

POETRY, 1st Place: Brynlee Rabah

Teacher: Kelli Rollins-Stidham, Paragould High School

An Unwritten Path

Like a bird bound for freedom in its first flight,
Feathers trembling against an uncertain, crisp wind,
Like a show rabbit waiting to perform, still as velvet
Beneath the judge's silent gaze.

I think of every mistake possible—
All the things that could go awry.

Without guidance, without structure,
How could one pave a path without a map?

The winds whisper each day.
The sun rises.
The moon sets.
Birds whistle into the pale morning air.

How does one go on with no direction?

The truth is, maps aren't always needed—
As the sun continues to shine,
And the birds still choose the open sky above it.