

## PENN KEMP

### Gender Bias Even Among the Elements

The hurricane was first named for the saint's day on which it surfaced, stark mnemonic.

The World War 2 meteorologists plotted Pacific storms by women's names. Ever

since 1980, hurricanes are called equally after men and women. And so we learn—

"Much gender bias is more automatic, ambiguous and ambivalent than people

typically assume." The more masculine the name, the more respect for a hurricane.

Sound familiar? Bring on mysteries inherent in the mélange between culture and element.

Our system of belief has no limit but it does have confused and complicated consequence.

"Researchers find that female-named hurricanes kill about twice as many people as similar male-

named hurricanes because some people underestimate them. Americans expect male hurricanes

to be violent and deadly, but they mistake female hurricanes as dainty or wimpish and don't take

adequate precautions." Such silly assumptions neglecting the power of words end in salt tears.

Beware an errant hurricane named for women: the female ever more dangerous than the male.

*Activist poet/playwright Penn Kemp is London's inaugural Poet Laureate, with twenty-six books of poetry/drama and ten CDs. As Western's Writer-in-Residence, she produced Luminous Entrance: Sound Opera for Climate Change Action (DVD). She hosts Gathering Voices, Radio Western. Quattro Books published Jack Layton: Art in Action, which she edited.*

## SAEREEN QURESHI

### The Sun

My heart is like the night,  
so dark that every thing is a  
surprise.

I am deeply scared,  
because the stars can't hear my  
cries.

And the moon seems to glow,  
as I wait for you to rise.

### Happy Birthday!

You came into this world,  
as delicate as a flower.

You received two clouds,  
with love to shower.

As you grow,  
and blossom your own way,  
the garden seems more beautiful,  
when you arrived that day.

### Happiness

A smile on the chin,  
is all but a grin.  
But the true laughter,  
is what comes from within.

### True Love

Love is a lot,  
like the wind.  
It gets carried away,  
with little things.

I thought of this song for the movie  
The Lion King:

The beat of the drums,  
the beat of the heart.  
When your in love,  
you can't tell them apart.

*Saereen Qureshi is a fourth year student in Political Science at York University. She has published poems and articles in journals and newspapers.*