

FIRST PRIZE

Below the Sky

Below the sky, before my eyes

A sprinkle of sakura petals,

Swirling swiftly through the morning mist at sunrise

Below the sky, before my eyes

A circle of chattering children,

Squealing synchronously as a whirl of wind sends their kite soaring high

Below the sky, before my eyes

A bunch of bustling bakers,

Battering breathlessly for the next batch of sweet cinnamon apple pies

Below the sky, before my eyes

A procession of pine trees,

Embellishing elegantly with bows and ties of wintry festive design

Below the sky, before my eyes

A tempest of steel showers,

Tumbling thunderously through the cumulus clouds as a surprise

Below the sky, before my eyes

A string of screeching siren,

Echoing endlessly in the metropolitan maze of deserted drives

Below the sky, before my eyes

A smog of scorching smoke,

Fuming ferociously as it expands exponentially in size

Below the sky, before my eyes

A row of residences,

Lamenting limply for its shattered skeleton and doomed demise

Below the sky, before my eyes

The world I had once known has perished in chaotic cries

I look up at the sky, and close my eyes

Longing for the return of my sky when I open my eyes

by Angelina Lo (Grade 5)

Fresh Minds Academy

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FIRST PRIZE

Human

The wreck of flesh and bone
That stands before me
Upon the mirror

The eyes that reflected
The tears that shed
The body that worked

What makes me human?

The endless works of sweat and blood?
The hearts I broke?
Those shards—
Of moments?
Of memories?

Is that what makes me human?

When I break this mirror
Without its glass, is it really still a mirror?
Or a shell of its former self
A skeleton?

If you break my heart
This happiness
Am I still human without joy?

The mirror stands before me
Taunting, laughing at my crippled soul

Far away
You might just find
A broken mirror
Its glass, gone before its eyes

by Josh Elkin (Grade 6)
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Winnipeg, Manitoba

SECOND PRIZE

They

My face, a mask,
A field of lies,
Rigid and calm,
Never changing.

My mind, a nebula,
A creative, living entity,
Growing with each experience,
Trying to see through a veil of dust.

My hunger to learn, a sprouting tree,
Branches stretching skyward,
Eating up the warmth,
Spreading its roots for strength and solidity.

My memories, a half-full notebook,
Open to a blank page
Old ideas always there,
But some pages stuck together,
Never to be seen again.

My determination, a single wave
In an endless ocean,
Coming back with the tide,
Rushing forward at full speed,
Never giving up.

My creativity, a rainbow flag,
Individual and bright,
True to itself,
Unique and eternal.

by Barr Sapiro (Grade 5)
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Toronto, Ontario

SECOND PRIZE

Lost but Not Forgotten

I walk through the door.
You're not there to greet me.
Your bed is empty, and I know
No matter how much I search,
I will never find you.

I feel hollow inside.
The tears fall.
You're not there to comfort me.
Without you, I'm alone at night.
Why did you have to die?

No one and nothing
Will ever replace you.
With my heart full of sorrow,
I feel as if I'll never recover,
That I'll never be happy again.

Why was your life so short?
In the night, I weep for you.
In the day, I silently cry.
Everything brings back such bittersweet memories.

I'd do anything to bring you back,
To stroke your fur once more,
But since it is impossible,
I will treasure our memories together forever.

by Ada Hack (Grade 6)
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Regina, Saskatchewan

THIRD PRIZE

If Only I Had One More Day with You

If I had one more day with my grandpa, there would be so many things I would love to do. I would spend the first hour talking non-stop and telling him everything that has happened the last three years. I would tell him how much I love and miss him every day. I would probably spend an hour just hugging him and not wanting to let him go.

If I had one more day with my grandpa, I'd take him to my favourite hiding spot. It's behind my house and at the end of the backyard. I built a little table and chairs out of wood, just the way he taught me. I would sit with my grandpa there and tell him how I built this chair for him and the other for me. I would tell him how I go there and talk to him all the time. Even if he isn't in front of me, I know he is listening. Then I would take him to my hockey arena where I play hockey. I would go on the ice with him, and we could shoot goals together. I would show him how good I've become, how I wish every game he were there to watch me.

I would spend most of my day telling my grandpa how I want to grow up to be just like him, how I love computers and building things like him, and how one day I want to be the best grandpa in the world just the way he was.

If I had one more day with my grandpa, I would go to our favourite restaurant we used to go to together. We'd order the spaghetti bolognese and get the ice-cream sundae after, with extra whipped cream, the way we always did. Then I would wait for him to tell me his usual joke: "If you eat another bite, you will turn into an ice-cream sundae."

If I had one more day with my grandpa, I'd ask him all the questions I never had the chance to ask. I would want to know more about when he was a kid, what experiences he went through growing up, and things in his life I never was able to get answers for. I was too busy having fun with him to stop and take the time to learn what made him into the man he was. If I had just one more day with my grandpa, I'd tell him to stay with us forever.

I miss my grandpa so much. "If only I had one more day with you."

by Adam Day (Grade 5)
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Kitchener, Ontario

THIRD PRIZE

Alive

Brisk morning sunlight
leaks through the evergreens.
Lake surface flashes,
birds chirp blissfully.
The sky darkens rapidly,
salty scent of rain drifting to my nose.
The clouds split open to reveal a torrent of rainwater.
Droplets fall,
slash my umbrella,
tap the glassy river.
Its ripples fan out into nothingness,
soak the already sippy grass,
seep into my socks,
shake the branches of the nearby tree,
freeze my clammy hands.
The deluge softens
until it dies away completely.
The air fills with the scent of pine needles,
of fresh streaming water,
of wind, of rustling plants in the distant field of grass.
Silence falls gradually until
the forest is quiet—
quiet, yet alive.

by Brayden Ma (Grade 6)
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