

2025 Elie Wiesel Competition

1st Place Junior Poetry

Julia Lambros, 8th Grade

Old Donation School, Brittney Purchas

Even Butterflies

The stroke of a brush, mightier than any weapon,
art painted with shaking hands,
that remember each time they were beaten and tortured.
Kurt Conrad Löw.
A survivor, an artist, that will always be remembered.

Memories captured with the click click
of an angry camera.
Murals painted on the walls of a french internment camp.
Karl Robert Bodek.
A victim, an artist, that will always be remembered.

Introduced under circumstance,
collaborated by choice.
A chance to piece together their broken world.
Bodek and Löw,
Two men, drowning in their hope, who wanted others to remember.

The painting One Spring,
grief poured onto canvas.
Meant for museum lights and wide eyes.
Viewers of the artwork stare.
People who weren't there, but feel like they were.

Telling a story through a painting,
putting emotion into simple strokes of a brush.
Black twine drawn, keeping them in.
The darkness of their two worlds,
connected with color.

Watercolor, India Ink,
pencil on paper.
Put together as a recollection of memories.
Supplies used carefully,
wanting the injustice to be remembered.

The focus of the painting:
a solitary butterfly, innocent like a child,
amidst a village of ransacked houses.
A hypothetical butterfly that can't remember
because it was never really there.

All those who were lost.
All those who survived.
Recognized by the painting One Spring.
Showing that even in the darkest of places,
yellow butterflies can be found.

And even butterflies
deserve to be remembered.