

First Place, Adult category

DO YOU SEE

by Amy Armstrong-Laitinen

My face on every supermarket shelf

Produced.

 Packaged.

 Delivered to your table.

Gravy boat, cornucopia, silver ladle in your hand.

Record the world with your
lens. Steal my voice and leave
me naked.

I am a document.

My face branded with the American

Dream. Furrowed field.

Hungry eyes and famish,

braided to shape history.

Human memory clings like a dust

bowl blossom. A grimy fingerprint.

Pride snapped and served up, a main
course of shadow and rock.

Stone does not flinch,

grow weary or crave a crust

of bread.

 A hank of light.

Children huddle

The supple music of my hands

 Nourishes

 Tenderly smoothing survival.

I search dry river beds for language,

fill tiny bellies with words.

Place pebbles under tongues of babies

so they never dream

of thirst. Feed their pockets

with seeds to plant deeper

 than hunger.

My heart is a blackbird flapping wide-
wings across acres of farmland

Parched.

Fertile.

Humble strength stamped on my

Forehead. A sentence. Read

between the lines. Land of plenty.

 Appetites.

What do you see?