



Will Dorais, Grade 7



Emma Shepard, Grade 8

Dover Public Library's 23rd Annual Poetry Contest May 2025

We received 275 entries in this year's contest and this booklet contains the winning poems. Poems were judged in seven categories: grades K-2, 3 & 4, 5 & 6, 7 & 8, 9 & 10, 11 & 12, and adults ages 18 and older.

We would like to thank our judges for 2025:

Marcia Goodnow
Lesley Hocking
Donna McAdam
Jessica Purdy
Lauren Vermette

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Keane Fruh, Grade 7

Poisonous Sweet Potatoes

I come down for dinner time.
I am always picking the meal

B

U

T

Then my sister comes along and
makes dinner a nightmare.
She says for dinner she wants
sweet potatoes.
And the thought of that hurts my throat,
the horrible
poisonous
creatures.
I DO NOT want them to go down my
throat!

Allison Wangerin, 1st place
Category K-2, Grade 2



Marcellus Chase, Grade 6



Gavin Arlin, Grade 6



Imogen McKinney, Grade 8

Pink

Pink is a color I like

Pink is the color of my bike

Pink is my favorite color

Pink is the color of happiness

Pink is when I snuggle up with my cat

Pink is the color of roses

Pink is the color of my favorite shirt

Pink is the color of love

I love pink



Evelyn Chisamore, Grade 7



Sydney Belair, Grade 8

Wiggly Tooth

On Saturday I had a wiggly tooth.

I bit into an apple.

On Sunday it got a little bit wigglier.

But on Monday I went to school. Instead of
doing work, I wiggled my tooth all day.

The teacher said, "Do your work!"

I said, "My work is wiggling my tooth."

Max Montini, 3rd place
Category K-2, Grade 2



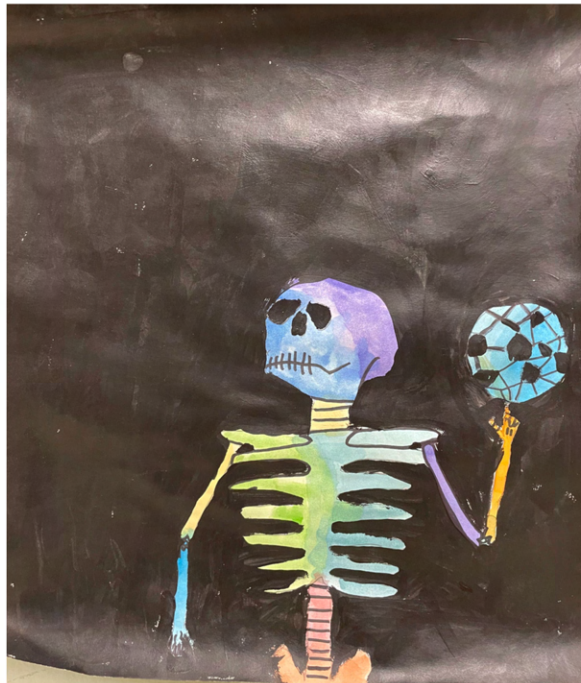
Alex Perkins, Grade 5



Sydney Childers, Grade 6



Ernie Laban, Grade 7



Eli Johnson, Grade 7

Dance

twisting and twirling and having fun.

I love all the moments I get to spend with my mom.

we listen to songs and sing in the car. we love long rides and go far,

our favorite thing to do is dance in the rain.

the moment it starts I call my mom's name,

we go out and look up in the sky, its raining and pouring we pretend we can fly,

we dance and dance and have so much fun Before you know it here comes the sun.

Sophie Marshall, Honorable Mention
Category K-2, Grade 2



Lottie Olkkola, Grade 8



Kristin Rawung, Grade 8



Novie Moll, Grade 8

Landscape

There's a picture of a slighted rainfall
peeking behind a broken glass,
a dark candle in the window frame,
an uneaten piece of fruit on the table,
a broken chair next to the door,
shapeless stains on the walls,
an old crucifix forgotten on the floor,
two old coins next to the fruit.

There's a sea of shores that have already withered
on the sand where your footprints no longer exist,
a rock molded by the pounding of the waves,
a storm that nestles in the palm trees.

There's cold and there's silence in this painting without you.

Pablo Lopez De Anda, Honorable Mention
Category Adult, Dover, NH



WHAT WOULD WE DO THEN?

Try to think how it would be
If the world was different
Not how it would be
Say tubes were tubs or tubs were tubes
Oh what would we do then?
And say that dads were flags or flags were dads
Oh what would we do then?
It would be very hard to have a bath in a tube
And it it impossible talk through a tub
What if bees were bugs or bugs were bees
Oh what would we do then?
And what if dudes were moods or moods were dudes
Oh what oh what would we do then?
But these things could come true if you try hard enough
So think before you wish or do because it changes a lot if you do
And may I add
I never heard of a nerd bird herd

Emmanuel Teal, 1st place
Category 3 & 4, Grade 3

Beyond the Waves

Have you ever wondered what lies beyond the sea?

The coral reefs filled with colors,
the swaying seaweed,
the schools of fish wrapping in and out of coral and
rocks.

The mothers of the baby sea turtles wondering if
their babies made it,
if she will ever see them is a mystery.

The sharks with their many stories,
sad how evil they are thought to be.

One day there will be answers to these questions
told by me, the sea.

Logan Myers, 2nd place (tie)
Category 3 & 4, Grade 4



Julia Martin, Grade 5

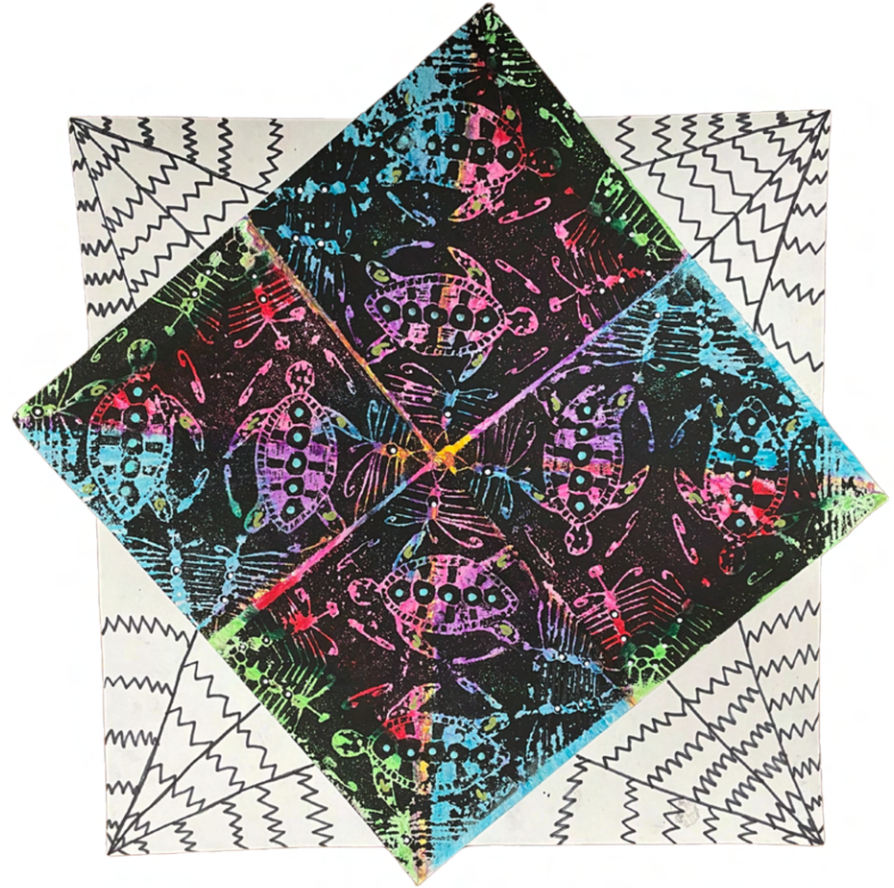
An Ode to the Moon

Thank you for your protection while
watching me grow up.
Your moonlight has provided serenity
since my adolescence.
I am not your first apprentice,
nor your last.

Upon the night sky you have guided me,
enlightened me,
by being a constant in my life.
Staying up late into the night,
seeking to get a glimpse of you.
Let go of me now, it's time
we take care of you.

Your cool, motherly embrace
has given me strength.
Alone, I gaze upon the atmosphere
and try to encounter you.
Even between the clusters of
luminous stars echoing in the abyss,
I still can meet your gaze.

Allow me to sing this ode for you.



Eleanor Gourd, Grade 6

Belle Giguere, 3rd place
Category Adult, Dover, NH

Coffee Ice Cream

Coffee ice cream so smooth and nice
It does not have a bad price
Ad it gets my sweet tooth groovin'

On days that I'm beat
Tasting ice cream so sweet
Gets me movin'

It's brown color is so light
Coffee ice cream makes me happy and bright
Keeping it all for myself, hehe

Everly Bazo, 2nd place (tie)
Category 3 & 4, Grade 4



Alice Jordan, Grade 7

The Kiss of Aphrodite

Kiss me, Aphrodite.
Let your golden waves crash into me.
Draped like silk around my shoulders
until it's time to tie it back --
until you're ready to begin.

Kiss me, Aphrodite,
like you've never kissed anyone before.
A moment suspended in time,
.where only we exist.

Let me taste the wanting on your lips,
swim in your sugar-slick sweetness
until you pull me back up for air.

Kiss me, Aphrodite.
Bring me into your chambers
and do what you will.

Lead me in the tango of desire
and I will follow you --
all the way into the dark.

Your whispers – my guide
through the storm of longing,
where I surrender to this divine encounter.

Ry Friese, 2nd place
Category Adult, Dover, NH

Adam Taylor, Grade 8



Beauty of Nature Haiku Poem

When you really look,
everything is Beautiful.
Just open your heart.

Amos Johannessen, Third Place
Category 3 & 4, Grade 3

Earthquakes and elephants

Earthquakes are like elephants

They stomp big and bold
and then they get what they want.

Garrett Brown, Honorable Mention
Category 3 & 4, Grade 4



Marek Surina, Grade 5



Evelyn Chisamore, Grade 7

BY THE RIVER

Someone's stashed a fish here
In the shallows. A boy, I'd guess,
Must have caught it and buried
The line, to claim his trophy later.

It is unneighborly I know,
To undo another's doings,
But I kneel in the wet sand,
And take hold of the sleek fish,

Its pulse fast against my fingers
And guide the tricky hook gently
From its frantic mouth. It gleams
An instant, almost iridescent,

Then arcs back into the river's flow,
Free of someone else's plans.
Still, I take the hook and line with me.
Let the boy think what he will.

Liz Goldman, 1st place
Category Adult, Dover, NH

A kitchen symphony

POP CRACK SIZZLE HISS

THE KITCHEN MAKES SOUNDS OF BLISS

I SIT AND LISTEN ALL THE WHILE

SITTING THERE WITH A BIG SMILE

I SIT IN MY CHAIR AND LISTEN THERE

WHILE THE SYMPHONY PLAYS ON

THE MUSIC IS LOUD AND LONG

PLAYING OUT ONE BIG SONG

THE KITCHEN HAS BECOME A DREAM

THE NOTES FLOW OUT JUST LIKE A STREAM

I OPEN MY EYES AND LISTEN WITH HASTE

I WONDER HOW THIS SONG WILL TASTE

Elijah Feistman, 1st place
Category 5 & 6, Grade 5

Zion National Park

The mountains are a shade of orange
Like your in a picture
The soft breeze blows sand around
The sand is the leaves that fly in the breeze
Whoosh!
You hike up a mountain,
Astonished by the view
Little friends meet you up top
Chipmunks scurry on your bags and climb up your legs.
Chitter!
You hike in a river
Birds sing and dance
Splash!
Waterfalls stream down the canyon walls
Like a natural sink
The tour guide said you would know there is a flash flood
Because pinecones would be floating in the water.
Now me and dad are trying to get pine cones off of trees
To put them in the water.
Waterslides are all around,
Currents that bring you into pools of water.
I float on my back,
But I quickly get up before I get washed away.
The sky is always bright blue
With little clouds for shade
But the canyon covers the sun
Leaving it perfect.
I can feel the sand against my skin,
I see deer running along the trail.
I never want to leave this place.
It's like home.



Sophia Lazarz, Grade 8

Maya Snow, 2nd place
Category 5 & 6, Grade 5

-Seventeen is not a dream-

I can remember, the days
I laid on the couch sunlight dim against me
tears falling down my cheeks as digits got higher
years blend together
there are no big celebrations, no more excitement at age
I feel as if I've lived centuries but I'm only
Sixteen
now I'm turning Seventeen
What a sad, sad age to be
Only songs of suicide to commemorate the year
I'll truly be leaving behind memories
that only belonged to a younger me
books now lay with dust, and the tire swing
stands still
my legos clutter spaces I've long since touched
and college letters are scattered in places my
DVD's used to stay
I'm turning seventeen and everyone thinks
I've got it all together
but only I know when I was 7 life was better

Lily Druge, 3rd place
Category 11 & 12, Grade 11

Bone Chilling Story

It was a cold misty June morning around 3am.
The rain hissed like acid melting plastic.
All he could smell was pizza cooking, breadsticks baking and soda bubbling.
Then out of nowhere his mop fell.
Trash laid on the floor.
Dirt left in piles.
The janitor was missing.
The morning shift crew came in to start their shift.
When they saw the mess and the missing janitor they knew they had a problem.
BOOM!
CRACK!
The rain started to get angrier.
As the morning went on I didn't know what to do.
I held my head down real low.
Then I saw something out of the corner of my eye.
A clue.
We had a mystery on our hands.

Gavyn Urban, 3rd place
Category 5 & 6, Grade 5

Brazil

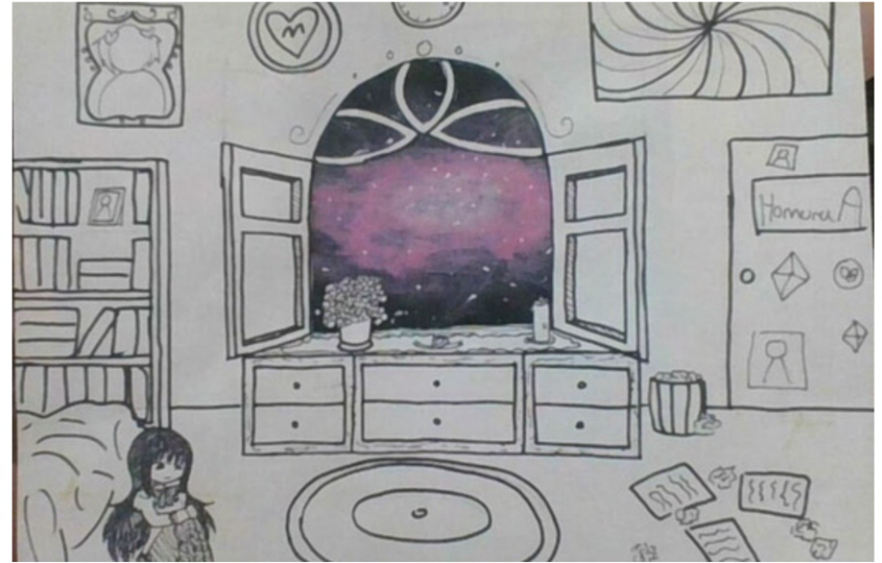
Brazilian towns range
From small to big
Be careful in some you
Might run over a pig.

The rains that fall like stones
From the sky over the land
Dig a pattern into
The dirt and sand.

In Brazil there's controversy
Door to door
You might see a mansion
And a pigpen next door.

Not everything in Brazil is nice
For some like my uncle
You have to pay a price.
His car, his phone, and his wallet too.
He would have given money to them if
They asked nicely.

When my dad visited Brazil he swam in
A river and got hit
By a frightened fish's quill.
It took him many months
To get it out but he was
Brave and did not pout.



Via Sweet, Grade 8



Rhillary Suzano, Grade 8

A Square of Satin

The window had been just slightly ajar
When a breeze fluttered in, whispering secrets from afar.
It tickled my tired eyes to open,
And on the window sill I spied a square of satin.

It looked out of place there where it lay,
Itself majestic before a room in disarray.
Its color of the richest green
Was the deepest I had ever seen.

I went to touch it with timid care,
But I was given quite a scare
The lovely, foreign satin square
Instantly vanished in thin air.

I knew not where it went,
I knew not how it was sent.
Still I stared out the window a while longer
Hoping the wind would bring in another.

Linnie Ngamcharoenthana, 2nd place
Category 11 & 12, Grade 11

In Brazil there is
Wildlife all around
Some are cuddly or cute
And other will put
You in the ground.

There are many resorts
And parks
Here in Brazil
Some you dream of
Some are your last resort

If you like fruit
This is the place to be
Some of their many Mangos
Are nature Van Goghs.

The price of everything is
Five times less but
Most of the products
Don't measure up to the test.

Brazil can be good or bad
Sometimes downright sad
What makes me want to
Go back?
Are the experiences I've had.

Caleb Carrel, Honorable Mention
Category 5 & 6, Grade 5



Breanne Maroon, Grade 7



Xavier Cruz, Grade 7

"To love the helpless"

When people are lost, souls left in despair
We lift the fallen with a gentle hand
To love the helpless is to truly care

For those displaced by wars, homes with no repair
We welcome them as part of this land
When people are lost, souls left in despair

The disabled's voice must declare
Their worth, their strength, their right to take a stand
To love the helpless is to truly care

In shelters or streets, we all must share
The kindness, soft in hand
When people are lost, souls left in despair

No matter the difference - worthy of fair
We help them with love so grand
To love the helpless is to truly care

So let compassion be our constant wear
And love the least with open hearts and hands
When people are lost, souls left in despair,
To love the helpless is to truly care

Louisa Henker, 1st place
Category 11 & 12, Grade 12

Oscar Ramirez, Grade 6



I whisper in glass jars to hold my secrets the world will never know. I'll put my eyes on satellites so they can watch earth from the stars, I'll put my hands on Venus and my arms on Mars. I'll put my fingers on Saturn to wear rings not ours. I'll send my mind to the sun so it burns just as bright as one. I'll send my heart to Mercury to show it the love it's never had. I'll send my blood to Uranus to keep it cool- for I am cold blooded. I'll send my legs to Jupiter to stand upon the stars and my feet to Neptune so I may walk amongst the stars. I will send my soul to Pluto. Because just like Pluto, I was not grand enough to be considered anything other than what I am.

Amira Myassar, Honorable Mention
Category 9 & 10, Grade 10

Wildflower, Dear Old Friend.

Some season's cool breeze
that had me turn my collar
and cast eyes downwards
There was no possible thing, no
thought to keep me here,
that could have worked
Now I walk alone,
along the pavement

I called out once, after all this time
I don't think you heard
It is mild out nowadays
this calm dreary scene.
Your path is so different, my
dear

It may very well have been summer,
for which you turned away
from spring's faults.
Outstretched hand
to keep *you* here,
to save me.
Now without you,
around the flowers I step.

Still shouting for you,
I believe it is my own echo burning my ears.
I don't think you'd like it here,
oh, the wind, dirt, grass blade, weeds,
wildflower,
old friend.

Zahara Bolevic, 1st place
Category 7 & 8, Grade 8



Imogene McKinney, Grade 8

“Boy at the bottom”

Cold rain
Alone at night
Seeping into
My wet socks
Cold and wet
Wanting to leave
Have to wait
To see her
Dark at night
Scared and late
Her ghost is here
Holding me close
She's on the ferry
Without me there
The rain hides my tears
From falling noticed
She's hugging me tighter
But I can still breathe
I take a breath
And start to walk
Into the water
Falling very slowly
Head goes under
Eyes get blurry
Now he's dying
No air left to breathe
Lungs start burning
Black in my vision
She's still here with me
Right by my side
My arms start to tingle
Then go numb

being an academic success ,
stretching yourself thin to get to a point where one day everyone will be
looking up to you ,
Growing Pains , Growing Pains , Growing Pains
I hope one day they go away ,
And we can all have a smile on our faces ,
and grow up and be happy for the future

Aisha Khan, 3rd place
Category 9 & 10, Grade 9

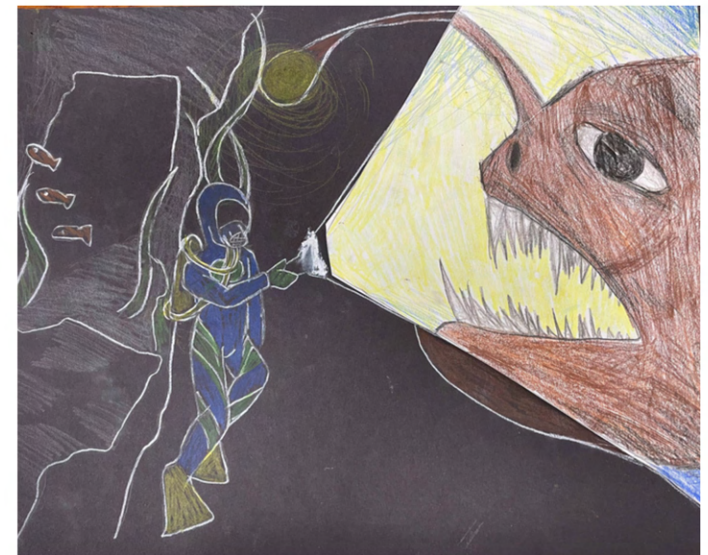


Doaa Elibrahimia, Grade 8

I wake each morning , wondering why we all have to grow up.
 Why can't we just stop time for a moment
 so we can breathe a breath of fresh air once in a while.
 One moment we are in Kindergarten learning how to add and subtract
 and then in a blink of an eye you are in a place they call "High School".
 As a kid Middle and High school looked so cool to us
 because that would mean we would be older and more mature and people
 would look up to us.
 We went from learning our ABC's to writing like we were running out of time.
 Oh , how I wish I had a time machine that could just freeze time for a
 moment and let me enjoy childhood for a moment.
 Growing pains , Growing pains , Growing pains, When will they go away.
 I don't want to learn Algebra or have to worry about what college I am going
 to yet.
 Can we stop for a moment , I have not even put my shoes on yet.
 When will this marathon end ,
 Am I in an illusion?
 You're telling me I have to wake up and be operating like a machine at 6 am in
 the morning.
 I want to go back to the playground where we would count down , to get a
 chance to swing on the swings.
 Growing pains , Growing pains , Growing pains , when will they go away.
 I want to go back and sit on that rug , one more time to do storytime
 and where there is no pressure to get the best grades in the class.
 I am happy to grow up ,
 but so sad to let go of being younger and having less obligations.
 Growing up in this generation is so hard , you have so many things to worry
 about ,
 The list goes on and on ,
 clothes ,
 Grades
 social circles ,

My muscles are tight
 And so is my body
 Then I feel light Almost
 lifting out of the water
 The water is weighing me down
 I am now at the bottom
 My arms float to my side
 Fully at peace
 My head goes numb
 No thoughts left
 The lights go out
 Fish swimming past me
 Circling my body
 Waiting to attack
 As the last bubble leaves
 The lights are out

Poppy Messier, 2nd place
 Category 7 & 8, Grade 7



Ernie Laban, Grade 7

Dinner

I am too cold. I am too warm. And I can't breathe. I've never been able to breathe. I feel my heart flutter, I'm not in love. I never have been.

Dull light shines through broken orange plastic.

The last light.

"Happy, happy" they've told me

So why not now?

I keep eating more of my favorite meal.

The last meal.

My meal is addicting, it's cold and chalky, and shaped just right. For me to swallow in one bite.

I lay on the cold floor, this is where I will eat every last bite.

My vision is clearer, is that a face I see? Coming to share dinner with me?

I see true beauty. Rainbows and spirals, faces and voices. They all come for one last meal, my favorite meal.

I feel my heart flutter again, I feel the wings like one of an Angel grow from the arteries around my soul.

I love this meal.

The last meal.

The orange tinted light grows brighter, it turns white. What a fascinating show the voices have put on for dinner. My favorite show. They come closer. They yell at me.

Rude voices

I feel light, It's finally time for dessert.

Dessert is the best part of my meal, it's true peace once dessert is served.

I hear the voice of another face, "I'm here with sweets!"

Oh my am I ready for dessert

I start to run to the face as she yells "I'm here with sweeties!"

Blossoming Shells

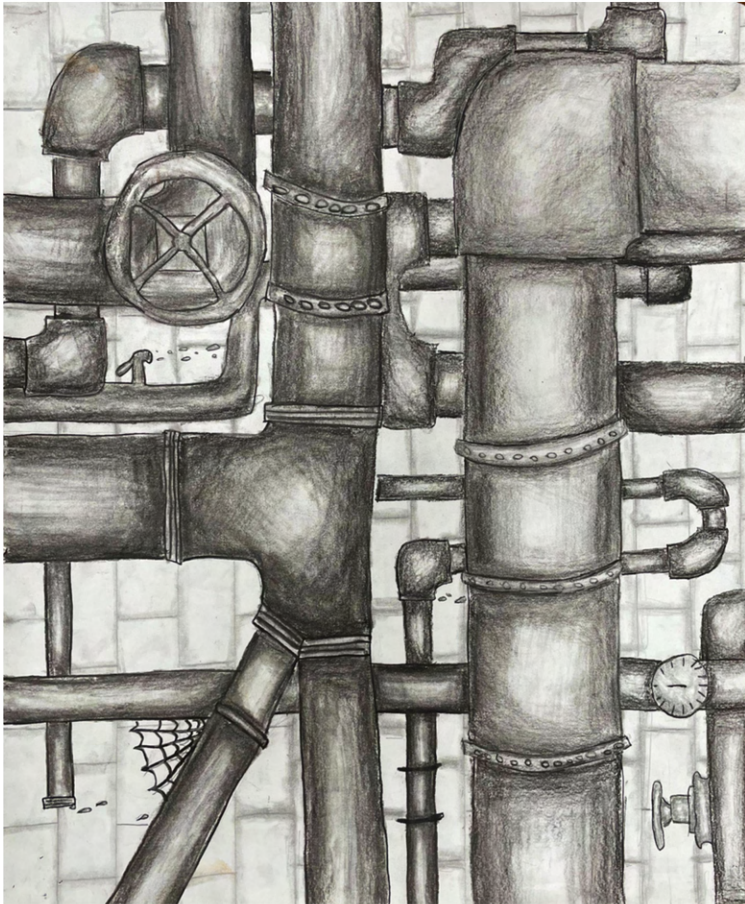
It's cold
Droplets trickle down
Explosions blossom bright and bold
Shells scatter like petals
My body is numb and dull
I hear the cries of men begging and praying to the heavens

When I look at the sky
All I see are struggling planes
Why would God make his children play this game?

My friends who once burned with life now lay dead
Their bodies forever praying
Their eyes without light fills me with dread
My light will soon be blown out

It's cold
Droplets trickle my face
My vision blurs with grace
Where are my buddies?
They're waiting for us
God, hear my prayer
Let my body stray away from hell
And dwell with them again

Lilah Kraemer, 2nd place
Category 9 & 10, Grade 9



Tessa Hobbs, Grade 7

I run faster, my steps beeping longer and louder as I sprint my way to her.
Dessert, finally dessert.
The last dessert
"I'm here, sweetie." Said the face
What?
The bright orange light fades fast
The face of the dessert holder paces back quickly
She's gone within an instant
Yet her voice getting closer says,
"Sweetie please wake up, I love you." She says
Why would the face tell me to wake up? So so close to dessert? To peace?
I suddenly feel my surroundings
There's muffled voices and loud sirens
I can still taste my meal, chalky, fresh on my tongue, mixed with blood
I don't want to go back
Please no
I just want peace
Please let me have peace
I hear her voice again while blue and red lights flash through my eyelids
and sirens pierce my ears
"You almost died, what happened?"

Sam Zammit, 3rd place
Category 7 & 8, Grade 8

the lonely lemon

I sit and watch the bluebirds fly past the window, so my mother thinks.

But in truthfulness I am looking at the bowl.

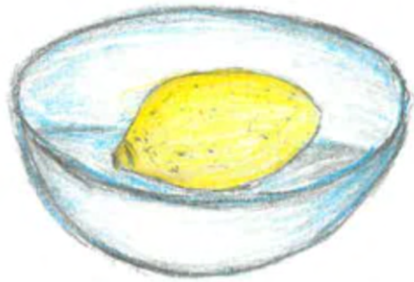
The bowl that sits on the windowsill holding one single lemon.

The lemon is whole and yellow, and sweet and round.

The lemon tastes good I'm sure, but will never be tasted.

The lemon will stay sitting on the sill, forever and always.

So I will come home each day to see my lemon, alone in
the bowl, and in alone it will stay.



Ellie Tarket, Honorable Mention
Category 7 & 8, Grade 8



Brigham Prior, Grade 6



Kiernan Kilrain, Grade 6

My Body Is Not Your Courtroom

Don't tell me "life begins at conception"
when yours began in corruption.
When power was passed like pills,
when my rights were **collateral**
in your backroom deals
and evangelical thrills.
You signed your name in smug red ink,
smiling like you'd made history--
but all you did was drag us back
into the blood-soaked pages of **misery**.

Roe fell.

And so did the lie
that this country ever gave a damn
about *me*.
You don't know the weight of a womb
until it's weaponized.
Until a girl barely grown
becomes a battlefield
because five robed strangers
thought God whispered
"control her."
And you?
You cheered.
Stood on your stage of lies
with your golden tie and empty eyes
and said:
"We've returned power to the people."

But you didn't mean *me*.
You never meant *me*.
You meant the people
who already had it.
Tell me--
when a rapist walks free
But a woman bleeds in a bathroom stall
because a doctor was afraid of jail--

who's protected?

Who's sacred now?

You never cared about life.
You cared about obedience.
About keeping women
quiet, compliant, afraid--
as if we don't remember
how to burn.
But listen close,
because this voice?
It's not going to be quiet.
We are the daughters of witches you couldn't burn,
the granddaughters of women you tried to erase.
You took Roe?
Fine.
Now we'll take the whole damn system
and build something
that wasn't designed to hate us.

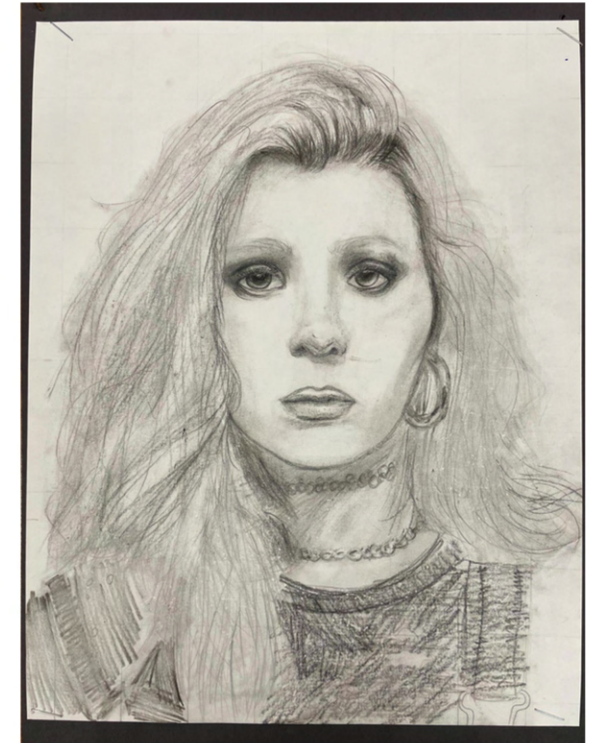
I am not your court case.

I am not your shame.

I am not your moral debate.

I am a woman,
and I decide
what happens
inside
this
body.
Try to stop me.

Olivia Nyby, 1st place
Category 9 & 10, Grade 9



Jeazelianys Rosas Lopez, Grade 8