

Winning Poems in 2021 CFCP, Inc., Student Contest

2. Senior Poem, Second Place

Trapped in the Tank

It must have been fate that the plates made contact
And formed what we call the tank
Where outside in people's eyes
You're a shark with teeth like shanks
When I went to school in P town
One day I said "I'm from San Jo!"
They looked at me like I stank
The shark got too far from its cage
Bussing home a day ago I was thinking
If you figure the mountains are frames
And the big houses are glass panes
When you put them in place
It forms what we're familiar with
The deep part is where most of us fit in
Some of us will only ever know
The streets where sideshows get lit on
40's get sipped on
Blunts get hit on
And walls get scribbled on
Because the deeper you are in the tank
The harder it is to escape
And the easier it is to make mistakes
A shark has to go to great lengths
To look normal on the outside
Where the watchers boast in riches
Behind their sturdy glass pane
And feed the sharks grain by grain
Watching over as their plan unfolds
To fish the ones that get too close
But there's so many sharks to be caught
That the fishing is done for them
And they even get us to fund it
The taxes you pay might handcuff you one day

But sharks aren't taught to think about it that way
They're left to their own devices
And other sharks with kids to feed
A shark will take one of its own if it needs
At least that's what the watchers would like to think
They don't realize that their glass pane
Stands no chance against a million of us
And one day the glass will break
And the watchers will make for juicy steaks
But until that day comes
We remain sharks trapped in the tank

Dom Trapani