

Our Heart

By: Morgan Beatty

I've needed a heart transplant for about a year. I'm not sure why. The doctors won't tell me. They only tell my parents. The doctors say I'm too young. They always say it's too complicated and that a ten year old girl wouldn't understand. My parents are having a really hard time because my brother Adam has brain cancer and it's not going away. It's funny, he needs a brain and I need a heart. Most people laugh when I say that. They think my brother is dumb and I'm heartless. That's not it. They will never truly understand.

I got out of bed one morning and got dressed. I walked into the kitchen expecting my mom to be making me a special breakfast due to my diet. Instead I saw my parents looking at my brother with a scared yet sympathetic look. My brother was whispering something to them. I couldn't understand a word they were saying and I'm not sure I wanted to. I've learnt that in this family when someone is keeping something quiet it's bad news. I really don't want anymore bad news.

"Hi. What's up?" I said. My parents looked at each other and then at my brother. He nodded. My dad sighed.

"We found a heart donor," my dad said, "and the hospital wants to do it today." For such good news he didn't look that excited.

"Oh really! What time?" I jumped up and down with the good news. Why were they keeping this quiet? Was I missing something?

"Right now," Adam added. My mom looked at him and grabbed his hand.

"Are you ready Evie?" My mom asked.

"Yes!" I tried not to squeal. I failed.

In the waiting room things were really quiet. I had a nap because the hospital was busier than they thought it would be. Plus I didn't have an appointment. I was a last minute appointment. My grandma and grandpa showed up and I ran up and hugged them. My grandpa put his hands on Adam's shoulders.

"Only 18 and yet I'm so proud." Why was everyone acting so weird today? I heard footsteps behind me. A nurse slowly approached. I hope she is here for me.

"Everly Faye?" asked the nurse.

The room they had us in was packed with my grandparents, parents and my brother. Then the doctor walked in.

"You're aware of the risks of this surgery, right?" everyone nodded.

"Okay, the surgeons are just about ready," he said as he looked at Adam. Adam walked up to me and held my hand.

"Evie I love you. I have to go, but know that I love you and we will always be together," he said as he wiped away a tear. I hugged him. As he walked out he blew a kiss to me. I looked around and everyone looked so sad like they were about to cry. The room was silent. A few moments later the doctor came to get me.

I woke up in a hospital room with my grandma, grandpa, mom and dad sitting beside my bed. Balloons and flowers overflowed the room with banners and signs that read "Get well soon."

"Hey, Everly how are you doing?" my mother said as she held my hand.

"Good. How long have I been asleep?"

"About a day," said my dad.

"Where's Adam?" everyone looked at each other. My dad grabbed the hand that my mother was holding. My grandma buried her head into my grandpa's shoulder.

"Sweetie your brother is gone," my dad spoke. I thought back to earlier.

"I have to go, but know that I love you and we will always be together," I remembered Adam say. I remembered him wipe away his tear and how my grandma was about to cry. How she was leaning on my grandpa's shoulder. I remembered my dad holding my mom in his arms as she used his shoulder to cry on. I looked back to my grandpa's face as Adam walked out the door.

I felt tears well up in my eyes.

"No," I said "why would you let him do that?"

"We're going to give you a minute to process this." My mom kissed my forehead and everyone left the room. I curled my legs up to my chest and started to cry. I stayed like that for about half an hour, the only reason I stopped was the fact that he was right. We will always be together because I have *our* heart.

She ran through the streets which were strangely empty. The rain pounded on the pavement and crashed onto her face making her vision blurry and indistinct. She heard a scream from somewhere behind her yet it was quickly silenced by something other than turbulent downpour. She ran harder as all her muscles begged for rest. She knew that if she faltered, even for the slightest moment she would have no chance of survival. She ran and ran, but she knew that ultimately her muscles would refuse to carry her any farther, forcing her to face whatever horrors lay behind her. Just then she heard a familiar voice, “Belladonna, it’s me Sebastian. Look at me Bella - ” “Sebastian?” Her voice came out weaker than she meant it to. “Is it really you?” she asked, turning around uncertainly. Sebastian was standing in the middle of a cluttered alley that she couldn’t quite remember running into. But none of that mattered now. She flung herself desperately into his open arms, tears already cascading down her dirty cheeks. “They were going to kill me. I couldn’t stop running,” she sobbed hysterically into his chest. She looked up at him and stared at his golden eyes. Impossible she thought, a human couldn’t have these eyes. His eyes were all gold, metallic, and no pupil.. At that instant skin began to peel away from his flesh. She tried to take a step away, but his arms trapped her. His face was decaying before her eyes. Every piece of skin that hit the alley floor mutated to cockroaches and

centipedes, scuttling into the trash and darkness. Instead of the familiar face of her prince, a grotesque face of a demon peered down at her. “*Devil.*” was all she could whisper before the monster’s arms let her go. She fell ungracefully to the floor, darkness greeting her with all the coldness of concrete.

Bella woke up, tangled in her sheets, tears streaking down her face, and splashing on her pillow. She stretched her legs and wiped her face with the back of her hand. Sunlight shone through the floor-to-ceiling windows, illuminating her vast bedroom. She was getting better at waking up from her restless nightmares. She gulped down some water from an annoyingly small, flimsy glass resting on her cluttered nightstand. Almost everything in her room was small and dainty, by order of her stepmother. “Proper princesses are dainty and small, and Princes marry proper princesses.” This was one of her stepmother's many princess-training mantras. Her stepmother, the Queen, was always prim, proper, and insufferably perfect. She so badly wanted Belladonna to be her replica, that she had almost wasted Bella’s childhood with her so called “Princess Practices”. Bella rolled her eyes in disgust just thinking about it. Queen Charlene had always hoped for Bella to bond with her like she had with her real mother. Bella’s real mother, Natalie, had died when Bella was only two. Natalie had been the Queen of Mizule for many years before she became pregnant with her daughter. Two years after her daughter’s birth, she passed away from an unknown disease. Bella touched the simple silver chain she wore

around her wrist, a last gift from her mother. Dismissing the painful memories, she unsnarled herself from her covers, shuffled to her dresser, and started hunt through it. She was about to settle for a nice pair of leggings, a t-shirt, and a forest green cardigan (the only comfortable clothes her stepmother would allow,) when she remembered the tea party her mother had arranged with princesses from neighbouring kingdoms. Priscilla Ashburn, Cordelia Cadmen, Lilliana Rowe, and the only one she could stand (her best friend) Dana Wilde. She and Dana had been introduced when they were three. Bella was still hurting after her mother's death, so Dana comforted her as well as a three year old could. They'd act as proper as their personalities would allow in front of their strict, prissy parents, yet they would be as wild and free as they could without getting caught. She moved away from her dresser, and grudgingly trudged to her sizable closet which held all her pretty, girly dresses; basically everything she despised wearing. She flicked through all the different shades of pink until she found a baby blue dress with the least amount of ruffle and lace. It was going to be shorter and more plain than the other girls dresses, but that didn't bother her; she enjoyed being a bit different. She glanced at her clock and realized she was late. She hurriedly dressed, did her hair, and raced downstairs as fast as she would dare in her dress. She skidded around corners, glad she had remembered to wear flats. She hurtled down many staircases to finally arrive at the patio doors. She stopped, took a deep breath, and composed

herself. She schooled her face into togetherness and pushed open the doors. She forced her herself to calmly stroll over to the table set out furthest in the courtyard. Other girls were already seated and making small talk with one another. Belladonna waved only when she was sure she girls had seen her. A polite chorus of “hello”, “hi’s”, and “how are you’s” bombarded her ears as she sat down in the chair beside Dana and Queen Charlene. Just as she had taken her seat, her older brother Elliot raced across the lawn and whispered something in the Queen’s ear. Her step-mother’s face changed to something strange for such a short moment that Bella wasn’t sure it had even happened. Her expression quickly changed into despair and sadness. The Queen motioned for Bella to follow her just out of earshot of the other girls, “We just got news that,” her stepmother took a breath, “that your mother’s death wasn’t because of a disease, she was... murdered...”

To Be Continued...

Pink and Blue

The colour of your lovers lipstick smeared on the napkin from her ice cream. It's the feeling of your fingers brushing against freshly bloomed flowers, the feeling of your fingers dragging against her cheek. The moment when you hear her laugh while she cooks her favourite meal and spills. The warmth of your hands slotting together while you walk along the beach, the sand sliding between your toes. It's the feeling of you and her falling asleep while soft piano ballads play in the background. It's the sound of her breath and soft sighs while she lies down next to you after she comes home unusually late. The noise of the door shutting and her perfume filling your lungs and an unconscious smile graces your lips as hers falls. Your legs intertwine with hers but she doesn't reciprocate the action and your heart beats slightly faster, it feels like that. It's a dreading feeling of something you know and knew would happen. Yet your heart still swells when you think about her even though you know it shouldn't. It's the feeling of your cold hands finding her face and caressing her lips and as you expected, her smile was gone. It's the moment you find out that you were right to assume those nights she said she was working overtime; she wasn't. You already knew but that makes it hurt more. It's the feeling of your fingers rubbing the fabric of her dress that she wore on your first date. The dress shares this deadly colour with her lipstick, ice cream, perfume, and the feeling of her leaving you for someone else she never even wanted. It's the colour of so many broken promises and regrets of love.

But realizing that she never was yours is a whole new colour. It's the colour of spilled drinks and ruined cakes. It's the colour of her nephews birthday that she desperately dragged you to then broke her arm chasing him around the yard. Her presence was the colour of that hospital room that she barely smiled in when she found out she had only 3 months to live because the cancer came fast and ruined her like a tornado. It's the colour of her tears when she remembered she couldn't spend those months with me because she left me broken surrounded in the colours she abandoned. She is the colour of love, life, and death. All of her colours will be only a trail and it's all because she couldn't see past one mistake. It's all because she broke my heart and I broke hers. She hurt me but I couldn't forgive her like I did when her lipstick smudged across my new white shirt, like I forgave her for the spilled ice cream and broken perfume bottles. I could forgive her for all these mistakes but I couldn't forgive her for the pain she drowned out with drinks and other people.

I couldn't listen when she told me she didn't want to sleep with that man. I didn't listen when I should've because what was once my best mistake is now my worst and my once ever listening ears are now blurred over with the sound of your death repeating. You were once a vibrant colour but you are now but a lost song. My feet seem to always carry me to your grave now to set beside it roses and hyacinth for those were always your favourite and they are forever the flower I keep next to my bed. They are the colour of you. Pink and blue like the bruises on my heart.

The Chaser

I'm The Chaser. Yes, it's just how it sounds, I chase people. Most people think I'm a creep, but there is a reason why I chase people: I'm forced to... Well, I'm told to. There is a voice in my head telling me to. It is a man's voice, but I don't know who it belongs to. That probably makes me sound delusional, but I promise I'm no creep. Last time I didn't listen to the voice, I was paralyzed- I couldn't move. Then it told me next time would be worse. So now I listen to it, no matter what it is. Overall, I hate chasing people. When I chase them I hear their screams crying for help. When I hear that, a chill runs through my body. What I'm saying is, I've been doing this for two years and every time their screams chill me to the bone-. You would think I'd be used to it now. I always catch them, for I'm faster than them. You're probably wondering what I do once I catch them, well actually I don't know. I'm chasing them and then once I touch them I black out and I'm in my bed.

My name is Ivory Cartwright, I'm a 15 year old girl and don't know what to do. My parents died two years ago in a car crash, leaving me alone with no other family. I was put into foster care to begin with, but no one liked me-. They sent me back within the first week. Finally, my social worker gave up and sent me to an orphanage. I used to be such a normal girl. I was just Ivory, the girl with the yellow-blond hair and green eyes. I went to a normal school with normal friends. However that was two years ago, now I'm not Ivory, I'm The Chaser. I don't get hungry even though I haven't eaten for almost a year. I haven't taken a bath in almost a year, and I still smell as fresh as a daisy. You would think that my hair would look horrible, but it's completely normal. Nothing used to be like this and I don't know why it changed.

The Chaser

Today is going to be a normal day, or so I thought. I woke up in the woods which is where I live now and a man in all black is standing over me. He looks only about two or three years older than me.

“Who are you?” My voice is shakey.

“The more important question is, who are you?” I’m about to say Ivory, but then I think better of it.

“I’m The Chaser.” I try to make my voice sound stern, and not scared.

“Then why aren’t you chasing me?”

“Because it’s not telling me to.” I say referring to the voice in my head.

“You’re not going to know what I’m talking about.”

“Actually, I was afraid of this. Ivory Cartwright, you’re coming with me.” He snatches my thin, boney arm and starts dragging me away.

“But how do you know my name?” My voice sounds high and squeaky, compared to his.

“I don’t.” He says smirking.

“You just said it.” It is now I realize the voice in my head telling me what to do for the past two years, is his.

“How are you inside my head?” I say, now yelling.

“All will be answered in good time.” I honestly don’t understand, but I keep that to myself, he would think I’m stupid if I ask him.

The Chaser

“I don’t think you’re stupid you know. I didn’t understand either.” I completely forgot he can read my mind, somehow. What does he mean by

“I didn’t understand either?” Quickly, I try to force the question out of my head before he can read my question, or it comes into his mind, or however it works. But it’s too late.

“I was like you until they came and changed it.” I give up on staying silent and ask,

“Who are they? what did they change? what’s going on?!”

“All will be answered in good time.” Okay he’s starting to get annoying.

“You said that already.”

“And that’s why I’m saying it again.” I can tell he is getting annoyed too. I start to come up with a plan in my head but then I remember he can hear me. How am I supposed to catch him off guard if he can hear what I’m thinking.

“That’s the thing, you can’t catch me off guard.”

“Ugh! Stop that!” I say.

“Or what? You’ll chase me away?” He says, challenging me. Without thinking I take my hand he isn’t holding and punch him in the nose. He staggers back and clutches his nose, letting go of my wrist.

“No, but I can do that”. I say laughing. The man is still groaning from when I punched him. I start to run, but this time not chasing someone, but being chased by someone. I am now in the shoes of everyone I’ve chased in my past.

I can hear him behind me, chasing me. But then I trip on a tree root coming out of the forest floor.

The Chaser

“Stay away from me”! I scream at him

“Sorry, I’m not allowed to do that”. Blood is streaming from his nose, It looks painful.

“It doesn't hurt that bad. Afterall, it was only a girl’s punch”.

“What? Did I hurt your feelings”? He makes a pouty lip as he says this.

“Oh, no one upsets The Chaser”. I scowl at him in disgust. His smile vanishes turning into a frown, like he suddenly remembered why he was here.

“Get up”. He says.

“Give me one reason”. I say.

“I’ll shoot you”. He says cocking an eyebrow.

“You wouldn't”.

“That’s where you're wrong.” Then he fires, there is a blast of pink and then
nothing, just... black.

Morning Ride

She was walking down the path; the gravel crunching beneath her feet. The mist was floating below the tips of the mountains, and the trees swished in the morning breeze. There was some light, although it was not quite yet dawn. The last stars sparkled in the twilight as the sun burst its way forward between two of the mountains and over the pond. The first rays of sun danced upon the girl's face. She smiled from the warmth of it, the same warmth she longed for while she walked through the night listening to the whines of distant coyotes and sometimes the hoot of an owl. Thoughts floated around her mind of the previous day. How her horse, Zash, threw her, how he galloped away after, and now, how lost she was. She had been wandering on this old gravel dirt road all night, and part of the previous day. Her stomach was growling, and now, even when she licked her lips, they remained dry. She listened for the sound of a stream, or even a thunderstorm. But none came. She kept trudging through the day, not giving up hope.

She knew, that if the hunger or thirst did not kill her, the wildlife would. It was a wonder she lasted the last night, stumbling and tripping, she must have looked like a newborn foal to the predators watching her, the hair on the back of her neck had stood on end. Easy prey. It would be a miracle if she lasted tonight too. There was no sound but the swaying of the tree's, the occasional hop of a deer, and the skittering gravel that fled from her steps. How long she'd been walking she did not know, other than it had become dark once already. She had eaten nothing since the morning she went out for her ride, and only then she had but a bite of an apple and a slice of toast. Her steps were slurring together now, and she was hearing things. She could hear her mother calling her name. Once she even thought she could hear the giggling of her brothers as they rolled around on the floor, fighting over a little green toy soldier.

Morning Ride

"No, no," she murmured, shaking her head. She didn't want to die. She still had so much to do. What about the roping competition she and Zash had next weekend? They had been training for months. Now who would be his partner when he chased that steer? It couldn't be her now, after all she was about to be eaten by a cougar, like some kind of triple A steak. "I'm sorry Zash," she mumbled. She felt like she let him down by being eaten by a cougar. Her mind raced, as fast as it could in her current state, to all the possible ways to get out of her situation.

The cougar was circling her now, trying to decide what side would be the best to strike her on. *'This is it,'* she thought. There would be no more morning rides, no more laughing when Zash tried to eat her hair because it somehow looked like hay to him. All of that was over, and she would soon float in a vast pool of darkness. She almost had come to peace with this idea, other than she had let Zash down.

She didn't want to die, but maybe it would be okay if she got to see Zash once more, only so she could say sorry and kiss his nose, once more. Up above her more rocks slid down the mountain, falling around her. *'Oh great, another one,'* she thought. But just as this thought entered her mind the gleaming belly of Zash came soaring over her. The magnificent chestnut bay reared up and struck out at the cougar. The cougar only struck out once to fend off its attacker, but once it saw the sheer power of Zash revealed, he leaped back up the hill in but a few bounds. Zash turned back to look at the girl, he then looked back up the hill once more, as if to make sure it was safe. He then turned around and nuzzled the girl's face.

'Oh Zash,' she murmured. *'Zashy,'* she said once more.

The horse nuzzled her again, the reigns that still hung around his neck falling onto the girl's face. The girl tried to lift her hand to grab them, but it was much too tiring. She wanted

Morning Ride

to lie there and never move again. She thought, '*How peaceful it would be to sleep right now. To just to float away.*'

But no, she couldn't leave Zash, who would give him is vitamins? So she tried again, grabbing the reigns and hugging his neck, his silky main tickling her nose. Zash pulled his head up and lifted her onto her feet. Her saddle was hanging of the side of his belly. She reached over feebly to undo the already almost broken girth that kept his saddle on. The saddle fell to the ground with a thud. She stepped on the tree of the saddle to lift herself onto the horse's back, all the while holding on to his neck. When she had made it atop him she wrapped her fingers in his mane and lay her head on his neck. Zash turned and pulled them both up the hill. Straining so hard that he had to stick his head out to gain more power. Once on the road, he perked up his ears, listening for the sound of the cougar and then continued on the road with his nose to the ground, like a hound, searching for the way home. And then, as the saying goes, they rode off into the sunset.

Hunting-Good or Bad?

By Levi Kempter

Grade 8

Barriere Secondary School

Just imagine you're on a field at 6:00 AM. You can smell the fresh air and the dew is wet on your boots. Then you see it, a white-tailed deer. This is why you got up so early. You look through your scope and take off the safety and shoot. The deer falls to the ground never to rise again. "There," you say to yourself "My freezer is now full for the winter!" That was easy, wasn't it? Now your freezer is full for the winter. Some people think that hunting should stop, this is something that has been around for a very long time. Critics say hunters are brutally and needlessly killing animals. They are wrong. Hunting is a sport, just like skiing or snowboarding. Remember this, "a poacher is not a hunter!" The reasons that hunting is a good thing are; the conservation that is happening, how it teaches people to respect the environment and the ethics of hunting.

Conservation is an important part of hunting. For example, in 1900 there were only 100,000 wild turkeys remaining in Canada. Thanks to the conservation today there are over 7 million. Here is an example of conservation. Let's say a hunter has a special spot they hunt. In that spot, they hunt mule deer. Even though they are legally allowed to shoot two bucks, they will only shoot one. So every year they only harvest one buck and leave the other deer to have more babies. So instead of getting two deer, they get only one but they don't kill off all the deer. The hunter might not even shoot

one deer in that spot if there is a bad winter or disease. Don't you see how they hunters are not killing everything in their hunting spot? This is the conservation that is happening.

Hunting also teaches people to respect the environment. Have you ever been walking in the woods and come across someone's trash? This is bad. The next thing you might come across is a dead grouse that ate the trash. Hunters always respect the land. You will never see a hunter leaving his trash lying around where wildlife could eat it. When a hunter takes the C.O.R.E (Conservation Outdoor Recreation Education) course they are taught how to clean up their hunting camp properly. A hunter always respects the land that they hunt on. So this is why hunting teaches people to respect the land.

Finally hunting teaches ethics. Ethics are rules like "fair chase." These rules mean hunters are not allowed to hunt animals from an aircraft, boat, or vehicle. Ethics mean other things too. Let's say there is a family who is from the city and has never seen a deer and they are driving on a road to go on a hike. They go around a corner and one of them shouts "look a deer!" They all get out of the car and start taking pictures. As this is happening a hunter drives up the road and sees the deer. He is legally allowed to shoot the deer, but he does not. Why? Because if he goes out and shoots that deer the poor family is going to see all of it. That family will not think of hunters very highly. So he waits until they have finished and have driven away and then he goes and shoots it.

These are my reasons for saying hunting is a good sport. You now know that hunters respect the environment, the people and the animals they hunt. Now after reading this do you think hunting is good or bad?

Away

By: Jady Michael Grade 8 Valleyview Secondary

Harsh cold winds sound,
Releasing the howl of a hound.
Trees sway and bend,
Indicating the end.

The souls scream,
Awaking those from a dream.
If the dark is here,
Making it clear.

The souls take flight,
To make it to the light.
Fire's rise,
Scanning for lies.

Some must meet their demise,
Allowing our good-byes.
If we die,
All will lie.

Memories

By; Jady Michael Grade 8 Valleyview Secondary

Swift as a jay,
Locked away behind a door.
Wiping away the day,
Staying on that shore.
Slowly fading to grey,
But happen to soar.
Always tending to stray,
Creating a war,
To show us the way.

Caitlyn Neufeld

Grade 8, @Kool

Who I Am Meant To Be

The sun is shining. The halls filled with chatter as I walk down them. I search to find my little sister, Sarah. I reach a hall called, *Perfects Hall*, where 'Outlaws' aren't allowed. I rush in to see my sister sitting there doing her homework. Sarah is lucky. One of the Perfects isn't there. She would be *dead meat* otherwise. Visually upset, I rush over and stand in front of her saying, "What are you doing, Sarah?" Sarah looks up annoyed, as she replies, "uh, doing my homework. Duh!" I grab her arm as I lift her onto her feet and pull her out the door that is closest, saying, "Do your homework in our own hall, or outside. Not where we are not allowed." Once we are outside, she violently pulls her arm away and almost yells, "What's your problem, Saber? I was working hard so I can get good grades! Unlike some people!" I glare at her as I shout back, "You ain't doing so good on grades either, Sarah! What are you even getting for marks?" I asked upset shoving my hands in my pockets while staring at her, waiting for an answer. "Better than you! Unlike you, I am getting over this thing that happened alright!" I keep looking at her as my eyes turn soft and I say, "Look, it hasn't been easy on either of us. You get over it by getting good grades. Me. I don't even know anymore. Let's just be going home alright?" She huffs in response, "Fine".

We both go to Arts High School; Sarah, a freshman, myself a junior. The school is split into five different areas: Perfects, Musicals, Artists/Dancers, Sports, Outlaws. Sarah and I are Outlaws. Meaning we don't have a category yet. People who have just joined become *Outlaws* until they find a category they like. Sarah wants to be a Perfect. But, I don't know what I want to be yet.

We step inside our house where Mom is unpacking boxes still! Sarah cheerfully walks over, hanging her bag saying, "Hi Mom!" Mom looks up from her box to see me parade past and drop my bag on the stairs. Well, that ended like this. "Saber Mason Jackson, pick your bag up this minute and

Caitlyn Neufeld

Grade 8, @Kool

Who I Am Meant To Be

get into this kitchen at once!” I grunt as I trudge back down the stairs grabbing my bag and facing them saying, annoyed, “What?” Mom stands up crossing her arms asking, while trying to stay calm, “How was school? Any different?” I shrug, as Sarah stares at me. She smiles her evil little smile as I respond, “I just want everything to go how it was. Dad never left and we are still in New York!” I said, with anger in my voice as Mom smiles at me, saying, “Well, Sarah is trying a class with the Perfects tomorrow. How about you try Artists Hall or something, Saber?” She places a hand on my shoulder. I immediately shrug it off as I take a step back, “Fine! I will do it! But, it doesn't mean I have to like it!” I rush upstairs to my so called room.

The next day I walk into my art class. I spot a huge classroom where people are laughing and having fun. I look around and I pull my bag farther up onto my shoulder. A girl walks over to me. She is a bit shorter than I am, but not by much. She smiles nicely, while playfully punching my shoulder, “You must be an Outlaw trying our class. Well, come on! You can sit at our table.” I follow her across the room ducking to avoid getting spattered with paint that came from across the other side. I sit down where the brown haired girl sat with three other boys. Next to a boy with a ponytail as the brown haired girl says, sitting down herself, “This is a new Outlaw. I'm Jona. That is Speeder, Rocker, and Mini.” Mini has short hair with the front blue. Rocker is the guy with the ponytail, and Speeder has a race jacket on. Now I understand the names. Staring, I take off my bag while asking, “What are supposed to do anyways? Like in this class?” Rocker smiles while laughing, “You ain't from around here are you, Green Eye?” I smile at the nickname, Green Eye. Makes sense cause my eyes are a bright green. “We can paint, draw, experiment with oil pastels, use clay. Anything you want. When you're finished you hand it in and get your marks back a few days later,” he said, returning to his

Caitlyn Neufeld

Grade 8, @Kool

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painting. He was drawing a wolf, but there were other designs inside of the wolf. It looked cool.

Speeder passes me a piece of paper and a pencil. I take them, as Mini asks, "What's the name, Green Eye?" I smile, for like the first time in three weeks, saying, "Saber, after my father." Jona smiles, "I think we will keep calling you, Green Eye." Again, I smile at that name. I suddenly begin my drawing and continue for the rest of art class.

Sarah and I walk home. For once in a long time, I am humming. A song that Speeder and I both found out we loved. We walk inside our house as I hang up my bag. I see Mom still unpacking and I walk over to pull a few things out myself. Mom looks at me, kindly, as she asks, "What's up with you, Saber? Liked your classes?" I nod. "Let's just say I have a few new friends and a new talent." With that, I pull out a drawing I did. Speeder, Mini, Jona, Rocker, and me. Green Eye. Saber Jackson.

Skull Island

By: Anthea Neves

"HELP!" I screamed at the top of my lungs. "BRENDON PLEASE HELP!"

Oh! Hi I didn't see you there! Let's start from the beginning of the story shall we? My name is Madison De Laurentiis, and I am a 14 year girl that loves adventure and writing books. I have actually published a few. my books are based on true adventures that I have experienced.

It all started the other day I was at home in Avalon, and I was walking to school. I was on my phone when I accidentally ran into somebody

"Oh. I am so sorry." I said very embarrassed. "Here, i'll pick up your books for you. Here you go. Once again I am so sorry I wasn-"

"OMG your Madison Delaurentis! Hi my name is Brendon I love your books I have every single one. Is it true that all your books are true stories of all the cool things you have done?" He said cutting me off

"Yes it is true. However I don't think I will be writing any more I haven't had any 'inspiration' if you can call it that" I replied

"Well let's get you some!" Brendon said. Suddenly he grabbed my hand and we ran in the opposite direction of the school.

"BRENDON!" I yelled out. "WHERE ARE WE GOING?"

"You'll see. Just trust me. You'll have your new book in no time." he replied

I was nervous not gonna lie I was freaking out. I had to be at school. I miss so much of it because of meet and greets due to my books, if I missed another day I might have had to be held back. Also I had no clue where I was being taken. For all I know Brendon was going to keep me hostage in his basement until I write another book.

We ran all the way to the Avalon ferry port and before I knew it we were on a boat to go on a tour of skull island. I don't know what made him want to take me there honestly it is just an abandoned island with a huge forest.

It took us a long time to get there. When we did I realized that there is something about skull island. It has an eerie feeling. It always has. Legend has it that a long time ago on it was a hospital. Its is said that on the island is where they would send everybody with a very bad illness in fear it could cause a pandemic. One day a few years after it opened a fire started, the fire spread throughout the whole hospital. It is said to have killed everybody there. The legend also states that if you go into the forest the skeletons of the people will rise again out of the ground. They are called skele-zombies and they kill.

"Why on earth would you take me here Brendon? There is so many other places we could have gone and you chose skull island." I said. "Honestly I would have rather gone canoeing in a volcano that's about to erupt."

" I bought you to get a real sense of adventure. Honestly you books lack adrenaline. It just seems like you are an emotionless 14 year old girl"

"Hey! I am not emotionless." I said rather offended. "I just have never done something to really rack up a bunch of adrenaline. I like to play it safe. Not go to a skele-zombie infested, burnt down, old mental hospital on an island with no way to get off."

"Ok calm down princess" He said laughing at my reaction "Also, the legend is fake. If it were true people wouldn't be here. Let's go over. The tour is about to start, and I know you wouldn't want to be left behind"

So I followed him to the tour group of 11 people mostly tourists. kind of frustrated and confused at what he just said.

Are my books really lacking a sense of adrenaline? I started thinking to myself. Do I really come off to be an emotionless teenage girl or is that just what he sees? Also, What is with his hair it is so tall.

We followed the guide and the group going on the tour of the island. All of the sudden all our flash lights shut off and when they turned back on most of the group was

gone. It was just the guide, an elderly couple from camelot, bendon and I. I was terrified. At that moment I knew something awful was going to happen.

All of the sudden these things sprung up out of the ground

“Oh no! Brendon what is happening?” I yelled in fear

“They are skele-zombies!” Brendon said as one of them killed and ate the tour guide signaling the others to go after the rest of us.

I picked up a stick and I started to fight them off so did bendon. Sadly the elderly couple couldn't fight them off and got eaten.

We ran. We ran all the way back to the boat dock. We turned the corner and saw more skele-zombies. And they all came for me.

“HELP!” I screamed at the top of my lungs. “BRENDON PLEASE HELP!”

Brendon came with a metal pipe he found and bashed them in the head. After getting out of there I took my stick and joined in.

It was fun. I could feel the adrenaline rushing through my veins.

After getting rid of them all, I ran to bendon.

“Do you have your inspiration yet, princess?” He asked

“Yeah I hope so. Maybe when we get home I can start writing our book.” I said

“Wait.” He said. “Our book?”

“Well yeah you were there weren't you? Or do you not want to help me write my next book?”

“Of course I do! Are you kidding?!” Brendon said

“Ok. let's get off this island” I said

“Good Idea.”

The True Story of Sleeping Beauty

It all started when I was a child. My parents had perished from an unknown sickness, that had plagued our Kingdom for many years. I was left on my own, to wander the streets. I trudged around the castle, the horrific scene of my parents death still fresh in my mind.

I heard some children's voices oohing in excitement. I turned to see what was making the ruckus, and my jaw hit the ground. (Figuratively, of course). There, on his black horse, was the Prince Charming. Oh, he was charming indeed; his close cropped hair, and his flawless face, always smiling. As he came closer, he tipped his head to the side, and looked at me in the eyes. Oh those eyes, so full of joy, peace and, most of all, love. His smile was infectious. And I, let's just say I might have been a bit lovesick. Okay, well..... maybe a lot.

I watched him for months, whenever he came outside, and decided that, yes, I did love him. He was always so kind to the poor and homeless, leaving baskets of food outside the castle when the servants weren't looking. It was there that I took my father's last words, and put them to use. "You can do anything you put your mind to, my dear, and it doesn't have to be magnificent, Maleficent." I hatched a plan. Well, more like a proposal.

The next time I saw him, I wasn't hesitant to ask him for his hand in marriage. "Will you marry me?" I asked him, my voice sounding stronger than I thought it would.

I remember it too clearly, the look of disgust that crossed his face when I proposed to him. I looked down at myself and saw what he saw. My clothes, worn down to rags from too many nights of sleeping in the streets. My dirty face, never been clean a day in my life. What was I thinking? Why would someone of rich nobility want to marry a beggar like me?

As I turned to walk away, I heard him say,

The True Story of Sleeping Beauty

“I’m sorry, but my marriage has been set up already. I am marrying the princess from the Eastern Kingdom, to keep the peace and prosperity lasting between the kingdoms.”

“Hello Maleficent,” said a voice from behind me.

“Who are *you*?” I asked suspiciously, figuring a random person who knew my name wasn’t a coincidence.

“I,” said the stranger, “am an enchantress.”

Okaaay... One moment I was having an extremely weird conversation with some lady who claimed she was an “enchantress,” then I was in her house, spilling out the story of my life.

“Well, there's one way to fix that,” she said.

“You can make him love me?” I exclaimed.

“I could grant you the powers of a sorceress and you could do anything.” Her voice was luring, hypnotizing.

She continued. “It would require something from you, to make it a fair trade.”

“Of course, anything!”

I was so happy that I didn't listen to the rest of what she was saying.

“So it’s a trade, I vaguely heard her say”

She led me through the house, and told me that this special drink would turn me into an enchantress. I drank it, and fell asleep immediately.

The True Story of Sleeping Beauty

The next day, I felt a change come over my body. I got up, and was planning on thanking the enchantress, when my feet started walking the other way. My fingers combed through the ratsnest on top of my head, and began to make two buns. I walked through into a dark room, and my hands placed a dark hat with black horns atop of my head. I stepped into a black dress, and a black cape was placed around my neck. .

I found myself walking up the palace steps, and saw the prince with a woman. They were holding a newborn baby, and there were three fairies who were bestowing gifts on the infant. (Wait, had I been sleeping for a long time in the enchantress' house?)

Suddenly it dawned on me. The enchantress was using me to do her dirty work . My mind was working at her command. I wracked my mind for memories.

Words came pouring from my mouth, willed by the sorceress.

“How come *I* wasn't invited?”

(Whoa! I didn't know my voice sounded that creepy!)

“I...”

“You what!” I snarled. “Well, to show that I am not offended, Prince *Steffan Charming*, I too, will bestow a gift on the tot.”

“We don't want your gift,” said the queen, her voice shaking.

My feet led me up the steps to the babe's cradle, and no one dared oppose me. I, (The enchantress, really) said to the child; “You will indeed grow up in grace and beauty, liked by everyone who meets you,” (I turned to the parents at this point,) but before the sun sets on her sixteenth birthday, she will prick her finger on a spinning wheel, and will fall into a sleep, a death sleep.”

The True Story of Sleeping Beauty

Aurora came back a day early, and I pricked her finger on a spinning wheel, falling into a deathlike sleep.

(Seriously, she was told the *exact* day and time this would happen! I guess no one blessed her with smarts.....)

Naturally, a prince came to free Aurora, by facing a dragon, whom he defeated. That dragon wasn't me, as the original story claims. It was the malicious enchantress. (I guess she couldn't trust me with that important of a job!)

With the enchantress gone, my body returned to its original state. Therefore, me being me, I went to the palace, and told the King, Queen, Aurora, and her beloved the whole story.

They were thankful that I had told them the truth, (The whole truth, and not leaving out embarrassing details).

Aurora offered me the job of a royal servant in their palace, and I gladly agreed.

Well, there isn't much more to it, except of course, a happily ever after!

Harper.Schrauwen
Clearwater secondary school
Grade 8
Page 1

Falling into Madness

This is a recurring nightmare that I used to have from the age of about 8 to 12

In this dream I would walk on a normal path in the woods (my family use to go on a woods walk every day). In real life, the trail is beside a slope, so if you fall left, you will fall down a very steep, large hill for about 20 seconds and if you don't smack a tree, you'll drown in the rapids of the river. In my dream the ledge was as far down as a mountain. Here is the dream:

I start out walking. I feel fine. Then when I get to the part of the trail where it has the longest drop, suddenly the scenery around me changes. The trees grow huge, the grass turns tropical and when the scenery finishes changing, the cliff edge extends too far down to see.

Then my body goes limp and I can't stop myself from falling off the cliff. My body in real life no longer feels like it is lying in a bed, in a room, it now feels like there is nothing below me. No room, no house, no earth. I feel as though I'm in space falling until I hit a tree. I feel the pain, but it doesn't wake me up. It also doesn't feel like it hurt as much as it should. I keep falling and falling and smashing into the gargantuan trees.

In real life my dreams were the worst feeling I ever had, having no ground below, no earth to comfort me. It was like my soul drifted out of my body and floated there above me in my sleep. It was like being trapped at the bottom of the ocean, never being allowed to swim back up,

To have to just give up and be at the mercy of your own brutal imagination. As a child, you have fun and in your dreams you remember all the wonderful things your parents show you, but for me, sleep was a curse. I would see things I didn't understand. I would feel pain I hadn't experienced. The part of my life that was supposed to be happiness was filled with the words, "but mom I don't want to go to sleep tonight. Oh... well no reason never mind then."

In the dream it was torture. The thought of flying down that mountain and seeing nature move in and out of my vision, to know how useless my efforts to escape dreams. Were at the end When I tried to stay awake the dreams would be worse than the previous night. I tried to grab little trees that stick up out of the ground to stop me from falling, but they only scratched my hands. I got desperate, so when I hit a tree I tried to hold on, but it was as if gravity was dragging me to the bottom of this descent or rip me apart trying to stop myself from falling down the deadly slope. Every time I fall down the mountain I would feel like I was moving in real life, but my eyes are stuck shut until I die. They're shut so tight and the agony is too much. When I reach the bottom of the mountain I can almost see something but then my dream goes black, and when my dream ends I have to pull my eyes open. My dream was always this way until I started to play the piano and put my thoughts to something productive

The Best of the Worst Situations

I tossed in my bed for hours. No matter how much I needed it, sleep evaded me. As I started to drift off, my alarm started screaming and blinding me with light. I needed to figure out how to change the settings on that thing. I tiptoed around the house in pitch black, recurringly stubbing my toes. It seems ridiculous, but I always woke up before my family and I never wanted to wake them up, so I stumbled around blind until six when they woke up every morning. I hopped into the car ten minutes early, per the norm, and scrolled through my phone uninterestedly. As my mom got in the car to take me to school, pressure built in my chest as I picked my brain for anything I could have forgotten, then we were off.

The roads were icy, and Mom's mouth was a concentrated, tight line. I turned on the radio and blasting rock nearly broke the speakers. Mom jumped, and the car started spinning. I didn't have my seatbelt on. It's said that your life flashes before your eyes, but all I felt was a pure, animalistic fear. I tried to move, to scream, but I couldn't move fast enough. Then, there was the jolt of hitting something and I don't remember anything else.

I woke numb, oblivious to the world. Then, the pain hit. It was monstrous and all-consuming. Shaking uncontrollably, I heard sirens and yelling. There was an ampu bag in my mouth, intravenous needles all over, and I think someone's hand was in my stomach. My mom was sitting beside me, crying and stroking my hair. I fade away.

Olivia Sjokvist

Grade 8

St. Ann's Academy

The Best of the Worst Situations

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Gaining consciousness in a hospital bed, I felt groggy and weak. I fought a battle to sit up and lost. A doctor came in. "Hello, I am Dr. Alex and you are in the pediatric ward of St. Peter's Hospital. You just got out of emergency surgery. Your family is going to be coming soon. I'm going to do a quick examination." He rolled me onto my side and started poking my spine. I stopped feeling it at about the small of my back.

"Good news or bad news?" Dr. Alex asked.

"Bad?" I said.

You are paralyzed from the waist down. Your spine was compressed in the accident. Good news is that with spine and muscle therapy, you should be on your feet in a matter of months." Paralyzed? Months?! I could never last that long without being able to stand. "You'll be staying in the hospital so we can keep tabs on you." The hits just kept coming! "If you want we can wheel you down to the rec room. Maybe someone can teach you how to get around."

A nurse took me to the room, empty, save for a wheelchair-bound boy with a blanket over his legs and a toque on his head. "Hello," I said awkwardly as I tried to wheel over, but keep veering to the right.

Olivia Sjokvist

Grade 8

St. Ann's Academy

The Best of the Worst Situations

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"Hey, I'm George," he said, smiling crookedly, green eyes shining against his pale skin. He raised his eyebrows expectantly.

"Oh, sorry, I'm Stacie." I kept trying to wheel over. He laughed. "You have no idea what you're doing, huh?" He wheeled over gracefully, spinning to face me. I put on a face of overdone awe.

"Teach me what you know," I whispered in sarcastic voice of childish awe.

" 'Teach me what you know, Professor,' " he scolded jokingly.

One hour later, I was puffing and wheezing. George was pink and leaning back in his chair. We'd done a full lap of the wing.

"I've... never... had such... a good workout... in my life," I said breathily.

"Why do you think... I'm so ripped?" he smiled sarcastically. He's tall, but sickly lean. I cracked a grin.

So it went, for months. Family visited when they could. We helped each other with homework. One day, I told George about my spinal predicament. I asked him when he would get out of his wheelchair. His joking demeanor vanished. He took off his blanket to reveal two mid-thigh stumps. "Osteosarcoma prevented that. Osteosarcoma is-

"I know," I interjected. "It's a bone tumor, right?"

Olivia Sjokvist

Grade 8

St. Ann's Academy

The Best of the Worst Situations

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He laughed "Let me guess. You read it in a certain tragic young adult romance?"

"You caught me," I blushed embarrassedly.

"Don't worry about me. I promise it's not ever going to get that advanced." I felt relieved. We soon became distracted by the fact that there were simply no shows on early Wednesday afternoons.

Life went on. One day Dr. Alex told me I would be out by the end of the week. I apparently made incredible progress. I resisted the urge to hug him. "I have to tell George!" I exclaimed. I was floating on a cloud.

A crash cart whizzed by, followed closely by a team of doctors. As they entered George's room, fear clasped my chest. I pushed through the door, and I distantly heard myself screaming his name. He was flatlining. "Miss, I need you to leave," said a concerned looking nurse. I ignored him and held George's hand, tears dripping on the sheets. I couldn't breathe.

"Charge to 250!" Dr. Alex shouted. "Clear!"

"Let go of his hand!" a frazzled doctor screams. They shocked George. The nurse wheeled me out. Dr. Alex shouted to charge again. What felt like hours later, though it was mere minutes, Dr. Alex said I could come in. All the other doctors had left. I rolled over to him, gently took his hand.

Olivia Sjokvist

Grade 8

St. Ann's Academy

The Best of the Worst Situations

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"Howdy, Stace," he whispered. For some reason, I saw red. Fuming, I lectured, "How could you do that to me? George, you better swear that you won't make me go through that again. I was so excited to tell you that I was getting out of here, but you had to go and ruin it, and... and..." The anger collapsed into sobs.

"I'll only go if you promise you're going to be okay and really mean it, and I'll visit and you have to text me everyday."

He lifted his right hand's fingers slightly. "Scout's honor," he laughed.

So that's what we did and still do, years later. Eventually George went home. He has to have bi-weekly check-ups, but he's doing okay. I thought my hospital stay would be so terrible, figured George would be miserable. I discovered even the worst situations have upsides. Maybe I was George's. I know he was mine.

Glorious in War

Screams tear through my throat as I lash out at anything I can reach. My hand whips up to my face and I tear away my blindfold. Shielding my eyes against the stark white light that fills the room with one hand, I use the other to grab a small object that looks quite lethal sitting on a small metal platter next to me. I turn and sink the blade into the leg of a man dressed in blue standing next to me and send him to the floor clutching his leg and gasping. Stunned, the people around me, dressed in long white jackets and masks, release me as they begin to realize that I might be a little more dangerous than I look. I don't stop to see their reactions or to watch it sink in; I hop down from the cot I've been perched on and run. Then, all at once, it sinks in.

Running is more difficult than I remember. I stumble and slip down corridors and around corners, but after a bit of labored breathing I fall into a steady pace: my footsteps a silent steady beat on the floor. Behind me I hear garbled shouts and cries from the room I left behind and soon footsteps join the menagerie of sound.

Thump, thump, thump, I hang a right, *thump, thump, thump*, more garbled speech, *thump, thump, thump*, they've found me.

About half a dozen men and women dressed in blue stand behind me and a wall stands in front. The woman closest to the front says something that I don't understand in a stern voice that matches the glare she flashes with steely gray eyes. I return the

Glorious in War

No, I don't stop. I don't plan on stopping until I'm out of wherever I am. I pound up a flight of stairs and the trickle thickens until it feels more like a river flowing down my leg and I am forced to limp. I turn another corner and see the exit. Ignoring the pain, I full out sprint toward the door. I'm about to grab the handle. But I don't. Instead I'm tackled sideways to the floor.

.....

It's not easy to catch me off guard let alone knock the breath out of me. Somehow the guy sitting on me managed to accomplish both. I was so close to the door then, bam, I'm on the floor with some stealthy ninja guy sitting on me. I didn't even hear his footsteps coming up from behind me.

His sneak attack leaves me completely immobile. Realizing this, he scoops me up into his arms before I can recover from the shock. He calls out something then pads down the corridor with me riding breathlessly in his arms. His footfalls are silent on the white floors.

Once I finally do catch my breath he is more than ready. I reach to his face preparing to sink my nails in but he deflects my pitiful attack and jabs his thumb into my

Glorious in War

leg - reminding me of my injuries. A fresh wave flows down my leg; I let out a low moan and curl into a tight ball against his chest. My adrenaline has deserted me and taken my will to fight with it. I am starkly aware of the glass from the syringe pushed deep into the soles of my feet which are coated in hot sticky blood.

I make a few more feeble attempts at escaping but they are easily deflected. I give up, only half aware of where I'm going and the people around me. It feels as though I'm looking at the world through a thick haze that becomes even denser when a syringe, identical to the one I crushed, is plunged into my neck. Its contents are emptied slowly into my bloodstream, tinting my pale skin a deep blue and lulling me to sleep.

Grudges In My Country

By: Jana Steyn, Gr. 8, St. Ann's Academy

Walking down the dusty road
 Fearing my reflection
 Realizing that all I have is
 Open to objection

And I descend into a town
 A small one, I may add
 And I am met with unfriendly glances
 Something my ancestors should have had

I am an *Afrikaner*
 Descendant of the Dutch
 For As my pale skin foretells
 I haven't been around that much

For we are the invaders
 The ones that they have feared
 The white Africans
 They are not to be neared

My home country
 Is not considered mine
 For a dainty, plain white face I have
 Something not considered fine

I am not my ancestors
 I apologize for them
 For they did not see the beauty
 In the natives that they met

We all should live in harmony
 Black and white, without a care
 Make it seem as if you cannot feel
 The tension in the air

I am greatly sorry
 For what they did to you
 You are a true African
 But remember, I am too.

Wild

By: Jana Steyn, Gr. 8, St. Ann's Academy

The trail never ends
Extends beyond the valley
For even beyond there, nothing but insanity

The real world filled
To the brim with customs
Rules, regulations, laws made to be followed

But out here in the wild
Here stands only me
Alone without a care
Finally free

I will never go back
Never turn around
This is where I belong
Out here is the wild

By: Taniah Toscano
Grade: 8
School: Clearwater Secondary school
Pages: 1

The Leaf

I was just a simple bud of a tree. As the months went by I grew up into a beautiful green leaf. I looked so gorgeous! As the summer went by it got chilly outside and when I looked at myself, I saw I was a bright orange instead of green, but I was still beautiful. I fell down to the ground, my other friends thought it looked up to the minute so they decided to fall as well. But then, a big fork raked my fellow brethren and I up into a pile. We were a bit stunned about what just happened. When suddenly, huge giants started jumping on my friends and I. The giants kept assaulting us. Suddenly, I went flying into the air and was picked up by the wind. The breeze carried me away from my friends and my tree. I was carried by the current of air for a long time. When the drift finally dropped me I was in a strange place. I looked around, but I saw no one, so I sat there. It got colder and colder outside then one day, I saw a white flurry come down from the sky and land on me. I thought it was cute. Then, more flurries started falling, until the whole sky was white. I was quickly swallowed up by them. I didn't think they were cute anymore as I sat under them, buried alive. After a couple of days of sitting under them I saw that I was all brown instead of being colourful and beautiful. A couple more days had passed, I started to fall apart piece by piece until I was finally gone.

Emily Weston-Lee, Grade 8, Sahali Secondary

ANN

Ukrainian 1956

Ann's 12th birthday was the most exciting. In her Ukrainian orphanage, this meant she was free to roam the streets, without Sister Jane or any of the other Sisters. And that meant friends, and to be free of the little ones. As Sister Jane brought in her small, poorly wrapped gift, she could hardly contain herself. With her slender fingers, she peeled away the slightly mouldy brown paper. Her eyes lit up at the rag doll, complete with two dresses. She knew it was homemade, and made only from clothes baby Rich had grown out of.

"Please, Sister Jane, please may I go out?"

"Good heavens child, no! The little ones have already gone to bed, and the stars are coming out. Now you go to bed too, and in the morning you may go out to see the wonders of the world."

She crept into the room shared by all the orphans. She slipped into her flimsy, thin, scratchy wool nightgown. She flopped into the small cot she shared with baby Rich. He cuddled up close to her and smiled in his sleep. Cradling around him she fell asleep, protecting the child. The next morning, she slept in from staying up so late. Stretching, she realized she was wasting her first day of freedom. She rushed out of bed, quickly tied her hair back and jumped into her dress and hurried to the kitchen. Sister Jane laughed and fixed her hair into two plaits, running down her back and buttoned up her dress.

"Settle down now, Ann and eat your breakfast, like a good girl." she said sternly. Ann settled down and ate the watered down oatmeal slowly, so she would be less hungry. Then, she felt as though she couldn't bear it any longer. She exploded out of her seat and ran out of the kitchen.

Emily Weston-lee, Grade 8, Sahali Secondary, Ann

"Oh Sister Jane, please, please, please may I go out now?"

"Yes, Ann, you may go out." sighed Sister Jane. And so Ann skipped out the door. Her cracked buckle shoes clacked down the cobblestone street. She waved to every child she met, and most waved back. She saw lots of big buildings. She tried to go in a few, but got the sense that a dirty orphan was not welcome. But the last one she went into, a kind lady with glasses waved and smiled. Grinning she twirled around. Then she saw something that made her gasp. A girl! With long curly hair, and clear blue eyes. Ann grinned, and so did the friendly stranger. And sat down and started to tell her new friend about her birthday. Ann did not mind that "monique" as Ann had come to call her friend, seemed to talk with her, her mouth running along in speech with Ann. Monique was a good dancer. Ann and she did lots of duets. She giggled yelled and danced, and sometimes a grumpy old man told her to be quiet, and Ann knew that she shouldn't look at Monique, or else she would laugh. The next few weeks flew by, with giggles, secrets and the occasional quarrel. But the next month, a tragedy occurred. Sickly baby Richard had died peacefully in the night. Ann wore her too small black dress, and tight black boots, and wasn't allowed to see Monique. Sadly, Ann buried her first and only friendship along with Richard, thinking how sad and upset Monique must be with her. Thinking to herself, she thought she should probably explain to Monique why she had abandoned her, so she didn't feel as though Ann had just... left. When she ran tin to the building, she saw Monique. Instantly, she forgot how wicked she had been and ran towards her, and tried to hug her. But instead she ran straight into something hard. She looked at Monique, and realized she was behind a layer of glass. Anxious to save her friend, she looked around wildly, and saw a chair. Seizing it, she swung it at the enclosure. Glass shattered everywhere, and Ann turned to see Monique, but found only wall. Page 2

She had been playing with her reflection the whole time, and never knew it because she had never seen it before.

page 3

THE HORSE

They're not a hobby

Not a ball,

A puck,

A ring,

Something you lose and forget.

They're too spirited

Too strong

And passionate to forget.

They each give you something,

Teach you something special.

They are in your blood,

Fierce and bold.

They light your soul,

With grace and mystery.

That is the way of the horse.

Most people are intimidated,

Because in our sport,

The ball has a mind of its own.

A RIDER'S PROMISE

We ride to live.

It's in our blood.

Nothing can change it.

But as a rider,

It's not about the sport.

It's about the horse.

The magic,

The passion,

The bond.

As a rider,

You have to make a promise to your horse.

As a rider,

I make my horse this promise:

I will give you the food you need,

And no that does not mean you get

All the grain and hay you want.

Enough food to keep you fully healthy

And maybe a bit more.

I will make sure you get the appropriate exercise,

Keep you strong and full.

I will give you freedom,

Happiness,

Love,

Confidence

And strength.

Because that's what you give me.

Above all,

I promise to understand you.

I promise to love you,

To be your best friend

And baby you.

I promise to understand your

Quirks and your defiance.

Your moments of stubbornness

And your moments of pure idiocy.

My promise to you

Is that you are my horse.

And I will do everything in my power

To take care of you.

I promise.