

2020 POETRY OURSELVES HONORABLE MENTION

Photographs

By Sadie Richert

San Luis Obispo County, San Luis Obispo Classical Academy



In the bleak cave of a car-less garage,
Dust-capped mountains brood,
Their solitude only interrupted by
The flight of grey flurries under a merciless broom.
Buried in the dark recesses,
These photos are not old enough to be of value,
Nor new enough to be tossed aside;
Once carefully placed between sheets of worn wrapping paper,
And dusted, stored where no fingerprints could mar,
Prayed over,
Cherished through moves and purging of other treasures
We're glad we don't have to store.
Their ornate frames: faux gold,
Worthless, but the best they could afford.
Archaic faces:
The little girl who deems the cost of grain
A problem weighty as snarls in her doll's rag curls;
Her grandfather's fierce brows furrow
As he measures his life in rain clouds and wheat fields—
Images taken after long deliberation
In a hot room, with best shoes cramping one's toes
Told to look for the camera
To be remembered as such.
Trapped within the yellowing paper: lives,
Antique and strange
Yet strangely like our own,
Their triumphs and struggles,
The courage and faith which shaped me
Slipping unrecognized into other mountain mists.