the delicate roses I have reclaimed as mine,
And He will never steal my love for a flower,
He will never taint my love for something so innocent and pure again,
Because He is nothing but the monster that lies dead on my bedroom floor.
And I can sleep without the covers,
Knowing that he is powerless
And that red is mine again.