

Honorable Mention: Aidan Sadler
Colgan High School
“Only Everything”

I blind myself with brilliant golden rays of sun
just to feel the sharp, stinging pain strain my eyes
and the blistering heat fracture my reddened face.
I welcome the swirling wisps of color painting
my eyelids with longing wonder.

For when poets create, all sense is gone.

I break each fingernail on coarse, jagged rocks
just to feel each divot and rocky pore and hear
the rough scratching on earth. I savor the taste of
my bitter, copper blood as it meanders down my
finger like morning dew.

For when poets create, pain is inspiration.

I want to see, hear, taste, smell, feel
Everything.

Brushing my hand through the oily fur of a sleeping dog.
Coating my mouth with sweet, acidic nectar of citrus.
Waking to the cheerful, morning warbling of birds.
Every simple act of life,
I embrace.

Hurling through freefall, rushing air inciting adrenaline.
Giddy excitement from the warm, gentle embrace of love.
Carefree monkeys screeching euphoric, dizzying cacophony.
Every oddity of life, I long
to experience.

Should death come, whether Raging
inferno combusting my skin,
thick smoke filling my lungs; a charred stab to my nostrils–
Arctic winter freezing my extremities, tight breaths
fighting against stinging frostbite– Choking on the sweet,
fresh scent of bread, gluttonously stuffing my throat until
only bread exists– So be it.

For when poets create,
Only everything is enough.