

**POETRY –THIRD PLACE**  
**Baby Bottles and Algebra II**

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“Wait till you’re married,” my mom used to say,  
I rolled my eyes and looked away.  
“Because I know there will come a time in your life,”  
I wanted to tell her, but I was scared that it would cause strife.

I thought I was invincible to disease,  
And me get pregnant, please!  
They warned us in health, told us the stats,  
But I was much too stubborn to believe any of that.

I couldn’t concentrate one day in Algebra II,  
I thought maybe I had come down with the flu.  
I went home and decided to check,  
And when I read the word positive my mind became a wreck.

I approached my boyfriend the next day after school,  
He looked at me as though I was a fool.  
Then he proceeded to tell me, “We’re through,”  
In my head I recalled how he had recently said, “I will always love you.”

Nine months later with Lorelai in my arms,  
I looked down at my bracelet filled with silver charms.  
One charm read “Happy 14<sup>th</sup>,” and another said “Mom,”  
To see these next to each other seemed so wrong.

Soon after I returned to school,  
I had to abide by the fifteen-day absence rule.  
My Algebra II teacher asked why my homework was incomplete,  
And I sheepishly said that Lorelai wouldn’t sleep.

My body could no longer take all of this stress,  
Homework awaited me as I changed into a post-maternity dress.  
“I love Lorelai, but how can this be,”  
I cried and bounced my child on my knee.

I sat down in a rocking chair,  
And gave Lorelai attention and care.  
To my left were baby bottles,  
And to my right, were unfinished Algebra II problems.