

2020 DMPA Results

Junior Secondary

RUNNER-UP

Janice Han, 14

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Crows Nest, NSW

Poem 1

The siren's sea call came lilting
over the foam and waves
washing us forth in a myriad
of warmth and cold.
The bubbles churning
stirring
the sail cracking like a
whip in the wind as we plunged
into the Kraken's domain.

The sea, ever changing
like a sheet of burnished bronze
then like a pool of ash and grey,
is wed to the tempest and squall.
It drives us forth
until a blood-dawn comes,
licking like flames
on a red-rimmed horizon.
Scattering the clouds like grey
ashes on the briny breeze,
it darts
down
across the gold-streaked jade of the
waters and crafted ripples -
wider and wider they go, foam churning
in our wake.

We've been swallowed many a time,
our lady shattered to

splinters by the blustering of the sea.
Our clothing has hung on us
in shreds
like wet newspaper.
The roiling folds of thunder have
hidden the spiderweb of shimmering sapphires
in the silken dusk sky;
the gentle lady of a thousand lights,
a friend of decades,
obscured.
We have been flung
far off course
sinking deeper, deeper
into the ocean's iron hold.

Yet despite this –
how sorry I am
for the folks we leave behind
who never know
the world beyond the bight
who stay
watching
waiting on the grey, grim shores
for a ship that never returns.

Judge Comment:

A well-constructed and clever poem, that hints of the poet's knowledge and love of mythology. As readers, we are plunged right into the thick of the trouble at sea – our hearts breaking for those left behind on the shore. A poet to watch!