

MARY KENYON POETRY PRIZE 2026 - WINNERS YEARS 7-9

What the Light Brings

By : Mariam, Year 9

A world once bathed in the light of stars,
Now bathed in the light of rockets.
The old light gave, the new light takes;
Hope sputters out like the dying flame of a candle.

Light: Blinding, Breaking, Bleeding.
The twinkle of a missile, a star in the day sky.
The glow of fire as it warns, as it burns;
The harsh beam of sirens bringing aid
to destruction caused by the light.

Light: Scathing, Scorching, a Siren.
That paradox, that force
Always reaching, yearning for it
And like Icarus getting burnt
Children wanting light to chase away the darkness
Not knowing light and dark are as entwined as their fingers are in their mother's hand.

Storm-weathered mothers seeing light which once brought hope bring fear
Bombs for a second beaming with light
Before the inevitable calamity follows.
Seeing that which used to save them, destroy them, is a different kind of darkness:
One which can only be brought about by the Light.



MARY KENYON POETRY PRIZE 2026 - WINNERS YEARS 10-11

to feel free

By : Chrissie, Year 11

it's phenomenal.

the way it falls, swift but steady.
the way it flies, smoothly and safely.
never in a rush.

its patience is a wonder,
constantly poised and always at ease.

it has a certain willingness.
an ability to go wherever the wind takes it,
and somehow with not a shred of worry.

a constant pour of relaxation ebbs through
its spine, with a certain stillness and definite
tranquillity.

its movements are effortless.

the start of it - a point,
sharp with the ability to write its own story.
the end, however, is soft and gentle
and is perfect to bring out someone's laugh.

i'd give anything to feel practically
weightless and forever carefree.

how i long to be like a feather.



MARY KENYON POETRY PRIZE 2026 - WINNERS

YEARS 12-13

Yellowing
By : Theia, Year 12

I leave glittered impression on the railway, bold, holy,
The boys shouting shun-worse! don't matter (it's screech louder than any self).
I'll always be more shine, more nectar, more pavement-painted warm,
Road to Oz, caterpillar-tracks, stomp-stomping laddered laces,

Flat leather digging in more than one place, filthy, sweat yellowing,
Bleeding some forgotten work through baby-pink tragedy.
Toss out dreams; fold body into passport perfection and pray with sunshine on my tongue.
Platform blazer-shed baloney can't cut rays sharper than this lust, oozing bright from each crevice.

Above and pulling, bruised arms, chest scarred, black eye, honey hair straight from scalp.
Loose and stained, full gagging on acid thought. I don't care for their noise.
Hot sunflower painted on their eyelids, rolled back dull. Mother didn't raise a lily;
Crooked teeth canary! fly down the tunnel, smack-hit in the jaw by the galloping dark.

