

2023 My Brother Jack Awards Senior Secondary School Poetry Award

Congratulations to all the magnificent poets who entered the My Brother Jack Awards this year and a mountainous amount of awe and praise to the incredible writers who won!

The submissions for 2023 are full of variety, originality and skill. It's interesting to note the themes, subject matter and focus that change each year. Some topics are universal and will always continue to come in: love, family, connections, vulnerability, environment and hope. This year there was also poems about seasons, garage sales, Rubik's cubes, island beaches, Aussie Rules, record collections, trains and so much more.

The Senior Secondary Poetry section was so strong, I singled out ten poems and arranged them in so many different ways as all were wonderful contenders. The consistently high quality of work is inspiring. Every time I read the Junior and Senior Secondary Poetry submissions, I'm astounded at the breadth and depth of the poems. I know it's cliché to say, but the future is in exceptional poetic hands!

I hope you enjoy the winning poems as much as I did.

***Sand Dunes* – First Place**

Sand Dunes was a dreamy contemplation on holding strong and loving the body you have. The sand and beach metaphors were skilfully woven into the textures of the poem. This work sings off the page as well.

***A Box of Dreams* – Highly Commended**

This poem has an ethereal, otherworldly quality to it. An exquisite dedication to the writer's mother.

***Distance* – Highly Commended**

A graceful investigation into emotive regulation and self-doubt. This poem would resonate with so many readers.