
Third Place, Poetry, Grades 10-12

“The Cattle Car,” Ahuva Roberts

I used to hear the sound of animals lowing,
And so patiently stowing.

I once felt hours stretch long and easy,
and their slick fur combed so neatly.

But something has changed.

I used to see lush meadows of green
and a countryside so serene.

I once heard cattle called by a name,
and smelled the earthy scent of dry hay.

But something has changed.

I now hear the sound of young children groaning
And adults so feverishly moaning.

I now feel the yoke of countless bodies thrust upon me,
And a burden that makes me want to burst free.

Now I see barren acres of dry soil
And endless fields of nothing; no toil

Now I hear only odd numbers rather than names

And appalling odors that the memory will always retain.

No longer are there cattle resting in peace

But human beings standing crammed together on two feet.

Each day they stand, their legs so weak

More bodies add to the piling heap.

And as the days continue to give

There is more room to sit

As more hearts continue to quit.

*Ahuva Roberts is in the 12th grade at Bais Yaakov High School.
Ahuva enjoys baking, playing sports and hanging out with
friends.*