

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