

**2026 Elie Wiesel Competition**

**1<sup>st</sup> Place, Junior Poetry**

Jaymie Crabb, 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

Old Donation School, Lisa Kilczewski

***The Flood of Memory***

I was five when it started.  
A flood, washing over my small frame by my father,  
The pristine white walls were washed, stained.  
The world consumed in wetness,  
Not with water, but memories, tens, hundreds.  
Of the life of those before me, lost because of prejudice.  
Because of the chocolate we call skin.  
Dad never let us forget,  
Every night, like clockwork.  
“They didn’t grow up like you are.”  
Back of the bus, dirty water fountains, white only signs,  
“Never forget.”  
The flood never left, dad never let it.  
Day after day, splash after splash,  
The soil soaked and muddy, never dried out.  
He never stopped flooding us,  
With the sadness, the despair,  
But also, the hope.  
They found things to love, music, food, and each other.  
They never forgot but thrived in it.  
The flood went from mud into sprouts,  
Into a field of sugar filled yellow and red.

Never forgotten, but morphed into something bright,

Something everyone can see.

He never let anyone forget, always kept their spirit alive.

A field of memories, above the flood,

My father, the bee that pollinates

The sweet memory

The flowers hold.

I'm no longer five, and I no longer forget,

Neither do my peers,

Or schools, or offices, or stores.

And when the flood stops?

I'll start it again,

Because we need the flood,

The flood that brings light, that moves us into the future.

The flood of memory.

And this time, it'll hold the memory

Of a man who never let the flood stop

Until the flowers grew.

*So, no one forgets, ever again.*