

Friends by Alex Gerstein

They really don't get it, do they?
All those days where I came downstairs,
So hopeful, convincing myself that today will be better.
I spend my lunchtime picking at my food,
A book in my lap,
And they take it for silence.
All the times I told them I'm fine,
I had thought they could see through me.
I used to be transparent, wearing my emotions on my sleeves.
Now I'm opaque and blank as a clear sky.
They'll never understand me.
They're used to being surrounded by friends,
Craving their approval.
Well, that's not me.
If my lunch period was a canvas,
They'd be bright colors, the ones you notice first.
I'd be white paint.
If you don't look hard enough, you'd never know I was there.
That's friends for you.
Things used to be fine, until they weren't,
And we became divided.
But I can't help worrying that it's because of me.
It's all my fault.
I'm my own scapegoat, I tear at what's left until there's a shell of myself;
Hollow and made of doubt.
Did I make a mistake?
An unknown slip-up that cost me my spot
At the table where I used to feel at home.

"Friends" by Alex Gerstein – Wood Oaks Junior High, North Brook