

- By: Kaitlyn Hammerle
- Grade: 12th
- School: Boyne Falls Public School

Roof Work Bullets (Inspired by Warsan Shire)

It is 8:15 a.m. 2 days after the Oxford High School shooting in Oxford Michigan.

I walk into school after seeing our American flag is at half-mast.

A cop greets me at the door;

I don't usually run this late but our keys got lost today.

I am asked if there was anyone behind me when I pulled up to school.

On any other day I think this question is harmless,

But today my blood runs cold.

They do not ask me this because the bell will ring soon;

They asked me this to be sure the cop sees every face that walks through the doors.

Those doors that are supposed to keep us inside,

Away from threats.

Those doors that could be broken by any shot taken at them.

1:00 p.m. and our school is getting roof work done.

This is normal, but each footstep I hear on the roof freezes my heart,

And then lets it go once silence falls again.

1:30 p.m. I'm writing my name on a bubble sheet so I can begin my test.

Someone drops something big on the roof right above our heads.

Nothing happens, but never have I been so quick to hide myself,

To look one of my classmates in the eyes as to say "this is it."

And "we have to take cover." ...

Our class falls silent, in quiet reflection of the events 2 days past.

I have never seen such fear in someone's eyes as I did with that classmate of mine.

I know above all that I looked just the same,
Wondering if that noise from above our heads was the first shot of many.

3:05 p.m. I ride the bus home, after waving to the police officer standing at our doors.

I walk from my bus stop towards my house.

I put my feet in my door.

I come home.

A pleasure those Oxford kids didn't get the chance to have,

And never will.

9:00 p.m. I wash my face, brush my teeth, and climb into bed.

I think of those kids who will never go to college,

Who won't get to have families of their own,

whose families are now trying to fill the space left behind by them,

As I drift into sleep,

My dreams are filled with gunshots,

And the blood of my classmates soaking our schools' carpets.

Those doors did not stop the gun,

The officer was the first one dead.