



The Mirror
Spring Poetry Contest
-2021-

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First Place

Hidden Beauty

Ella Roland

What grace do we ignore
When the clock has struck the hour
What little charms do we deplore
And crush like little flowers

What mortal beauties hide
In the woods and in the sky
And take their time and bide
And then wither and then die

Their only suitor silence
Their only kiss was death
Their first and final cadence
Was their bitter bite of breath

Sweet as right from wrong
By the swallow just as fair
Slighted as birdsong
And as lost upon the air

Only by the sun were they cherished
And swifter than the moon
They were here and then they perished

Second Place

End of Watch

Sofia Peoples

I write to all that you have left behind
A weeping mother, a broken wife.
Three children mourning the loss of a life
Your smoker sits untouched and neglected
From those who miss you too much to direct it.
Your fishing hole lays calm and timeless
Not a sound or motion, completely lifeless.
Your brothers and sisters who mourn the fallen badge
And your sisters of blood who already lost their dad
All the Raiders flags and jerseys too
Now they just remind us all of you
The dying lemon tree sulking in your yard
And the empty bottles of limoncello that leave us scarred
The halls echo with the sound of your booming voice that's no
longer there
A void in our hearts left beyond repair
Your fight was one that came too soon and scary
Infamously in our minds the seventeenth of January
But what I've failed to mention is the good you left behind
You left a role model to three young minds
Your wife with a love story only some are lucky enough to find
You left memories and moments shared
All those games of Monopoly are uncompered
You left jokes and laughs
Always the party man perhaps

A newly sprouted lemon tree in your name
To make your famous limoncello just the same
You left your family with the blessing of loving you
And your piers with the honor of serving with you
You left happiness and smiles wherever you went
You were a glimmer of light in a cloudy present
And even though your dark twilight days have come and gone
May we always remember your bright, shining dawn
Goodbye, Zio. I love you.

Third Place

Living in My Head

Elise Blomquist

When many people see
Spiders or snakes, they fill with dread
But what's scariest to me
Is living in my head

I'm not scared of ghosts
The dark, vampires, or the undead
In fact, what scares me the most
Is living in my head

It's like being stuck in a crowded room
Where everything's a threat
Everyone will hurt me, I assume
When I'm living in my head

When I look around I see
Stares of hate, disgust, and I start to dread
Everyone is judging me
When I'm living in my head

I can't trust any strangers
I think I'm seconds away from being dead
Being in a constant state of danger
Is like living in my head

My heartbeat starts to speed up
My vision turns dark red
I don't know how I can keep up
Living in my head

Like a never ending maze
A haunted house filled with the dead
I know I'll never escape
Living in my head

*Honorable
Mentions*

A Dream of Seasons

Justine Canio

Let us fall into cinnamon dusk,
Where pears and figs pile upon musk.
Westward winds blur sights with spice,
As we grieve to let go these branches of spice.

These arctic nights of thundering fear,
Numbs my cheeks full of blood, sweat, and tear.
Your white fog leaves me a bitter taste of beer,
But steams my moon to the cranberry nose of deer.

Fuzzy bees floating amongst your flowering gaze,
Busy nature is in search for a lilac in this maze.
New balls of cotton now powders the high sea,
As born lambs bloom with joy, like the you I see.

Thy rosy aroma simmers like Turkish delights,
Whilst your honey smile shimmers the cocktail lights.
I wish I can meet those blueberry eyes,
That blushes and dawns my strawberry skies.

Watching Embers Scatter

Emily Martin

All I remember about my grandmother is her dying.
How her words stumbled out of her mouth and tripped over each other,
Twisting and tangling on the way down.
How she walked until she hobbled,
Then collapsed into a wheelchair,
Never able to get up again.
How her words,
Which fell into a tangled heap every time she spoke,
Eventually stopped getting up too.
How denial,
Turned to hope,
Turned to tears.
I remember how I sat with her,
Crying for fragments of memories that I wish meant more,
And a person I did not know

The Girl Before Me

Sinclair Yadao

Today I was looking at a girl before me.
The positivity she held was too appalling,
She made me wish off a cliff I was falling.
I thought her ears stuck out as usual,
Her face was unsymmetrical.
Her stomach moved too much with every step she took,
It was painful to even take a look.
I judged every single inch of this young girl's appearance,
Her body was squarish, for instance.
What's wrong with her mouth? Her smile?
This girl had me in denial.
Gradually I could see her brightness fade,
And in came the darkness of shade.
Soon enough the positivity disappeared,
And a whole new person was near.
Tears drew lines down her crooked face,
But who cares,
She's a disgrace.
My oh my, this girl is replaceable.
She was without a doubt, the opposite of beautiful.
Ugh! How hideous she was when she bawled,
Beautiful! Beautiful! Oh, not at all.
Finally, I gave her one last glimpse,
Then I stepped away from the mirror,
And my insecurities got their wish.

Justice For All

Jadyn Weaver

After Maya Angelou's "Caged Bird"

The world is ever-changing But,
Somethings feel as if they never will. A
Light at the end of the tunnel will come Caged
Like the so-called freedom and justice we "have". Bird
Will fly and we shall not. If no one Stands
Then what shall we as a people become, On
This day I pray that modifications come. The
Grace and peace we want will emerge from the Grave
And we shall live as one race Of
Human beings with the same Dreams

Apathetic

Alicia Del Toro

She is excited,
So she jumps around,
A clown has been sighted,
Someone calm her down.
Why is she crying?
She's always been selfish,
Other people are dying,
This life she should cherish.
Who did she yell at?
Nevermind what's frustrating,
She's just being a brat,
Has she been menstruating?
She lets no emotion leak,
Lowering each eye,
Pulling the expressions from her cheek,
Why is she so shy?
She hasn't forgotten how to feel,
But she remembers the judgements,
She isn't made out of steel,
So she made some adjustments.

Apple Pie

Sydney Scott

The yellow sun beams
through the kitchen window,
illuminating the poinsettias
as my mom stands in the sunlight,
calling out to us for help.

She puts the red apron over my head,
her delicate fingers tying a bow
while my sister gathers the ingredients
and I start mixing.

Flour floats through the air,
glistening in the sunlight like pixie dust,
leaving a mess everywhere,
and we all laugh as my mom points out,
the flour on my chubby cheeks.

My sister gets green apple shavings
scattered across the counter
as she hands me a slice to eat,
with a disapproving look from mom.

The pleasant smell of cinnamon
drifts to my nose
as my mom opens the door
to get the pie out of the oven,
a smile floats across our faces.

Living Unforgiven

Jenna Pimenta

I heard everything, and everything was thrumming. Among it all I picked out my own heart beating, soft and insistent; it said, *I love you, I love you, I love you.*

It was love pouring from my hands, it was love bleeding from my mouth, it was love simmering in the air. Love like a prayer. All of my swelling love was directed at myself. At each injured soul that sat next to me. At humanity. The world has captured me in her heart — she has bewitched me, body and soul —because I believe in the human spirit, and in the kindness of strangers. I believe there is a light at the end of the tunnel.

(A train thundered past, roaring sweet as a trembling melody, and wasn't it? Isn't it music, all of it?)

David as my heart, Goliath as my head, felled by passion and everything we call childish and raw - everything we call simple-minded and primal - so be it, I sing, so be it. How can I not believe in God when I see it in the face of everyone I meet? I see God in the words you wield like swords, in the way you bow your head, in the violence of emotion that hides in your throat. I see God in the spaces between us, as brilliant and precious as sunlight.

I used to say, in the derisive, blunt way that comes from thinking you know it all, that people only believe in God because otherwise they'd despair. Well, I could be right. But what difference does it make? Would I question the hand that saves me from drowning? If God is a figment of my imagination, a dream I've clung to for too long, at least I am still alive to believe in it. Life is not made to be had pragmatically. Life is for shouting and singing and crying and buying into things that promise salvation for your troubled soul. We're all a little afraid, deep down in the recesses of our hearts, of being a bad person, living unforgiven.

I confess, almighty God, and to you, my brothers and sisters - I have been given a terrible, sacred hope. It burns within me, lighthouse in the storm, and I will not forget the match that put it there. Holiness does not lie in ritual so much as in the people performing it. In friendship. In arms that open wide. In the hearts of those who extend a hand to pull someone from the water.

Listen. *Listen.*

Silence will give you the voice of Christ. It says, I love everyone I meet because they have a story to tell. I love everyone who is alone. I love everyone who is lost. I will abandon the ninety-nine for the one, and I will love the hundred wholly. You are the hundred, you are the ninety-nine, you are the one. You are my flock and you are my staff. We are all instruments of each other.

Do not despair.

I am with you.



AMK