

2017 Elie Wiesel Competition

1st Place Senior Poetry

Ingrid Lavin, 10th Grade

Oscar Smith High School, Marianne McMillin

Reflection

When you look in the mirror,
what does your reflection look like?
Does it reflect your thoughts, aspirations, wishes,
desires, goals and regrets?
It doesn't reflect what you wish you had said
when you saw what they were saying to her.

You always heard, growing up,
"Sticks and stones may break my bones,
but words will never hurt me."
You know that isn't true though,
you know from experience,
those little insults, those "jokes,"
those side comments under their breath.
They do hurt, and you know they hurt her too.
And yet, you stood there and watched them,
watched them break her down, piece by piece.

Your reflection doesn't show what you wish you had said to her.
How you could've offered her a seat next to you,
how you could've told her
"If they try and say anything to you again,
please tell me."
Instead, you stood there, silently.
In neutrality, you supported them.
You gave them permission
to verbally assault her,
emotionally traumatize her,
destroy her confidence.
You gave them permission,
to not only change her reflection,
but your own.

