

First Honorable Mention – Grades 9 – 12 The Virginia Prize

My Dream About Dissection

-after Lucille Clifton

you didn't mistake that white light
for a halo i knew i could see it in the way
your thin hands only grew strong gripped
around the wriggling squid you smeared
slime on sterile silver you helped
keep my hand steady as i ripped down
the blubber coat in short scratches

i reached for the sharper scalpel you shook
your head and pressed the squid's
three brains into my palm I bit your finger
through the latex
i swear there was something i was fighting for
something something i'm still searching
through the freeze-dried organs

by Virginia, Petersburg, VA