

Honorable Mention, Poetry
Grades 10-12

“Humanity’s Anatomy,” Dvorah Leah Kvasnik

If you can keep your chin up
As the clouds above roll through
And as the thunderclaps and the lightning strikes
And the little drops soak you

If you can keep your shoulders steady
As the world weighs you down
And as the burdens of society
Begin to rust your crown

If your eyes still have that twinkle
Though they see in black and white
And if they hide a painful story
That your silent tears fluently write

If you’ve thickened up your tender skin
To prepare for all the scars
The torments and the mockery
Each one leaving a subtle mark

If you’ve plastered on a smile
One too many times
When really you are broken
And happiness feels like a crime

If you hold your hand from shaking
After an overwhelming cry
And all you want from Him is an answer
Why me- why?

If your knees don't buckle over
As you’re beaten to the ground
And if you fall, you get back up
Without making a sound

If you put one foot in front of the other
Though your feet feel like lead
And once you finally start climbing
Your progress seems to reset

If you can piece your heart back together
After it shattered in defeat
And you continue loving
Although it still feels incomplete

If you're brave enough to stay positive
Though the thunder is so loud
Brave enough to stand strong
Though so much holds you down

Brave enough to keep looking
Though the good is hard to find
Brave enough to keep fighting
Though they have bigger swords and knives

Brave enough to smile
Though life feels so unjust
Brave enough to stop the tears
Brave enough to trust

Brave enough to stand balanced
Though they try to sway your mind
Brave enough to keep walking
When you're pushed against the tide

Brave enough to love again
Though your heart is bleeding out
Brave enough to get back up again
And show them what you're really all about

Well then, you are human!
From your head down to your toes
The world is at your fingertips
Let life ignite your soul

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