

Third Place Senior Poetry  
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### Hushed

She had always walked with a strong sense of confidence,

Each step she took caused the earth below her to tremble.

Her head was held high, much higher than her peers.

She had a stare that made you freeze in place, paralyzed within her energy.

Although, if you looked close enough,

Behind her eyes was a thick barrier.

It was built tall enough to keep all the pain of the treacherous world at a safe distance.

With that heavy protection came the inevitable freezing isolation,

Lonely and cold in her own personal igloo.

Each time her voice was wrenched from her own throat,

Thrown away without a second thought

She added another block of ice,

Until one day she couldn't even see the top.

There was only an endless fence of seclusion from the hands of the devil.

Even the blindest eye could see the wheels in her head turning constantly,

The gears and pulleys interlocking to form a plan of defense.

Her next twelve moves were plotted out ahead of time,

And she knew their scheme before they were even aware they had formed one.

Children looked up to her and saw immense strength,

Far more powerful than the strongest man,

Indomitable to any army in existence.

Her astonishing inner beauty radiated through her skin,

A blinding light that could be seen from miles away.

And the children had always asked her where it came from.

Her response again and again had remained the same,

“It is not what the beasts of the world do to you that defines you, rather how you fight back.

Every day you must make the decision to be stronger than your enemies seem.

Mightier than you could ever fathom yourself to be.”

If we were to take a look at the memories flashing through her mind as she said this,

We would see a black dress.

A naïve girl who thought the world to be inherently pure.

A quickening heartbeat.

A deafening scream.

An unheard voice.

These memories were caused by the actions of the so-called “beasts.”

The horror that inspired her to build her wall,

One that stood proudly over everyone.