

Winning Poems – 3rd Bar Sagi Young Poets Prize, 2022

First Prize: White Noise by Sapir (Hila) Frumkin, age 15

White Noise

I dreamt we were walking in a field.
The leaves crunching beneath your feet,
it sounded like scratching, and I had
an itch to look down.
Bone white, delicate, turning to dust –
Eggshells, I wanted to tell you, look,
let's go another way instead.
But I knew you knew already,
eyes on the horizon, hand in my hand
so I let go, tip-toed, tried walking slow
but made a sound, eggshells breaking
loud and ugly beneath my Achilles heel.
And you laughed, you know, I can feel
it when you laugh at me, it's second nature by now.
Sour and cold, left in the sun to rot, open
in the light. I'll fight the sun. You say I always slow you down.
Please teach me how to walk. Call me a baby
and guide me, step by step, how to do anything. How to do everything
all at once. I've already tried being everything.
But everything is a big loud thing, and when it walks
it shakes the mountains on the horizon.
Come on, it's just a mile away, you say.
Or said. It's hard to remember which You is in my head.
We were walking down a field, yes, yellow under a greying sky.
Come on, I said, let's find shelter from the coming rain,
Even though I could dance with the thunder, loud and ugly, I could
spin you around and laugh until I cry.
But you were gone already, always one step ahead,
and for once I didn't follow you, just stayed
dancing and kicking and stomping and having
the time of my life,
and it felt like being home
under the watching eye of a thunderstorm.

Second Prize: Empty Seats by Eliav Huppert, age 18

Empty Seats

In the empty seat in front of me
Sat a man
Who looked vaguely familiar.
I knew those eyes
I've looked at them a hundred times.
But the creases on his chin
And the ones on his forehead
Were peculiar. Strange.
He slowly opened the windows to his soul
And two emeralds spoke louder than
Anything that could ever be said.
He wanted to say something
When I realized who he was.
I had to leave.
I had to run.
But he said there was no use

Third Prize: "Comfort", by Amiad Dror Golan, age 17

Comfort

I'm not a bird expert
But the silhouette of their broad wings
when darkness kicked the sun off the fields
was for me a final whistle for this glorious day,
panting.

at morning I saw a gray dove
buzzing with fatigue
but towards the flood that awaits
she was my sanctuary.

Honorable Mention: "Coral" by Sapir (Hila) Frumkin, age 15

Coral

I used to stay in my home between anemones,
Another clownfish in the circus.
And home was alive, warm, away
From any storm, and every day
I'd swim outside
And get pulled back in by the tide.

But things go on, somewhere along the line
More fish passed by,
Swimming far from me, along the river
To the sea beyond the winter.
So for once I took a chance
And joined them in their coral dance.

Started out riding on their coat tails,
Shiny fins and scales that glittered in the rising sun.
But winters pass, and come the spring
At last we heard the blue whales sing,
And it brought me peace of mind
To be a member of fishkind.

Cycles come and go like leaves upon a lake,
And by autumn I was homeward bound –
Another reef this time, one with all the friends I'd found
And all the ones I've yet to make.

Clownfish need their home, but truth be told,
A bigger joy than being odd
Is being one of many weird fish within a pond.