

20th Annual Poetry Contest 2019 Winners-Youth

Grades 2-3

Evan F.

“Baseball”

Ball

Amazing

Score

Entertaining

Bat

Awesome

Lead your team

Learn how to play

Reese C.

“Meatloaf, No Thank You”

I just don't like meatloaf. Don't be upset with me.

It feels real funny in my mouth.

You get it don't you see.

It tastes like feet and crusty toes.

There's gravy that goes on top, eww, I have to plug my nose.

I really prefer chicken nuggets and fries.

Just don't tell my mom it just might make her cry.

Mia P.

“Dancer”

Swish, swish goes the skirt.

Tap, tap goes the shoes.

And music rattles the floor.

I am as happy as a golden retriever.

I am dancing.

My teacher is a graceful swan.

She knows all the right steps.

My heart beats like a factory machine.

The studio is a warm hug.

I am dancing.

Emerson S.

“The Fish in the Ocean”

The fish swim in the ocean

keeping up with the motion
as each wave passes by

The fish swim in the ocean
within low tide going with
the flow the ocean sends by

The fish are so bright then
colors reflect in the light
as they jump between tides

The fish swim in the coral reef
with their fins against open water
as they ride by the high tide

As the waves pass by
the fish swim in the high tide
and they pass by the coral reef

Lennah W.

“F on my Test”

I got an F on my standardized test.
I don't know why. I did my best!
I studied and studied and studied some more.
Until I couldn't feel the floor.
My grade is a mystery.
I don't know how.
I don't know why.
Maybe because I'm a cow, I cry.

Grades 4-5

Elly F.

“Spring”

Winter's gone spring is here
Flowers bloom summers near.
Children laugh and
Days are sunny
Skies are clear and The cherry trees bloom. There are rivers to wade in and puddles to jump in. there
swings to swing on and slides to slide on. It's spring again and soon it will be summer.

Kirsten F.

“Kirsten the Volleyball Player”

I play volleyball just for fun,
I play volleyball in the sun.
Volleyball is always on my mind,
But the ball is not always kind!
Volleyball is my life.

It's mine.
I play volleyball all the time.
I play volleyball while I rhyme!
I wear a jersey that's bright red,
On the back 'FRANK' is what it said.
I play volleyball and I won't stop,
I play volleyball till' I drop!

Abigail H.

“Pointe Shoes”

Emma S.

“The Wolf in the Night”
The wolf prowls at night
His eyes glow bright
Eyes glow like two burning coals
Teeth gleam in the moonlight
He prowls until moon rises at full height
As he passes the tombstones
Passes
Movement catches his eye
Fox

He snarls
He crouches, ready
Ready to die
Or eat
One step forward
Clouds cover the moon
The forest is shrouded in darkness
Muscles like iron
Lunges
Slash
Scream

He bites its neck
Pain shoots through his thigh
Blood is everywhere
The wolf's teeth close on the Great Vein
Burst
Death
Food for the wolf
Veni, Veni, Vici
I came, I saw, I conquered

Brandon V.

“Ode to Testing”
Oh, testing

how I hate you so
every time I hear you
I think I gotta go

Oh, testing
you make me want to hurl
I get anxiety about you
and you make my head swirl

Oh, testing
the studying is a pain
I go home and study for hours
for a test that's very lame

Oh, testing
then theirs the prep
I know it's supposed to help you
but it always takes me down a step

James Y.
“Good Versus Evil”

Kamrynn A.
“Flowers”

Tabitha A.
“The Brook”
The brook is a lovely little thing
The prettiest I have ever seen
Day and night
It flows and flows
And I do wonder
Where it goes

Christian C.
“Beach”

Ava D.
“Summer Wishes”
Summer is over and Fall has begun,
Oh how I miss that summer sun!
I wish that it could be summer once more,
I wish that I could wear flip- flops out the door.
I wish that I would see the Ice cream truck,
But it seems as if I'm out of luck.
I wish that I didn't have to wear a jacket,
I wish that I could be swinging a tennis racket!
I wish I was swimming in a pool,

But now the breeze is far too cool.
Summer is over and Fall has begun,
I wish that I could still have all that fun!

Peyton F.

“Be You!”

Katherine G.

“Sunlight”

Morning falls on a town as the giant sun beams brightly to all awake.
The orange, red, and pink sky is a magnificent sight to see.
The sun flies by overhead, like a horse galloping across a field.
It makes the hills and trees look vivid green like mint.
At first, it's a soft warm blanket before it becomes a heated blanket.
You wish it would stay forever you never want the Beautiful sun to leave.
You'll never forget the mornings when you get to see the rising.
All that will be left will be the mountains, the sun and us.

Tyler H.

“Bears”

Jordyn H.

“Mario”

Mykala L.

“My Happy Place”

As the sun was saying hello,
and the wind started to sing
the salty air danced around me
as the wind played with my hair
I thought, “This is my happy place.”

Ethan M.

“Dog”

ViviAnne P.

“New Year”

Kaylynn S.

“Summer Night”

The sun is still out
I'm getting ready for bed
All the birds are chirping in my head
I love the summer nights you see

There is no other place I'd rather be
Then in the sky just you and me

As we float by in this wonderful
Summer Night.

Miranda S.

“Ode to Sunny”

Sunny my cute little bandit.
Your little paws,
soft as a pillow.
Your fur so fluffy,
I could cuddle you forever.
Claws like a whetted needle.
The rings of your
tail go on and on.
Your nose like a squishy.
I need more, more, more.

Sunny, my love, so active.
I adore how you pounce
from rock to rock.
Climbing my leg like it's a tree!
Scavenging like a mink on the beach.

Sunny, I praise you!
Your existence, love, curiosity.
You're playful, loyal, sweet.
You melt my heart
like s'mores over a fire.
Sunny, I love you!
Life before you was dismal.
Now I am ecstatic! Complete!
Vagrant you will never be.
Home is with me.

Evan W.

“Cello vs. Trumpet

Grades 6-7

Nicholas A.

“Anger”

Anger shades over me
Anger is a bad case of chickenpox
It looks like a shade of darkness
It feels like a kangaroo kicking you
It tastes like a rotten mushroom
Anger smells like rotten eggs.
It sounds like claws scratching against chalkboard
Anger is like a river of lava
Anger is like your head catching on fire

Autumn C.

“Depression”

Depression on some days is as big as a bear
Depression is a loaded gun
Depression looks like spikes on a cloudy day
It feels like a stabbing wave of pain
It tastes like poison in your blood
Depression smells like a fire burning in your soul
It sounds like thunder crashing and screaming help
Depression is a grizzly bear scratching at your heart
Depression is a killer coming for you
And it always wins the fight for your mind

Jalynn D.

“Happiness”

Happiness sprints through the streets
Happiness is a wonderful look on everything
It looks like a happy puppy
It feels like a soft cloud
Happiness smells like beautiful roses
It sounds like the laughter of a grandpa
Happiness is a wonderful feeling
Happiness is caressing us all

Lena D.

“Navy Blue Is”

The sound of ships moving,
The smell of midnight ocean water as it swishes,
The taste of cold refreshments on a hot spring day,
The feel of soft smooth silk laid out perfectly,
The touch of slow cold wind breezing by.

Emilie J.

“Depression”

Depression grabs
It hides behind a mask so you can't see it
Depression is a shadow that no one can see
It looks like a thunderstorm
It feels like death
It tastes like the saltiness of tears
It smells like the air of the early morning
It sounds like the crying of someone you lost
Depression is a shadow that no one can see
Depression grabs me
It hides behind a mask so no one can see it

Camden L.

My Special Person: Grandma
Her favorite game was twister
She played it with her friends before her Mister
Her favorite show was Ed Sullivan
At least when she was a youngin
Her favorite book to read was Nancy Drew
She didn't have a favorite restaurant because
she couldn't afford to
She would eliminate electronics so we can have more
Personal interaction
She said I hope that will be as easy as basic subtraction
Her favorite music was a Beatles album
She played on a record player not a radio because
They didn't have em
Back then the famous hairstyle was the Flip Bob
When she was real young she got a job
Her favorite song was I Want To Hold Your Hand
Did you know that the group that wrote that was
The Beatles/her favorite band
Her favorite dance was the Twist
You can cross that dance off the 70's list
A brand new car was \$3000 and it was the most expensive item
They didn't have phones,so letters they had to write them
She used to play with Barbie dolls
No phones, so they couldn't pick up calls
One famous car back then was a Charger
Our sports equipment today is much larger
She had a lot of things to do like bike riding
The hard part was just deciding
A game she played was The Game Of Life
She did this before she became a wife
They didn't have text messages to send
That's all folks because this is the End

Nicholas M.

"The beach"
Oh, the beach.
So sunny, so sweet.
Wind whirls and twirls.
happy as could be.
Coast side.
as the wind whirls and water washes I sing a song so calm, so strong.
Wind twirling, sand storms, water waves.
So Delicately and calmly as its soft waves softly cross the sand.
Oh, the beach.
So beautiful, so sweet.

Gianna M.

“Love”

Love is in the air running all around. Love is an Open Book, It looks like a meadow of flowers blowing in the wind, It feels like the sun on my shoulders on a summer day, it tastes like refreshing ice cream on a hot day.

Love smells like a thousand roses, it sounds like birds chirping early in the morning

Love is a big ocean waiting to be discovered

Love is swinging in a park

Love is waiting to yell my name.

Cole A.

“The Forgotten Book”

A book lay still on a wooden shelf as the dust around it grew

What lay inside its crisp white pages, well sadly no one knew

This book has sat in the same position for years upon years upon years

The more each person passed it the bigger grew its tears

The book lay still and undisturbed

As each second past, it became more perturbed

All the book wanted was to be read

But after a while the book’s dreams were dead

Until some hero came along

A determined reader, bright and strong

He picked up the book and started to read

A story of a knight and his noble steed

He dropped the book on the checkout counter, it landed with a pound

The book felt that his purpose had finally been found

The man took the book home and read it until the end

The book finally found his purpose, a new life, a new friend

Hope B.

“Decision”

There once was a moody moonball

Who thought she could go very high

Until she fell down

And looked like a clown

She knew that she would never fly.

She wallowed in her sorrow

Imperceptible in the sky

Until tomorrow

Where all the sorrow

Gave her the hope to go and fly

She finally felt ready

Lots of determination too

She went to the sky
And she went so high
She can do it, and so can you.

Emmalee B.

“Happy Birthday, Dad!”
For this dad that stands by me
So happy, so joyful, he fills me with glee
He has taught me many things throughout my life
ABCs, numbers and shapes without strife
He’s also taught me how to play the guitar
He drives me where I want to go in our car
He also taught me how to walk and talk
And how to also draw on the sidewalk with some chalk

His birthday is today when he turns 41
He watched my volleyball games when we lost and won
He is smart and funny and amazing and great
I remember the time when he came through the gate
When we threw him a surprise party when it was late
I am so happy, I am so glad
When I get home I’m gonna yell “Happy Birthday, Dad!”

Tessa D.

“Stars”
Stars are looking down
Watching from above
Protecting and guiding
all the ones they love
because when you loose a loved one
it might just help to know
that your loved one really isn't gone
and will never ever go
because your truly beloved
isn't very far
want to know just where to look
then look up at the stars.

Loreal E.

“Forever”
They say forever is a long time
it is as far as I know
but let's see how far this "love" goes
If I give you my all, would you still let me fall

And my heart is not a game
And every touch is a fickle frame
I've been cracked before, don't shatter me more

I'm here for you hold me tight

Hold me tight till it feels right
when the night is cold
and we get old
stay forever

Tristan F.

“Humans”

One water molecule in the ocean of the universe
What we do just makes our planet worse.
We aren't special.
We are inconsequential.
We just leave bad omens.

Humans are selfish.
We look for short term gains.
Which on our part is foolish.
It gives me pains.

We need to save the earth,
And not let it die.
We need a rebirth.
It is time to say goodbye,
To the old ways.
And not standby and gaze.

Caitlyn G.

“An Inspiration”

She found joy in everything.
I wonder if she loved to sing.
Believing there was always good,
even if no one else ever would.
She definitely had a heart of gold.
I'm betting she was very bold.
This is Anne Frank a jewish girl,
who went through more than a hurricanes big whirl.
She was alive during a big war,
Fighting on the battle floor.
She was taken away even though she was a fighter.
And her dad made her a published writer
She's an inspiration every day
And I wouldn't see her in any other way.

Catey G.

“Ode to my Sketchbook”

You held my hopes
Dreams and secrets within every page

Treasured memories placed perfectly peacefully

Every line like a song
With a rhyme of colors
Perfect imperfections
Coat every surface

A sketchbook holds more than drawings
It holds the artist soul.

Amber H.

“Calm Waters”
The ocean is so large,
Yet so very silent.
I’d rather be there
Where everything is quiet.

The land is so loud,
And it makes me so scared.
Sometimes I think
That nobody cares.

The human voice
Is one I’ve learned to hate,
The way people scream,
Using innocent ears as bait.

A man’s voice
Seems to kill the world.
Those hateful, obnoxious,
Loud loud words.

The thing about the ocean
Is all that is heard,
The silent, the still,
The waves of the horde.

I hope to go there
Someday soon.

To go to the light
Of a quiet
Ocean
Life.

Lucy H.

“Our Society”
The labels that we got from our society

has given us so much anxiety
And when we try to escape
It feels like we are stuck behind tape
But when you feel like you're stuck behind a great wall
You just have to stand ever so tall
When you get pushed down
Don't let yourself drown
Get back up even higher
And set the wall on fire

Sophia M.

“Differences”

We all are different, this is true
There are many ways to tell me from you
Personalities, thoughts, what we think of other people
But whether we feel sad, or whether we feel regal

We are all the same, we are all human,
If you cease to see this, you just need to zoom in,
Look inside, look in our hearts,
And if you do, a companionship may start

That stranger, that outsider, could be your friend,
And if this pays forward, what could end,
Is the stereotyping of all in the nation,
And people might find that it's good, a variation

Gage M.

“Baseball”

I am pacing
My hands are sweaty
My heart is Racing
But I was Ready
The pitcher lets go
Then I blew it away
I finally got to show
What was to happen one day

Emma P.

“The Isolated Star”

The lonely star shining up in the sky
No one to say hi or goodbye
The star imagined having a friend
Someone to hang with until the end

The star shining keeping all the planets warm
Even when all he wanted to do was storm

Doing his job always so good
But sometimes he wanted to put up his hood

Crying again looking out into the void,
What he saw was actually an asteroid
It was finally clear that he was not alone
What he had only imagined had just become what he had known

Alexandra S.

“The Raging Storm”
The wind is blowing
Like a strong fist, punching me
No stopping the force

Jake S.

“Reach for the sky”
Every time I reach for the sky,
I nearly touch, but I don’t qualify.
As if there is this barrier,
That makes me hungrier,
Hungrier for a retry.

I leap again, only to get further.
This is useless altogether
I get closer and closer.
But at the same time,
I feel like I only get further.

Until at one point in time,
I hear the birds chime.
I reach for the sky
Then I start to fly.
Then I touch, then I qualify.

Ava S.

“The Feeling of Music”
The sound of music flows through my head
It gives me comfort and peace when I’m laying in bed
As I look out the window and gaze at the moon
I become sentimental at the sound of the tune
The words flow in my right ear and stop at my left
The melody leaves me breathless and unstressed

Even when there is a sea of thundering noise
I can still feel the passion and overflow with joy
When I wake up every morning I depend on a dose of tones
I try to control the powerful force but music is in my bones
As I pamper my face and brush my hair

I still hear the sound of harmony in the air

When I come into class and do my school work
There is a small and faint sound of notes that always seem to lurk
At the end of the day, when I am feeling down
I can always play my music without turning it down
As I look at the moon with one more glance
I think to myself I love the sound of music and I soon begin to dance

Grades 8-9

Isabelle B.

“Invisible”

I sit on the bus,
Waiting for someone to notice my crying,
But nobody ever noticed us.
The invisible ones.

The ones who cry alone.
The ones who never dare speak about the way they're feeling.
No one notices until we're hanging from the ceiling,
They just sit there and watch us like we're stone.

We're still healing,
From all this pain,
All this bad in the world.
From all this emotional baggage we're carrying around.

We drive ourselves insane.
Living in this constant rain.
Will anybody ever notice us?
I hope so.

When we finally decide to show ourselves,
It'll be the best feeling in the world.
When I finally decided to make myself known,
I didn't regret it.

I didn't feel alone.
Everyone asked me about me, how I was feeling.
It felt good to feel loved for once.
It felt good to be seen.

Kelsie C.

“Seasons love”

I think of you every springtime,
When all the flowers bloom.
I think of you in the summer,
Sitting under the stars and moon.

I think of you in the fall,
With everything growing tall.
I think of you in the winter,
When we have our first snow fall.
Always know I love you and you are in my heart,
When you here love, nothing can tear us apart.

Brenna D.

“Wouldn’t It”

The summer air was warm,
The city would fill with laughter
But then the season would change,
Wouldn’t it?

The air becomes chill,
The leaves begin to turn and eventually fall
But then the season would change,
Wouldn’t it?

The air turns cold and snow fills the air
The streets become silent
But then the season would change
Wouldn’t it?

The air gets warmer
Allergies arrive
But then the season would change
Wouldn’t it?

Olivia F.

“An Ode to Growing Up”

We would wish on stars
And laugh ‘til we cry
Dream of unicorns and Mars
Watch our days go by

We wished to grow older
But little did we know
That the world would be colder
And covered in snow

Why weren’t we taught
That being young was smart
And that when we fought
Insults go to heart

We fantasized our futures
Wishing life would hurry up
We should have captured it in pictures

For we were young as pups

We only saw the pros
Cars, houses, doing what we want
Then there your childhood goes
Leaving you alone, exposed and gaunt

Some of us moved away
We got jobs and ran off
Some in graves they lay
Leaving us to scoff

But from the deathbed I ly
I'll look back at old memories
And with a whispered voice I'll sigh,
“ Let's cut the pleasantries”

“ I spent so long dreaming of growing
That I didn't stop to savor
For I had no way of knowing
My carefree nature would one day waver”

“ If I was young again
I would live while I could
I haven't laughed since God knows when
I didn't do everything I should”

“ And now this chapter's closing
And I hope that you know
Childhood is simply dozing
Compared to the adulthood show”

Next time you want to grow up
I want you to see
That being a kid is what you should cherish
Just take it from me

Brittany G.

“Smile”

Taylor G.

“Weightless”

At the top of the hill,
I gaze at the endless
forest of snow-capped
trees stretching out
toward the horizon.

The setting sun shines

against the snow
beneath me, an orange
beam casting its
light on my face,

and I turn my skis
down the steep slope,
my poles pulling
me forward into the
sea of radiant gold.

A hill approaches,
and I'm ready,
my knees bending,
so that the second
I reach the top,

I jump, suddenly
weightless, my
stomach dropping,
a cry of joy
escaping my lips,

before crashing down
to the cold earth,
pain prickling through
my legs, and sliding
over to the lift,

ready to do it again.

Arolyn H.

“Waterfall”

Elsie H.

“Genes”

I sit by the old creek,
the frosted breeze immerses me.
Crisp amber leaves dip towards me.

I glance across the crystallized water
towards the mud-packed slope.

A rusted metal toy tractor peeks out of the dirt.
I pick up the worthless junk.

I see value.
I see history.
I see me.

The man that held me moments after my first swift, quiet breath,
suddenly a young boy,
sloppy golden hair
and ocean eyes.
With a toy tractor, forgotten for a generation.

Somehow through the thirty-seven years of neglect.
I have a relation.
I have a part in its story.

My fingers burn cold as I trudge back towards my grandpa's house
holding my

genes.

Reese J.

“Hope for Freedom”

Geneva K.

“A Waterfall”

Kennedy M.

“Over the river”

There once was a rubber duck
His mind would run amuck
He loved to play
Down by the bay
With the boy who has much luck

One day the duck got lost
In a scary place where he was tossed
Through the river and past the trees
All the way through winter, summer, fall, and spring

Pass the tunnels and through a jungle
He came across a waterfall
And the rubber duck had a great stumble
I wonder if he fell or crawled

He made his way down the river
When a cold chill made him shiver
He made it to the shore and then,
He went home with the little boy again.

I'nya M.

“Purple Rain”

Meyaunni M.

“Red”

It reminds me of the heat,
of flames of a fire,
the spirit of someone who’s fighting for their life, or for their country,
of when the hotness of the water touches my skin.

It reminds me of the love I have for my friends and family. It reminds me of the anger I have when I'm frustrated,
when something happens when I could have prevented it.
Of when I fall and scrape my knee, the blood seeping down my leg.

No one really realizes that some people have never had the blessing of witnessing color,
or to see the beauty of the world that God made for us.
On hot summer evenings, the dark crimson clouds flowing through the sky.

Leah M.

“Ode to the passion flower”

A small explosion
bursting from a vine,
you reach for sunlight.
The finger-like tendrils
shooting out around you
are a crown encircling your bright face.
Your arms, as vines, are strong.
Flexible, with strong intentions.
They hold you up
day and night
so you might tip your head up,
drinking in the warm rays of light
that satisfy
and nourish
your delicate purple being.
You climb, twisting around the woven reeds
that are a trellis.

What are you?
What folkloric land holds your origins?
You are a fleeting thought,
a whispered word,
a lucid dream.
You are the cool escape
of an oasis
in a scalding desert.
An icy lemonade and a good book
on a humid summer day.
A diversion from the world
and a portal
into nature.

You are a soothing nocturne,
soaking up the night
and pouring it into my mind,
the solitary refreshment of the moon.

I want to praise your Creator
and marvel at a small glimpse
of a masterpiece.

Keegan O.

“Society is an Ocean”
Society is an ocean.
It goes far and deep.
So if you hover me over,
And drop me down,
I might just drown.
While testing to stay afloat,
I gasp for air,
But the people on land.
Why would they care?
Your hand touches mine,
Pulling me to shore;
Now I feel sore.
Society is like an ocean,
It goes far and deep,
So when you hovered me over,
And dropped me down,
I did indeed drown.
But one fish,
One fish saved me from the ocean,
The ocean which I call society.

Emma W.

“The Full Empty House”
As I stood in the house
I didn't see the empty space,
the imprints where the furniture had been,
the piles of boxes and
miscellaneous items on the floor.
I didn't see the vacant walls
and uninhabited bedrooms.
I didn't notice the missing smell
of a delicious dinner cooking.
And I didn't notice the silence.

When I stood in the house I saw
old brightly colored Victorian furniture,
framed pictures, neatly distributed on the walls
intricate rugs laying on the old

flattened turquoise carpet.
I saw the table in the cramped dining room
set for a least fifteen people.
And I smelled salty ham, mashed potatoes,
rolls, green beans and sweet tea.
When I stood in the house I saw
people in every room.
I heard the hum of a television,
my Mamaw asking questions,
and my Papaw humming a quiet tune.

When I left the house for the last time,
the walls bare and the floors piled with boxes,
I knew that it would never be empty.

It was too full of memories for that.

Ja'ala W.

“Masa”

No more masa
Whipping, cotton picking, cleaning
No more masa
The tree on my back is no long bleeding
Shackles no longer talking to me
No more masa

Katerina W.

“Blue”

Blue is the color of her eyes so fair,
blue is the color of the crystal morning air

Blue is the color of the ocean in the light,
blue is the color of the sky late at night

Blue is the color of the carpet on my floor
blue is the color of the socks inside my drawer

Blue is the color of a peacock's feather plume,
blue is the color of a baby's painted room

Blue is the color of the jay on my porch,
blue is the color of a newly flaming torch

Blue is the color of the flower in my hair,
blue is the color of my freshly painted chair

Blue is the color of the pool in which I swim
blue is the color of my ideas and my whims

Blue is the color of the sky that God has made
Blue was the color of his tears the night he was betrayed.

Blue was the color of the morning bright and clear,
Blue was the color of sweet Mary's tears, so dear

Blue is the color of the new life that he gave
Now, no longer must we ever fear the grave.

Mary B.

“Aaron Burr”

Katie Y.

“Strife”

There was a sour taste in her mouth.
She was finally out of the drouth,
but her heart was singing a song of sadness.
She no longer felt like a swan without wings,
or like she was slowly sinking in a stream.
Her husband was a destructive animal,
yet she still sat crying.
She had taken his life
and she was his wife,
but he had stolen hers.

Grades 10-12

Andrea B.

“Small Island Journey (Jeju)”

I see,
Water clear as glass
Canopies like blankets,

I smell,
Salty sea water
Flagrant fish frying,

I taste,
Food burning my mouth
Saltwater teasing my lips,

I hear,
Birds chirping and chirping
Waves rushing and rushing,

I touch,
Sand which is fire
Rocks which are sandpaper,

I feel,
The sun beating down
The temperature rising,

Nevertheless,
I love it.

Penny D.

“Dandelions
Reign in realms where other flowers refuse to grow,
Donning golden crowns more regal than the lion’s mane,
Resilient through every season, every eon,
Persisting no matter how hard the ground,
Conquering hillocks, pastures, valleys,
Pavement cracks, garden walls or luscious fields,
When empire’s flames fade, leaving legacy embers,
The winds whisk the ashes as seeds soar ‘round.

Natalie J.

“a pretty peach scar”
don’t touch me

who are you to tell me that
you could hear a pin drop
my chest burns like a wildfire
so much to say but i stay silent

always silent
that’s how they like it

no?

it shouldn't be questioned
but
it always is
i am sure. no is my answer
but
they are dissatisfied

i give in
my existence is to make everyone but myself happy
correct

tears
a flowing stream
fake the smile and move on

the wildfire ignites often
but

wildfires are extinguished with sweet nothings
flesh stays charred
memories are violet scars

don't touch the wound if you want it to heal
she knows
the laceration is exposed
but
eventually it will heal into a pretty peach scar
eventually she will be respected
they will notice.

Paul W.

“Life”

I stood upon the crooked doorstep of my aching mind
To sift through aging memories long sanded down by time
To separate the meshes that were formed by bleary eyes
Too weak to see the burning lights as more than mist upon the skies

I wandered down the foggy streets where my memories are stored
To see past the sleepy haze that obstructs all I must record
To learn the sacred song I am far too weary now to sing
So that I will be ready when the church bells finally ring

I sat in the crumbling study where all my thoughts are forged
To read the holy manuscript that men have so adored
For it wipes away the smoke and it sweeps away the dust
And it peels apart the layers that are melded by the rust

Now I stand upon an open street to fill with dancing dreams
To run freely through the flashing stars, absent of all seams
To leave behind the tears that once drowned everything in strife
And turn a shining corner in this labyrinth of life

Darien Y.

“Hesitation”

Many travel down the river at some point in their lives.
We are called by the promise to sail our ship wherever we please.
To have free reign over the waters, and no restraints but our own abilities.
But often we find ourselves looking backwards
Afraid to sail on or risk losing the safety of land.
We become so addicted to having solid ground beneath our feet that we can't handle the water's
turbulence.
The excitement we once held soon falls to fear
And we wish only to let the wind guide us back home.
But don't lose hope up so soon;
It takes time to learn to sail.

Alex N.

“Amplification Formulation”

The volume of a man
is determined by the volume of his shouts;
and the volume of his shouts
is determined by the width of his soul,
the height of his pain,
and the base of who he is.

Franchesca F.

“Sandcastles”

you've taught me
to carve the sand
and build the sea
psychedelic sandcastles
we never took
pictures of
etched in our minds
with traces of sand
do you remember?
ebbs and f l o w s
the tunnels
built and destroyed

don't become the sand
fragile to the touch
flowing
with
the
wind
fleeing
to
the
sea
drifting
in
deep

Madison M.

“three simple words”

You told me I was wrong and that I never belonged.
My feelings good for nothing more than a slam of the door.
I begged you to reconsider, but instead, you decided to be bitter.
You gave me a cold grin and told me I lived in sin.
Never have I ever felt so alone before.
You said it was just a phase and nothing more.
Maybe someday you'll accept me like before.
But we both know that door closed when I uttered those three simple words.
You will never give me the time of day.

But that won't stop me from praying these words make it your way.
I am me that is all I have ever wanted to be.
Maybe someday you will learn that people don't live by your decree,
And that everybody has the right to be.

Mztyc M.

“Child”

Cora O.

“Girls”

fingertips brushing against each other
the slight friction isn't enough
for the attention we so desperately crave

fairy light kisses on top of eyelids
bring us warmth we've never felt
lips pressed together like petals
soft delicate flowers paired with
a raindrop sheen

soft skin and freckled noses touch
intimacy tastes like sweet strawberries
and feels summer mornings
tangled in silk sheets
kissed by a warm breeze

“you're an angel”
words dancing on the tip of a tongue
sweet breathless nothings
in brightly lit rooms