10TH–12TH GRADE

ELISE WING
10th Grade, Kentfield
Winner

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10th Grade, Kentfield
Honorable Mention
THOUGHTS WE HAVE GETTING OUT OF THE CAR IN MONTEREY

Night in the Philippines has fallen
and usually we think nothing of it
as we go about
checking our watches and tempers
our laundromat costs and taxes
and our kettles and language

But today is different
today we clamber out of the backseat
and the wind shocks us
the sun is too harsh on the sea
and the sea too wide to look across it

So instead we imagine across it
thinking of the boy
with lips wide and elliptical like banana leaves
as he melts into his hammock

Listening to dogs bark
and cars rattle over the potholes
the rain falling like slashes of black ink
and the neighbors
laughing over the last bowl of squid curry

—Elise Wing
TREASURE HUNTING IN SANTA CRUZ

Sea cliff bedding planes
layers of some immense cake
brackish, slumping
human history is only an inch deep here

The fossils come away dusted
chalky veil, swept away by callused fingertips
the spiral, delicate
is veined by grooves regular
as a corrugated tin roof

Somewhere my mind shapes a detour
kelp is a lushness and rustling
flash of silver as a minnow darts
light is meek and blue
but bold enough to say, “good morning”
to the shelf where this very shell resides

How was it to know, that out of the billions
it would be the one preserved for posterity?
will my ginger beer can be the one
found lodged between layers
some three million years hence?
when they, whoever they are
look back on the trashed oceans
and plastic-spotted rocks
and recall the anthropocene?

—Elise Wing