



Title: "Chains of Silence"

Writer: Charlotte Suttee

Category: Poetry

Age Division: 16-18

Place: 1st

The silence sounds different now.
Like the inside of my basketball,
Air pushing to escape the dark.

The life in your room,
A crisp, fallen leaf waiting to be blown away
By a still wind.

My empty heart begs to be full again.
Tears as my only drink,
And bread spoiled by my touch.

Like a grain of sand
Swallowed by the sea of anguish,
I've no control.

My thoughts these days,
Rain puddles after a storm,
Or a seed that will not grow.

But Mom comes around every now and then.
A taffy puller with tireless arms,
Exposing me to the air once again.

Sometimes I tell her no.
Because I don't want you to drift away
Everytime I look away.

Sometimes I say yes.
And a late tulip starts to bloom,
Stars pierce through the gray cloud.

She cried that she didn't want to lose me too.
A tangible hope seared through her voice,
Like the last lifeboat on a sinking ship

So I unraveled my sore wings,
Stirred the air and released a mighty trill
That broke the chains of silence.



Title: "Pillow Talk"
Writer: Brianna Dunn
Category: Poetry
Age Division: 16-18
Place: 2nd

Dear pillow,
We need to talk
You're new to this room
Unaware of the sleeping arrangements
You're a stranger welcomed into a forbidden sanctuary and I am the prophet
You can smell the comfort I bring
See the colors of my threads
And listen to my words of wisdom

Much like me she is delicate
She may be our provider, our caretaker and our mother
But she is delicate
Your polyester fiber will cradle her head
when she no longer has the strength to hold it up on her own
She will love you and she will hurt you
And that isn't your fault
We were created for this
From the time your first threads were brought together
You were ready to comfort someone
Ready to cradle whoever may be too weary
You are soft, cold, welcoming and she loves it
And you will love her
Maybe
If you do there are somethings you need to know

She will break your heart
She will cry, and sometimes those tears will drown you
She will scream into your face, mouth opened, body curved, tears running down her own
Eyes glued shut as her tears tango with her mascara
Desperate to hide from the world
She will soon not make a sound
You will catch and silence all of her screams

So she will break your heart
But she will also mend it, one night at a time
She will sing to you, when that boy kisses her goodnight before he leaves
Words half forgotten she will tell you stories
She will give you nicknames like pibba
And she will love you more than she probably should
Our mother is delicate, the quietest of all dreams
Be careful with her

Dear blanket,

You can keep her warm

I will teach her how to be okay on her own



Title: "Dark Olives"
Writer: Chris Chaney
Category: Poetry
Age Division: 16-18
Place: 3rd

I'm not a child.

I don't keep stuffed animals around anymore.

All they do is sit, and peer at the world swirling around their tiny eyes.

They see your every move.

In your worst moments, they are watching.

When you broke the television and cried.

In your best moments, they are watching.

When you got your driver's license, and you jumped with joy with joy.

It's too much responsibility.

To have someone watch you the way you watch yourself.

So I threw them out.

Mom would say I grew up.

I would say I'm ashamed

No longer will my actions be mocked by the dark olives resting upon their face.

Their pointy ears and soggy smile judging silently.

Always watching.

Maybe I am still a child.