

FOURTH PLACE WINNER

Lindy Lichtman

Wellington Community High School

9th Grade

Soup

On Friday nights jumbo bowls of soup were placed in front of us as if they were prizes that were won at The World Fair.

The soup's cooking of chopped plentiful goodness forcedly sat my father, grandma, and I down as if enforced by a law that stated family with no real connection shall sit down and enjoy a painfully silent meal.

My Friday Night Family

The soup bowls were vast, but not vast enough to hold the entirety of my suppressed emotions. And as a result, I started to see more than just potatoes floating in flavored water. In my grandma's soup I saw her.

Her gentle hands, where the potatoes were chopped into perfect cubes. Her voice saying, *Do it right, or don't to it at all*, because the broth was salted perfectly. As if she placed each salt crystal inside one by one just to make sure it wrapped the tongue perfectly.

The soup brought us together when the only things we could relate on/to is that the silverware needed to be polished and that both me and my grandma jerked like rickety roller coasters as/when my Dad's fists collided with the tabletop, clinking our drinking glasses together in unison/ My Friday Night Family was a shattered glass bowl of soup

like some sort of twisted instrument.

Nowadays, though, it seems as if stacks of court papers have been stuffed into all of the soup pots.

Leaving a void between us three, that will only be filled by a phony forgiveness of my father.

My Friday Night Family was a shattered glass bowl of soup-- Suppressed emotions, tension, and lies were what glued us back together, every time, like toxic glue.

FIFTH PLACE WINNER

Julie Claude Petit-Frere

Wellington Community High School

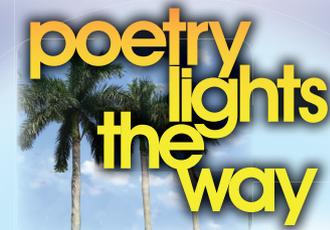
10th Grade

Justice For Some

Tell Uncle Sam there some brothas out here that need daddies instead of guns
Tell the cops to stop shooting them leaving fatherless daughters and sons
We've been locked away and confined in chains, crypts and war zones
And they have the nerve to ask us why the pain still hasn't gone
As black soldiers fight for a country that doesn't believe their lives matter
The blood of their kin, supposed to be safe at home, continues to be splattered
Yet we still pledge allegiance to the flag and sing Amazing Grace
Forgetting justice is not and has never been for all in this notorious place

Poets & Writers

We are grateful to Poets & Writers who have generously awarded a one-year subscription to all contest winners of the Annual High School Poetry Contest.



2018

Palm Beach County

High School Poetry

Contest Winners

2018 Palm Beach Poetry Festival High School Poetry Contest Winners

FIRST PLACE WINNER, Sophia Upshaw, Wellington High School, Grade 11 for "Here Lies the Girl in the Wildflowers"

SECOND PLACE WINNER, Katherine Oung, AW Dreyfoos School of the Arts, 9th Grade for "Night Wanderers"

THIRD PLACE WINNER, Jannard Jackson, Wellington High School, 12th Grade for "Black"

FOURTH PLACE WINNER, Lindy Lichtman, Wellington Community High School, Grade 9 for "Soup"

FIFTH PLACE WINNER, Julie Claude Petit-Frere, Wellington Community High School, 10th Grade for "Justice For Some"

FIRST PLACE WINNER

Sophia Upshaw

Wellington High School
11th Grade

Here Lies the Girl in the Wildflowers

She wasn't the most beautiful girl to step through those doors;

There had been better. There had been worse.

But when she entered the room,
sunlight peeled back the walls, swales of wildflowers
bloomed in her step,
and you knew she had arrived.

You felt your willpower cave in on your soul
when she wrote about death written on the back of a
rose petal.

Heat flashes plagued your dreams.

Golden tresses lassoed your heart in a kinetic embrace
and you awoke in a halo of sweats,
but the moonlight that seeped through your window
never looked so beautiful.

She was late nights spent chasing the lights of the
skyline,
the sound of The Smiths maxed out on the car radio,
soft footfalls down the hall, and coffee kisses in your
old Miami shirt;
the taste of Strawberry Lip Smacker and the din of
Steak n' Shake at 11:48 p.m.

Her laughter placed the stars in the sky.
Her smile stitched up the caverns of your heart.

Here lies the girl in the wildflowers.
Here lies the girl you wanted to love
but couldn't figure out how..

SECOND PLACE WINNER

Katherine Oung

AW Dreyfoos School of the Arts
9th Grade

NIGHT WANDERERS

i.
here we are, counting change under the electric glow of the diner in the
night: bodies of red blood and slow learning, our small, trembling forms as
transient as the apparitions stirring coffee at the tables beside.
show me, I say, and he offers his arms, those scars. face hazy like the
lamplight filtering through the glass of water sitting on the tablecloth.
one day, I say, breath shaking, *you'll find more warmth than your cupped
palms can hold. one day, we'll bury the knife in the drawer, teach your hands
to be like morning glories unfurling at dawn.*
*but for now, fall into the heavy sweetness of pancakes: red velvet and key
lime*
each bite proves you're still breathing, still alive

ii.
he broke my heart, I say, roller skates grazing old grey snow, the iron tang of
rail line. *the boy on the train with the milk-teeth hair and the suitcase full of
stars broke my heart and left behind this great, winding metal scar.*
I know, he says, *but see this as a place he left, not left behind. look at the
sparrows flying in their ancient, arrowhead ways and feel the pulsing of the
coming train as if it were the thrumming in our veins. how soon the early
morning will stream through the encroaching pines in ribbons of ochre-
colored light, our rust-wreathed hearts pried open to reveal the red ones, the
real ones, nestled inside.*

it is only February, but already daisies peek out from under the rail line
those soft white petals, those golden flowerhead buds.

iii.
I want heartache, he says as we pass the produce, my roller skates
squeaking against linoleum tile.
girl trouble? I say, laughing, because here sadness is buried behind the
crates of sunflower and plum.
as if, he says, eyes crinkling with an almost-smile. *no, I want to see
mangoes and peaches and think prosper, think sweet. see bouquets of
geraniums and think of lovers, leaning into one another, cartons of eggs as
the safety in Sunday morning breakfast. I want to know so much beauty in a
Publix at 3 A.M. that my heart bursts and blooms, tender like a fresh wound,
like rose petals, so in love with the world that I ache to be like it too.*

later, we buy ice cream, spoon dulce le leche under the moon's half-
crescent

and I think of how beautiful-sharp we looked under those fluorescents,
— how ethereal.

v.
we were meant for biking eleven miles in 5 AM fog, knees knocking on the
bluff, for laughing with our aching ribs. see the beauty of it all, pouring out
like the ocean over the horizon.
summer's only a word, but it's an orange word, a kind of burning; see it in the
red sun spilling into the sky, the burn of seawater in the shipwrecked songs
we heard, of Icarus in his folly, wax wings pleading to fly.
we tired youth, all wet limbs and salty hair, reveling in broken bicycle wheels
and this restless sea; for there is hurt here and we too are not holy, but we
can still save each other, over and over, endlessly.

quick! before the tide bleeds away from the shore,
jump in. bask in that quiet radiance of hope.

THIRD PLACE WINNER

Jannard Jackson

Wellington, High School
12th Grade

Black

Black like the rich and moist dirt
Black is beautiful like the rich velvet texture of cloth
Like space which embodies all the stars
Like the leather braided whip which
broke and welted the backs of my ancestors

The color that a little boy sees
when his eyes close in death
The bullet that pierces and shattered his skull
like the veil of a weeping mother
Black like the night stretched across the sky
in which strange fruit hung from trees and
Blood dripped down their bodies like wax on a candle

Like a bomb
That tore through sixteenth street Baptist church
That slaughtered those precious 4 little girls
As they got ready for church
They tied each other's velvet bows
And fixed their church dresses
Oblivious to what would happen next

The color that struggles like a mouse
in a snake's death trap
The color of the six feet deep hole
into which 5 foot coffins are lowered into

The color that is constantly oppressed
That hangs at everyone's disposal
Controlled like a puppet on a string
Needle and thread weave the pains
of my people together
like a quilt

The day to day struggles
The pains of experiencing death
Drug addiction, disease, mental illness
The blessed and cursed
The color that will engulf the sky
In the end of days, like an even mist

I look in the mirror
I see the brown, not black
Brown like caramel
Is black the go to
word to describe me?

Black is used as an umbrella term
to describe many
Are we color blind?
Do we not see that people aren't black
but are brown?

How are we supposed to be progressive
If we use such a regressive term?
We all bleed to same rich velvet color of red,
yett still black is used to describe many.
It represents our race
Like a broken mirror