

2023 Adult Winning Poems

Because the infinitive verb 'dar' is nestled in her name

In the radical gospel according to Jovita Idar, the humble pantry—
from an old word for a place to store pan, our daily bread—must be
stocked with provisions for the bellies of our children. How can they,
whose eagerness belies their hunger, learn when the stomach's rumble
contests the textbook's lessons? Señorita Idar, they cannot see
the glorious possibilities of letters and numbers and dreams you hold
so dear, namely justice and equality. This hutch, made to fit in a comedor's
cramped corners, made for the proud exhibition of the porcelain fruit of hard
labor and the curios of good taste, is now filled with canned peas, dried beans,
spooled fideo, and an ample supply of hope. Some day, this almacén
of our gente's goodness will be on unassuming display, interpreted,
in a museum whose climate is controlled, whose perimeter is guarded
every hour. But now, its shelves bowed by the simple gifts of those
with little to spare, it houses sweet aspirations. Estimada Maestra, watch
over our precious object, totem of better times, this pantry, plain and bold.

- *Pablo Miguel Martínez*

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"Donations Here / Donaciones Aquí / Thanx!!"

this "little library and pantry" on Duct Tape Boulevard
and Rusty Nail Street is Narnia on crooked hinges—
a hotel for leaflets and libros and abandoned tea bags

it is a monolith with such potential for healing

someone's tío constructed this piece of furniture, featuring
segments like ventricles and holes out the back
in case a soul needed to escape

before i even reach for intricate handles of the wooden
pane, i imagine this cabinet as a safe shelter para la
comunidad—
playing your abuela's lullabies, leaving
behind what you can, moving your family karma along

- *Violeta Garza*

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Community Cabinet

Comida y libros gratis,
neighbors feeding neighbors.
Behind the cabinet doors
fideo, frijoles, fiction,
nourishment plus knowledge.
Take what you need.
Donate what you can.
Ease insecurity.
Free food or a free book,
open the door, and satisfy
your need for human connection,
compasión y corazón.

- *Diane Gonzales Bertrand*