



THE QUEEN'S  
COMMONWEALTH ESSAY COMPETITION 2019

# *GOLD AWARD*



*2019*

This is to certify that the Royal Commonwealth Society, on  
recommendation of the judges, has awarded this certificate to:

**Tayyaba Noor**



**Dr Linda Yueh**  
*Chair*

**Dr Diana Owen OBE**  
*Chair of Junior Judging Panel*

**Vicki Wienand**  
*Chair of Senior Judging Panel*



THE ROYAL COMMONWEALTH SOCIETY

## *The place I feel connected to*

Ethan's words fall out of his mouth like vapour but land in my guts like nails. I feel my insides tear apart, and the blood drain from my face. I would laugh but he is downbeat serious. His eyes are cold and his features immobile. He hands back the birthday present I gave him just last week but, I let it fall as soon as, its weight hits my palm. There is a riotous sound of metal as the box crashes on the murky pathway, but neither of us moves to pick it up.

"You're kidding, right?" I ask, my voice shaking, as his eyes meet mine for the last time.

"No, Talia, it's over." He slowly turns away, shoulders sunken and his hands in his pockets.

"I guess it is," I gulp down a sob and try to keep my composure as he walks away. My heart pierces with pain as, tears of regret blur my vision. I want to beg, plead, get down on my knees and ask him to stay, but I know that face. It is the one he wears when his ears are shielded, and his mind has put up barriers to all new information.

The bitterness is rising like bile into my mouth, and when he's gone, I am left with no reason to swallow it. His words hit me hard, piercing into me and ripping me apart into little, tiny pieces. It feels as if, a red hot, sizzling coal is being placed into my chest, it glows and burns at the same time, but it did not cool down quickly, like coal in water, it throbs and tortures with all its strength and there is no relief to be found.

As I sit on the crusty log facing the silver-blue lake, my head hangs low, heavy with thoughts of him.

The lake in front of me lies sparkling in the bright light of the glorious, full moon. It mirrors the glimmering, dark sky above, both of them sprinkled with bright hues of silver. With the gray, moonlit sky hovering over it, the lake beholds a wondrous view that would leave you with a deep sense of serenity as, you stare in ecstasy at the expanse of blue-lagoon that lay before you. It is sprinkled with a slate grey mist that hangs over the lake like a veil. The only sounds that break the eerie silence is the soft whispering of the lush green trees that ring around the lake and the subtle movements of the glassy water as it, sways with the delicate wind.

I have never felt this alone, and yet only he had the power to cure the empty feeling in my heart. And that's why I came here...

This lake is the only place I feel connected to him. It is the place where we first looked into each other's eyes and said the three words that left our hearts with a feeling like no other, where we wrapped ourselves with each other's warmth and felt the need to never let go, where we first felt the rush of electricity that shot with each touch which brought us closer but, left us craving for more.

My mind drifts to the last time I came here. It was the day, we had our first fight, and I ended up leaving him.

I remember him coming to this lake, filled with pain in his eyes because, he knew he messed up.

I remember that feeling of relief, when he saw me sitting on this log, in this exact position.

I remember when he ran to me and wrapped me up with his warmth, comforting every cell in my body with his embrace.

I remember the sparks of joy that exploded in my chest, screaming, I loved this man sitting next me, with every ounce of my being and wasn't willing to let go of this beautiful soul, in the next billion years and more...

"I love you", I whispered, my voice shuddering, as I opened my eyes.

These were the memories that have a special place in my heart, and they will forever be cherished, with every ounce of love and passion they hold...

And I know that, even though he took everything when he left, there was something he forgot to take. It was this lake. Which tells our story from the day he said he loved me to, the day he left me...