**A letter to a child of war** By Lina Buividavičiūtė    Third Place Tie

For Ukraine

My child, they say, when boys are born

to an entire generation, we must wait for war.

At a similar time, we had sons – we rejoiced, all of the matrons of the family,

but dark forms loomed, there was no calm. My grandmother

saw those forms before the Second World War when she glimpsed the sign of the cross

in the sky, women, alone, bearing all of the world’s burdens

on their shoulders. On September 11 You will turn eighteen, and I

watch the skies more nervously, follow the news in neighboring lands.

And yet, I forgive You for being born, child of war.

Still, the most frightening things aren’t bludgeons, phantom

limbs, our faded hair –

the most frightening thing is that we’ll never be rid of

the ghosts of the bare wind, nothing will be

as it once was.

And yet, I let You go, child of war –

My reigns no longer hold back the horses.