357

Shrunk with fear of a destiny she cannot comprehend
She hovers in a corner filled with dirty magazines
And cobwebs
Whitewashed walls splattered red and brown
of new and of old
The ceiling drips water from god-knows-where
Stained and peeling
She stares at a man saddened with youth
Sees him smile and doesn't understand why
She hates it so much
She feels the breath on her eyes As she
closes them
To pretend it's a soft breeze off a Jamaican coast
Warm and constant
But the smell is wrong
And the feel of his body pressing her against the
colored wall
Is wrong
This is not of the dream
she wanted
Oh she wanted so much
Too much to wish for
He takes her strongly into his arms
Only to throw her down again (to safety?)
onto a mattress
Where she sinks lower
Trying to hide between the thin, worn-out yellow sheets
They were once pretty, too
Trying to bury her head beneath the foam pillows
To drown out the noise of his heaving breath
His anticipated sigh of unsatisfaction
She waits

for him to touch her once again
To feel the grasp on her leg
Pulling her away,
again
He sees her tears running freely from her swollen eyes
He smiles and brushes them away Trying to comfort her in her fear
He says *I love you*
And throws her against the wall
She whimpers
While he strokes her hair And tells her his dreams
Promising she can make them come true

Jessica Harris