

Academic Integrity

After three ten-page papers and two more to go,
It may be easy to just ctrl+c two or three or even five
Lines of words that are not your own

And ctrl+v into a document, fiddle with a phrase or so,
Save as with your name and date
Turn it in without predicament (no one knows)

But the thought will linger in your mind
Brew like dark coffee, bitter grinds steeping, releasing
The taste of guilt as uneasiness trails behind

So before you press send, consider this:
Someone else spent sleepless nights
Sinking into a seemingly dark abyss

To hopefully claw out an argument
That the world has never considered nor seen
And cast light, stir minds, even split

Apart a theory, the atom, something oft held true
Or bring beauty to stuff forgotten
Because they were brazen, because they wanted to

That is integrity: to pursue a noble goal
In honesty and fairness, in the face of laziness or opposition
Or the decency to quote the one
Who helped bring you one step closer to graduation.