

# First Prize

## Michael McCabe, Oriel High School 6th Form

Ah, the tomahawk you say? That sweeping sliver of river-born silver  
that can sweep through the air like arrow from quiver. And how  
does she fair, that u waya with the oaken hair? Hurt- crippled in  
the hunt, wounded in the woods- from the blade you say?

O! O! O! The brother's finger too? She took it from him they swore, a thug's  
idea to the dohi maiden's sword.

How she runs o how she runs! she

Gallops from,

Sprints from,

Stalks from,

dives

and

hides from prying eyes.

Home at heart, prison in her psychosis, the wary gigadanegisgi cannot  
bear, to ever dare to see her parents' angry warchief's stare...

But is she a gang-blade, a hooligan, a girl with fiendish aim?

Or was this bludgeon simply child's play, a harmless woodland game?

Fighter or wronged assault, ayastigi, it matters not to them.

When she acts so mad, so young, 'spite the crimson fissure on her finger.

*Side note – the non-English words are Native American, specifically from the language of the Cherokee people.*

*"u": strong of heart*

*"wuya": wolf*

*"dohi": healthy*

*"gigadanegisgi": blood taker*

*"ayastigi": warrior*

# *Waiting for the Past*

## by Les Murray

### Child Logic

The smallest girl  
in the wild kid's gang  
submitted her finger  
to his tomahawk idea –

It hurt bad, dropping off.  
He knew he'd gone too far  
and ran, herding the others.  
Later on, he'd maim her brother.

She stayed in the bush  
till sundown, wrote  
in blood on the logs, and  
gripped her gapped hand, afraid

what her family would say  
to waste of a finger.  
Carelessness. Mad kids.  
She had done wrong some way.