

**High School Poetry Winners**  
**First Place**  
**Jacob Lawless, Mercer Christian Academy**

MARTYR OF LINEN

Martyr of linen-  
Starred crimson,

Fat white eyes,  
Rummaging

Soft pink sockets.  
Receding oceans

Of top oil, of films  
Like dairy.

“What is it that ails me?” I hear you scream  
Into caves,

Your voice taking shape,  
Becoming a bone.

Take it up,  
Lead us West;

The hard white  
Scythe

Of Judas,  
The hanging Christ

Of suns  
Set.

The smoke is frenetic  
This hour.

The water is off.

In rooms  
As far as hope  
There are sheets  
Entwined  
In nebula stars  
And whirring fans.  
And here we are,  
The sun melting  
Convexly.  
All we can see  
Is blue.

**Second Place**  
**Hyacinthus**  
**Emily Estep, Montcalm High School**

There must have been a moment when I did not love him,  
A moment in which he did not strike me with his beauty,  
A second in which I couldn't name the number of breaths that parted from his lips as he  
slumbered.  
A time when it did not enlighten me to see the sight of his hands in mine,  
But that moment was not now, as he bled into my palms.  
I stuffed healing herbs and desperate wishes into his open wound:  
Even the mighty god of healing could not save my lover.  
I was relentless in my begging, my pleading,  
I wished nothing more than for my lover to rouse at the noise of my sobs and comfort me.  
Perhaps if I were mortal like him, my torture could be lessened,  
No matter my beseeching, no other God granted me my release,  
And I was left crying over him soundly, knowing the turmoil of my own misery  
Through my sorrow, I created him into beautiful flowers, so I may gaze upon him forever.  
I would be welcomed by the scent of my Hyacinthus  
And on every petal, I wrote, "Alas."  
Because there was no word better to express my grief at his passing memory.