

Teen Category

12 – 17 Years Old

1st Place – Sienna White

Tendrils of the Past

Cracked concrete looks forlornly at the fiery sunset
as young sprouts of ivy creep skyward in the serene twilight.

The shadow of the guard tower stretches across the fauna tangled below
and a mourning dove crones songs of remorse.

The jails has seen many years with many more to come,
so old its foundation has taproots deep in our soil.

When you lean against the aged wall, cock your head just right,
you can almost feel the past inside.

You can almost smell dank sweat of angry men
And if you squint into the into the harsh sun,

You can see tendrils of tobacco smoke,
the cigarettes rolled by stained fingers.

You can almost taste the bitterness of regret
and feel the ground shaking
as rowdy men move to their quarters.

But those men are gone,
and if you were to scale the wall
you'd see nothing but trampled grass and dusted handles.

Yet their imprint in the clay can never be erased,
and their ghosts still sing the past.

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1st Runner-Up – Josh King

A Scar

Deserted halls and concrete walls
is all that is left to explain your fall
You have been abused as nature ran its course
leaving your story forgotten in time
All you have left are memories of ghosts
you still contain within your steel posts
On this town you are a scar
a reminder that evil is never too far
your only companionship is the departed
those who died on Penitentiary Road
once a home to the wicked hearted
reduced to a memory and a pile of stone.

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Honorable Mention – Emilie Kelley

Shoes on concrete
echoing off cold steel bars
hands cuffed
the first of my restrictions
men watching, guards passing
eyes reading me like a book
drip! drip! drip!
falling from the ceiling
their lips whisper,
guilty or innocent?
innocence a flicker
the of a candle,
gone in a second, or
Slowly melted away.
Here, locked in a box
of hate and unchanging circumstances
There is no innocence.