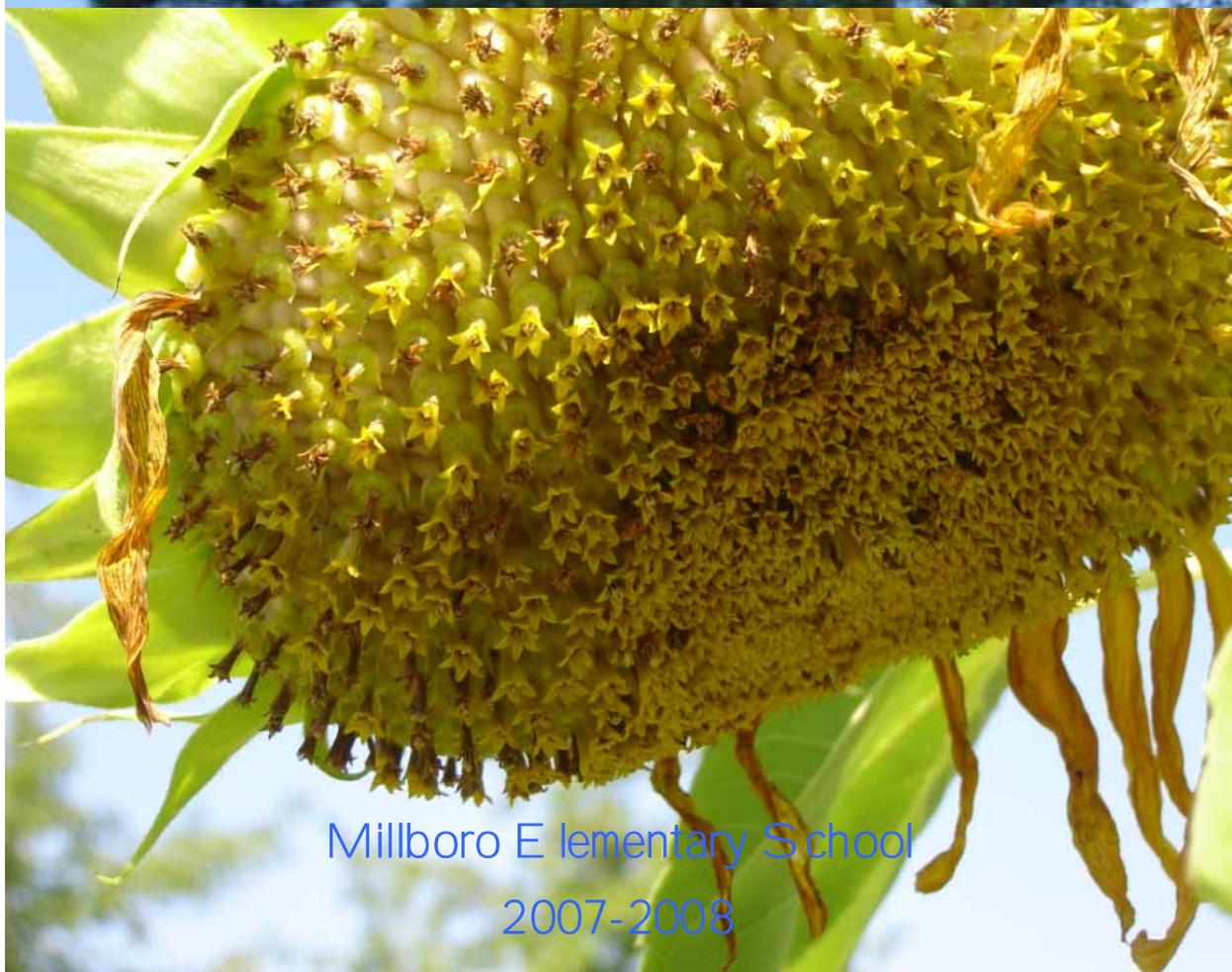




Creative Cats Literary Magazine



Millboro Elementary School
2007-2008



Creativity is everywhere. Growing up I lived for the time of year when I could submit my poetry and stories to the school literary magazine. I loved seeing my hard work in print. I loved knowing other people were going to read what I wrote.

Growing up, my love of writing has expanded. I have seen my work published on the internet and in other literary magazines across the country. I have finished one novel and am hard at work on two others. I have three short stories in the works and two short stories out in the world trying to find homes. I also have a drawer full of rejection letters. I should have enough later this year to wallpaper my office!

I graduated from Long Ridge Writers Group and, though I am not by any means an expert on writing, my love of writing does make me a pretty good cheerleader. I encourage my students daily to write and if asked, I am happy to help try to find publishing homes for my students' writing. The ME S Literary Magazine is just one way I can get the job done.

Thank you for your support of student writing. Only with positive encouragement can writers succeed!

~The Editor



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Lost Cat

By Beth

I was playing with my toy cat. I could not find my toy cat. At bed time I first looked under my pillow. I did not find it there. Then I found it under my bed.

Friend Camp

Patrick

Me and my dog went on an adventure in the mountain. We made a camp. We cooked hot dogs and we cooked marshmallows. We skated, too. I went home to gather some more stuff.

The Bears' Hiking Trip

By Megan

Once upon a time, there were three bears! They went hiking. They stopped to rest. Mom sat down and she fell asleep. Dad and Baby Bear walked home. Mom woke up and walked home, too. They had lemonade and berries.

I Found My Dog

By Taylor

My toy dog and I were outside playing. I went in to go to the bathroom. When I went back outside I had lost my dog. First I looked outside. Second, I looked in my bathroom. He was in my bathroom in the bathtub. I brought my dog in my bedroom to go to sleep.

My Snowman By Hunter

My snowman is fat and he is wearing a hat. He has a big nose because his nose is big and fat. He has one button on his chest. He's fat and he has short arms and legs. His hat is too big for him. You can see half of his eyes. So his name is Half E yes.

He's very, very, very happy. He goes sledding with me. It's fun being with him. He also plays checkers with me. He beats me every time we play together, but it's fun. Very fun.

A Snow Day By Mary

We were outside. The wind blew very hard. When we were on the bus I saw a beautiful sky. When I got off the bus I felt like an ice cube. It is snowing. I can't believe it is! I went sledding. I even built a snowman. I love snow!

Frosty the Snowman By Hunter

It was a cold night. A snowman was built. A black hat was in the air. It landed on the snowman's head.

He started to dance around and sing. He could count. Frosty came alive.

In the morning a little kid came out. She saw the snowman. She was surprised Frosty had come alive.

They went to a fair and they had fun playing. They played catch and basketball. A snowman is a fun pal to have around.

Tubby
By Maegan

Tubby eats a lot
Upset about the girls in the clubhouse
Because they leave stuff in the clubhouse
Buys candy and cookies
You are a good private eye

A Little Caterpillar
By Maggie Hylar

Once lived a little caterpillar. I found it on an old broken down tree. It wasn't a stinging one it was one that didn't sting. So I picked it up and I put it in a jar and I poked holes in it so she could breathe. She needed a name so I named her Spot because she has black spots and she's green. But when I got home from school she had a cocoon. The next day she turned in to a beautiful butterfly. So I let her go and said "goodbye."

Skinny
By Nathan

Skinny is really skinny
Kid private eye
In wizards private eye club
New private eye case: Case of the Scaredy Cats
Nice to his friends
Yells at Marigold

Skinning Squirrels

By Kaylynn

One night me and my brother were skinning squirrel tails. He said I could have a squirrel tail. Then a huge rat popped out. I screamed! Bro-Bro ran inside to get his gun, but then it was gone. It had gotten under the car. We went inside to get salt so the tail would not rot out.

I had to stay the night there, but I did not like it. I was a little scared that the rat would pop out. The next day I stayed for a little while. Then Daddy came to pick me up. On the way there I was quiet. But, when I got home I told Daddy all about it. Then I went to watch TV.

My New Kitten

By Katie

When I was getting my new kitten there were so many kittens. I didn't know which one to get. Then I saw a cat in a cage by himself. Then I asked, "Why is this cat in a cage by himself?" I asked.

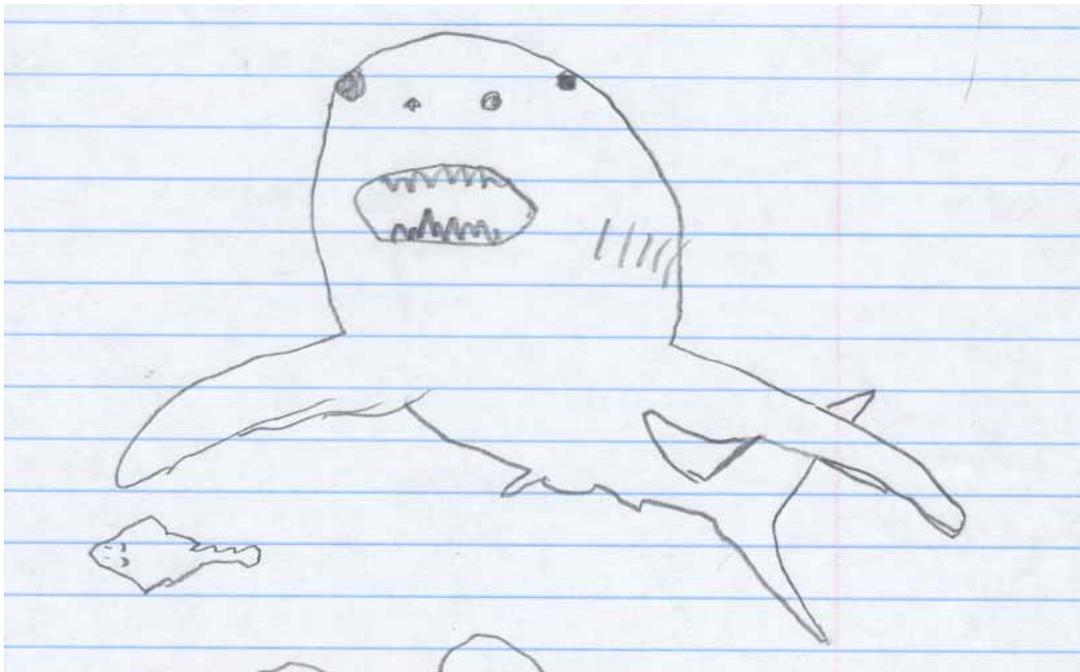
"Well," said Harriet, "He's just so big that we can't trust him." She said. "Well, he's just so big," she said. Then I looked at two other cages. Then I saw four kittens in the cage. There was one boy and three girls. I named my kitty Carly. My mom got the big cat named Chester. When we brought them home Carly and Chester hid under my mom's bed. I'm so happy I got my kittens.

A Cold, Windy Day

By Nick

It was a cold, windy day like today. There were trees in the road and branches in the road and the power was out! Then trees started to blow down on everything what would we do? We couldn't do anything but wait until the wind stopped after a while. But they had a big mess to clean up. So they took machines and cleaned up the mess. They never had mess like that again. They were happy.

Sharks By William



When a shark attacks something above water his eye rotates into his head. Sharks don't eat the black fish on them because they clean the sharks. A magladon has seven gill slits. A shark can smell blood from 5,000 miles away. A shark has rows of razor sharp teeth. A shark has two fins. A shark has enemies and friends.

The Bear Hunt By Will

One day, I went hunting for bear. I was hunting with a 30-30 lever action. Then I went hunting. I saw one by the lake, but then he saw me and ran away. I followed his trail.

I found him again and this time he did not see me. I got a good shot. I aimed right for his heart. I squeezed the trigger.

BOOM!

I got him in the heart. Then he started to charge me.

I shot again.

I missed.

I shot again. I got him in the head.

I brought him down.

Winter
Snowy, dark
Running, jumping, snowboarding
Snowmen, sled
Winter

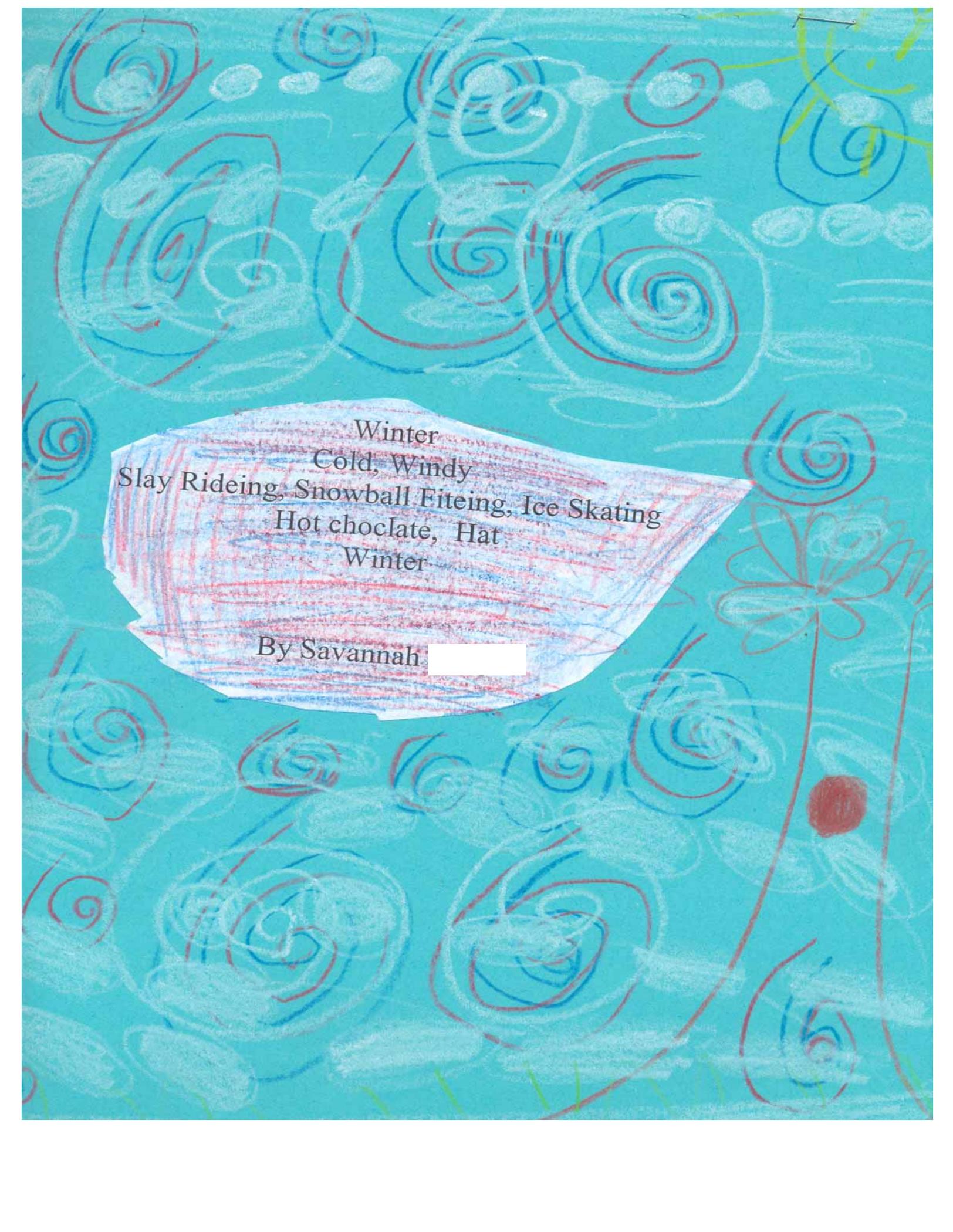
By Matthew



Winter
cold, snowy,
sled riding, snowball fighting, snowing
hot chocolate snowman
Winter

by Lorenda





Winter
Cold, Windy
Slay Rideing, Snowball Fiteing, Ice Skating
Hot choclate, Hat
Winter

By Savannah [redacted]

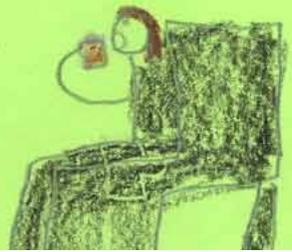
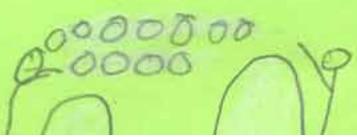
Winter
Cold, lonely
Shivering, slay riding, playing
Snowball, heavy coat
Winter

By Ciera



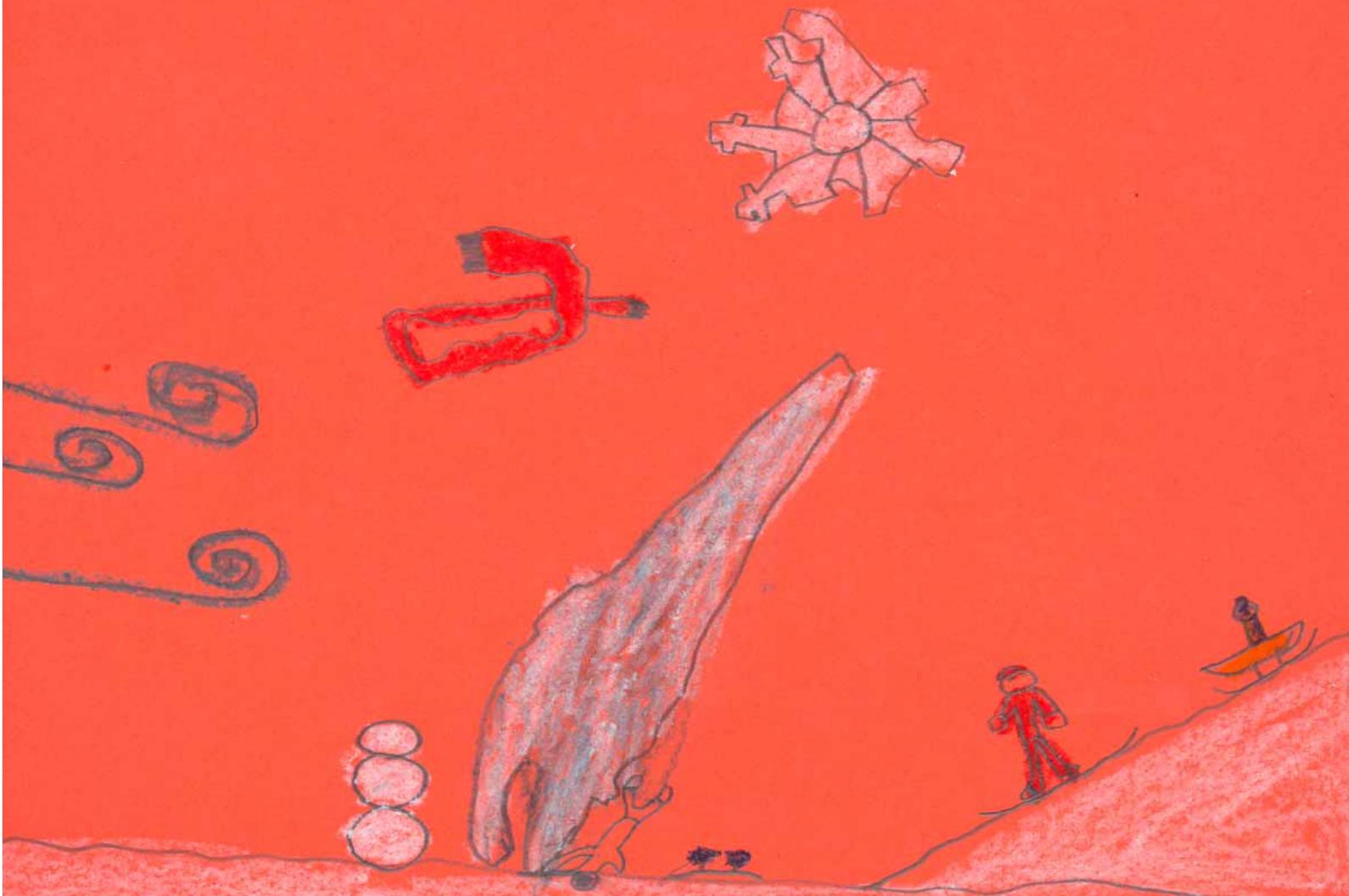
Winter
cold , white,
sleding, bilding, fighting,
hot chocolate ,trees
winter

By Shelby



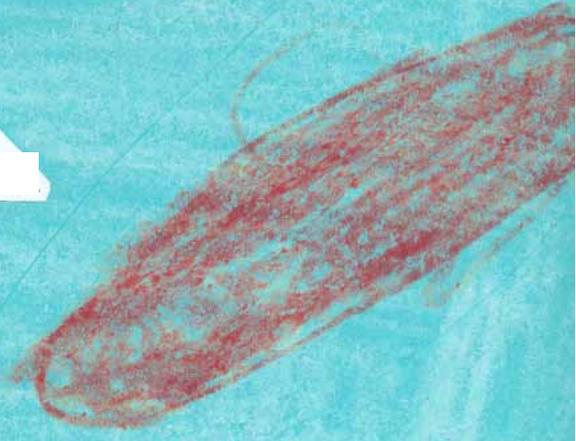
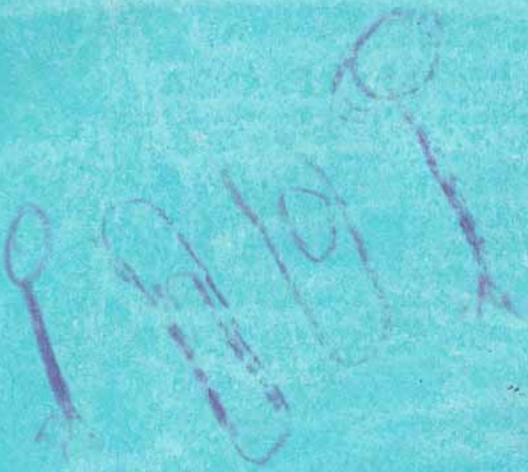
Winter
Cold, white
Snowing, snow boarding, sledding
Snowmen, scarf
Winter

By: John



Winter
Cold, Windy
Ice skating, Snow bording, Sleding,
Hot Choclate, Snow fort
Cold

By Katie



Winter
Cold, snowy
Snowball fighting, sledding, ice skating
Hot chocolate, snowmen
Winter

By Giovanni

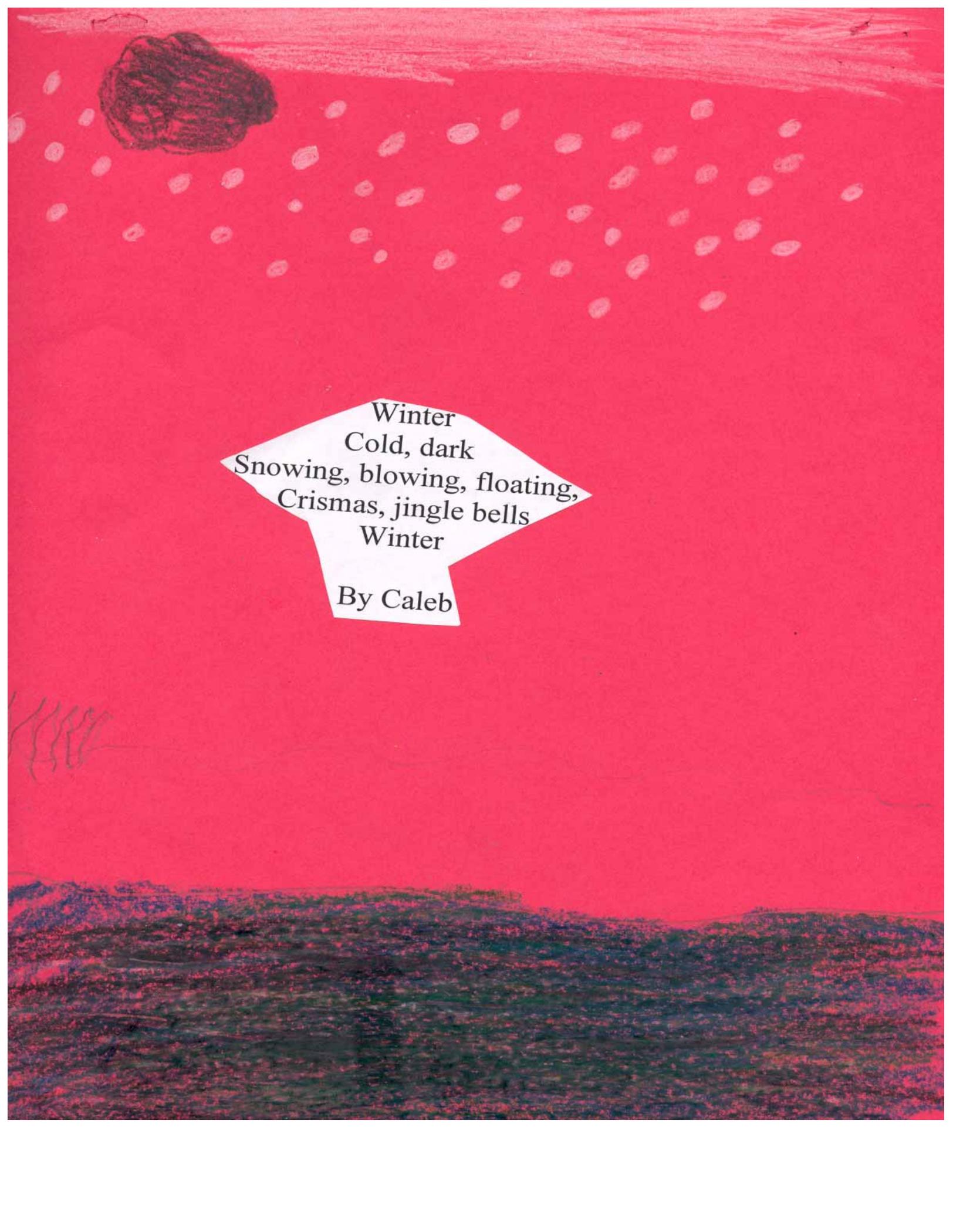


Winter
Cold, windy
Skating, snowball, fitting
Snowman, cocoa
Winter

Winter
Freeze, snowy
Baking, sled, snowing
Fire, family
Winter

By Victoria





Winter
Cold, dark
Snowing, blowing, floating,
Crismas, jingle bells
Winter

By Caleb

Winter

Snowy, icy,

slapping, sledding, skating

Scarf, gloves,

Winter

By Brianna

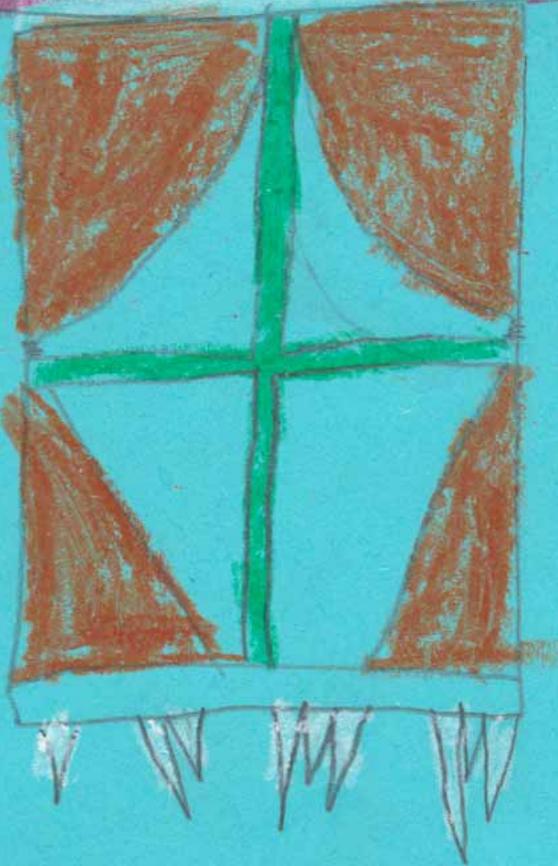
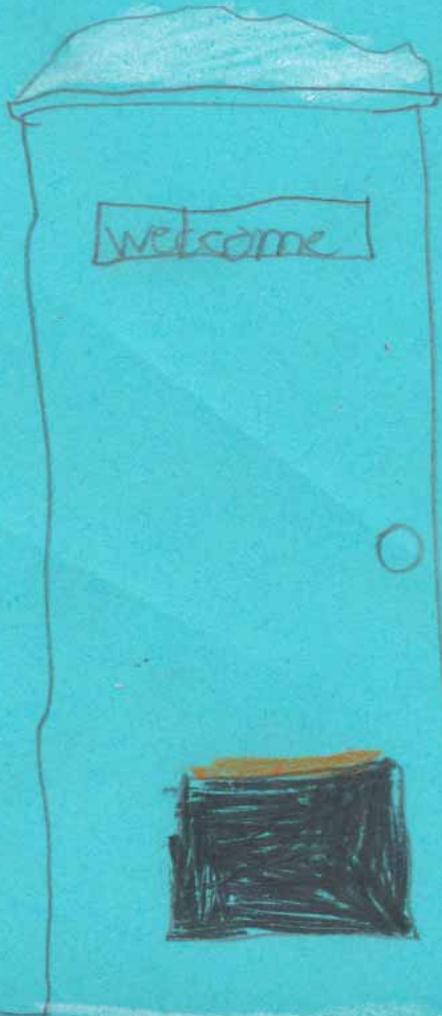
Winter,

Windy, snowy,

Sledding, sleeping, snowing,

Scarf, hat,

Winter



Wondering Where I Belong
By A imee

I have always wondered where I belong.

I have been to the tallest mountains.

T he deep valleys

T he deep dark seas

T he world's largest mall

T he deepest darkest woods

T he unknown islands

I didn't think I belonged at any of those places.

T he one true place I thought I belonged is home in my parents' arms.

T he way some people know where they belong is—

You need to love that place with all your heart.

At Christmas By Catharine

Once there was a little girl. Her name was Sarah. She loved to buy things. Every time she bought something Sarah would put it on her shelf. But her favorite time was Christmas because she could get so many things without buying them. One night near Christmas Sarah thought and thought. *I need more money.* Once she thought about it she came up with so many ideas she did not know which one to try first. When she agreed to shovel paths for \$2.00 a path she thought she would be rich.

The next day Sarah tried it out. She got \$30.00. Sarah was so happy. When Sarah was done she went home. She looked in all of her catalogs for something she could buy. Sarah could buy anything she wanted in the catalog.

So day after day she went over to other people's houses. The night before Christmas Sarah had \$300.00. Sarah asked her mom "Mom can we go to Wal-Mart?"

"Sorry honey I have to go to Target." Mrs. Martin said.

"That's good, can I come too?" said Sarah

"I guess so." said Mrs. Martin

"Great!" Sarah said

So Sarah went to Target with her mom. When Sarah was there she bought lots of things that she thought were useful to her.

When she got home Sarah unloaded all her things she bought and sorted her new things. She put some things in her closet for later and some in a basket for now. Of course Sarah had so many things she wanted to give some stuff away to her friends.

The next party Sarah went to she had great presents for her friends. Sarah could not wait till next Christmas. Since Sarah had so many things she was very happy to give them away to her friends.

So when Sarah grew up she became a millionaire and donated so much money to charity for children in need the people at the charity told her not to donate any more money. So that is the wonderful story of how Sarah Martin became a girl who could give things away to everyone.

My Life During the Holocaust

By Lucy

Hello, my name is Lucy. I lived during the Holocaust. I am here to tell you about my life during these tragic times. When I was a little girl, my family lived in a ghetto in Germany. My mother's name was Yvonne Deitz. She was a stay at home mom. She stayed with my sister, Anne, and I. My father, Otto Deitz, ran a bank in the upper part of the ghetto.

The ghetto we lived in was a very crowded place. Many families lived in that same part of the same ghetto as we did because it was the 'nice' part, as far as nice places in ghetto's goes. Anyway, my sister and I would go to the general store in the ghetto and get the flour from Mr. Von Schmuckle. Mr. Von Schmuckle was the store manager; he gave us free flour in return for our mother's wonderful home made bread. I remember the smell of the bread as Anne and I walked down the street carrying it.

Our father, like I said, ran a bank. The bank wasn't too fancy. It had a big vault that Anne and I would sometimes sit in and talk to each other, or play with our dolls, or just sit there and enjoy the quietness. My favorite days were when the bank would close early and he, Anne, and I would walk home together.

Some days, when our father had had a good day at the bank, he would give us each a penny to go to the store and buy some candy. Back then a penny in the candy store could buy you one candy stick.

Anyway, one day Anne and I were walking to the store to get the flour and we see big trucks with lots of people in the back. I counted one and it had 70 people in the back! When we got home with the flour, our parents were packing up all of our things and Milo and Sally, two of our father's friends from the bank, were loading it into Milo's truck. We could tell that something was not right when everything was being packed up because everyone was quiet. Anne and I did not ask questions because our mother was crying and our father was looking out the window with his 'thinking face' on.

After the long drive to the bank, we all got out and our father told Anne and I to go to his office, later our mother joined us at the door because it was locked. We waited there patiently until father came with the key. Sally came with the key and unlocked the door and told us that Milo and our father would be along soon to bring our things. And until then we were to wait in the back room.

Once our father and Milo had finished unloading our things from the truck, our father ordered Milo to show us to the secret room in an unused part of the bank. It was very

large and cold. I asked Anne what was going on but she shushed me and told me to sit quietly until father told us to do anything other than sit. Later on, Milo told us to pick a place in the big room for our things because we would be there for a while. I picked a small corner in the very back.

After being there for a while, Milo had gotten used to going to our old house and getting the mail and bringing it to us. One day Milo walked in and said that I had something. It was a diary from my aunt. It would be my birthday soon but mother and father said that I could open it early. It was pink with a lace trim around the edges. I wrote in it every day. I wrote about how mother was doing. She had gotten ill soon after the 'move' to the hiding place. We would have called a doctor but that would have revealed our hiding. Anne and I tended to mother and soon after Anne's birthday, which was a few days after mine, mother got well again.

We all were happy but the day Anne got a letter in the mail that said she had to report to one of the places that the Nazis were taking Jews; we all got unhappy very quickly. Us being Jewish didn't help because that's what they were asking for, Jews.

The place we were hiding was above the bank so we had to be extra careful when we flushed the toilet or walked from one place to another or we would be heard. After a month or two, everyone working at the bank was aware of us being up in the attic. Some of the nicer employees brought us food and clothes.

Milo and Sally also worked in the bank, so when everyone left for their lunch break, they would join us to eat. They often brought flour with them so mother could use the kitchen in the abandoned building next to the bank to make bread.

But that all changed when Milo came one day and told us about a poster he had seen on a wall in town. The poster said that all Jews of teenage years that were able to work had to report to the general store to be picked up by trucks.

Anne and I were both of teenage years and were both able to work. But we stayed with our family instead. We did not know where the trucks were going, even though we had heard rumors from some people that they were taking their passengers to concentration camps east of Europe. But none of us believed this because the people that said these things were known for lying, therefore no words that came out of these people's mouths was thought of as the truth. But we had not to worry about that because we were in no danger of being caught in our hiding place, so we thought.

About a year later, things had gotten worse. More and more people were being taken away. Now not only the children of teenage years, but elderly, children and the ill.

Mother was ill again, so Anne and I had not only been worrying about getting caught, but we had to tend to our mother.

The entrance to our hiding place was a very large statue. It was shaped to fit into the wall and you had to hit it in just the right spot for it to open. Well, one day, while Anne and I were tending to mother, and father was busy mending one of his socks, the 'door' flew open and two big men with guns walked in and started yelling at us to leave and get in the big truck that was parked outside of the bank.

While we were leaving with guns pointed at us, we saw Milo and Sally who were looking scared and sad. Milo mouthed that he was sorry to me and I nodded and mouthed its all right back to him. He nodded back but I was already half way out the door.

When we got into the big truck, we were ordered to sit on the floor and not talk. And naturally, we didn't because one of the guards was sitting in the back with us and he was very scary looking so we all sat there quietly.

Anne and I were both holding mother's hands, which happened to be very cold and were trembling. When we finally arrived at our destination, we all got out of the truck and were separated. After being separated, we were sent to big tents and were told to undress and once we did that, we were told to stay where we were and wait. No one knew what we were waiting for, but we all did what we were told and waited. I bet we waited for at least two hours before one of the guards told us to go to the tent with the big number 1562 on it.

It took us a while but we finally found the tent and when we went in, it wasn't a pretty sight. We found people, some that we knew, that were starving and some were just lying there and you could have sworn they were dead, but they moved and you knew they weren't. One man looked at me and said, very softly, to me that he had been there for over a year and knew all that there was to know about the concentration camp that we were at.

I later saw that man the same day lying on the ground, dead. I almost screamed but I knew if I did, I would get beaten, so I just stood there in awe. I didn't know the state of the rest of my family but I prayed to God that they were alright. And I don't think He heard me either or we would all be here together.

I had been at the concentration camp only a month and I smelled of dead bodies and you could see my ribs already. They didn't feed us at all in the concentration camp. And when they did they fed us what was supposed to be soup. One man found a tube of lipstick in his bowl.

And the smell! Oh my. It wasn't good at all. We all knew that it was dead bodies that we smelled because if not all of us had heard one or two of the guards talking about the in-

cinerators.

I had lost my diary when we were taken away from the bank, but I still remember everything very clearly, even though I didn't write anything down. Not long after our arrival, I found Anne. She was in the tent next to mine. I asked her if she knew anything about mother or father and she said that she was with mother but she had died not too long after we had gotten there.

I cried for about a week, just knowing that my mother wasn't going to be with me, my sister, and my father anymore, crushed me. Anne tried to make me feel better but it didn't work. I told her that I needed to be alone for a while and being the sister that she was, respected that and left me be.

I had made a few friends in my tent so when they heard of my mother's death and saw how badly I was hurt by the news, they did all that they could to make me happy again but it didn't work. After the news of my mother's death, I found my father and told him of my mother's death. He said he already knew. I could see the pain in his eyes. I gave him a hug that felt like it lasted forever. And now that he has also died, I wish it would have lasted even longer.

Anyway, once the ever-lasting-hug was over, he looked at me and said, "Lucy, I want you to live the best life you can live, if you survive this horrible war. I want you to go far away and never remember these terrible times. So when this is all over leave." I nodded, fighting back tears. We hugged again but one of the guards caught us and beat my father, because we weren't supposed to talk to the others in different tents. I yelled at the sight of my father being beaten but the guard told me to go back to what I was doing and to forget seeing what I saw and to tell no one even though everyone knew that people were being beaten.

I was at the concentration camp for a little over two years when I found my father again. He told me that my sister, Anne, had been murdered. I was horrified. Anne had not only been my sister, but also my best friend. And knowing that she was gone and never return, was devastating.

My father saw that I was about to cry and told me to let it out. And as any 15 year old girl would do, I let it ALL out. I screamed, I kicked, I yelled that I didn't want it to be true. But sooner or later, one of the guards came over and told me to shut it and go back to my tent. My father gave me a consoling look and I was off, never to see my father again for quite a while. After about another month, I had accepted the fact that both my mother and sister were dead. It was hard to except at first, but I did it.

By this time many people from my tent had been taken away and told they were to

take a shower, but never returned.

I didn't eat because of the things that were found in the soup. We often found lipstick and tissues and one lady found a wallet in our 'soup'.

And the smell of the place now! Oh it's awful. When I first came, it was bad but not as bad as it is now. The more bodies that get burned, the worse it gets. And lots of bodies got burned a day.

I didn't take a shower either because there were rumors around camp that when they got in the supposed shower, they were getting really showered but with gas. It was a very unpleasant thought.

I didn't want to think of it but when you hear people constantly talking about it, you can't help but think about what they're saying. I was wandering around camp one day and I saw some carts that were filled with people that were screaming for me to help them. I wanted to do something I swear I did! But I couldn't. Knowing that I might have a chance of getting out and surviving was all I could think about.

I didn't know what was going to happen to those people but I knew it wasn't good. A few minutes later, I saw the same set of carts go by filled with the clothes that the people were wearing. When I saw that cart go back, and heard the screaming from the big building that had smoke coming out of the big stacks on the top, it gave me a sick feeling in my stomach. And even now when I think of that day, I get that same feeling.

After seeing the cart filled with the clothes, I ran back to my tent and tried to take a nap but not knowing what the Nazis would do while I was sleeping made me not want to sleep anymore. I had been in my tent when one of the men was taken away while he was sleeping. Him not being able to walk or fight back, he just laid there and did what he was told.

Since I was one of the younger ones, I didn't understand much that was going on, but I talked to the ones that had been at the camp for a while, and I learned a lot.

I had found another diary one day and wrote in it since mine was left back at our hiding place when we were taken away. I wrote in this one everyday that I could.

Sometimes the guards would come around and count us to make sure that we were all there, but I don't see how anybody could leave with all the barbed wire, and guards! Oh my heavens! There were so many of them! At each of the tents was a guard.

I think they picked the scariest one for our tent. He was big and had a long mustache. He had the biggest gun that I had ever seen. Everytime someone left to use the bathroom, he would have to give them permission. Quite often we would have to use our food bowls. And our food bowls weren't even actual bowls! They were dog bowls.

Some people didn't even have bowls. They had to use someone else's and then the person that gave the other person their bowl couldn't eat that day. It was confusing and a big mess but we managed.

We were as thin as any person could get. If you wanted to, you could have counted all of my bones in my whole body. By this time, the clothes that we had that were off the people that had died before us didn't fit. They were way too big. Half of the people that were too weak and couldn't move just let the clothes fall off and just sat there and rotted. Yes I said rotted, because that's what just about all of us were doing.

I was able to move a little but not a lot. I could get up and walk around the tent but there was no use in doing that because there was no place to go other than the bathroom. And half the time, we couldn't even go to the bathroom so we used our food 'bowls'.

The camp was beginning to smell worse and worse. More bodies were getting burned. And people didn't want to bathe so the people that were living were really beginning to reek.

We had to dig holes during the day. I'm not talking about your average size let's-plant-a-tree-in-hole, I'm talking about your let's-bury-a-thousand-bodies-in-hole. They were huge! And that's what they did with the holes too. They dumped the dead people in them.

When I was digging, I often felt like I was digging my own grave, because I was. If I thought about it long enough, I could see my body lying in the hole I was digging. It wasn't a very good thought but I couldn't help it.

I would often lie in my so called bed and think about my home in Germany. I thought about mother's bread and the taste of the candy that Mr. Von Schmuckle sold us. When I thought about these things I would start to cry, but I made sure that no one was around to see my tears.

One time I was crying and one of the others came over and asked me what was wrong and I told them everything about my life in Germany. I couldn't just keep thinking everything; I had to tell someone about how wonderful my life was before this awful war.

The person's name that I told everything to was Margret. I told her about my doll I had named Margret and the bank and my father...My father! I had seen him the other day on one of the carts. I had cried out for him and he looked up and said, "Remember everything I have told you! You will need it all!" I yelled back but he couldn't hear me, he was too far away. That was the last time I saw him...for ever.

I had a tough time getting around after seeing him in that cart. It was heartbreaking watching my last living family member be taken away to his meet his death. But I didn't have

to worry for long.

Soon after that, the Americans came to save us! I was so happy. If I could have, I would have jumped and danced around but I couldn't so I didn't.

We first discovered that they came when we heard screaming from the soldiers' tent. The American soldiers were the nicest people I had ever met. They carried each of us out and put us in hospitals that were much nicer than the ones in Germany.

The nurses fed us and fed us and fed us. I had never seen so much food in my life. It was all too amazing. We couldn't eat any solids so we drank until our hearts content.

After I had gained all my weight, I was released out of the hospital. I almost didn't want to leave but I had to, and I knew it. So I left. I found Milo and Sally, who were not Jews like my family and I were.

They were still working at the bank, but now Milo owned it. It hadn't changed at all. When they saw me, they ran to me and each gave me a hug. They asked me where the rest of my family was and I told them that they were killed.

Milo and Sally were devastated. I knew that Sally was thinking that it would happen to them but I told her that it wasn't. She was much relieved.

I told them and the whole bank how the Americans came and tried to capture Hitler but he had killed himself so they just captured the body. No one knows just what they did with the body but I hope they did something very bad to it.

Sally told me that she saved my diary. It took me a while before I could read it. By the time I read it, it had been three or four years since I got out of the concentration camp and I was twenty years old.

I saved the diary I had started writing in while I was at the camp. As I was reading, I started comparing how different things were in the two time periods. It amazed me how good my life had been before the Nazis took us away. I have just told you about my life during the Holocaust. I hope you enjoyed it.

My Dark Walk

By Mikayla

Knock, Knock. I heard a sudden knock on the door, so I ran to open it. When I opened the small wooden barrier I saw, standing there my father who had just come back from work. He was not a very wealthy man, but our family all together was better off than most. When I saw him I jumped into his arms and he cradled me like a small newborn puppy. His arms feel so warm compared to the bitterness around me. He walks through the doorway and puts me gently on the ground. Then he goes over to my mother, who was cutting up cabbage to put into our soup for dinner and gives her a peck on the cheek.

Mother said to me, "Dasher, go tell your brother that dinner is ready", so I go over to the door and slip my clogs on. I run over all our land, and then I come to a small wooden barn where my older brother was milking our cow. As I walk in I can hear the sloshing noise of the milk rapidly dripping into the metal bucket. I walk in and tell him that dinner is ready so my brother, Caleb and I run all the way back to our house, where a nice cabbage soup was waiting for us in the kitchen, calling our names.

When we walk in we set down for dinner, at the table. We all say grace and start passing the food around the table. Suddenly we heard a loud *KNOCK, KNOCK*. My mother tells me to go and answer the door so I do as I'm told. When I open the door, I glare up to see a tall man with a gun staring at me and my surroundings. I get scared, and my father comes to me and tells me to go back and eat, so I did. But from the table I could still hear their unhushed voices. The man wants to take our whole family away! He shows my father a piece of parchment that is an order from Adolf Hitler himself, to come and take us away because we are Jews.

My father rushed into the dining room and tells us to pack all our belongings, very quickly so we did. I ran to my room and grabbed all of my stuff, then went back out to where the man was standing. When we were all ready the man hands us each a green star, it was the Star of David. He tells us to pin them on our shirts, so we did. Then he leads us to the middle of town where there were millions of people. Then these men started pulling me towards this line, as you can probably imagine I tried getting away but the man smacked me across the face! I was bleeding at the corner of my eye, but the man just forcefully shoved me into this line and told me to stay, so I did as I was told.

By that time I had lost my entire family, so I was extremely frightened. Then I was next in line to enter this small shack, where the men were in there. They told me to take off all

of my clothes, put my bags in the HUGE pile in the corner and get in the next line to exit. I did as I was told. I was next in line again and then I stepped in the next shack. Where they told me to put on these clothes that were from corpse which I imagine they murdered, then to get in the small line at the right. I stepped in that line, very worried like. Then I was next in line again, when I stepped up they told me to sit in this chair that looked like the ones you set in at the barber shop. Then this horrifying looking man came out with a razor, to cut off my hair, all of it! At that time I had long, beautiful, curly, brown hair. So it killed me to see all of my beautiful brown curls drop past my eyes and onto the floor.

Then the men threw me into the bed of this small truck, which had about 18 other girls my age in it. I was terrified, but after that we started moving down a long dirt road. But the men told us that the driver had to go back for another load, so they threw all of us out and told us to walk the rest of the way.

Then when I was walking slowly down a long dirt road I inhaled the stench of dead bodies and deadly toxins, which have flooded the air to replace the sweet aroma that was once settled there. As I arrive I see other children, my age, peering at me through a spiked barbed wire fence. They look hungry and afraid, as I would soon find myself being. The soldiers forcefully shove me through a small wooden door and when I stepped through the deadly passage, all I see are dead bodies, depressed children, and souls overflowed with despair.

Then they threw me into the small shack at the edge of the camp near the fence, and told me that I get the small bed about a foot and a half wide and 6 feet in length. There were no pillows, blankets, cemented floors or any other building like things that you could imagine. Then after I sat there for a second the men came back in and told us to go outside with them, we all followed. When we stepped outside there were men, children, and women that were just bones and maybe what looked like a ¼ of an inch of skin. It was a horrifying site. Then we stopped at this open spot in the ground and they gave us all metal shovels and told us to dig, that's all they said was, "dig". So we did.

A couple months later I was just like those people that are now dead, bones and skin. They fed us disgusting food, like one day we had soup with a boot in it. That was nasty, and then I never took a shower because everyone that went in the showers never came out. I

was stuck for 11 months in the horrible concentration camp and then one night we heard screaming. It was coming from the soldier's tent though, and all of the soldiers were running out of the camp! All of us just said, "That means we can leave, so we did". I ran back to my house and no one was there.

Then a couple years after the war ended no one EVER came back. I'm not even sure what happened to them. But I know that they're never coming back. And ever since the war has been over I've been telling everyone my story of how I survived the Holocaust, and the pain I went through doing it.

Basketball By Kiwi

Ball-handling skills

And hand-eye coordination

Score, score, score

Know and meet new friends

Exercise

Talent

Baskets are worth two points

Always remember: don't double dribble!

Lots of fun

Lots and lots of practice

Heartbreak By Skye



When Bella woke up, I worked hard to hide my emotions as I kissed her forehead and went out her window. The night before, as I watched Bella sleep I thought about a lot of things. I didn't really know how I could tell her about all of this. As I ran to my house, I still wasn't in good condition. I had to figure this mess out. I reached my house, went to my room, got some new clothes, and went to the garage to get my car. It was so lonely, not to be able to talk to Jasper, Emmet, Carlisle, Esme, Rosalie, or Alice. Yet, I knew I would see them soon in Alaska. I got to school and waited for Bella to come. She was there five minutes after I arrived. Then I opened the door for her.

"How do you feel?" I asked about her arm.

"Perfect." Bella said. I could tell she was lying but I didn't comment.

We started toward the school in silence. I shortened my walk to match hers. I was wishing that I could hear her thoughts, that she wasn't the exception to the rule. I wanted to figure out what she was thinking. But the only thought I got was from Mike Newton.

"I still can't believe she picked him over me!" They aren't even talking. He looks mad at her for some reason. I wonder why," Mike thought.

The morning went quickly for me. When we were sitting at our table, Bella kept looking around her. Looking for someone, I guessed.

"Where's Alice?" She asked me.

I looked at my granola bar as I answered. "She's with Jasper."

"Is he ok?" she questioned.

"He went away for awhile." I said.

"What?! Where?" she exclaimed.

I shrugged. I didn't want to tell her yet. "Nowhere in particular."

"And Alice went, too?"

"Yes. She will be gone for awhile. She was trying to convince him to go, too." I guess I had to tell her. "Denali."

Bella swallowed. Her expression scared me. It was one of pain. I thought her arm was bothering her so I asked, "Is your arm bothering you?"

"Who cares about my stupid arm!" she retorted.

I didn't want us to fight so I didn't argue. She lay her head down on the table.

At the end of the day, as we walked quietly to her truck she asked if I would come over later.

"Later?" I repeated. Dazed to be pulled out of my thoughts.

"I have to work. I had to trade with Mrs. Newton to get yesterday off." she told me.

"Oh," I murmured.

"So you will come over when I'm home, right?" she asked.

"If you want me to," I said, seeing the hope in her eyes.

"I always want you," she reminded me. That made me sad to know she cared so much. I was going to break her heart.

"Alright then," I answered.

I kissed her forehead and closed her door. I could feel her eyes on my back as I walked to my car. I went home. Then an hour later I drove over to Bella's house. Charlie let me in and we went and watched T.V. Bella came in soon after we finished our pizza. I had hid mine to throw away later.

"Dad? Edward?" She asked when she opened the house door.

"In here," Charlie called.

She walked into the room and said, feebly, "Hi."

"Hey Bella," Charlie said. "We just had cold pizza. There should still be some on the table."

"Kay," Bella said. Then she looked at me. I smiled at her.

"I'll be right behind you," I said as my eyes looked back at the television.

She went to the kitchen. Then she went upstairs with her camera and took pictures. I could hear all of this because I had a keen sense of hearing. Then she came back down the

stairs. She snapped a picture and I looked up at her. I was so lost in my thoughts that I didn't hear what she was talking about with Charlie. I came back as she said, "Hey, Edward, take a picture of me and my dad together."

She threw the camera at me and knelt beside Charlie. "Smile, Bella," I murmured to her. She made a grimace, an attempt at a smile, and I took the picture. Charlie said something I didn't catch but I stood up and threw the camera at him as I read his thoughts about what he wanted. Bella came to me and she put her arm around my waist as my arm



automatically went around her shoulder.

"Smile, Bella." Charlie reminded her again.

After the picture snapped I twisted out of Bella's arm and sat down. When the show was over I stood and said I'd better leave. Charlie said bye and I walked to my car. Bella followed. "Will you stay?"

"Not tonight," I replied and got in my car and drove off.

The next morning I only said one thing to her during English class. I whispered the correct answer when Mr. Bertie asked her a question. At lunch Bella asked Jessica to take some photos of everyone. After that, I walked Bella to her truck. I didn't go to her house that night. I went home and packed.

The next morning I put my bag into my Volvo's back seat and headed to school. The day went by fast. At her truck after school I asked if she minded if I came over. She said no.

"Now?" I asked.

"Sure," she answered. "I just need to go to the post office on the way."

Seeing the envelope, I picked it up. "I'll do it and I'll beat you to your house." I smiled then walked to my car and got in. I drove fast to her house. I went in, went to her bedroom and took the photos and everything that ever reminded her of me and hid it under her floorboard.

Then I went to the kitchen, scribbled a fast note about her going with me on a walk in her handwriting, then went back to my car. She arrived a minute later. I got out, helped her out and grabbed her bag, then I put it back.

"Come for a walk with me," I said, knowing that I had to tell her, to break her heart. I grabbed her hand, fighting the urge to turn and bite her, and started to walk toward the trees. We went a few steps then stopped. I let go of her hand and went to lean against a tree and look at her. I took a deep breath and started, thinking why would I...how could I do this to her, and remembering her 18th birthday.

"Bella, we're leaving," I said.

"Why now? Another year—" She started.

I interrupted her. "Bella, it's time. How much longer could we stay in Forks, after all? Carlisle can barely pass for 30 and he's claiming 33 now. We'd have to start over, regardless."

She stared at me helplessly. I wanted to die so bad but I kept my emotions in check.

"When you say we..." she whispered.

"I mean my family and myself," I said slowly.

She shook her head back and forth. She looked at me desperately.

"Ok, I'll come with you," she said.

"Bella, you can't." My heart felt like it was being ripped but I had to continue.

"Where we are going is not the right place for you."

"Where you are is the right place for me," she said.

"I'm not good for you."

"Don't be ridiculous! You're the best part of my life," she claimed.

"My world isn't for you," I said grimly with cold seeping into my broken heart.

"What happened with Jasper—that was nothing, Edward! Nothing!" She shouted.

"You're right," I agreed. "It was to be expected."

"You promised. In Phoenix, you promised that you would stay..."

"As long as that was what was best for you" I said, interrupting to correct her mistake.

"No!" This is about my soul, isn't it?" She shouted furiously. "Carlisle told me about that, Edward. I don't care! You can have my soul. I don't want it. It's yours already!"

I took a deep breath and looked at the ground, trying to keep my emotions to myself. When I looked up, I knew my eyes were cold and hard.

"Bella, I don't want you to come with me." I said coldly, looking at her.

"You...don't...want me?" She asked, sounding confused.

"No." I told her.

She stared at my face, then looked into my eyes.

"Well, that changes things," she said.

She sounded strangled as she said that, but I needed to tell her something important, so I hoped she would listen. I looked at the trees while I spoke.

"Bella, I'll always love you...in a way. But what happened the other night made me realize that it's time for a change. Because, I'm...tired of pretending to be something I'm not, Bella." I looked back at her. "I'm not human. I've let this go for far too long, and I'm sorry for that."

"Don't," She said. "Don't do this."

"You're not good for me, Bella." I said.

"If that's what you want..." She said sadly.

I nodded once, and her face filled with pain. She looked miserable.

"I would like to ask one favor, though, if it's not too much to ask." I asked.

"Anything," she vowed.

"Don't do anything reckless or stupid," I ordered. "Do you comprehend me?"

She nodded.

"I'm thinking of Charlie. He needs you. Take care of yourself for him."

She nodded again and whispered, "I will."

"I'll promise you something in return. I'll promise that this will be the last time you will see me. I won't come back. I won't put you through anything like this again. You can go on with your life without anymore interference from me. It will be like I never existed." I told her.

The blood rushed from her face after that last sentence. I smiled gently.

"Don't worry. You're human. Your memory isn't more than a sieve. Time heals all wounds for your kind," I said.

"And your memories?" she asked.

"Well, I won't forget. But my kind is easily distracted." I lied. I smiled again then I said, "That's everything." Taking a step backward I added, "We won't bother you again."

"Alice isn't coming back," she said.

I shook my head. "No, everyone's gone. I stayed behind to say goodbye."

"Alice is gone?" She asked in disbelief.

"She wanted to say goodbye, but I convinced her that a clean break would be easier on you." I told her. "Goodbye, Bella."

"Wait," she choked out. Then she reached towards me. I locked my arms around her wrists and pinned them to her sides. I leaned down and kissed her forehead for an instant.

"Take care of yourself," I breathed. Then I let her go and ran.

I had wanted to say more, but I couldn't. My heart broke into a million pieces. The questions came crashing back as I got into my Volvo and sped away. I stopped them with one sentence.

"It was for her own good."

Then I remembered her face as I reached the interstate. How could she have believed me when I said I didn't want her? That was such an absurd concept. I knew that she wasn't going to move on, but I had to try. I guess it was worth it.

Then I was gone, missing Bella already.



Editor's Note: This piece of writing is an exercise in viewpoint. The original scene comes from the book New Moon by Stephenie Meyer. All characters and scenes were created by Ms. Meyer. The author of this piece chose to change the view of a certain scene to see what the other main character was thinking and feeling. The author of this piece in no way feels that these characters, setting, or scene are her own.

7th Grade Thoughts (a poem for the 7th grade)

By Laura

We sit here in class each day,
But are we really here
Or do we dream the day away?

We learn English, History, and Math
Everyday we wonder
We wonder what will be our path

Some of us are worried
Others are scared
Even a few feel hurried.

There are people that just can't wait
They want to move on
They wonder what is their fate

Others of us want to stay here
Even with the work
Their friends are still near

Next year some of us won't be together
It will be sad
But we will be friends forever

When we are in high school
It will be scary
Even though we will learn great tools

So we will all go our separate way
But we will still remember
Tomorrow is always another day

Dad and My Hunting Season

By Cody

It was opening day, Saturday, November 6, 2004. We were in a big tree stand and a spike came out. He saw us and ran. Then a little 4-pointer came out. A big 4-pointer came out and then I shot. He ran down a road and he turned left and fell down. We sat in the tree stand. Some more does came out and saw us. Then a turkey came out and I told dad to shoot him. A hawk flew at the turkey. The turkey flew. We went and got my deer and I field dressed it myself. We checked my deer in. Then we ate lunch.

Then we got in my tree stand at 3:30. I saw my 8-pointer. Then he laid down for awhile. Then it took him an hour to get close. I shot. He ran a hundred yards and dropped dead. I ran and saw him. We took some pictures and then checked him in.

On Monday we were in my tree stand. We saw a spike. Then we saw some does. Then an 8-pointer came out. Dad shot. Then we went and got it. Dad field dressed it. We took it and checked it in.

Tuesday I went hunting with my dad. It was the day after school. We walked to a big tree stand. We sat there a little while. Then we saw some does. Then I took a little nap. That was the moment when my dad saw the ten-pointer. He said "Be quiet!"

He shot it and we found the deer. We checked the deer in.

On Saturday dad and I sat in a big tree stand and didn't see a thing. We decided to take a hunt down a big hollow toward Mr. Hepler. As we started back to the truck just before lunch we sat down and got a glimpse of a deer. Dad shot and she dropped dead. Dad field dressed her. We went home and got the four-wheeler to go back out and get the deer.

Friday I took the day off to be with my mom. Dad went hunting by himself. He got in the new stand at our house. He saw ten does and just before dark he took a big one. He shot her in the head and she dropped. He took it to the cabin and gave it to Carl and Jimmy.

The next Saturday me and my dad sat in a big tree stand and saw a doe. Then we saw some more. We waited for awhile. Finally a button buck came out and two does came behind him. I shot one of them. We took it to the barn and field dressed her.

On Friday, dad and I sat on a hill for awhile and didn't see a thing. Then we went to a tree stand. Before we got to the tree stand we saw a doe and dad shot it. We went and got it. Once we were in the tree stand we saw some little deer. We waited awhile. Then five does came out of the left of the field. Then I saw a buck come out from the right and it was

an 8-pointer. He got close and I shot. He ran but we went and found him and field dressed him. We took him and the doe and checked them in.

On Saturday me and dad were hunting in a tree stand. We heard a deer and when we saw it; it was a 4-pointer. Then we saw a little deer. We waited awhile and saw five does. The buck ran them off but they came back. Dad shot a doe. We went and found it and gave it to P.J.

Later that day we were at home playing with Ryan and dad went to hunt. Ryan and I went into the garage and watched him. He shot and the doe dropped. We went and got her and took her to the farm.

A Good Read By Mrs. Black

Have you ever been asked, "If you were on a deserted island and could only have one book, which book would you take?" Only *one* book. Hmmmm. That is a tough question to answer. Sort of. I already know my answer: The Bible.

Now, before you start thinking that I am a "Bible thumper," or trying to push religion—I am not. The reason I would choose the Bible is because it is not just *one* story. It contains many stories. Murder (by the way, God was the first judicial system), love stories, disaster, survivorship tales, faith, trust, infidelity. Anything you enjoy reading, the Bible already wrote about it.

Many authors today could take a page from the authors of the Bible. Keep it simple, put in characters that are believable and use descriptive words to capture the imagination of your audience.

I love books and to just limit myself to just one book is, well, unthinkable. But, if I am being sent to a deserted island...send me with a Bible.

The Dropout Club

By Mrs. George

"Something is wrong. Very, very wrong," Jimmy said as the class full of ninth graders sat, gazing around, confused, and not just a little bit scared.

"I'm sure they're just having a meeting. Mr. Madison will be here in a few minutes." Kelsey Mayor said. She was the most academically achieving ninth grader in the school and Jimmy rolled his eyes. He was in control of the situation. Not brown-nosing Kelsey Mayor. She would make them take out their books and start learning. Jimmy, though, had other plans.

"Ok, guys. Listen up. Here's what we're going to do." It was amazing what a little popularity could do. He was only on the JV football team, but already he had power. The students stopped talking amongst themselves and looked towards him. Standing up from his desk and moving to the front of the class, Jimmy gave himself even more power. All eyes were on him and he loved it.

"There's a little-known rule. A rule the football players keep guarded." Who cared if his older brother, Sam, who was in college, had told him about the rule? Jimmy was sure it applied to high school, too. "It's called the Ten Minute Rule." He looked at the clock. Three minutes left. "If teachers are ten minutes late kids can leave class." Jimmy watched as smiles spread across the faces of his classmates. As one, like the carefully choreographed synchronized swimmers they had learned about just last week, the class looked to the clock and then back at Jimmy—with one exception.

"I don't think that's a very good idea, Jimmy," Kelsey Mayor said, pushing her thick librarian glasses back up her nose only to have them slide immediately back down to the tip to hang precariously where she left them. "I know exactly where we left off yesterday, I could figure out what Mr. Madison was going to do today—"

Groans escaped the mouths of his peers and he grappled to keep control of the class. "No way, Kelsey. You're not getting us to do any work. If the teachers wanted us to do work they'd be here. Apparently they're just a little too busy for us and so, we're going to be a little too busy for them. In thirty seconds we're leaving the room."

Cheers erupted and students went wild, running around the classroom, yelling. All of them had wide picket-fence smiles that made Jimmy want to go out and play football.

In thirty seconds the classroom was empty of students—with one exception.

#

Eight glorious days. They should have been filled with school. They should have been filled with homework, practice, limited time on the Playstation or on AIM and even more limited time hanging out with friends. But, they weren't. Jimmy happily went to school every morning, with a rising feeling in his heart that he would never have school again. Each day the teachers did not show up, and each day, after ten minutes of waiting, they happily pulled their backpacks up onto their not-so-tired shoulders and walked, with a spring in their steps, of course, outside to greet the day full of nothing.

Jimmy stood at the front of the class, taking the place he had earned as the savior of the ninth grade. Whitman High School had never seen the likes of him and he took his place proudly, arms folded over his chest, eyes on the clock. Two minutes left.

A quiet cough pulled his thoughts away from another day of playing outside in the fallen leaves with his football buddies. He looked over and Kelsey Mayor was raising her hand as if she still needed permission to talk even though no teacher was around. "What?" was all he said.

"Jimmy, something's wrong. It's been eight days. No one has seen from *or heard from* any teacher or staff member at this school. What if they've all been killed? What if they've been kidnapped—"

The class erupted in laughter, spewing looks of complete annoyance Kelsey's way. Jimmy laughed as well.

"Like we care, Kelsey! We've gotten eight free days. Eight days with no classes and no homework. I'm not going to complain if the rest of the year goes like this."

"But you don't care about what's happened to them? No one's even tried to call. Since you're the leader and you've taken it upon yourself to be the Nero of this school and play a fiddle while our education burns to the ground, then it should be you who goes to check on them. At least go to Mr. Madison's house and just see if he's ok."

"And what if I go and he's just sick?" Jimmy didn't know who she had compared him to, but he imagined it was someone pretty lame if he knew how to play a fiddle.

"Then you can stay in charge of the class and you'll have done everything you could to get to the bottom of this. But, come on, Jimmy." She put her hands in her hair and pulled, tightening the hair held by elastic. "You *know* this isn't right. Deep down inside past your stupid adolescent joy of skipping school, you know something is wrong."

Jimmy looked at her for a moment. Her glasses once again rested on the tip of her nose and she did nothing to stop them from falling off except raise her eyebrows. Her face

was red with anger and there was, suddenly, a vein that ran from her hairline down to the bridge of her nose, pulsing purple with emotion.

"Alright, fine." He stood taller, reaching his head towards the ceiling to make himself a commanding presence. "I'll go to Mr. Madison's house. But you're going with me."

The class erupted into gales of laughter, once again, and Jimmy smiled evilly. He'd show her once and for all. It's brawn over brain every time.

#

It was a mistake. Bringing this whiny, geeky bookworm with him had been a mistake. She walked right next to him like his puppy that didn't want to be left alone. Jimmy wouldn't be surprised if she started drooling or yipping to go outside soon. She had her backpack straps on both shoulders and he shuddered. How dorky could this girl be? All she needed was toilet paper caught on one of her chucks. He glanced down and amended his thought. Toilet paper—check. This girl was definitely the dorkiest girl he had ever seen.

"Can you give me some space?" Jimmy snapped.

"What?"

"Just back off a little bit. I'm not saying you have to walk on the other side of the street, but you're crowding me." Oh God, what if she liked him? What if she thought this was a great opportunity to get him alone and try to kiss him. He thought he might be sick.

"Sorry," she mumbled, putting her hands in her pocket and waiting until he was a few steps in front of her to start walking again.

"How far is his house, anyway?"

"It's just up here, around the corner," she said quietly.

The sooner this was over, the better. He still couldn't believe she knew where Mr. Madison's house was. Had she stalked him? Had she actually gone to his house? She probably did extra homework on the side just for fun.

"Right here," she said as he got to a white picket fence with a stepping stone walkway.

The yard was full of flowers. Red, orange, yellow and the burnt colors of fall covered his lawn like a rainbow. Jimmy stared.

"Holy cow. I never knew Mr. Madison liked plants."

"There are a lot of things you don't know about Mr. Madison, James." She pushed passed him and unlocked the front gate. She walked in as if she owned the place. She had shed her shyness and now walked with assurance and knocked on the door. She turned to stare at Jimmy, still standing at the edge of the road, the look on her face saying clearly

"What are you waiting for? You're the person in charge, right?"

Jimmy took a deep breath and walked forward just as the doorbell rang. Out stepped a sweater-clad, slipper wearing version of Mr. Madison. He had reading glasses on and his index finger marked his place in a book larger than any book Jimmy had ever seen.

"Why, hello, Kelsey. What a nice surprise," the smile that lit his face vanished when he lifted his head and saw Jimmy. "James," was all he said.

"Hey, Mr. Madison," Jimmy said, feeling suddenly out numbered. "We just came by to see if you were," he looked at Kelsey, pleading for help. She stood and smiled at him, raising her eyebrows and holding her hand out in an invitation to continue. "Um, we were just seeing if you were...killed, or kidnapped, or something. But we see that you're not so..."

"Mr. Madison, Jimmy was worried that something had happened to you and the other teachers. It was his idea to come see if you were ok. Why haven't you been at school, sir?"

"Why don't you all come in," was all the English teacher said before walking back inside. Kelsey smiled smugly and disappeared into the darkness of the house interior. Jimmy hesitated, unsure of what to do until Kelsey appeared in the doorway again to beckon him in, obviously annoyed at having to wait for him. He ran and jumped up the two steps to get into the house.

"So, you want to know why none of the other teachers or I have been to school, James." Five minutes after he had entered the house, he was sitting cautiously at Mr. Madison's kitchen table staring at a cup of steaming hot tea with milk. What was he supposed to do with the steaming hot cup of tea? He suddenly realized both Mr. Madison and Kelsey were looking at him.

"Yes, Mr. Madison, sir. You haven't been in school for eight days. We were just worried..." He trailed off, unsure of what to say.

"Worried, were you?" Mr. Madison smiled. "I don't buy that for a second, James. Not one day since you walked in the doors this fall to begin high school were you worried about your teachers."

He looked at Kelsey, pleaded with his eyes for her to say something, do something—anything—to help him. She shrugged and Jimmy realized that for once the brainiac had nothing to say.

"Well, James? Is that true?"

"Yes, Mr. Madison," he said quietly.

"So you and your classmates talked during class, refused to turn in homework, showed no respect for me or your other teachers. What would you do if we showed up to school without having something for you to do? If you had to sit in class all day while we teachers stood in the hallway gossiping and talking about you guys, laughing about all your mistakes and the fact that you can't write complete sentences. What would you do, James?" Mr. Madison looked at him and Jimmy wanted to look away.

"I'd get upset, sir."

"Why, James?" Mr. Madison, he realized, wasn't antagonizing him, he was pushing him for an answer.

"Well, it's not right. You're our teachers. You're supposed to have stuff for us to do. You shouldn't gossip about us because you're supposed to be an example to us. You're supposed to teach us what to do," he ended lamely.

"Oh, really? And, James, how do you suggest I teach you when you won't listen?"

Jimmy looked down at his cup of tea and wrapped his hands around the warm ceramic mug. This was the first time he looked at the problem of kids not doing their homework from the teacher's point of view. Normally he was tired from football practice or there was a video game in need of his attention.

"Let me put it another way, James," Mr. Madison said quietly, patiently, as if he were in class rather than in his kitchen. "How much time do you spend a week doing football-related activities?"

Jimmy answered without hesitation. "Two hour practices after school Monday through Thursday. So, eight hours of practice. A game on Friday, so four hours start to finish. Then three hours on Saturday."

"So, you work fifteen hours a week at football. And you work hard at it, right?"

"Of course."

"Why?" Mr. Madison said, probing, making him think.

"Well," James said. "If I don't do well in practice, I don't get to play in the game. If I don't get to play in the game then all my friends will see me sitting on the bench and know that I suck."

"So, you work hard because you want to succeed?"

"Yes."

"Well, look at it this way. All that time you are practicing and playing football, guess what I'm doing?"

Jimmy was silent. He shrugged. "Reading?"

Mr. Madison laughed and a genuine smile came across his face. "No, James. I'm not reading. I'm practicing at being a teacher. I work in the evenings grading papers and making lesson plans. Making class exciting is my goal and I spend a lot of time trying to come up with new ways for you to connect with English." He paused and took a sip from his mug. "So, while you measure football success as playing and doing well in a game, I measure my teaching success by how well you do in class, on homework, and on tests that I give out. When you all fail in class, when you don't do your homework, and when you don't study for tests, I am a failure."

"That's not true, Mr. Madison," Jimmy said hurriedly. "You're our favorite teacher. We like your class."

"Really? You like my class, that's great. But you don't like me. You don't respect me or your other teachers. If you did, you'd do what we ask of you. If you respected us as people you would understand that we are devoted to your success. All we want is for you and your classmates to succeed. You and your classmates, however, do not understand that." He smiled sadly. "That's why we haven't been in school. We've decided to drop out. If you don't care about us, we don't care about you."

Jimmy was floored. The teachers were just giving up on them? He looked at Kelsey who sat motionless across from him, her arms resting on the floral print table cloth. "You knew about this."

She nodded.

"That's why you wanted us to stay. That's why you kept pushing us to do school work."

"You're right, Jimmy. I knew. I've known all along. But it wasn't my place to tell you. You all needed to see for yourselves. Unless you came to the conclusion that you needed them, I couldn't do anything to help."

Jimmy turned to Mr. Madison. "So, how do we get you to come back?"

"Well, James. It's simple. You and your friends have to decide to take an active role in your education. When you do that, the teachers will come back."

"We will, Mr. Madison. We'll do our homework, we'll do our class work. No one will fail their tests." Jimmy spoke quickly; his words tumbling out onto each other, piling up in front of him like a tackle on the football field.

"You don't speak for the whole class, James. You can't tell us what the whole class will do. Besides, telling isn't enough. Isn't that what we hear every day at school? 'I'll do it tonight, Mr. Madison!' 'I'll study next time, Mr. Madison.'"

Jimmy was silent. The teacher was right. As they finished their tea, talking about last weekend's game and the state championships coming up, Jimmy's mind was focused, not on football, but on how to get his teachers back.

#

Twelve school days had passed. Well into their third week without classes, Jimmy stood again at the front of his classroom, angry at the classmates that wanted to get up and go.

"Two minutes left, guys," Michael Prescott, starting quarterback of the JV football team said. A chorus of cheers followed the announcement.

"Wait a minute, guys," Jimmy said from the front. He looked at Kelsey and swallowed hard. "This has gone on long enough. If we don't take our classes, we're not going to graduate. The teachers can't just not teach. If they're not here, we need to go to them. They have to give us the chance to graduate."

There was a pause and he watched his classmates' faces change as they began to think. He knew what they were thinking because he had thought it all himself last night. How dare the teachers jeopardize their chance to graduate? How could they sit at home while students were waiting to be taught?

"We've got to go to them. Show them that we want to learn, that we want to graduate. We've got to work hard, do our homework, and study for tests. No more slacking off guys. We're in control of our education just as much as they are. We deserve to be taught, but they deserve to be respected. We demand they respect us, well, they can demand the same thing, you know?" Heads nodded in the classrooms, eyes got wide, faces turned red.

"You're right, Jimmy. They need to teach us. They *have* to teach us."

"I know where to start," Jimmy said, authoritatively. "Grab your bags."

Leading his class of twenty students out of the building and towards Mr. Madison's house, Jimmy smiled at Kelsey who was walking determinedly at the front of the line with him.



Ned

By Mrs. Hart

My family has had a number of dogs through the years, but Ned, our Springer Spaniel is connected with a multitude of family stories that have resurfaced in conversations many times over. The name Ned means "happy protector" which accounts for his demeanor. Ned's tail was constantly wagging from side to side, even when he drank water and, I had no idea how many "vamints" he chased out of our yard until after he died, when our yard was overrun with squirrels, possums, and the like.

Early one Saturday morning, Ned's relentless barking prompted me to go to the back door. In my haste, I left my glasses by the bedside. When I called to him, Ned bolted towards me and in my fuzzy view, I noticed that he had some kind of critter in his mouth. I asked him to drop it at my feet, which he proudly did. I bent down to examine his catch and for a split second, my heart was in my throat. It was a skunk!

I waited for that gagging, offensive odor to strike my senses, but none came. I gathered enough courage to touch the skunk and then I began to chuckle. It was one of my daughter's stuffed animals that Ned had pirated from her bedroom!

Even though most stuffed toys have gone elsewhere, this toy has gone into storage which still brings giggles whenever it is rediscovered. Ned has gone to puppy heaven, but his stories live on in this household.

