



## SHADOW

free verse  
Janie Ripps | 8

Everywhere I go, you are there  
You are all people see in me  
You are all everyone compares me to  
Your achievements, I am expected to fulfill  
My actions always pale in comparison to yours

“Stop following me” I say  
The constant competition is tiring  
I need some time alone

“Get out of mind”  
But my thoughts  
Seem to be yours as well

People say I look like you  
They say I talk like you  
But how can they tell if it is me talking or you?  
If it is my brain or yours?  
Your reputation or mine?

How do I make my own way,  
When you are always looming over me?  
We are the same, but so different

When will you disappear?  
When will it finally be my turn?

When will my decisions be my decisions?  
And never ones that you had to make before me

You follow me around  
Everywhere I go

But it seems obvious  
To everyone but me  
That we are not one

My decisions will be my decisions  
The moment I have to make them

You will always have come before me,  
But my job isn't to outshine you

Your shadow trails me,  
But only now do I realize that it's mine