

**Ministerul Educației Naționale
Inspectoratul Școlar Județean Dolj
Liceul Teoretic “Henri Coandă” Craiova**

ART WITH FICTION AND POETRY

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OUR ART WITH FICTION AND POETRY

Every year we are amazed by the great number of participants in the “Art with Fiction and Poetry” competition. The seriousness and the professionalism of all the young students can not be compared to anything else. We have great works of art that will please the eye and the soul when reading and watching them. The writings are full of depth aiming at an even larger audience I would say.

No matter the purpose of the creations, literary and artistic, all students deserve great respect. Teachers did a great job again when they trained you! Besides their training one always needs a little inner skill to do what most of you, dear participants, did.

This year we were challenged by the number of poems and plays, as compared to those of last year. The drawings that accompanied each piece of paper were wonderful. Our students are full of qualities and I am proud to say that we have come up with such a competition that shows just this. Creativity and lots of work are the key to any success. You all did it, again!

Congratulations to all of you!

General Coordinator
CORINA VASILE



Winter

Grigore Maria, Paun Andreea
5TH Grade
„Fratii Buzesti” National College
Coord. Teacher: Diana Cotescu

Once upon a time, in December, a girl like me was waiting for Santa.

Winter, the season of all seasons, the most beautiful God's weapon instead of lightnings and thunders and rains there are the hugest and the whitest snowflakes drop from the grey sky.

Few days with clear sky, more days with starless skies.

The atmosphere is overwhelmed by the black darkness lightened by the lights that you can find at every window, every house, every street. The smoke goes down from the chimneys, silence at first, then bursts children voices. Carols are sang everywhere and people seem to be better than they usually are.

I adore the snowing, snowmen and everything that is related with winter. I'll wait for Santa patiently and excited at the same time as I did all these years.

The snow is fluffy and its smell is playful for every children. You can think that fairies discovered a new fantastic world. This world is magic and its poetry is very funny.

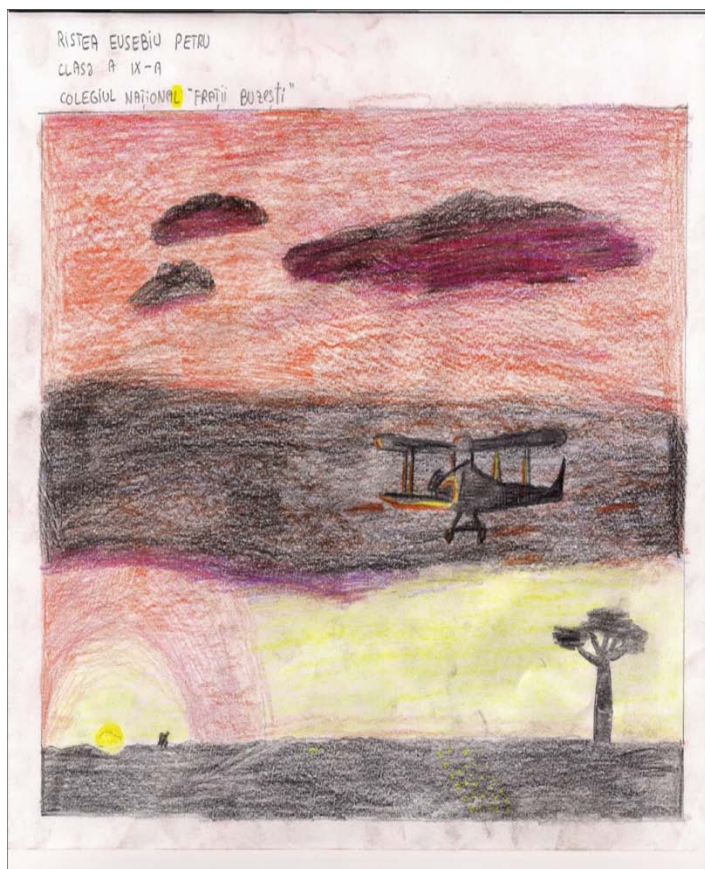
Winter is like a metaphor in real life, it emphasizes all the beauty of the human beginnings.

The Snowman



Pîrvu Irina, Săpoi Cosmina
5th Grade
„Fratii Buzesti” National College
Coord. Teacher: Diana Cotescu

Outside it's so much snow
 That's why the grass doesn't grow
 I make a wonderful snowman
 With my uncle Ben.



Stormy Flight

Ristea Eusebiu
9th Grade

„Fratii Buzesti” National College
Coord. Teacher: Diana Cotescu

It was 6:30 AM and I was flying above the african desert with Panuka, a friendly and full of life african boy, who always had a smile on his face. Our plane was heading to Gwai, a small town in central Zimbabwe. We had left at 5:30 AM from Swaipe, the town of Panuka. We were planned to arrive in Gwai at 7:30 AM, where we had to buy some food and water for the villagers of Swaipe. After a spectacular sunrise, common in Africa, we switched the coordinates from the original way, because we heard at the radio station that a sandstorm is very likely to happen in Zvishavane the area we were heading to. So we changed the coordinates to Mberengua. As much as I heard, the storm wasn't going

to hit there. Next to us was Kawika, a member of the Onahu tribe that has its origins at the border between Zimbabwe and Botsoana. Although Kawika and Panuka were born in different tribes, they were like brothers. At about 6:50 AM we were flying above Mberengua. As we didn't see any sign of a sandstorm, we switched the coordinates back to Gwai. The plane was small, old, but it was flying pretty good for a plane with a single turbine.

I enjoyed being in Africa, it was like another kind of life. The sun was shining bright and the sunsets were superb. I had a peaceful life living in Swaipe, and Punaka was one of my best friends, as well as Kawika. And now, I was flying above the desert with an old plane and with two of the most funny persons I had met. Suddenly, I heard Panuka:

We were wrong! The storm is right in front of us! Turn the plane! he was shouting.

Looking at the skyline, I saw a huge cloud of sand. As wind was blowing against us, the storm was coming fast in our direction. I couldn't turn the plane in time so we entered the storm.

I can't see anything! Kawika was shouting. But I barely heard him, because of the turbine that made so much noise. We were flying to nowhere. We didn't have any direction.

S.O.S.! S.O.S.! Sand storm! Mberengua! Plane is going down!

The plane was making a deafening noise. The turbine was shutting down, then it was turned on again. The currents were moving us like a leaf, so we didn't know where we were.

Accelerate the engine to the max! I heard Kawika.

I can't hear you. What are you saying?

I said: Accelerate the engine!

Long after that I realized why was Kawika telling me to accelerate. He knew that in the middle of a sandstorm, there is a very powerful current. This current is the one that brings the sand up at very high altitudes. So he wanted to use it to get above the storm. All the emergency lights were open and Kawika

was shouting in the radio station. The noise made by the turbine was so loud that we couldn't hear anything.

Now! He shouted at me as loud as he could.

I heard him and I started to accelerate as much as I could. After two minutes of revving the engine, I felt an invisible force that was carrying us above. I was worried because the this force could destroy us, as it carried the plane so high. This plane was not made to fly at that altitude. But Kawika knew what he said. In the blink of an eye, we were out. We started breathing easily and we were glad that the storm passed. Panuka said loud in his language:

Aasante mungu wa jua kwa sababu una kuokolewa sisi! which meant "thank you god of sun because you have saved us!". Everything is over! He said in English.

We are out! We are out! Kawika was screaming. I can't believe my eyes. I thought we were going to die.

We were so happy. After this, we arrived in Gwai. It was night when we arrived, sowe fell asleep on our seats just after we landed. We were so tired after the fight with the sandstorm. Next morning, the sound of Panuka's drums woke me up. I got out of the plane, where he was beating at two African drums.

Well, look who woke up! he said. I think mama Africa likes you as she let you alive after a sandstorm.

I guess that is right! Now I will go change my clothes. This ones are too dirty.

I went back in the plane to change my clothes. After I finished, I took Panuka with me to find a mechanic, because our plane was seriously damaged. Kawika went to the local market to buy supplies for the villagers of Swaipe. We found a mechanic, so I let Panuka with him and went at the local market to help Kawika. All day we bought supplies and carried them to the plane. It was exhausting. It took us more than we thought, so we couldn't carry the supplies in one day. After the mechanic finished to do the repairings, he invited us to stay at his home during the night, because he saw we didn't have any place to sleep. We slept very well that night. When we woke up, we had no time to waste, so we said goodbye to the man and his family, and left to the market.

At 7:30, we were in the plane, with all the supplies we needed and ready to go. I turned on the engine. When I heard the good sound it was making, I knew that the mechanic did his job well. It was like a new engine. The flight lasted long, or that is what we felt. Panuka was very happy because we were getting back in his village. Kawika was sitting next to me. I could see the happiness in his eyes. He didn't expect to survive the storm, so he was thrilled to see us alive.

As we were getting close tp Swaipe, I let Kawika to land with the plane and I went to Punaka and told him:

It's time!

He knew what I was saying, so we both took a parachute and got ready to jump from the plane.

Three, two, one. Now!

We jumped in the air. The summer sky was at sunset. The sun was orange and the wind was blowing. And there were we, falling above the African desert. As we were falling, we shouted:

This is Africaa!

It was the most beautiful experience I had. We landed close to to Swaipe, so we packed our parachutes and walked to the village. Panuka and I swearded that wherever the life will take us, we will never forget what happened to us in those three days. When we arrived in the village, Kawika and all the villagers were waiting for us. They hugged us and welcomed us back home. After we got the supplies out of the plane, we made a big campfire. I will remember that night when all the villagers were sitting around the fire, listening to the story of our surviving. I will always remember those days.

Who Am I?...**Văduva Iulia-Ștefania****5th Grade****„Fratii Buzesti” National College****Coord. Teacher: Diana Cotescu**

Life is like a town with stronger or paler lights. My soul bears a sparkle inside, which I want it more and more powerful, even more sparkling. Like leaves which are "the verbs that conjugate" the seasons, each human being's "destiny" is the same, with ups and downs. Suddenly I start thinking: who am I?

Is it really enough to say I am the little girl sitting in the second desk from the middle row, having light chestnut hair, green eyes and wearing glasses? If this be enough, it means this is me...

But no, I am not only this. How short, but how comprehensive this world "I" is...

Deep inside my soul, I am like a seagull that tries hard to reach the sky -success- but it is sometimes killed

by the game of the waves which break one after another against the shore. I wouldn't like to live so short like a wave. Sometimes I feel like touching the sky with my little hand, but it is just an illusion which disappears when worries come. The wings of the seagull get tired, they are blown by the wind that led them into the sea... a careless moment and everything is ruined.

The same thing happens to me: sometimes I am ambitious, courageous, I want to be the best, but other times I am shy, undecided, I am a totally different person.

My mother always tells me that it is natural what happens to me, because my personality is developing now. By hard work I hope I can change myself from a sparkle into a powerful light.

**Winter Kiss****Nanu Alexia Ioana, Mărculescu Daria****5th Grade****„Fratii Buzesti” National College****Coord. Teacher: Diana Cotescu**

The winter is coming in her carriage of crystal snowflakes. Little white bugs are flying in the grey sky. The wind is blowing quietly between the branches of the old trees. The snowmen are coming one by one in the children's gardens. Sparkling eyes are seeing the miracle of the cold season. Smallbell petals weave clothes tree with silver threads. Everything is covered in a pretty carpet of

shiny small stars. Winter is a wonderful fairy who loves her beautiful art that is on the dead cities. The sky is sad because it lost its serenity. The sun is chained by the rainy clouds for a long time ago... Nobody knows where are the feeble swallow's where are they going, where will they be for all the chilly winter. There is a picturesque image of winter the most beautiful creation, the city of fog.



Color

**Speianu Alina,
10th Grade
“Margareta Sterian” Arts High School
Coord. Teacher: Neagu Carmen**

We aren't blind,
But we see only dark.
What if this world
Weren't so cold!
It is the worst to be alone.
Then the monsters are awoken in my head,
No matter how much I try,
Until I see the rainbow
They won't die.
I must forget about tomorrow
And live without sorrow.
I feel alive
Even if here it is dark.
I know the light is coming,
With colors it will be raining.



Open my eyes,
Listen to my instinct,
Feel alive,
Let the death wait and live,
It won't pull me down
I won't be a foreigner anymore, in this town.

It is raining with colors,
But we are too busy to see.
I want some wings to fly,
Maybe I'm dreaming, but I touch the sky.

Love in Cold Framework

**Enache Andreea,
12th Grade
“Margareta Sterian” Arts High School
Coord. Teacher: Neagu Carmen**

In the middle of the night,
When the moon and sun shine bright,
You can feel, in the air, the vanish of their light.

They embrace with fire in cold night,so fantastically
 Showing their love is indestructible.
 The lake and forest are the crowd
 That support their circle of venomous love.
 Their love could veil my scars,
 Letting unmarked written on drown, cold walls,
 As the blanket of feathers that covers the bed of roses
 Wouldn't let it weight you down.
 But neither had you land down, with your feet on the ground,
 Their love made you hope,
 While forever which has never come,
 Their shadow will rise,
 Letting you see their glimpse.
 You could walk on porch, silenced by their trance,
 In the midnight as they both dance.
 Their waltz is divine
 Between the stars,as they collide.
 They could let you know
 That love is their weapon
 Just so,so beautifully blinding with passion
 The vanish in the air it says,
 it is their time to dance in this maze.
 Love has no start,no end,
 It can't be measured or nailed,
 it is only about them two,
 There's no in-between.
 A song whispered through the night
 Could make the sky so bright,
 Reminding of the summer's sunlight,
 Watching the moon glowing upon,
 Sink in sun's enthralled love once more,
 Like the moth into a butterfly,
 Like dead leaves taken in palm,
 The poisoned love of their hearts
 Never fades,it never ends,
 Just increases into their blaze.

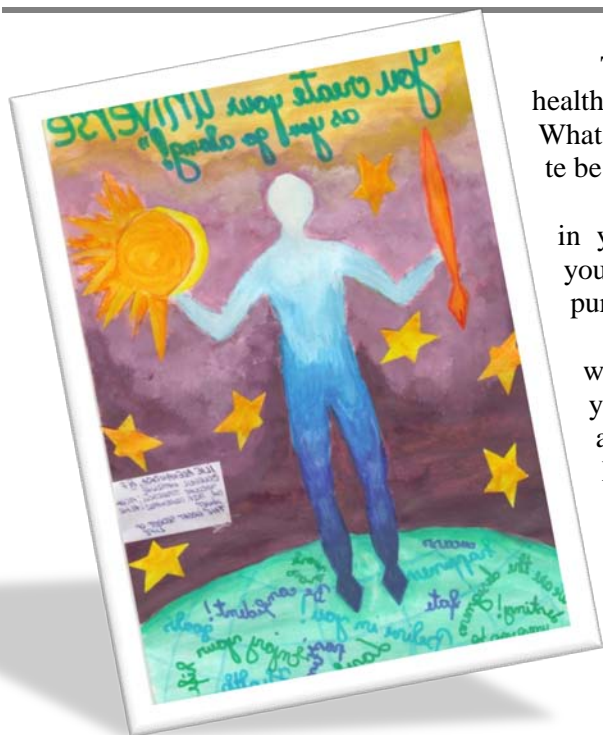


The Great Secret of Life

Ilie Alexandra
9th Grade

"Nicolae Titulescu" National College, Pucioasa
Coord. teacher: Ianeț Alina

We are the designers of your own destiny. We are the authors. We write the story. The pen is in our hands and the outcome is what we choose.



The secret gives us anything we want: happiness, health, love, wealth. We can have whatever we choose. What kind of house do you want to live in? Do you want to be a millionaire? What do you really want?

The secret is about believing in yourself, believing in your power and in your skills, it's about trusting yourself, working hard and dedicating yourself to your purpose. The secret is about being optimistic.

Firstly, there is no blackboard in the sky on which God has written your purpose, and to understand your mission in life, you have to find that blackboard and find out what God really has in mind for you. But, the blackboard doesn't exist. So, your mission is what you want it to be.

Why do people go to school? Why do they struggle to find a job? Well, I think they do this for money, because money rules the world, and without it, they can't survive.

Therefore, money is the main goal for everyone. You will work a lifetime for it without realising that money only brings misery, and at some

point, it doesn't matter if you're rich or poor.

On the other hand, some people want something that can not be bought such as love and happiness, because these are actually the fuel to success.

Furthermore, you have to be confident, and aware of your skills. Believe in yourself and you will do your best!

You also have to set your goals in order to have control, and recognize when you achieve your goals, so that you will build your confidence, but consider the reasons why you fail. Everyone fails in achieving some goal, but if you learn from the failure, you will be more likely to succeed in the future.

What's more, nothing is for free, everybody knows that! So, in exchange for the achievement, you have to work hard. Use realistic expectations to judge your own success. Do not expect to run a four minute mile, until you have trained and conditioned to run a four minute mile!

To put it in a nutshell, the secret can help you with anything, and it seems simple, but the fact is that the hardest and the most important part of it is about people's mentality. That's why life is the most difficult exam, because beside the hard work that you have to do, your thinking must be positive, and you have to believe in yourself, because you can make your life as you want as long as you are aware of your power and you use it rationally, with a good purpose. Your fate depends on you, as Winston Churchill said, "you create your universe as you go along"!

Be happy now! Feel good now! Enjoy life, because life is phenomenal, it's a magnificent trip! May your aim be true and pure happiness!

Cupid's Game

Stefania Dumitrescu

10th grade

"Carol I" National College

Coord. Teacher: Rodica Buzărnescu

Let's play a game with no certain rules
 It's a game designed to create more and more fools:
 Tied up minds, nothing but wandering hearts,
 The only thing I see is Cupid, playing darts
 He uses his arrows on everyone he sees and aims,
 And every love that ever was on Earth, he claims
 His silly game is anything but fair, however,
 Because once hit, his targets will be numb forever
 Your heart grows fond of everything it sees,
 And once he's done his job, Cupid just flees.
 He leaves you all alone, to find your pair,
 But careful - once you do, you might despair
 This game is nothing but an endless pursuit
 Whose purpose is to create a big dispute
 Between the things you love and those you hate,
 The combination of these two, pure happiness creates
 So all I'm asking is for you to be my playmate
 Together we'll cheat at Cupid's game and defeat fate
 I'll pull his arrows out and heal your heart,
 And all the pain we ever felt will turn to art
 You'll paint the kindest words upon my soul
 This is how over Cupid's game we'll take control.



A Tough Lesson

Visan Corina, Radulescu Bogdan
9th Grade
“Fratii Buzesti” National College
Coord. teacher: Vaduva Adina

John Michael was a man in the autumn of his life who had been whistling for the bridge in casinos, winning lots of money ever since he was young and easygoing.

He had been brought up by a severe mother, but he had been delighted with her attention and patience as he was tiny and valetudinarian. That was why his brother developed some raising rage against him over the years.

Since he had moved alone, he stopped keeping in touch with his loving mother and his envious brother. Now he spent hours on end talking to his neighbor, David, who was behaving strangely from a while, so that John thought that the latter was planning a robbery of his house, and that explained why our gambler had been avoiding the suspected man for a few weeks.

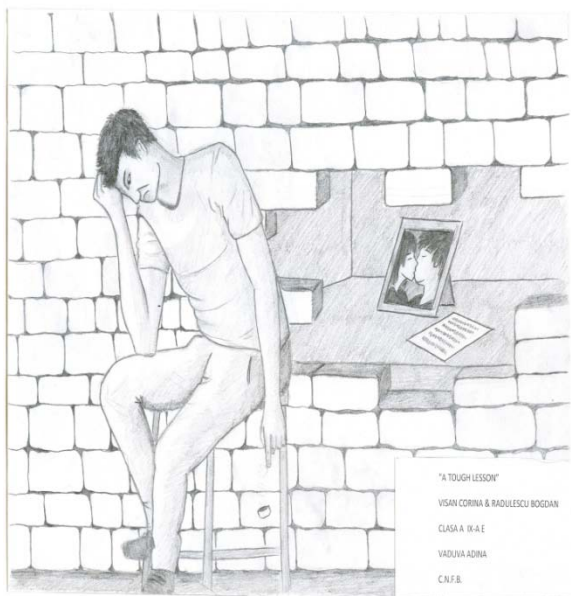
One day, when John was sauntering “back to the light” after having counted his money hidden in a secret, dark hole in one of the walls of his cellar, by throwing a glance on the window, he saw David sitting in front of the door, holding a pie in his hand. John opened the door grinning. There was no grimace on David's face and after glaring right in the latter's eyes, John's apprehension completely faded away.

During their conversation, a cold feeling of fainting gripped John and a blanket of mist covered his eyes. After mumbling a poor excuse, John went to bed without thinking of having eaten too much apple pie.

Suddenly he heard some whispers coming from downstairs. He rushed in the living - room where he saw his mother with a burly, swarthy man, who seemed to be a doctor. His mom rushed towards him and tried to embrace him tenderly. After she had hissed a groan, the poor woman started wailing that she was old, poor and ill, begging her son to lend her some money for the treatment. After listening to her, John's heart stopped beating for a second. Then his face turned red and while he clutched his weak mother's hands, he started bellowing that he needed to be left alone and pushed her and the doctor outside his house.

While Monika, John's mother, was crying desperately, she cursed her once beloved son to lose his money as soon as possible.

The very next day John was invited at David's party where he met a beautiful girl, Jane, whom David introduced to him. Once the party finished, they started dating and after a happy eight-month relationship, the two lovers got married.



On Christmas night, John suddenly woke up and saw Jane was missing. He rushed to the cellar and after having searched into the hiding place carefully, not only was the money missing, but there was also a picture of David and Jane kissing.

Next to it, it was a note saying "That's what you get when you misbehave with the woman who cherished and spoiled you more than she did with me". That very moment John realized why David had seemed so familiar to him. He was his elder brother!

Puzzled, with his heart splintered, John sat on a chair, next to the hole. He was holding his head with one of his hands, while the other one was hanging above the floor. He felt something falling from that hand. It was his wedding ring. He slowly started crying.

When he bounced back, desperate, he called the police. The officers said they could do nothing, so,

in less than a year, John became a beggar, scarcely living after such a hard lesson.



Year, Year, of the Four, Who's Your Most Beautiful Daughter

Barbu Florin, Babeanu Catalin,
4th Grade
„Tudor Arghezi” High School
Coord. teacher: Rotaru Cristina

Each year has got four wonderful daughters. Their names are: Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter. All of them are extraordinary and that's why it is difficult for me to say which my favourite season is.

Let's take the innocent Spring for example. She brings warmth, chasing away the frosty winter. The small patches of snow gradually disappear. The heralds of spring are the snowdrops. They look like bells as they push through the damp earth. The air smells wonderfully fresh. The whole nature comes to life. The trees gradually regain their green, once lost ornament. The sun regains its brilliance. The migratory birds return to their homes from the hot faraway countries. Blithe and happy, people also feel a kind of thrill. Just like nature, everybody feels alive and ready for a fresh new start. The second daughter of the year, who is just as beautiful as Spring, is, of course, the exuberant Summer. She comes together with the long awaited vacation, bringing happiness and relaxation in the minds and souls of all the school children. Now, nature is fully adorned as the colourful flowers are everywhere in bloom, the grass is green, the fields are green or of a golden hue and the ripe fruit in the trees are yellow, blue or red. Kids can now fulfill their holiday plans: they go to the seaside or to the mountains, they go on trips abroad or visit their gentle grandparents.

People treat Autumn with much respect and reverence. The beauty of autumn colours is simply breathtaking. Some people say that autumn is nature's best art. Autumn is also respected because it is the season of rich crops and fruit. People who have worked an entire summer will be rewarded with apples, pears, quinces, grapes and plums. A wonderful sense of accomplishment. A little bit more mature and more aware of the important role they also play, children return to school. A little bit later, the branches of the trees slowly become bare while the the wind hissing menacingly passes through the orchards. Everybody can feel like winter approaching.

Winter is the perseverant daughter of the year who wants all days to be frozen. Sometimes small, sometimes huge flakes fall from the sky, while water freezes in stunning unexpected shapes. Snow spreads everywhere the eye can see. Winter holidays are welcomed with joy by children. The New Year is eagerly looked forward by people. The magical days of St. Nicholas and Christmas are children's favourites. Children like fighting with snowballs and making snowmen.

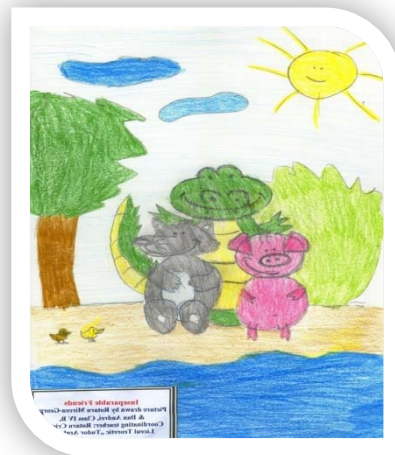
All I know is that every season has its beauty and, although there are people who can tell you without hesitation which their favourite season is, if you ask me, I will tell you that all of them are beautiful, all of them have their charm and, for one reason or another, all of them could be my favourites.

Inseparable Friends

Rotaru Mircea-George, Dan Andrei, 4th Grade
„Tudor Arghezi” High School
Coord. teacher: Rotaru Cristina

A naughty little pig was having a very pleasant stroll on the shore of a lake, looking for entertainment. Having a swim seemed a good idea because it was really hot. A light breeze was blowing, bringing with it the smell of the reeds and other water plants growing on the other side of the lake. In the middle of the lake the little pig could see a small island, which seemed strange to the pig because he couldn't remember having seen it before. So, the little pig swam to the small island in the middle of the lake and, after cautiously surrounding it for a few times, he decided there was nothing to worry about. So, he got on it and sat down with his little tummy lying in the sun.

All of a sudden, the small island began to speak: “Are you



having a good time there, sitting on my back, Mr. Piglet?"

"To tell you the truth, it's not bad at all, though you could have been a little bit softer", the little pig replied. "But, Mr. Island, if you don't mind my question, who are you, or maybe I should better ask, what are you?" continued the pig who was trying to understand what was happening.

"My name is Cro", the little island said.

"What, are you a crocodile? I mean, a real crocodile?", the little pig asked and then he went on for himself: "My mother told me to run away if I see a crocodile, but where can I run now?"

"Yes, Mr. Piglet, I am a real crocodile. Everybody is scared when they see me, but I don't do any harm to anyone", the island replied and the little pig could sense a feeling of sadness in the crocodile's voice. Recovering from the shock, the piglet continued:

"But you are a crocodile and I know that crocodiles are bad and ruthless, they have no pity and can eat pigs like me without even chewing them!"

"Yes, little pig, I am a crocodile, but you mustn't be scared of me because I am a vegetarian crocodile. Now, tell me, do you want to play with me?"

"Well, I'm still a little bit scared, to tell you the truth" the little pig said, not really knowing what to believe.

"What if I bring along another friend of mine? She is like a small fluffy ball and she's not afraid of me. Look, there she is, on the shore of the lake, she's playing with the wild ducks which live in the reeds. Let's go to her!" and then the crocodile with the little pig on its back swam towards the reeds.

"Hello, Wolfy!"

"Hello, Cro! What's there on your back?"

"A little pig", said the crocodile, a little bit amused.

"What's your name, little pig?" Wolfy asked curiously.

"Piggy", the piglet said in a faint voice. "Oh, my God!, the little pig said for himself. I was looking for some adventure and there it is! I'm playing with a wolf and a crocodile at the same time!"

Do you know what happened next? Much to the surprise of all the other animals, the three became inseparable friends. Every morning they met on the shore of the lake and used to spend the whole day together, swimming, talking, playing, being busy with all kinds of things. Who would have ever believed that? They were so different, and yet, so close!

The Story of the Sad Skylark

**Bacaran Oana, 5th Grade
„Tudor Arghezi” High School
Coord. teacher: Rotaru Cristina**

Once upon a time, there was a very sad skylark. She lived on a field full of flowers, near a beautiful clean village.

When she was very young, she was cheerful and had the most beautiful trill. Then, one spring, in April, when she was coming back in the country together with her family, a hunter shot both of her parents. She cried bitterly and the sadness took possession of her soul. Since then, she could never sing again.

One day, while she was sitting on her nest made out of cane and clay, she was looking at two young skylarks who were flying towards the sun singing happily. She wanted to sing, too. But she couldn't. Thinking they know the secret of how to be able to sing, she plucked courage and asked them:

- If you don't mind, what makes you sing so beautifully?

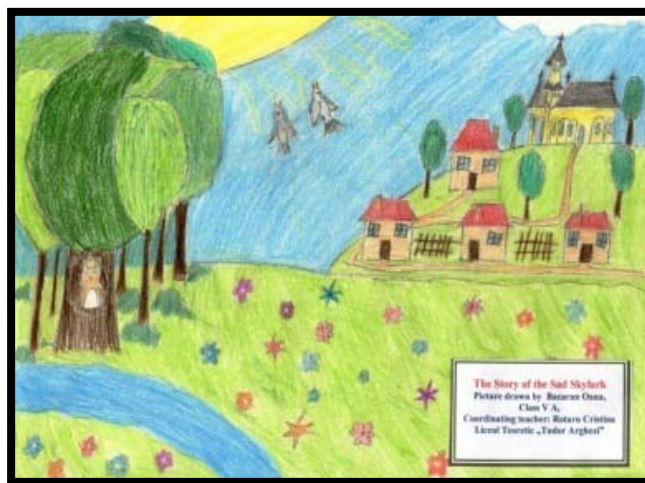
One little skylark replied:

- What do you mean? How could I not sing when, flying in the air, see the plain full of wonderful flowers, see how people work in the fields and make the crops grow, giving them all kinds of fruit?

And the other replied:

- What thrills me is the mysterious forest with towering oak trees teeming with animals, birds and teeming with foliage and the cool spring murmuring gently in the forest.

- But why do you ask?
- I cannot sing. I tried so many times, but I couldn't.
- I'm so sorry for you,' one of them said. Their mother approached:
- Hello, dear neighbor! What has happened to you?
- Mom, she cannot sing!
- Oh, I'm so sorry! I begin singing when I think I can freely fly and see so many beautiful places.



The skylark tried to think about the same things, but still she could not sing. She thanked for help and she left, thinking to go to the Queen of Birds, the protector of all the birds. It was the Wise Owl.

Secretly arriving in the dark heart of the forest, at the palace built in the hollow of an old tree, she met the wise queen. And she said:

- There are many ways to make you sing.

Yes, it is true, I know a lot of ways, but, unfortunately, they simply do not work for me,' said the skylark. And she told the wise owl all that had happened to her, how her parents had died and how she had since tried so many time but she couldn't.

- I am not surprised they did not work. Although there are plenty of ways to make someone sing, only one thing can make you sing and that thing is you!
- Well, I don't understand,' said the skylark, I tried everything I could and, no matter how hard I tried, nothing worked.
- I am not surprised, said the queen of the birds. It does not work if you are angry or if you stubbornly seek to achieve it.
- What should I do, then? the skylark asked.

- Try thinking about things that calm you down first. Your feelings stem from your thoughts and if you stay calm, you will feel peaceful. Try to think of the most reassuring thing that comes to your mind.

And the skylark thought about the village where she grew up, where her mother used to sing to her. She remembered those times. She could feel happy for the first time after so long...

- It is getting better,' the princess, feeling a change in skylark, said. Now you are ready to learn again how to sing. Think of something that you always do with pleasure.

And the skylark began to tell a story that she liked very much. Listening to her, the Queen had tears in her eyes at the end of the story.

- Now, try to sing! The queen said, and the skylark began to sing. And her song sounded just as beautifully as it once used to sound.
- Thank you, thank you so much! she replied.
- Remember, the Queen said, the power to overcome all obstacles and to remain cheerful comes from your heart!

And since then, the skylark has been singing beautiful songs, together with all the other sisters.

A Small Surprise

Minda Andreea, 4th Grade
„Tudor Arghezi” High School
Coord. teacher: Rotaru Cristina

“My name is Bunny”, the little rabbit said. “I have a younger sister called Rotzy”.

“Rotzy, will you please come here for a minute”, Bunny said.

“Coming!”, said Rotzy

Bunny had to wait for about ten minutes. But, in the end, she arrived. “Here I am!” Rotzy said. “Why did you want to see me?” Rotzy asked

“Let’s go and eat some carrots!” Bunny said

“ This is an excellent idea, but where can we have some carrots?” Rotzyasked a little bit surprised.

“In Old Elijah’s vegetable garden”, Rica said and his stomach rumbled.

“Ok, let’s go there before it gets dark” Rotzy agreed

Both of them were very hungry. Their parents had been killed by a hunter a week before, and the two of them hadn’t eaten anything since then. Rica said:

“We must be careful! I remember Dad once said that Old Elijah has got some very bad dogs”.

“I hope they don’t mind if we eat a few carrots”, Rotzy murmured.

When they arrived, the two bad dogs were in the back garden and the gates to the vegetable garden were

closed.

“We are lucky, the dogs cannot come here! We can eat as many carrots as we want! , Bunny said.

“ I don’t agree” Rotzy said.

“But why?” Bunny asked

“ Have you not seen Old Elijah? He is there, digging in the garden. And his little granddaughter, Julia, is helping him, too”

“Oh, oh! I guess you are right! Sometimes I am so stupid!” Bunny said sadly.

“ Come on, you are not stupid, maybe just a little bit silly and this is only because you are so hungry!”Rotzy said, trying to make

Seeing that Elijah and young Julia were coming towards them, the two rabbits hid under a bucket and they waited there with their tails shaking until both Elijah and his granddaughter left the garden. When they got out, they saw that Old Elijah was going to set the two dogs free, so they had no other choice, but to leave. They were very upset and very disappointed and, of course, they were extremely hungry.

But, on arriving home, a huge surprise was waiting for them. Old Elijah’s granddaughter had actually seen when they were hidden under that bucket. She wanted to go and feed the two little rabbits, but then Old Elijah told her that she would have scared them more. So, he advised her to bring them food at their home and let it there.

Julia brought them a basket full of carrots and cabbage and many other delicious vegetables. The two rabbits began eating hastily. Ever since then, young Julia brought them food every day and the three became very good friends. They began playing together in the fields. All of them were happy.



September is Gone



Covei Cristina and Ganea Laura,
5th Grade
„Tudor Arghezi” High School
Coord. teacher: Rotaru Cristina

Dear friend, do you remember,
That lovely day of September?
When birds used to sing,
Like we were in spring?

The trees were still alive
The soft wind used to sigh.
Now the winter has come
They are all gone...

The song of the birds
Is faraway now,
And the trees full of snow
Look like covered in dough.

Oh, dear friend, I just want
That lovely day would come back!

The Christmas Night Wonder



Ionica Daria, 6th Grade
„Tudor Arghezi” High School
Coord. teacher: Rotaru Cristina

It was a beautiful winter. The snowflakes were gently falling down. Christmas was coming with quick steps. All the families, all the parents and the children were happily doing the last preparations for the wonderful celebration.

Before starting my short and emotional story, I want to tell you, my dear kids, that it all happened in a city where all the houses were big and rich, decorated with all kinds of ornaments and colourful lights.

All the Christmas trees were big, all of them were decorated with balls, ribbons, candies, tinsel, plants and all sorts of lovely little things.

Yes ... all the houses were rich. But, as it always happens and as an old saying goes: "Every rule has an exception", in this beautiful city there was a big, poor and

ugly building.

But this wasn't an ordinary house. It was an orphanage. An orphanage for poor children.

However, this orphanage was different from all others. Here, all children seemed to know what they were and where they were, so nobody expected too much from Christmas.

They knew those "angels" who cared for them were trying to make them happy, but they also knew they would never get a "Christmas story" like all the other children.

But the most beautiful and amazing thing about all these kids was that they loved one another. Yes, dear, you have understood well. They loved and respected all the others, just like a family does, although they knew they weren't a normal family. Martin was like a father for all of them, while Sarah was like a mother, because being the oldest, they were the most responsible and the other were like sons and daughters for them.

Martin used to say: John, be good and get my globes. I know that you love Christmas. John, "the son", got up and went towards a dusty box, took out a few balls on a string and brought them to Martin.

John: Here they are.

Mia: John, get the tinsel, too.

George: Don't forget to bring some candy!

Sarah: Do not forget the lighting installation, John!

John sighed. He was the youngest of the "family". She was just 5 years old, however, whatever happened, she always called him up.

JOHN: Here they are, he said with his hands full of all Christmas decorations.

Finally, the little tree was ready.

Ana: Well, there it is. Even if it is not half as big and beautiful as the others, it is nice. What do you think?

Bruno, Andrew and Marvin, all said in a chorus: Yes! This is much more beautiful than the last ones.

But John did not agree. He was sad. He wanted with all his heart a big tree with beautiful decorations, a big house than this and a better life for him and all his "family".

He didn't realise that the bedtime was coming. The old clock on the little hall had just announced 10 p.m. John was sitting on the bed and he wanted to pull the curtain when he saw a shooting star. The boy immediately said, full of faith:

" Oh! Beautiful star, please, help me! I want a big tree, a real house and, most importantly, a better life for all the people I love! The star rippled several times as if it had listened to his wish. Then, it suddenly disappeared. The pitch black sky seemed to have swallowed it.

John tried to sleep, but a light began to flash in front of him. Slowly, the light became a wonderful angel! John was ready to scream.

The angel: John, don't worry! I'm here only because you made a wish on my star. Do you see? I am not an ordinary angel, I am the angel of the star.

John: I've never heard of you ... I'm sorry ...

Angel: In this world, there are billions of stars and, therefore, billions of star angels. One for each star, of course. You, my dear, you have made your wish on my star.

Your desire was so strong that it arrived to me. My name is Leo and, like you, I used to be a child many years ago. John looked at him fearfully.

Leo: Trust me, do not be afraid of me, please, follow me!

Leo took his hand and, like him, John began to float through the air. There was no doubt: He was flying! The angel led him out of the orphanage and they arrived at a huge house.

Leo: Look! I know this is your dream house. Now, we are in your dreams.

Stunned, John looked at the house. It was wonderful. It had a large fireplace, beautiful decorations and a huge Christmas tree. The house was perfect!

The only thing he could say to Leo was a simple " Yes ..."

Leo: Well, ask and you shall receive!

The angel began to fade away, only adding: "I'll see you soon! And remember, always believe, I am here only because of your faith!"

After that, everything was gone: the fireplace, the tree and the house. John woke up. He wasn't sure where he was. Certainly, he wasn't in his old and uncomfortable bed in the orphanage. No! He was in a large and beautiful royal bed! There was also a huge room, beautifully arranged. Slowly, John got out of the bed and opened the door of his new bedroom. He arrived in a huge room, beautifully arranged for Christmas: tinsel and lights at the windows, a huge table with all kinds of steaming foods that let your mouth water and a giant tree, even bigger than the one the angel had shown to him. Around it, there were all kinds of gifts, both large and small, packed in all sorts of shapes.

Suddenly, he heard a familiar cry: "John! Come here! It's great! It's unreal! I don't believe it! Come on, come on!"

John turned back. George, his best "brother", was there. All his other brothers were there, too.

Sarah: I don't know what has happened, but look, John! The orphanage doesn't exist any more! It has been replaced by this beautiful wonderful home!

Even though the others didn't know what had really happened, John knew. He went to the window. It was true: the new house had replaced the old orphanage. The new day was coming. On the sky, the moon and a few stars were still shining. Among all, one shone stronger and it was bigger, more beautiful than all the others.

John recognized it. He smiled and gratefully and happily whispered: "Thank you!"

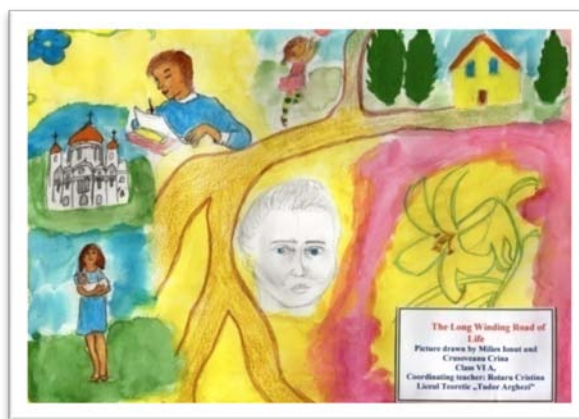
The Long Winding Road of Life

**Milies Ionut & Crusoveanu Crina, 6th Grade
„Tudor Arghezi” High School
Coord. teacher: Rotaru Cristina**

People have always tried to explain what human life is. They say that the road of life is long and winding, they say that life begins with a B, from Birth and ends with a D, from Death. But what is there between B and D? There should be a C. What does this C stand for? I think I know the answer: C comes from Choice.

Human life is a matter of choice, it is a never ending exam because we are forever required to choose. There are many options, many alternatives every time we need to make a decision: when, for example, we decide what school to go to, what profession to follow, who to marry to and so on. And we can always second-guess ourselves, we can always wonder would have happened if we had chosen a different path to follow.

There are many other things to take into consideration. In everyday life you may face different opportunities, so you have got to be prepared to act in time, not to miss them because some of them are unique in a life time. And there are lots of reasons why some of us fail. In my opinion, one reason for failing is negative thinking. I know it is very important to think positively because a pessimistic person usually fails. Another reason is lack of perseverance and giving up too early. Every time you want to achieve something, you must try as hard as



you can to overcome all the obstacles. After all, as Moliere once said, “the greater the obstacle, the more glory in overcoming it.” . Stress and tension also cause failure. Stress does not avoid anyone, so what matters is how you cope with it. I try to reduce it by listening to music, by painting and going out with my friends.

Another thing I know about life is that it has got all sorts of exams in store. Some people, including myself, are lucky because they have their families by their side. I am lucky because I have a mum and a dad who love me and always take care of me, I have food and I have shelter, I have got good friends, I have all the things that I need and want. But I know there are a lot of children of my age and even younger children for whom life is a day-to-day exam. Think about the orphans, think about the thousands of homeless children. The fight for survival is probably the toughest exam a child like me can take.

To conclude, life is the most difficult exam of all, some of us are lucky and the exam has easier tasks, but for many other people life is a continuous struggle, it's full of hardships and misery.

Merry Christmas Holiday!

Popa Andrei, 6th Grade
„Tudor Arghezi” High School
Coord. Teacher: Rotaru Cristina

This day has got a special way,
 Its name is Christmas day
 Outside it is snowing
 Inside the fire is glowing!

Christmas day, Christmas day
 It's a merry Christmas day,
 All my family's ok, We are now on holiday!"

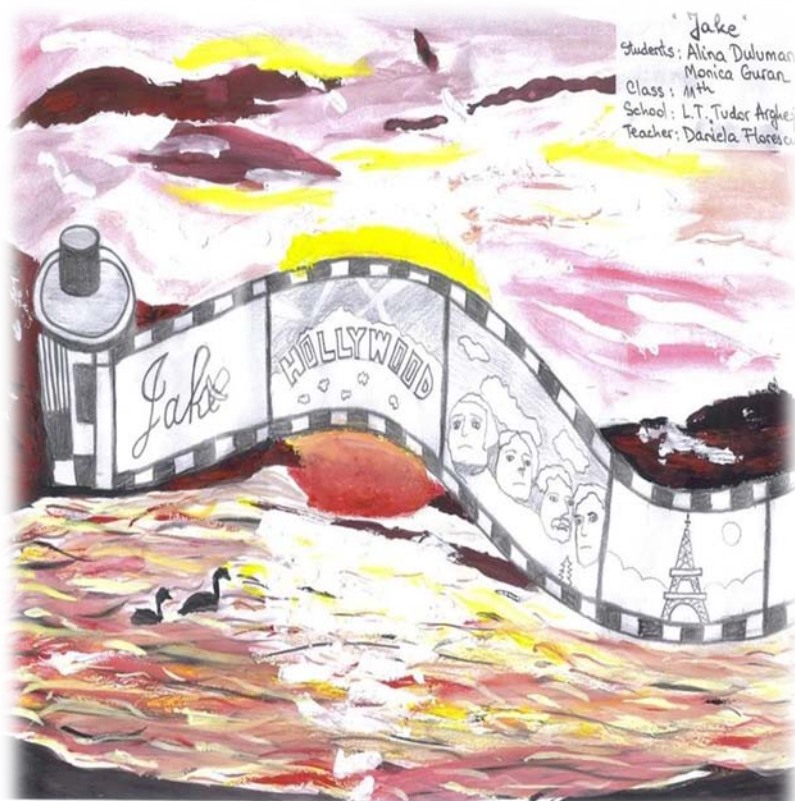
Santa Claus is coming soon
 We are all expecting him,
 We are so excited
 He'll bring what we wanted!

Christmas lights twinkle and shine,
 I hope you'll have a gorgeous time
 Christmas day, Christmas day
 Have a merry holiday!



Jake

Alina Duluman, Monica Guran, 11th Grade
 „Tudor Arghezi” High School
 Coord. teacher: Daniela Florescu



“What is life? What is love? What happens when, all of a sudden, everything disappears, and you find yourself alone?”

Such questions were tormenting a 12-year-old boy, named Jake. His life used to be perfect, his parents used to take care of him, as well as his best friend, Sarah, and also his elder brother, Jim. But suddenly everything changed and it changed dramatically. His parents were not around him anymore, and not even Sarah was there. Just his brother, Jim, was with him, but at the same time, he was not.

He did not have any clue about what had happened. Why was he alone? Why weren't his mother and father coming back home at 6 o'clock pm, like they always had?

Why didn't his father call his mother from the stairs as he used to do every morning? Why wasn't Sarah waiting for him in the park as she used to? Why was not even Jim there anymore?

“ Now there are only uncle Bob and aunt Anne and, of course, me. Even the landscape seems different: now I can see only mountains and forests - not so long ago, I could see the sand and the ocean not far from my house. Everything is confusing, I don't understand anything. In fact, I didn't, till I remembered a phrase - *You will never be alone, because loneliness doesn't exist, there is only you and the whole world, search yourself and then search the world.* Yet, there is still something beyond my level of understanding. Confusion keeps tormenting me. What does life mean? How can I loof for myself, if I am right here?”

All these Jake's questions, someday, somehow, were going to find their answers...

In the meantime, Jake continues to live in South Dakota with his uncle and his aunt, whereas his elder brother, Jim, who is 10 years older than Jake, is living in California, in their parents' house.

15 years later...

Jake is not living in South Dakota anymore, but in Paris, the place where he has always dreamed to live for the rest of his life. He is a true street artist: he is playing the guitar (just like his father taught him...), he is making jugglers with anything he finds (just like he was trying to impress Sarah when they were little...), and always, but always has a hat on his head, the same hat received as a gift from his mother 15 years ago... In the good days he gains even €200 per day. He is happy now. He's rediscovered himself and he is not alone anymore, he is with Sarah and their baby girl who is just 3 months old. Sarah became Jake's wife two years ago, when they met again in California, in their park. Now they have their own house, in a small and peaceful town near Paris.

A year ago, Jake finally understood everything: his parents had “gone” because of a deadly car crash, and Sarah had been sent by her parents to New York to a music school. And he was entrusted to his uncle and his paternal aunt while Jim chose to stay home in California.

He has also found out the explanation to the phrase said by Sarah, in the afternoon when his parents did not come back home. He now knew that “he was the world, and the world was he”.

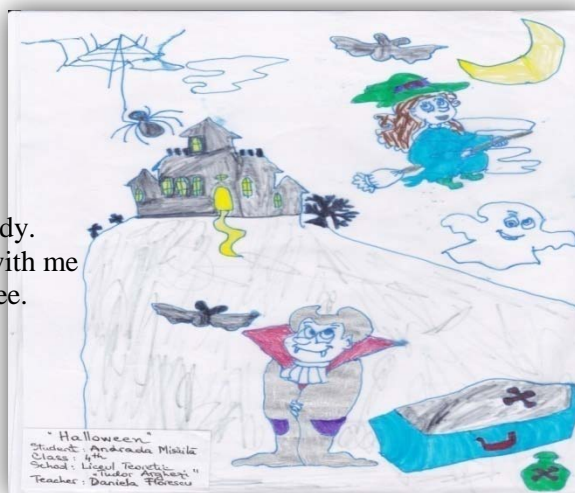
Halloween

Andrada Misăila, 6th Grade
„Tudor Arghezi” High School
Coord. teacher: Daniela Florescu

Halloween is the day of vampires and bats,
 Of wizards and witches with hats.
 It is the day of clowns and spiders,
 As well as of ghosts and other outsiders.

Look at me, I'm not anybody,
 I'm going to „trick and treat” everybody.
 I'm taking all of my friends together with me
 To carry the big jack-o-lanterns for free.

At school there is a great Halloween party,
 So we are not going to dress very smartly.
 We are going to play many funny and scary roles
 Like pumpkins or pirates or even monster dark souls.



The Retrieval

Balan Elena Teodora, Simionescu Tara Bianca
10th Grade
“Mihai Eminescu” National College, Buzau
Coord. Teacher: Haralambie Monica

Characters:

Cassie: She is a girl who loves to smile no matter to what. She has some amazing blue eyes, and she hides under a look a lot of secrets. At the beginning she is happy but she becomes a sad person after her mother dies in a car accident. She remains just with her stepfather, whom she has nothing in common with, and with her sister Anabelle. Cassie is 16 year old and she-s going through a lot of attempts.

Anabelle: She is 10 years old. "Bella", as her sister calls her, is a little girl, with blonde hair, speckled face and a sharp nose. She has two swift blue eyes. She notices everything around her.

Karl: Stepfather of the two girls, a kind man, but shocked by his wife's premature death, he changes in a party man preoccupied just with his friends and the nightclubs life from Woodway, a little city from

Washington.

Matthew: 19 years old, the son of a famous banker and a successful lawyer. She's a sensitive boy, creative and mature. He is the closest friend of the two girls.

Angelline: Surgeon in a Washington hospital, she is the two girls mother's sister. She broke any relationships with her family, because the career was too important for her.

ACT I, SCENE I

(The action takes place inside the house. Downstairs large living room, a kitchen, dusty stairs and the first floor where there are three bedrooms: the girls' room, Karl's room and a room full of old stuffs and photos from their mother.)

---Anabelle, Cassie, Karl, Matthew---

(7:30 a.m. In the Johnson's kitchen. Cassie is preparing breakfast. Anabelle with a plait caught and one undone comes inside.)

Anabelle: Good morning! Cassie, please, catch my plait. I can't do this.

Cassie: Immediately! Wait a minute, 'cause my food is burning.

A: Hurry up! I'll be late from school.

C: Have you made all your homework?

A: Yes... Somehow.... Never mind.

C: If you get your homework undone once again, I'll get very angry! Understood? And now, come to tie your hair. Where were you going this way?

A: I've just told you that I couldn't catch it. And by the way... I have a meeting today. Will you come?

C: I don't know Bella. In the morning I'm at school too, and then I'm at work. I'll try to convince my boss to allow me to come.

A: Ok...ok....

(Meanwhile Karl is appearing, hangover, opens the fridge and grabs a beer. He sits down on the living room couch.)

C: Good morning, Karl!

Karl: Whatever!...

C: Anabelle has a meeting today, and I'm not sure I can go. Can you go... please?

K: No!

C: What is going wro.... Nevermind.

A: Cassie where is my drawing?

C: On the desk, in our room.

A: Cassie where is my sachet?

C: On the table, in the kitchen.

A: But my pencil box?

C: It's in your bag. I put it in last night!

(Meanwhile Matthew, Cassie's boyfriend, is coming in.)

Matthew: Good morning! Are you ready? The car is outside, waiting for you.

C: Morning! I'm not coming with you today. Please take Anabelle. I'm going straight to work.

M: Ok! I'll take the little one, and then I'll come to talk with you. I know you. You're not Ok!

C: We'll talk later. Bye... Bella (kissing her on her head). I'll try to come at your meeting.

M: If you can't get there, I'll go.

C: Thanks, Matt!

(Matthew takes Anabelle to school.)

K: Cassie, I have bad news for you.

C: Oh my God! What's going on?

K: You know how much I lived your mother and how much i suffered after her' death.

C: Yes, I know!

K: I have to go. I'm sorry. You have to take care of Bella.

C: But why are you leaving?

K: I'm not giving any explanation. It's my decision. Please accept this.

C: I understand!

(Karl takes his coat from the hanger and leaves the house. Cassie is scared of the responsibility that she has on her shoulders. She has to find a solution before Woodway authorities are informed of her situation. Quickly, she goes upstairs and enters the dusty room, full of photos, boxes and memories of her mother. Easily, a tear escaped from her eyes. Meanwhile Matthew comes inside the house.)

M: Darling, Where are you?

C: Upstairs!

(Worried, Matthew climbs the stairs quickly.)

M: What's happened to you?

C: Look! Look how beautiful she was! How much I want her to be with me right now!

M: Calm down, love! You have me. Tell me! What's happened? Why are you crying?

C: Karl has just told me that he's going away, and that I have to take care of Bella, all alone. If the authorities find out of my situation, they'll take Bella away! I have to find another relative of mine.

M: Don't worry love! I'll help you to find a relative. Stop crying. I love you!

C: I love you, too! And thank you that you are beside me in these moments.

M: Let's search in these photos. Maybe we'll find something about any relatives...

C: I've found a letter from a girl, Angellina. It has an address and a phone number. She says that she's my mother's elder sister. Look! It's a photo of her. It is useful?

M: Of course!!!

ACT I, SCENE II

(Matthew, Cassie and Anabella, are going to the office of Matthew's mother. They try to find Angellina.)

---Matthew, Cassie, Anabella, Matthew's mother---

(Meanwhile, Matthew's phone is ringing.)

M: Hello? Yes mum!

Matthew's mother: Hello! What are you doing? Where are you?

M: I'm fine! I'm at Cassie's house. Mum?

M'sM: Yes Matt.

M: I'll come to your office soon. I have to talk something with you immediately.

M'sM: Of course! I'll wait for you! What's happened? Are you ok?

M: Not me, but we'll talk when I come. ok?

M'sM: Fine. I'm waiting for you! Kisses.

M: Me too! Bye!

C: What's going on?

M: We need to go! Come on! Dress up! My mother is waiting for us. She could help us. My father could help, too. Hurry up! We have to take Bella. It's almost 11:35 a.m. We'll going to be late if you don't hurry! And it's starting to rain outside.

C: In two minutes I'm ready. Thank you Matt!

M: Don't mention it. Hurry up, love!

(After 5 minutes Cassie is down in the living room.)

C: I'm ready. I'll grab my coat and my key and we can go.

M: Let's go!

C: It's late. We have to take Bella from school.

M: Will going to be there in one minute!

(Matthew and Cassie take Anabella from school and together are going to Matthew's mother office.)

M: Come on! Mom is waiting for us!

C: Are you sure that I'm not a problem for her?

M: Don't be silly. You know that she doesn't have any problem with you.

C: If you say so...

M: What's going on with you? You're not yourself!

C: Nothing, but it's too much for me. All the responsibility of taking care of a child is too much for me. I have to quit the school and work more.

M: You can't do this. I'll take care of Bella. She's like my little sister and I love her.

C: I know and I'm grateful for this.

(Cassie, Matthew and Anabella in Matthew's mother office.)

M: Mum!!!

M'sM: Hey, sweethearts! What's going on?

M: Mum, please, help us! Cassie and Bella need your help.

Cassie tells the entire story to Matthew's mother.

M'sM: Cassie, you know that your mother and I were good friends and you two are very close to my heart. Let's see what we can do!

M *(giving her the letter)*: Read it! It's all we've found. It seems that Cassie's mother had a sister.

M'sM: I think you're talking about Angellina.

C: What do you know about that?

M'sM: It's an old story. It's about...

M: Anabella....

(Perched on a chair, Bella stares to his mother's diplomas. She unbalanced and she falls down. Cassie hugs Bella and tries to comfort her.)

C: Bella, please, try to calm down! We have a big problem here.

A: But I'm bored, and I wanted to see those diplomas! You know I want to become a lawyer!

(In Cassie's arms, Bella falls asleep.)

C: I'm sorry.... This is Bella: full of energy.

M's M: It's ok. She's like your mother.

C: I know.

M: Let's get to Angellina. What do you know about her mum?

M'sM: Yes, I know her. She was a selfish person; she didn't care about anyone except herself. She broke any relationship with your family, long before you two were born. I don't know the reasons, but I think she's not the right person to take care of you!

M: Mum, read the letter!

M'sM: Yes, it seems she started to regret her decisions, but it's too late. Look! The letter was sent 1 year after your mother's death.

C *(putting Bella on the couch, she looks outside at the city lights)*: There is an address. And a phone number. Can we try?

M'sM: Yes, why not?

(Matthew picks up the phone and calls. But the machine tells him: "The number is no longer available!" Upset, he looks around.)

M: What are we doing now?

C: The only thing we can do is to go to that address.

M'sM: But it's in Washington!

M: You're right...

M'sM: Wait a minute, kids!

(Matthew's mother takes the letter and walks out. Cassie starts crying.)

C: What can we do? They'll going to take Bella away from me!...

M: This is not going to happen! It's going to be ok!

(In the office it is quiet. Suddenly, the door opens. M'sM comes in smiling.)

M'sM: At this address lives Lady Doctor Angellina Adam, surgeon at Prince George Hospital. I've found a phone number and I have already talked with her maid. Tonight she is on duty. Matt, call your father!

We are going to Washington.

C: Thank you so much!

M'sM: Never mind! It's my duty in front of your mother.

(Together they leave the office. Anabella is in Matthew's arms.)

ACT I, SCENE III

(The 4 are at the hospital, trying to convince Angellina to go home with her nieces.)

--- Cassie, Matthew, Anabella, Angellina, Receptionist, Matthew's mother---

A: Woow! How big and beautiful is everything. I think I've changed my mind. I want to become a doctor.

C: Ok, Bella! But now stay with me.

A: Ok, Cassie... Stop pissing me off!

M: Bella, but tomorrow what are you going to want to become?

A: I don't know. Maybe to work at the White House!

(The receptionist in the hall is watching them smiling.)

R: Can I help you?

M'sM: Yes please. We are looking for Mrs. Angellina Adam.

R: I'm sorry, but I can't help you. She's in a surgery and then she's leaving.

C: Leaving where?

R: To the airport. She's going on a 3- month mission in Cambodia.

C: What?! This is not possible! We need to talk with her. She's our aunt!

R: Are you kidding me? Mrs Adam has no relatives.

M'sM: Madame, the kids are not kidding. I'm here with them.

A: Cassie, look! In this hospital are angels!

C: Bella, please! It's not time for this!

A: But look, Cassie! At that door! It's mum! *(She runs at the woman, screaming)*. Mum, mummm! You're my mum; you're exactly like in the photos!

Angellina: Darling, I think you're confusing me.

Disconcerned, Bella turns her head to Cassie.

Angellina: Oh my God! You are....! Of course you are my sister's daughters!

C: Angellina?

Angellina: Yes I am...!

was looking for you.

Angellina: Really? But how do you know about me? Does your mother know where are you right now?

C: I have to tell you something, but you have to sit down.

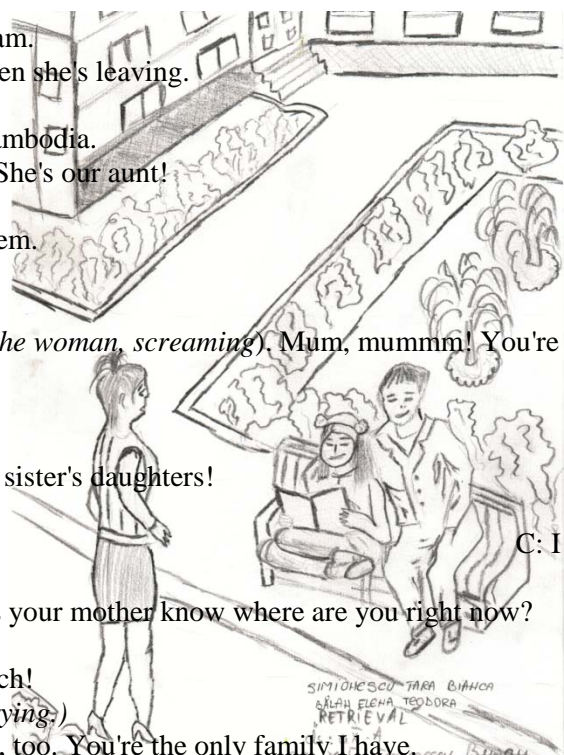
Angellina: I'm listening. But quickly. I have a plane to catch!

(Cassie tells Angellina the entire story. Angellina starts crying.)

Angellina: Sorry that I wasn't there for you! I am all alone, too. You're the only family I have.

(Matthew and his mother are watching the scene.)

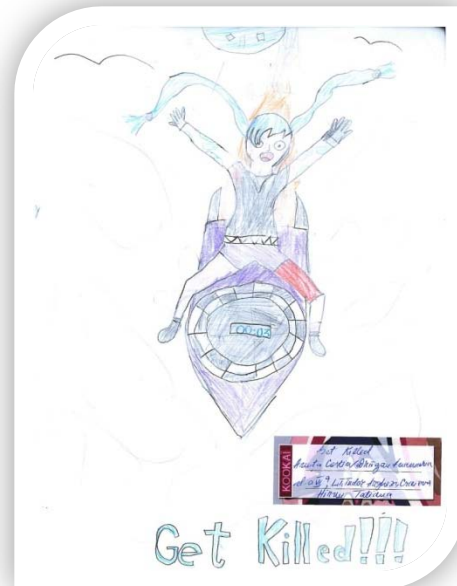
Angellina: Thanks you two for helping them! If you weren't there, maybe today we wouldn't be together...



Get killed

Anuta Costin Alexandru, Dragan Ana Maria Elena, 6th Grade
 "Tudor Arghezi" High School
 Coord. Teacher: Hirnu Tatiana

Why don't you join me?
 Come and play!
 I might shoot you..
 Right in the face!!!
 Bombs and bullets
 Will do the trick
 What we need here
 It's a little bit of energy!
 Do you ever want to catch me?
 Right now I feel a bit ignored
 So, can you try a little harder?
 I'm really getting bored!
 Come on!
 Shoot faster!
 Just a little bit of energy!
 I want to try something fun right now!
 I guess some people call it anarchy!
 Let's turn the
 Mode of our action
 In Shooting Frenzy Mode
 And after this, let's see what our guns think
 Let's blow those cities into ashes
 But not for long
 'Cause you get killed!



Alice's Journey to Woderland



Bîldea Alexandra Maria, 11 th
Grade,
Elena Cuza National College
Coord. Teacher: Mălăeș
Carmen

"I quit!" said Ali in a high voice.
 "And where would you go?" asked her boss with a mocking tone, crossing his hands over his chest.
 Ali took a step back and straightened her slim and tall figure, raising her head, full of confidence.
 "To become famous."
 She then plucked her nametag and slammed it on the small shop's counter and stormed outside, slamming the thick wooden door behind her. She stood there in

the deserted street, eyes closed, fists tightened. All those years she was trapped in the same daily routine, all those years she was simply fading away in that abject town, living a secluded life, just repeating the same day over and over again. With teary eyes, Ali took out an old blotted photo from the pocket of her jeans. It was a photo of her parents, the only memory of them she was left with. She fondled the blemished piece of paper portraying a young woman, with smooth white skin, sparkling eyes, flashing a condescending smile, revealing two delicate dimples and an attractive man with a slightly upturned nose, thick black hair, fine-featured face and a warm expression. The corners of her mouth curled upwards into a smile.

“Mom, dad, this is it! I am going to make it, you just stand and watch.”

A sudden feeling of fear crawled through her whole body, making her legs feel numb. But she stood pat. There is no turning back, no second thoughts. Ali blew away the fear of the unknown with a confident flip of her hair and took the first step into a new, better life. She was finally going to do what she loves, locked for such a long time in one of the shadiest nooks in her heart, to stand on a stage and perform. With nothing more than an ardent desire and few scarps in her pockets, she walked to the ticket office of the dingy train station.

“One ticket to Los Angeles, please.”

“Sure, said the old man behind the latticed wicket. One way ticket or round trip?”

“You’re kidding, right? said Ali with pretended peevishness.”

The man handed her the ticket with a peachy smile, it was a one way ticket to Los Angeles, the city of all dreams. After a long wait that seemed forever for Ali, the train finally halted with a creaking sound of the wheels in front of the platform. The doors opened and Ali walked to one of them. She stopped half way, her hand on the door handle, her foot above the first step. She had nobody to come back to, nothing to lose, so why would she waver? She shrugged her shoulders and got in without looking back. From now on, Los Angeles would be her home, there was no other place to turn back to.

“I am very sorry miss, said the old-looking lady in a testy voice in front of Ali, but we only hire qualified singers to work in our choir. You have great talent and a wonderful voice, but that it’s not enough I’m afraid.”

Ali tried in a hopeless attempt to convince the head of the choir that she desperately needed a job because the monthly rent was staring her in the face, risking to be evicted in any minute. But the old adamant lady stood her ground, like a cold, heartless, stone statue.

It had been two weeks since she arrived in Los Angeles and she was still looking for a job. She tried out almost every offer written in the newspapers, from backup vocalists to church choirs. Everywhere she went, she got the same answer: “You are very talented, but you are not qualified as a singer.” Absorbed by her thoughts, she didn’t take any notice of the men that were loading some boxes filled with fruits and vegetables into a truck to deliver them to a grocery store. A few seconds later, she was lying on the cold pavement, her clothes soaked in tomato juice. Afraid of stirring up a quarrel in the middle of the street, she paid for the damaged caused and headed home, walking through the overcrowded streets, keeping her head down and teeth clenched. As if this wasn’t enough, she stumbled over her feet and broke a heel.

“Great! That’s just fine and dandy!” mumbled Ali, tired and disgruntled of these day.

She sat on the cold pavement, not carrying about the people around her any more. This was not what she was here for, struggling for every cent is not the reason why she risked everything. The night had already fallen, the cold wind was brushing her delicate face, ruffling her hair and sending cold shivers down her spine. Her clothes were drenched and now her shoes were broken. Theatergoers dressed in sumptuous evening attires would stop to stare at her or making rude comments, not even bothering to have the slightest discretion. Ali took the old photo of her parents out from her pocket and patted the stained surface of the photo, letting out a heavy sigh.

“Mom, dad, I’m sorry, I know that you are not happy right not. Honestly, I don’t know what to do. It seems like I am hopeless. No one wants to hire me, my landlady is soon going to kick me out if I don’t pay the rent and right now, I look like a total mess.”

She took a glance at her reflection in a small puddle. Her long, wavy, fair hair was still damp, her golden fringe was uncombed and messy, her blue sparkly eyes were shadowed by two deep dark circles, her plump pink lips were curled downwards and her delicate hands were shriveled from the cold breeze. Stingy tears were beginning to form in the corners of her eyes, but she nervously whipped them with the sleeves of her jacket. No, she couldn't afford to cry, not now. She still had a long way to go. Her tears will only be shed when she has accomplished her life-long dream and they will be tears of happiness and joy. She put the photo back in her pocket and got up. First, she had to get home and take a long and hot bath, then, after she had a good night's sleep, she can think about a solution for her problems. She turned to find her way home, when a huge advertisement sign caught her attention. Pink, sparkly italic letters were graciously woven into a simple yet classy name: "Belle art". Under this gleaming advertisement sign there was a relatively small building, with no particular architectural style. The windows were imitating stained glass windows, colored with bright, but a little to flashy colors. There was a winding black steel stairway on the right side leading to a big wooden door, with a glistening welcome sign hanging on it. But what caught Ali's attention was this elegant woman, sitting by the entrance of the place. She had medium height, thin yet toned body, wearing a dress made entirely of sequins and a pair of black dancing shoes. Her hair was put up in a neat bun, some strands waving graciously on the sides of her face. She had a confident grin playing on her lips, her eyes fixing Ali with a haughty sparkle. She suddenly made a gracious turn, lifting her arms in the air like a ballerina and then made her way inside. Ali stood there in awe, mesmerized by the aura of the place. She wanted to go in but suddenly remembered the horrible state she was in.

"I can't go in looking like this, she said taking a look at her ruined clothes. But I'll definitely come back." She went home, the crestfallenness was long gone, a plucky feeling was now starting to develop in her heart, knowing she had found the right place. The next day, at the same hour, Ali was standing in front of the "Belle art" building. With hesitating steps, she walked up to the entrance, and opened the door with shivering hands. Those weren't shivers of fear, but shivers of excitement, the unknown waiting for her beyond that door was a risk worth taken for. Inside, there was a narrow corridor with different paintings hanging on the walls portraying female dancers in elegant dance poses, wearing glamorous outfits and surrounded by spotlights. At the end of the corridor there was a small wicket and a bald man welcomed her with a friendly smile.

"Welcome to Belle Art! The entrance is 20 dollars. Not pleased with the performance, you can take the money back, but that never really happened" said the man sliding one ticket under the thick glass of the wicket.

Ali looked for her wallet and searched for the money. 20 dollars, that was all she had left. But she did not hesitate and gave them to the ticket seller, then anxiously making her way down the narrow stairs leading the way. She could hear loud music coming from ahead of her, she could smell the odour of cigarette smoke. When she entered the room, her breath got stuck in her throat, her eyes widened and her mouth dropped open. There was a huge room with tapestry on the walls, the floor was made of black marble and there were tables arranged on different levels. In the middle of the room there was a glass-made bar, with a pyramid made of refined wine bottles and other fancy drinks. But what stroke most of the people's attention was a stupendous stage, with glamorous décor and a well organized orchestra, made of mostly middle-aged men, dressed to the nines, playing their instruments with ardency. On stage, there were female dancers twisting their bodies on the lively music, people surging to their feet and cheering loudly after every dance ended. It was perfect! She could not wish for more! The small yet select and animated atmosphere, the mystery and the subtlety of the gracious-moving silhouettes on the stage and the loud rounds of applause after every performance made Ali's heart swell with happiness and desire.

"I want to be up there, thought Alice out loud. I want to do that, too."

"Not so sure about that, a sudden male voice interrupted her train of thoughts"

She sighted in annoyance, thinking of the nosy man that was minding someone else's business. With a petulant toss of the head, Ali turned to face the curious man, but her words remained stuck in her throat. The man standing in front of her was tall, lithe, around his twenties, with brown curly hair, dark piercing

eyes and a mysterious yet friendly smile on his lips. He was dressed in a white plain shirt and a pair of jeans, wearing a black apron and holding a silvery tray in his left hand. Ali's facial expression softened. "By the cut of his jib, he must work here as a waiter, thought Ali trying hard not to stare too obviously at him"

But her attention was quickly distracted once more by the deafening sound of the applause and the loud shouts of the delighted audience of the show. Ali felt once more her heart pounding faster, like the stage was calling for her, like all those people were cheering for her. Seeing her contemplating mood, the mysterious men approached her and whispered in her ear:

"Go backstage and ask for Tess. Tell them that Jack sent you."

With that, the mysterious guy disappeared into the still-cheering crowd. Bewildered, Ali stood there gazing after the young man's figure, not believing what she just heard. Did he just help her? Why would he help someone he has just met and most likely he will never meet again? But where was she supposed to go? Suddenly, the dancers left the stage on the right side, probably going to get changed. On the spur of the moment, Ali made her way rashly through the crowd, bumping into different people without minding to apologize. She reached to a black door, with the words "Backstage, staff members only" on it. She pulled the door handle without hesitation and the view left her astound. The dancers were fluttering, trying to find the right costumes to change in, others were sitting at their makeup tables fixing their hair and appearance. With shaking hands, she tried to find Tess, asking around the agitated people, but no one was willing enough to help her. She sighted dauntingly, afraid that she might lose this unique chance. After wondering around for some time, she saw on one of the stools engraved with purple sequins the name Tess. Her face emboldened, raising her eyes to look at the person seated there. She was a middle-aged woman, with tall and slim body, her long black, curly hair was hanging loose on her back, her skin was as white as snow. Ali could see her face reflected in the mirror; sharp jaw line, well-marked cheeks, full sensuous lips, upturned nose and big, round, hazel eyes. Seen from a distance, she resembled a Hollywood actress. Ali took small insecure steps until she was close enough for the woman to hear her.

"Are you Tess? she asked with trembling voice"

The woman looked down her nose at Ali, then continued fixing her makeup. Ali froze in her spot, not knowing what to do next, since the woman wasn't answering her. Just when she was about to turn and leave, the woman broke the silence:

"Yes I am, and you're in my mirror because?" She asked with a firm voice

Ali's expression lit up, a small smile appearing on her face.

"Hi, my name is Ali, Jack said I should come to you. Listen, I really like this show and would really like to be in it. I can dance all well as those dancers."

Her thoughts were muddling in her head. She wanted to say so many things, but the words won't come out at ease. The woman stopped in her movement, analyzing Ali from head to toe. She could see her ardent desire for the spotlights, the fervor and the passion in her eyes.

"I got to say, great enthusiasm, terrible timing, said Tess rising from her seat."

But she couldn't finish because one of the staff members rushed through the corridors, shouting her name. He stopped in front of her, catching his breath and leaning on the makeup table.

"What's the matter? asked Tess with concern in her voice"

"Georgia, said the man breathing heavily, she's not here yet "

Everyone turned in shock, looking at the man. Soon, the room filled with low mutters. "The show will start in five minutes?"; "Will Tess find a replacement?" Tess contemplated over the problem. She had to find a replacement, and fast. Suddenly, her eyes landed on the fair-haired girl in front of her. Ali was still standing there, confused by all the hustle and bustle around her.

"You said you could dance, right?"

"Yes" said Ali taken by surprise.

"Good" continue Tess "Because you're on. If you ruin this show, you'll never have the opportunity to perform here again, understood?" Seeing Ali's daunted expression, Tess added: "Don't worry, you just

have to stand there and smile together with the other backup dancers and shimmy your chest. Let the lead's do the rest."

Ali calmed a little, but was still tensed from the sudden blow. Tess took her to the dressing room and gave her one of the costumes, telling her to get ready as soon as possible. After she left, Ali just stood there, unable to move a finger. What was going on? Was she going to stand on that stage? Was she going to perform along with professionals? This had to be a dream! She pinched her arm to see if she was indeed dreaming, but the pain felt was just a reassurance that she was wide awake. Her eyes became teary, not believing what was happening. But suddenly she remembered she had to get ready in less than five minutes. Whipping her eyes, she quickly passed on to action. The sparkling costume was fitting her as a glove, as if it was made especially for her. She stood at one of the makeup tables, looking at the various cosmetics, not having the slightest idea how to use them, since she never applied makeup on her face.

"Come on, aren't you ready yet?" asked Tess interrupting her thoughts.

Ali took one of the brushes from the table and analyzed it carefully. What could be so complicated? She took another brush from the table, this time thinner. The only problem is, which one should she use?

Seeing her perplexed expression, Tess grabbed the brushes from her hands.

"Let me do it." She then started applying makeup on Ali's eyelids. "When you are putting on your makeup, it's like you're an artist, but instead of painting a canvas, you paint your face. There you go, now come on, the show is about to start"

Having said that, Tess left to check on the other dancers, leaving Ali staring in awe at her reflection.

"What are you doing?" a sudden voice interrupted her thoughts.

Ali turned to see an absolutely stunning woman, dressed in a beige fur coat with red high heels and curly black hair.

"I asked, what are you doing? These are my shoes and my dress! Take them off right now!" the beautiful woman shouted, loud enough for everyone to hear her

"She will not take them off! She is going to perform in your place" said Tess in firm voice. "By the way, where have you been Georgia, did you just remember that you had a job to attend to? Be glad that I am letting this slide once. Now get out of the way, the show is about to start"

Georgia saw red. How was that possible? Who could Tess replace her so fast? She had to get revenge; she had to strike while the iron is hot. She smirked as an idea crossed her mind. Meanwhile, Ali was seconds away from making her dreams come true. The dancers gave her final instructions on what to do, and now she was ready to hit the stage. Although she was just a dancer in the back, she promised herself to give her best and avoid letting everyone down, especially Tess, since she got these chance that comes once in a life time. The lights switched off and all the dancers run to their places. She went and took her place in the back, shaking all the fidget away. The music started and everyone moved their bodies to the beat. As she was told to, she started dancing along with the other backup dancers, letting herself guided by the lively music. Tess was watching the performance from behind the curtains, smiling slightly at how fast Ali adapted to the sound of the music. Suddenly, the music stopped, the dancers freezing in their spots staring with fear at each other.

"Well, well, looks like the shoe is on the other foot" said Georgia with an evil smirk on her face, after pressing the off button of the sounding system.

"Drop the curtains" said Tess with a trembling voice.

Ali was confused. She did not know what to do. All kinds of emotions were passing through her head; anxiety, nervousness, fear. She saw the curtains slowly dropping. This couldn't be it. She did not give up everything for less than one minute on stage. She closed her eyes and clenched her fists. This wasn't over yet. Tess turned to leave, when she suddenly stopped, her eyes widening. The muted spectators dropped their mouths open as powerful vocals filled the heavy silence of the place. It was Ali! Eyes still closed, she continued singing, livelier and more powerful than ever.

"Wait!" said Tess "Raise the curtains."

The other dancers started moving to the rhythm of her voice, their tensed expressions starting to disappear. Ali opened her eyes full of confidence and walked to the center of the stage, singing and

dancing along with the others. She was living her dream, she was finally showing the people what she was made of. When the song ended, the crowd started screaming wildly throwing hats and flowers on the stage and whistling. Tears filled Ali's eyes, but she wasn't going to stop them because they were not tears of sadness, nor disappointment, there were tears of joy, of accomplishment. When she got off stage, everyone started congratulating her and shouting her name, wishing her a warm welcome since it was pretty obvious that she was going to remain there. Tess smiled with content knowing she had found just the right person. Georgia left, no one ever hearing anything about her again. As for Ali, she was now living her dream. Nothing else mattered anymore. After all the dancers left, Jack approached her, shyly rubbing the back of his neck. Ali's eyes dropped to the floor, not knowing what to say.

"So tell me" said Jack finally breaking the ice "What is Ali short for?"

"Alice" she said and took a step closer to Jack.

"Well then, Alice" said Jack with a cheeky grin, "Welcome to Wonderland!"

A House and a Tree

Pavel Andreea-Norina

"Ferdinand I" Technological High School, Curtea de Argeş

Coord. Teacher: Neagoie Maria-Lidia

That Sunday I went to my grandmother's place. It was a very beautiful day and I was very happy because I was going to see my grandmother after a long time. I missed her very much because I only saw her during holidays and because she was the one who took care of me as a child.

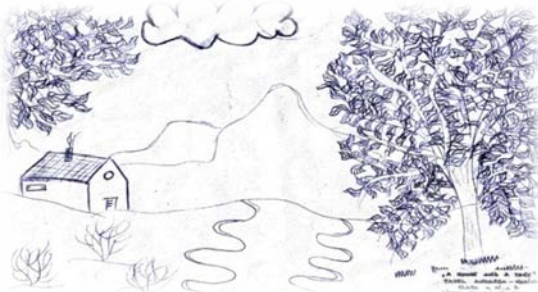
It was autumn and I got the inspiration to take a photo of her home. At my grandmother's house there was a stream nearby and a very old tree right beside. "Wonderful" I called it at that time, its leaves were a splendour. So many stories I imagined that tree could tell.

I sat and breathed, and thought under the tree. The stream was very blue and very clear, and you could see yourself reflected in it. I thought that would be a good place to read and to relax any time later.

Every time I went at my grandmother's that tree made me feel great. Why did I feel great? It felt good and I tried long to understand why. And because I couldn't find the words, I took a picture. I felt like home, happy and unlike I felt in any other place.

I can only say that I felt like when I read stories about foreign landscapes described there. But it felt more beautiful, because I was there, part of one greater story.

This place was sold five years ago. The house was pulled down and the tree was cut. But I am happy for all the days I lived there feeling loved. I have a picture taken on a Sunday and countless memories.



Mum's Day

Patricia Siminea, 4th Grade
 "Nicolae Bălcescu" Secondary School, Pitești
 Coord. Teacher: Plugaru Alina

I am beautiful,
 You are very beautiful.
 I am good,
 You are very good.
 Happy birthday!
 Happy birthday!
 Beautiful mum!
 I can give you a flower,
 I can give you an answer,
 I can give you a good heart!
 You are very smart.
 Happy birthday! Happy birthday!
 Beautiful mum!



Vampire Love

Nistor Luiza, 7th Grade
 Al. Macedonski Secondary School, Craiova
 Coord. Teacher: Cioc Ramona

In Foggy Falls there lived a lovely 20 year-old girl named Isabel. When she was a little girl she had lost her parents in a car crash. Isabel felt the need to have a family as she was very lonely and, so, when she met a mysterious boy named Steve she knew he was her soul mate and her new family.

Steve never wanted to hide the fact that he was a vampire from his girlfriend, Isabel. So he told her that from their first date. Isabel decided to keep seeing him and after a while, Steve introduced her to his brother, Damon who was a vampire also. The two brothers had dark hair and dark eyes, but their characters were very different. Steve hated being a vampire, but Damon loved the force, the speed and the fact that he would live forever.

Isabel was a beautiful girl with shiny brown hair, amazing green eyes and white skin. When Damon saw Isabel he realised she looked exactly like Katerina, an old vampire, a beautiful vampire woman who was 500 years old. Both he and Steve had dated Karina more than a hundred years before and she had left both of them. They had been in love with her and had never forgotten her beauty and charm.

He said nothing to Isabel about Kateriana, but he knew his brother Steve had chosen to date Isabel because she looked like Katerina.

For a while Isabel and Steve went on dating and spending a lot of time together. They used to go out at night because Steve could not go out during the day as he was a vampire. They would walk the streets caressed by the moonlight, hand in hand, talking about the day when they could be together all the

time. They wove their dreams, hopes and fantasies while walking in the park or lying on the soft grass of the forest nearby where no one could disturb them.

Damon was jealous because he was also in love with Isabel.

One day, by mistake, Steve and Isabel found Damon's diary. They started reading it and discovered that Damon had found a mystic cure that could transform a vampire into a human. The two lovers wanted the cure in order to be able to be always together. They continued reading and found out that it was on Vinaria, a mysterious island. Steven had heard stories about this magical island from his former girlfriend, Katerina. He knew where it was and he also remembered that vervins, mysterious plants which could kill a vampire were on that island.



So Isabel and Steve went to Vinaria and started wandering the thick forests on the island for clues. They were extremely surprised when they found a small house in a meadow and when they entered they were shocked to see Katerina. Steve because he didn't expect to ever meet her again, and Isabel because looking at Katerina was like looking in the mirror.

When Isabel found out that Katerina and Steve had had a relationship she was sure that Steve didn't love her, she thought she loved the fact that she looked like his old girlfriend. And the fact that he hadn't even mentioned that he knew someone who was identical to her was again strange.

Suddenly, while Isabel, Katerina and Steve were talking, a terrible storm started. It was raining cats and dogs, lightnings were striking the trees and thunders seemed to deafen those who happened to be on that island.

When a terrible thunder could be heard, the door of the house opened and Klaus, a horrible looking vampire, stepped into the house. Without a word he took Isabel and they disappeared. The storm stopped just as suddenly as it had started. Steve didn't know where to look for Klaus.

Out of the blue Damon appeared. He told them that he found out that Isabel and Steve had gone to Vinaria so he wanted to make sure they were safe as he knew that Klaus, their old enemy, lived on the island.

Klaus was 1000 years old, the oldest vampire. Damon knew Klaus wanted to be human again and that his mother, Anoria, had built a castle on the island in order to stay there and look for the cure. Although Anoria was a witch she could not turn Klaus into a human being again. They had spent years and years searching the thousands of caves that existed in the mountains from the island in order to find the stone that could cure her son, Klaus. But all their efforts had been in vain.

Klaus kidnapped Isabel and took her to his castle. It was on a high mountain, surrounded by a thick forest. From the distance the castle did not seem terrifying at all, but once you stepped inside the dark cold rooms, the black furniture and the rats running everywhere could turn anyone insane.

Steve and Damon asked Katerina to help them get to Klaus and Anoria's castle and she agreed. In order to get to the castle they had to cross the forest. Not only were there vervins, mysterious plants which

could kill vampires in the forest, but there were also werewolves and their bite could also kill vampires. They were strong and fast, but there were only three of them. There were hundreds of hugewerewolves.

They were running like lightening among the trees when, all of the sudden, a fierce werewolf attacked them and then all the werewolves started running towards them. They fought really well as they were fast and strong, but they were outnumbered.

Katerina was bitten but they managed to get out of the forest and the werewolves couldn't follow them. They were standing at the gates of the castle when they opened with a scream. Anoria went out and told them she was ready to give them Isabel back if they gave Klaus the cure, the magic stone. When she saw that Katerina had been bitten she told them that she would die in two days if she was not given a special magic potion she had.

Damon and Steve were desperate as they didn't have the cure. With a weak voice Katerina told Anoria that she had had the cure for a while and she would trade it for Isabel and the potion. Anoria agreed and told them to wait there. She went back into the castle to bring Isabel and the potion. Meanwhile, Katerina, who knew that Steve wanted to be human again, told him to hold his hand. She put the stone in his hand and told him that the next full moon he would be human again.

When the witch came back they traded the stone for Isabel and for the potion.

The four of them left the island in a hurry.

In the end Damon realized that Steve's love for Isabel was strong and he also that he was still in love with Katerina, so everyone was happy. Steve and Isabel to live in New York now that Steve was human. Damon and Katerina decided to move to an isolated island where they could live happily ever after as vampires.

Christmas Eve

Teodosescu Mihai, 8th Grade

Al. Macedonski Secondary School, Craiova

Coord. Teacher: Cioc Ramona

Today it's Christmas Eve
When we really should believe
In the morning, gifts will be
Put by Santa, under the tree.

Outside it is snowing slowly
Trees are dressed in a robe, that's snowy
Because it's an awesome holiday
When with our families we may stay.

Carol singers are coming
They're walking with a star that's shining
And white snowflakes fall on them
And they sing again and again.

Today Jesus Christ was born
About him, there are many songs
The son of Virgin Mary
Born in Nazareth City.



Blue eyes

Danciulescu Veronica, 6th Grade
Al. Macedonski Secondary School, Craiova
Coord. Teacher: Simona Salceanu

Blue eyes are as an infinite river
The magic porcelain that is clearer,
An icicle,
And sincere more a classical
Beethoven .

Their tears are like an icicle,
Breaking inside
Their anger is a criminal,
That can't be stopped.



The Magic of Fairies

Oană Cătălina, 6th Grade
Al. Macedonski Secondary School, Craiova
Coord. Teacher: Sugman Andrada

It is winter. Bright and fluffy snowflakes fall like a cloak. Sun last summer's boyfriend, is no longer visible now, but it left behind a leaden and deserted sky.

Although winter is terrible, tobogganing is full of happy children with red cheeks. Concealed under white hills homes are surrounded by a crystal field. Their inside work is in full swing: tree is decorated, the cakes are removed from oven, and children prepare to come out. Some happy children decided to make groups to organize a competition: *Which is the most beautiful snowman?*. So, all the children started to build a snowman: a large Bulgarian here, one middle there, then a carrot, a pot, a broom and a black coal no longer mattered. At the end of the contest all the children won. Children left to their homes chased by the hard and dark night. The stars were the only light. When I thought it was over, magic happened. Among the stars, two flashing lights descended to Earth. They were Santa fairies, who had come to give life to the snowman.

-We're Santa's fairies! they said.

- But why did you come? began to utter the Snowman.

- I came to give you life!
- But how?
- With the magic!
- Okay, but how long will I have?
- Two days, but watch out when evening will let you turn back! have warned them.
- Okay.

On the first day, he made new friends. There followed a series of fun games winter. In the evening, one child, named Radu, organized a party and called his friend, the snowman. Radu served the snowman with warm milk and cakes. When the night has fallen the Snowman was changed, and his last words were: "Goodbye."

The snowman and Radu remained with beautiful memories!

Broken Strings

Pârvu Alexandra, 7th Grade

Filiași Secondary School

Coord. Teacher: Tănase Ana-Maria

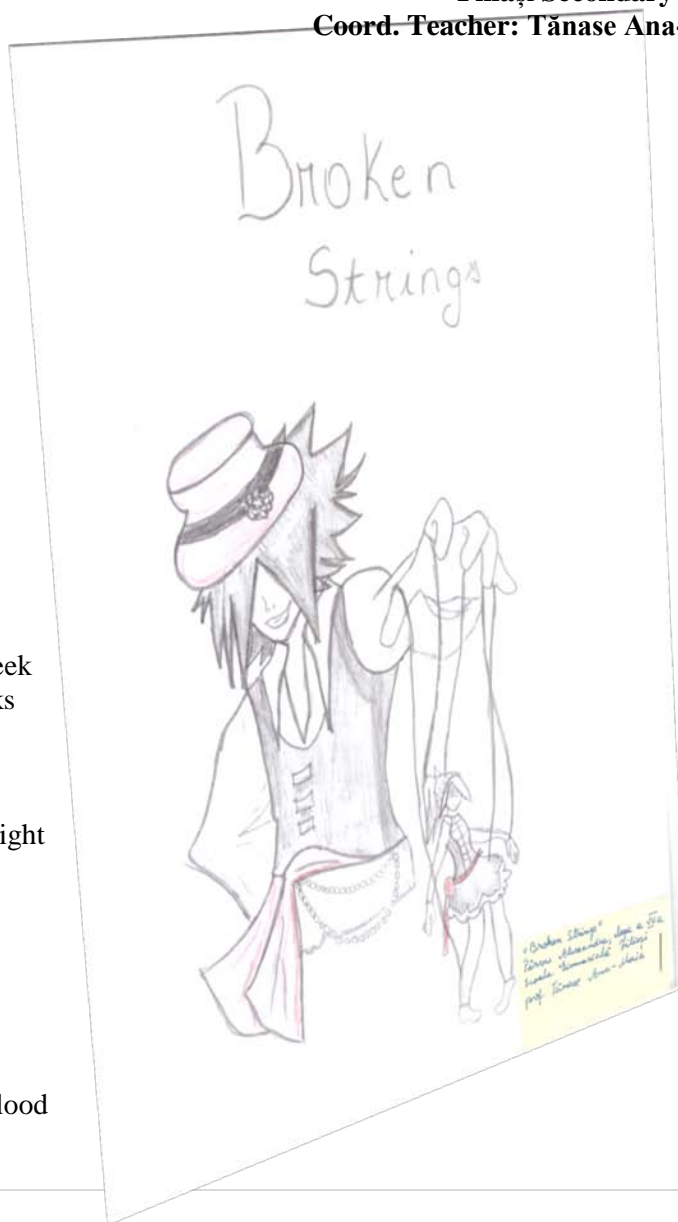
Now that my heart is breaking
I can't stop being lonely
And as the shadows fill the truth
I feel I was down already

I don't believe it can be saved
And it's just being cursed
The truth being a lie
But I know... it's gonna die

As I sat in my dark corner
I think I may be a dreamer
And people try to hurt me
But all I can do is walk away
I can't show my tears around them,
I can't show how weak I am.

Reflecting on my life at the end of the week
Tears leave my eyes and caress my cheeks
I toss and turn in my bed all night
Thinking if I'm doing it right
You left me there alone in the night
I'm such a disgrace, but hope you're all right
I'm sick of this so-called life
Which cuts just like a knife
Am I the only one who finds no peace?
I'm like a puzzle without one piece.

No one sees what I've done
I mean... the animal I've become
Now anger and sorrow run through my blood
All the hate and sadness create a flood



My mind is empty and so is my soul
 I want you back even if you're not in control
 My puppeteer has broken my strings
 And I'll see what my life brings

Game for Two

Bratoveanu Maria Larisa, Popescu Mario, 9th Grade
 "Henri Coanda" High School, Craiova
 Coord. Teacher: Tecu Elena Diana

Near the lake outside
 The empty silence walked,
 While you sat until late
 Your lonely bitterness to state.

Waiting for me in vain
 As I left you in pain
 'Cause I did run away
 From the heart's fire you left in my way.

But your game catches me
 To show how it can lie to me.
 Oh, what a cruel heart!
 Only darkness on its part.

And I can't help wondering why
 Only now do I find
 How empty your restless soul is
 That to tear my heart it did try!



Wish I'd Never Grown Up

Cârstoiu Carmen, 9th Grade
 "Elena Ghiba Birta" National College, Arad
 Coord. Teacher: Borș Monica

I
 Years ago, at seven,
 I would have given up
 Everything and anything
 To grow up

II

Now you ask me,
At the age of fifteen,
I wish I'd never grown up,
Wish I could return
To the days of missing teeth,
Bad scribbles on diaries,
Disney channel every evening,
Daddy who gives back rides.

III

To the days where nothing mattered,
Scattered toys and jumping on sofas,
Holidays, crying friends and
Being scolded for sleeping late.

IV

To the days waking up in bed
When you fell asleep on the couch,
And hiding behind my daddy
When my mommy was mad.
Wish I'd never grown up.



Friendship – the greatest treasure of life

Cumpănașu Luiza Maria, 7th Grade
"Sfântul Gheorghe", Secondary School, Craiova
Coord. Teacher: Stancu Camelia

Friendship ...so hard to find a clear definition... However there is one deep inside any person who has a real friend. A friendship may begin the moment when you see an unknown person and you smile to him or her and receive a smile back and one day nobody can tell you apart. I want to say that friendship cannot be won by force. It is one of those few feelings coming directly from the heart.



laughs with him, as well as when one cries, the other spreads hot tears with his friend.

Another definition for friendship is a lifetime promise – a magical promise, untold, unwritten. That promise lives in the heart of the two friends.

What is special about friendship is that it does not have to be between two beings of the same kind. An animal may be a man's best friend as well as the best friend of a plant or a tree can be a man. It is so simple, because the two beings should care for and support each other for a lifetime.

My friend means everything to me; she is my sister and a part of my heart. If she laughs, I am happy, if she cries, I am sad, too, and if she suffers, I suffer more. Are we united? Yes, we are. At the beginning, I did not understand very well, but the feelings got deeper and deeper. We started to need each other as beings need sun, as flowers need their colours and a child needs his mother. We complete each other, because we are so different...Adults may consider our feelings not so deep, but children better understand than they do, because our hearts are free, ready to be filled with love.

I think everybody needs friends, because in hard times your friends help you rise. No matter how hard you suffer, your friend will encourage you to look farther and go on. And if you cannot do this alone, he or she will take your hand and help you rise, walk with you to make sure you succeed. I say these things with an unlimited certainty, because I have passed through tough times myself and the support came from her ... my best friend!

All in all, I advise you to choose your friends with an open heart and a pure soul, as I did. Friends are like precious stones hidden on the bottom of the ocean and these might be found only with honest and sincere feelings. Love your friends, because they are the greatest treasure of life!

A Happy Family

Spînu Raluca, 8th Grade

"Sfântul Gheorghe", Secondary School, Craiova

Coord. Teacher: Stancu Camelia

In the world there are four sisters
All people say whispers
As they are good to one
another
And they all love their father.

Autum is full of golden trees
Children have a lot of dreams.
What weather would you like
To be happy and full of light?

Storm, storm, my dear storm
I prefer you to be warm
The strongest wind to be the
sun
And the worst clouds to run
and run...

What wicked girl do you know
Destroying everything with
cold snow?

Queen Winter with her icy feet

Coming slowly and at
Christmas we meet.

Who smiles together with us
And brings to life flowers and
grass?
Spring, which rules for three
months
And calls crickets and ants.

I like Summer more
Because it's warmer than all
It's time for a holiday
When we can easily play.

All these seasons make a year
None of them has any fear
They don't hate one another
They are like sister and

brother.



Everything

Deliu Victoria Maria, 7th Grade
"Sfântul Gheorghe", Secondary School, Craiova
Coord. Teacher: Stancu Camelia

Motto:

"Love is the power you give someone to destroy you and the confidence that he will never do it."

It is the miracle which has its roots inside of us... It is the inconceivable sensation that you can feel when your smile and his end in a soft kiss... It is the glow of your eyes when you see him coming impatiently to you... Yes, this is love.

The drops of love caress you many times in life, but real love can only be met once-in-a-lifetime. And you don't know if that unique moment has already come or not until you look deeply in his eyes and he looks deeply in yours and the words crystallize in your minds... When it happens, the whole life which you have lived has no sense anymore and you feel as you have never truly lived before. And of course you are right.

Your shy smile is inspired by his and you can read the happiness inside of your souls. You receive the pour wings of the exhilaration and just then you know that those moments will remain in your heart forever and you will never be able to forget those feelings. Never ever!

You begin to live through the other one, because after a few days he goes in your blood with whole his creature. No second flies, but your mind flies already to him. He becomes a part of yourself that you cannot live without anymore. He completes you and much more, you two become only one... Your powerful hearts fret of desire and passion and it seems as nothing can destroy you, because your strength has become profound.

Your mind and your soul are occupied now by another mind and another soul. You find the courage you need inside of him and he shows you the most beautiful way to live your life: with him forever. Your wishes are also his and his ones are also yours. You two aim at the same dreams and ideals and nothing seems impossible anymore. "The world is not ready for us, because we will travel through all these worlds, closed at the same time in our own world: our love for each other", you're thinking in your endless blessedness.

You begin to notice him with all his capacities and defects and you love him just because he is not perfect and just because he is actually the other side of yourself. Despite of the bad words you sometimes hear about him, you simply love him more and more every day. The miracle which you have witnessed is too pithy to stop now. It has already become an addiction but you still think that is a positive one.

You adore his fair hair which rivals with your dark one and you see his profound, green eyes as two rare emeralds. You know that brown and green together have always been a kind of harmony, but know they have acquired a deeper sense... Because they are the colors of your eyes, of course!

You feel that you would go heart and soul into him, you idolize him and you know that the days you live without him are like hell. You startle when you hear his name and you can talk about him days without end, always saying something new.

But one day, after he has offered you sweet chocolate, sweet words and touches, you begin to feel lonely again, you begin to cry... Why? Because it is over now, he is not yours anymore. Time has changed everything! Everything that you thought it would be forever. The only thing you need has disappeared and the amalgam of emotions puts you down. It is complicated how happy and sad can someone be because of one single person. How happy and sad you can be because of him... It seems that all your dreams have broken and your universe has no essence anymore. Your mind is numb, your soul is too empty to feel any good experiences... Your world has come to an end and you are actually dead... You

just exist, but you don't live anymore. And just then you understand how important he was... Just then you understand that you had truly fallen in love..... And don't forget! It is truly just once-in-a-lifetime.

Now you have two choices: to finish your negligible life or to wait to meet him again, to see his loveable eyes again, to feel his touches again, to live again... What do you choose? Of course you choose the second version. Why? Because you prefer to hope... And you hope... And you hope... And you hope... Maybe one day your true love will bring you to life again... This is your most beautiful dream... You and him, together again! In a better place, speaking a better language and loving each other more and more... Until then, you will always love him inside your heart in a way that you will never love someone else. Because he was unique and he still is...

Serene, in spite of the pain he caused you, your voice always falters when you talk about him. You smile away your bitter tears when you think of him. It is something hard to understand for the people who have never lived something similar. You don't know what happened to you or on what path you should go... All you know is that you want him back, you want the whole equability you have built back.

You are the moon, he is the sun... You'll never meet each other until the day of apocalypse. But for you it will be a great disaster; that wanted day will be the end of all your anguishes and the new beginning of your life. And you keep waiting for that day when you see him beside you again every moment...

Do you understand now? Do you understand what love is? It is something you need thousands words to explain, but only one man in the whole world to associate with. Simple and complicated, powerful and destructive, forever and never, water and fire, thought and feeling, full and empty, original and classic, ecstasy and pain...



Love arises from curiosity and subtle sympathy and it goes on with desire. Your heart is sheeted til the first, wonderful kiss, when an explosion of strong emotions catches you. Thenceforth your pathologic symptoms are more visible and that miracle called "love" becomes the air you just cannot live without.

In a river of suaveness, the flames of your soul are as red as the fresh roses he offers you every day. The dependence makes your moves almost automatically and it seems as if you hadn't known life until you understood love.

Love is in the water you drink, in the book you read, in the music you listen to, in the fragrance of your flowers, in the darkness of the night... Above all, love is in you and in absolutely everything you have ever done, do, will ever do... Although you might have met love because of an only one person, it exists in everything... Actually, this is the secret of

life: that love is in everything we want or not, but, unfortunately, we need a person to discover this.

The Perfect Gift

**Dumitru Diana- Georgiana, Stancu Alexandra-Maria, 6th Grade
"Sfântul Gheorghe", Secondary School, Craiova
Coord. Teacher: Stancu Camelia**

Characters:

Christian Brian William Richard Louis Oliver Richmonde III (son)

Christian Brian William Richard Louis Oliver Richmond II (father)
Christian Brian William Richard Louis Oliver Richmond I (grandfather)
Maxwell Leonard Andrew Jonathan Albert Richmond (uncle)
Wilhemina Theresa Anne Victoria Elizabeth Richmond (aunt)
Lady Greedy
Christine Hart
Rebecca Hart (Christine's mother) - caterer
Nigel the butler, servants, guests, the police officer, other policemen, social workers.
Setting: Richmond residence

Act 1

Scene 1

Before the party

Rebecca Hart, with her daughter, Christine, knocking at the back door of the Richmond residence.

Rebecca: Good evening. Is this the Richmond residence?

The butler (with a severe look): Of course. And you are precisely 2 minutes and 33 seconds late. Come this way, please.

Rebecca (to her employees): O.K., boys and girls, follow me and be careful with those plates.

(to Christine) Chris, come and help me; stay close to me and try not to get lost this time.

Christine: Wow, this is the biggest house I've ever seen. How many people live here?

The butler: Not simple people, little girl. Three gentlemen and one lady live here: the young lord Christian Brian William Richard Louis Oliver Richmond III, his father, lord Christian Brian William Richard Louis Oliver Richmond II, his mother, lady Sarah Jane Richmond and his grandfather, lord Christian Brian William Richard Louis Oliver Richmond I.

Christine (staring at the butler with her mouth open) : Jesus, there are lots of them, indeed.

Rebecca: Christine Hart, behave yourself or else you will leave right now! Remember what we talked about this morning?

Christine: O.K., Mum. I promise I will be the most helpful and the most polite young girl at this party.

Scene 2

The party

Richmond residence, The Blue Room. The hosts and a lot of distinguished guests are present.

Uncle Maxwell: Hello, old pal! So, how old do you say you are today? I'm going to give you your first Ferrari!

Christian: I don't think that's legal, uncle Max. I'm only fourteen.

Uncle Maxwell: Oh, are you really?! How about a motorbike? Is that legal?

Christian: Not quite, uncle Maxwell. I think a skateboard will be all right.

Uncle Maxwell: Then, a yacht it is! It's called "Dare" and it was designed by myself. I'm sure you'll enjoy travelling by it.

Christian: I'm sure I will, uncle Max. Thanks a lot.

Aunt Wilhemina: Happy birthday, sweetie! Look what I've got for you: the dream of every kid, the latest video game, "Sparkling Death"!

Christian: Wow! Exactly what I wanted! Thank you very much, aunt Willie.

(to himself) Not even in my nightmares!

Father: Son, your mother and I did a lot of thinking this year, but your grandpa helped us most. So, happy birthday and here is your present. (hands him an envelope)

Christian: Oh, Europe! Two whole months! That's awesome, dad! May I travel by the yacht uncle Max gave me?

Father: I believe we can arrange something, if your mother agrees to this.

Christian (with false enthusiasm): I'm looking forward to it!

Act 2

Scene 1

The meeting

Christian, walking around the room, greeting the guests with a formal smile.

Christine, in a corner of the room, looking lost.

Christian (to himself): Just a little longer and I'll be allowed to go upstairs and rest in the pages of my new novel.

Sees Christine and is heading to her.

Christian: Good evening, young lady. Are you looking for your parents?

Christine: Not really. My mum is over there, (points to the kitchen area) but she asked me to stay still and behave nicely... This party is kind of boring, isn't it?

Christian: I know, it's the story of my life. I'm Christian Richmond, by the way.

Christine (looking surprised): Oh, I'm Christine Hart and.....a, a, I'm delighted to make your acquaintance.

Christian: And I'm grateful to meet you, Christine. Would you like to dance?

Christine: I'd love to, but I don't want my mum to get upset.

Christian: Very well, then. Do you think it will be all right if I kept you company for a while?

Christine: I don't see why not. I'm bored to death, anyway. So, what do you do for fun in this house, lord Richmond?

Christian: I read a lot. My grandfather has an amazing library and books are my best friends. Sounds boring, doesn't it?

Christine: Not at all. I like reading a lot, but I don't have much time for this. I have to go to school, do homework, study, do housework, help my mum sometimes....stuff like that. I have so little time to play with my friends. How about you, don't you go to school?

Christian: I have private teachers who come to my house every day. I only go to school for my final exams.

Christine: That must be so awesome, not to have to get up early every morning! I envy you, seriously!

Christian: Don't! It's not so great to see the same people most of the time and to have no friends of your age.

Christine: How come? Don't your parents have friends with children?

Christian: They do, of course, but I haven't managed to find anything in common with them. They all like sports, parties, videogames, computers and

Christine: Do you do any sport?

Christian: I ride horses, I play tennis, basketball and soccer but I don't live to do this every day. I consider that we must train our minds more.

Christine: You may be right. I think I'd like to dance now, if you still want to. My mum is waving at me, so it means that I'm allowed to move.

Christian: That would be my pleasure.

They go to the dancing floor and start dancing .

Scene 2

The event

Someone is screaming, then the music stops and all the guests are gathering around a very elegant lady who seems very upset.

Lady Greedy: My God! My precious ruby bracelet is gone! I was wearing it when lord McKenna asked me to dance and I remember seeing it as we were dancing, but it's gone now. It's awful!

(Looking around suspiciously): Someone must have stolen it! Maybe, he or she found it on the dancing floor and decided to keep it.

(Almost hysterical) Lord Richmonde, please call the police, there is a thief in your house!

Lord Richmonde: This is a most unfortunate incident, lady Greedy, but I can assure you that I do not keep thieves in my house. Anyway, the police will be here in a short time and they will take care of the matter.

Lady Greedy (pointing at Christine who is talking to Christian on the dancing floor): That girl! Who is that girl? She is not one of us, what is she doing here? She must be the thief!

Police officer: Calm down ladies and gentlemen, we are here now and we will find the missing jewel soon. Now, I will ask you very nicely to sit down and let my colleagues do their duty. All the staff members will be questioned and searched.

Lady Greedy: Question her first, officer. I remember I saw her dancing next to me and she probably saw the bracelet falling on the floor and she just took it. She must have it!

Christine (petrified with shame): I did not. I have never stolen anything in my life! My mother taught me it's not moral to take something which doesn't belong to me and I'm not fond of jewels anyway.

Police officer: Who is your mother?

Christine: My mother is Rebecca Hart, the caterer at this party.

A waiter is sent to call Rebecca Hart from the kitchen. She is coming right away, looking worried.

Police officer: Are you Rebecca Hart, mother of this girl over here?

Rebecca Hart: I am. What is the matter, officer?

Police officer: A very precious bracelet is missing and your daughter was seen around the owner of the bracelet. What is she doing at the party, anyway? She is not on the guest list.

Rebecca Hart: It's just that I can't leave her home alone. I'm a single mother, I work a lot, mostly late at night and I have to keep an eye on her. Lord Richmond said.....

Christian: Christine is an old friend of mine, officer, and she wanted to surprise me by coming to this party. That's why she is not on the guest list.

Police officer: I'm sorry, sir, but if her mother can't look after her, we must call the social service to take her into custody till further investigation.

Rebecca Hart (bursts into tears): You can't do that! I was looking after her and my daughter didn't steal anything! You can't take her away from me!

Social workers arrive and start talking to the police officer while Rebecca Hart is holding Christine in her arms. Christine tries to encourage her mother. Christian is nowhere to be found.

Act 3

Scene 1

The investigation

Social worker: Christine, I think you'd better come with us. You look very tired and it's obvious for everyone that your mother is not capable of looking after you. This is not a proper hour for a 12-year-old girl like you to be awake. You should be at home, sleeping.

Christine: I'm not leaving anywhere. I asked my mum to take me with her because aunt Jenny is sick and I can't stay home alone. I don't go to work with her all the time. It's just an unfortunate situation.

Social worker: You are not old enough to decide, Christine. It would be better for you to live in a safe place for a while until the investigation is over and the bracelet is found.

Christine: My house is the safest place on Earth, but I hate staying by myself. Why can't you understand? You can't force me to leave my mum.

Social worker: I know you love your mother very much, but we have to think of what's best for you, Christine. I can't force you to leave, but a judge can, you know that.

Christine: What's the matter with you, people? I didn't do anything, I didn't steal that bracelet. Wait, Christian was with me all the time, he can tell you I didn't take anything from the floor. Where is he? Where is Christian?

The Butler: The young lord retired earlier. He wasn't feeling very well. He can't help you little girl. You'd better go with these kind people and rest till the situation is cleared.

Rebecca Hart: My daughter is not leaving anywhere. I'm calling my lawyer. She will know what to do.

A police officer is giving the social worker a document.

Social worker: I'm afraid the lawyer will come for nothing. I have the order signed by the judge. You must come with us, Christine.

Christine (struggling with tears): You're gonna have to drag me out.

Scene 2

The mystery is solved

Police officer: Christine, be reasonable and follow Mrs. Gibson. Nobody wants to harm you, but you must obey the law.

Rebecca Hart: It's all right, Christine, go with them. I will be with you in the morning and we will go home and take a long vacation. Just the two of us.

The police officer, the social worker and Christine are heading to the front door when Christian makes his appearance.

Christian: Could I talk to you for a moment, officer?

The police officer: Is it so important that it can't wait till morning? I have to escort this young lady to a proper home first.

Christian: I can assure you that what I have to tell you is very important and it's related to this unusual situation.

The police officer: All right. What is it that you have to tell me, lord Richmonde?

Christian: I'd better show you. Please, follow me.

Christian is heading to the sofa where lady Greedy is resting, surrounded by a few concerned friends.

Christian: Lady Greedy, I'm awfully sorry to trouble you in this situation, but would you be so kind as to answer me one simple question?

Lady Greedy: Of course, Christian, I will try.

Christian: Lady Greedy, don't you think that my mother's orchids are simply the most wonderful in the world?

Lady Greedy (smiling): I absolutely agree with you, Christian. I was just telling that to lord McKenna when we went for a walk in the garden.

Christian: And did you go for a walk after the dance, lady Greedy?

Lady Greedy (hesitating): I think I did. Why?

Christian: It was a rather cool evening. Were you wearing only your evening dress?

Lady Greedy: No, lord McKenna was so kind as to bring me my fur coat from the wardrobe.

Christian: And where is the fur coat now, lady Greedy?

Lady Greedy (looking confused): It's on the sofa next to the dancing floor, I completely forgot about it.

Christian, followed by the police officer, is going to the sofa next to the dancing floor, takes the fur coat and returns to the other side of the room where lady Greedy is waiting.

Christian: There's your fur coat, lady Greedy. You should put it on. You will feel much better.

Lady Greedy (putting the coat on): Thank you very much, Christian. I'm feeling better now. (caresses the fur coat) Oh, what is this?! My Lord! It's my ruby bracelet! It was here all the time, hanging by the fur! What a relief!

Christian: What do you think, officer? Was this important enough for you?

Police officer: Indeed, it was. (turns to Christine) Christine, I think Christian has just cleared you by the accusation of theft. You can tell that to your mother, too.

Christine: My mother already knows that, officer. Now, may I finally go home with my mum?

Police officer: I'm afraid it's not that simple. You did not steal the bracelet, it's clear now, but, still, this is not a proper environment for you. I need to take you to a safer house.

Christine: Here we go again! Where can a child feel safer than in her mother's house?

Christian: Why don't you stay here for a while? It's a safe place and my parents and I will be happy to have you around.

Christine: Here? What about my mum?

Christian: She may visit you any time.

Christine: Can this be possible?

Christian (pointing to a man who is talking to the social worker): Our lawyer says it can.

Christine (happy): Mum, may I stay here for a while? I promise I'll behave myself!

Rebecca Hart: Of course you may! It's your long-promised vacation, isn't it?

Christine: But you told me the vacation would be for the two of us.

Rebecca Hart: It will be, only I have to finish something first. Then, I will come, too.

Christine (to Christian): How did you know the bracelet was hanged by the fur coat?

Christian: I told you that books are my best friends. Detective stories are my favourite. I just did what they taught me – I followed the facts and I found the missing object.

Christine: Why do you want to have me around? I've ruined your party, I've upset your parents, I am nothing but trouble.

Christian: No, you're wrong. This was the most successful birthday party I've ever had: it had mystery, excitement, tears, happiness.

Christine: Oh, sure! I didn't even get the chance to bring you a present!

Christian: Wrong, again! You brought me the perfect present when you showed up earlier tonight.

Christine: What was that?

Christian: You don't understand, do you? You are the perfect gift for me, you are the friend I've waited for my entire life.

Christine: I am?!



Whisper

Cojocaru Mălina-Maria, 7th Grade
 "Sfântul Gheorghe", Secondary School, Craiova
 Coord. Teacher: Stancu Camelia

Humble creature,
 With a heavenly gift,
 Whisper a prayer,
 Of wistfulness and mystery.
 Whisper it secretly,
 When the stars are fading away,
 When desire and magic,
 Are bathing in Heaven.



Whisper to the icon hidden in my soul,
 The divine calling, a pure rainbow.
 Whisper me to swathe in a heavenly end,
 A wound that weeps and struggles forever,
 To give out of my generosity and my love,
 To the creature that falls in the hard winter,
 Whisper to me with warm and fervent passion,
 The heavenly saying in my heart.

Lord of the High Seas

Huzu Răzvan, Bariş Brandon, 11th Grade
 “M. Eminescu” National College Buzau
 Coord. Teacher: Caloian Liliana



From afar you can see a ship coming along with its
 captain and crew,
 Looking forward to landing on the crystal shore of
 Queen Sue,
 On the island of the queen of smugglers, whose
 subjects always drink rum,
 They'll do anything for gold, gunpowder, money,
 no matter the sum.

The captain, whose name is Duncan, is an
 infamous pirate in the Western Seas,
 And the queen is a fierce lady with fiery eyes,
 whom no man can please.
 Cap'n Duncan sent her a letter about his coming in
 advance, only to be amazed,
 That every man daringly pointed his blunderbuss
 at him; he was now dazed.

“Lower your weapons, mates! Let's see what this poor captain has to say!”,
 She said in a powerful voice able to charm all the men in the room,
 Duncan trembled at her overwhelming sight and woefully felt his doom,
 “Dear lady, to you and your honourless crew I bow, your orders I shall obey!”

“You dare call these men honourless? You, who rob and plunder ships that meet their demise?”,
 She let out a scream of terror that bashed the poor captain, and left him with no words to say,
 He presumed there was no way out, no escape plan left and that this would be his final day,
 But then there came Lady Vanya, the most feared piratess, able to turn the time counterclockwise.

“Leave this man unharmed or my cannon balls will meet your fort, Queen Sue”,
 The queen could only kneel at Vanya's sight as she knew she had to subdue,
 Then Vanya sent her men to plunder and scavenge the fort and its treasures,
 Nothing could save the queen now, not even her so-called 'desperate measures'.

Captain Duncan, still amazed on seeing the two powerful ladies in the big hall,
Thanked Lady Vanya and her first mate, but she grabbed and shoved him against the wall,
Then gave him a passionate kiss after which Duncan, in a hallucination, fell like after a lullaby
The fort was now taken under the rule of Lady Vanya, not some average passer-by.

Three days later, Captain Duncan was aboard his ship, named "Jackdaw", looking through the spyglass,
Searching for the Spaniards' fleet to plunder and kill the captain, but he only saw a dark black morass,
"What could it be? Could it be a treasure hidden under these marshlands or is it just a mere gutter?"
The captain asked himself for several minutes, then he ran on the deck and jumped into the water.

He swam there and found a big chest locked with an obsidian lock, only if he had known beforehand,
He would not have leapt into the water, because there is only one key, held in the Cameron Fort,
Where Lady Vanya resides, and he wants his treasure untouched or plundered by any foreign hand,
Yet he decides to take the treasure to the woman he had fallen in love with, soon to be his consort.

Rogue waves, twisters, and a lot of shipwrecked sailors he encounters during his journey to her land,
Is it only for the treasure that he is going there? Or is there another thing that he is willing to demand?
Once forgotten in the seas with his crew, Duncan now follows his path to earn a big bounty,
But is it right for him to go and share it with Vanya, or is it just a "linked-with-love" opportunity?

As he enters the big gate of the Cameron Fort he is disarmed of his pistols, brought to the pirateess,
He blushes, acts with shyness, and is evading her glances, is it shame or is it sheer politeness?
She comes to him and puts her finger on his chin, then makes him look up to her lovely face,
There are feelings rumbling through his head and stomach as he feels such untold disgrace.

"I have come to show you what I have found, pirateess Vanya, a chest whose key only you hold",
"I see, Captain Duncan, so you, merciless pirate and captain, have come to me only for this?",
"I've come here for this indeed, and only to feel your lips close to mine, and how we will kiss.",
"Guards, take him! I've had enough of this treachery, you will be jailed and your chest - sold!"

Ambushed, disgusted and heart-broken, Duncan felt hatred and revenge throbbing fast,
But later he saw that the chest and the lady he'd lost weren't worth even a handful of dust.
"My soul, I'm now to be jailed, will you be strong and not let me get mad?",
Duncan painfully whispered to himself, with the last breath that he had.

Banished to never ever roam the seas again, he felt like a fish out of water, dry and easy to catch,
He is now old and rusty, he can't even draw his gun, can't even light a dusty match.
He decides to take his life and jumps into the tides, which take his body away immediately,
Neither hell nor high water stood against his decision, he was going to be dead, definitely.

Not even a miracle could save him, let alone a man, but yet there is a traveller on the shore,
Who sees his body and drags it on the sand, his life is saved, he will perish no more.
The following days, on waking up from his slumber, he tries to remember his name,
"Aye mate, I'm Captain Duncan of the High Seas, now I remember! I drench in glory and fame!"

Days pass by, he goes to the big fortress of Cajun, looking for someone to rob and undress,
Of his clothes and pistols, and he looks forward to saving a graceful damsel in distress,
Expecting a bountiful reward or maybe a place to stay overnight, who knows,
Maybe our proud, lion-hearted captain isn't lacking skills as much as he shows.

“I can’t believe my eyes, is it the woman that betrayed me and stripped me of my rights?”
Wonders he as he sees beautifully-clad Vanya in the arms of a fellow captain, kissing with passion,
“I will grab that scoundrel and I will see him fed to the sharks, ‘cause that’s my fashion,
And I will see my revenge, I will kill Vanya and her lover, however staunchly he fights!”

Then, from nowhere, a skeleton pinches him from his back, something unseen for ages!
As the story goes, a curse was put on he who tried to find the treasure locked with the obsidian,
Is he the one who ordered to capture Duncan and send him to the realm of the dead and oblivion?
Vanya sees him and shoots into his direction, there’s no time to run, into combat he engages!

“I have waited for this moment since you sent me to the gutter, Vanya, now your time has come!”
“You have waited for nothing, you fool, you can’t carry the weight of the world on your shoulders!”
“Try me!”, screams he as he leaps onto a table and starts firing her first mate’s pistols at her.
Bullets rip through her dress and wound her fatally, Vanya is now dead with no one left to mourn her.

But Duncan is wounded, because a harpoon shot by the skeletal being went through his leg,
His life is now fading away, left for the dead and with no one around him whom to beg,
Duncan is bleeding to death and it seems no one can save him or quicken his end,
He’s not yet avenged and not yet ready to leave this world that is so full of torment.

Again, a wanderer roaming those realms came into the fort, which was from now on a ghastly sight,
And saved Duncan from his demise once more; painfully slowly, they together took their flight.
And he carried him for three days and three nights through the mighty deserts until they reached a city,
In which the sun shone brightly, full of diamonds to rob and rum to drink, oh, Duncan, such a pity!

“From here you must travel alone, Duncan, but do not forget, when you are in pain, I will be there!”
The wanderer said in an angel-like voice, but pirates don’t have angels, have no time to think back,
Pirates have ideals they struggle for, they have cities in their minds to plunder, ships to wreck,
Then he left him there, in the burning sun, in a land Duncan did not know of, God knows where...

Survival meant resuming his old customs, stealing, robbing, killing, and bravely sailing,
He became a wanted man every time he went on a rampage with the guards, sometimes failing,
Because he always had to bribe them to be released, or make them offers they couldn’t refuse,
Duncan always knew how to put a good man’s sword, knife or pistol to such a good use.

One day, looking through his spyglass, he saw the Spaniards’ fleet far from his location,
Immediately he knew what would be his ship’s and cannon balls’ next destination,
Because there was no more wood, rum, metal, sugar, or anything good to smuggle, torn asunder,
He went that direction with an iron will, this time with no desire to share any of his plunder.

A fierce fight was held, fiery parts were flying in the sky as the ships were battling and ramming,
Captain Duncan on the one hand was ordering that the hull had to be damaged first,
Piratess Alistra on the other hand was ordering her men to fire swivels with blood thirst,
The ships battled for hours and men, swords, pistols, knives, and also vanity, were slamming.
His avenging wrath was now fulfilled, and as he walked onto the other deck, one leg limping,
Lady Alistra’s eyes were following him, and he didn’t get out of her sight, like to him she was bound,
He helped her up and told them this was not the way to treat a lady, a voice in his ears was singing,
As it dawned on him that for a long time he’d been searching for this kind of love, now briefly found.

He untied the ropes that were keeping her hands tight and walked her into his cabin, to have a drink,
Ashamed, Alistra accepted knowing she had no other option, she was on the world's brink.
"From now on, you shall call this lady "Captain Alistra", and, my dear, you shall lead this crew
Wherever your heart wants or your piratess' mind feels they'll have cities to plunder, things to do."

Not even the strength of a thousand men can break the bond now bridging these two,
Because with Alistra by his side, Duncan felt like he could rule everything, crew after crew.
It was raining gold, silver, jewellery, treasures and love, they plundered kingdom after kingdom,
And only then did they feel the only thing they'd ever wanted was given to them: it was freedom.

Dreams are seldom shattered, but when they are, you can do nothing but embrace the pain,
So did Duncan, as he was betrayed by his first and second mates, deserted, with nothing to gain.
It was Alistra that did not went astray, and remained with him until her very end, the story tells,
It was he who buried her deep beneath the sea, only he could then hear the sea's church bells.

But it wasn't over for Duncan, he had yet to build his future, earn a fortune as the sun shone,
He'd always dreamed, even as a child, to have his kingdom, reigning on a golden throne.
And so he gathered, for the hundredth time, honourable men willing to give their lives for a cause,
Who would never obey any of those treacherous, unworthy to be trusted, man-made laws.

So he marched with his buccaneers and scoundrels aside, attacking governors overseas,
And claiming lands that no man or god could ever imagine, his future was like branches on trees,
Lavishing options on him, but he had to choose wisely, 'cause if not, in poverty he'd swagger,
His feelings would be killed, his dreams – torn to pieces, all he had to do was to use his dagger.

"What's that in the distance?" Duncan wonders on spotting a black-sailed ship, crowded with bones,
It has no captain or commander on it, the ship is magically imbued with demonic signs and stones,
And as it comes closer you can see the bones and carcasses rattling and smashing, forming corpses,
Is Duncan and his crew prepared to fight or will they eventually be just some lost causes?

"You have awakened the curse, captain Duncan, and now you and your crew must perish!",
"Not so fast, skeleton, it is you who must return to your grave and your death I will cherish!",
"You must think me mad, you stole our chest and lost it, it is our will for you in agony to die!",
"So be it! Men, to arms! Let's show these lifeless freaks we are not ready to die, but let them try!"

Thunder and forked lightning rushed down from the sky, making the scenery grim and dull,
Both ships were heavily damaged and there was no easy way out, the fight was wrathful,
With Duncan and his crew attacking relentlessly, while the skeletons were trying to parry,
The whole fight was in an unreal realm and their anger made it look even more imaginary.

There was gunpowder everywhere, the ships were sunk, pieces of cloth were flying,
The screams and roars that summoned strength and hope were really terrifying,
Breaking swords, shooting bullets and smashing bones, Duncan now had a thousand of souls,
An iron-willed pirate with an incredible blood lust eager to fulfil his life, to achieve his goals.

As he sank the enemy ship and chased away all the black summoning the skeletons he docked,
Docked on an uncharted island, only with a heavily wounded Alistra, just to remain shocked.
He landed in his homeland, far away from where he'd been preying on the seas and sailing ships,
This was the place where he had begun learning the art of merciless plundering and kissing lips.

“If we are to die, my love, I am happy we can die here, this is the place I was born in, fifty years ago, This is the place no one remembers, with many treasures that no one has discovered nor known”,
“To be in your arms is what really matters to me now, Duncan, my life is nothing but a seed to sow, So if I die, please bury my ashes deep beneath this earth, right here, or into the sea I shall be thrown.”.

Stronger than all, after Alistra’s life faded away, Duncan rises, clenching his teeth and shedding tears, Walking the path of shame as the lady he loved went to heaven, leaving him in a world full of fears, Only with his dusty and wet clothes and hat; his limping wooden leg - a horrifying sight, As it had been brutally damaged from cannon balls, swords, in the atrocious, long fight.

No one knows how he survived those pitiful days, he still lives, old and gruesome, Telling his story to every man who treats him in the tavern, no matter how fearsome. No one dares to challenge him at swordplay or at a real duel, they do know his story, He is Captain Duncan, the man who has always vainly reached out for fame and glory.

In the workshop there was a kid, named Edward, willing to step in his footsteps, and he asks, “What does it take to be a pirate, Sir Duncan? I want to follow the same path you’ve taken”, “Well, child, you have to wear another kind of clothes, a pistol, and a face with a thousand masks”, The child then fled in fear and never thought again of the life that was by then forsaken.

“They come to me and ask me what being a pirate is like, I forge them weapons, I build hulls and craft sails, I smell iron for the heavy balls that fit their cannons, They come to ask me about my past, they must think I’m a mad old man, they don’t know, Of the curse that has followed me all my life and will follow through, many years in a row.”.

The time has finally come for him to test the ship he has built, a man-o’-war, a big galleon, That he proudly named after the parrot that stood on his shoulder, “The Black Stallion”. “It’s time to roam the seas for one last time, Duncan”, he said grimly to himself, “Let’s hope your story will end in a dusty book left alone on a boy’s bookshelf.”. “Ahoy, first mate, raise the anchor and let’s put this beauty to work, it’s time I broke apart, From all the people here, from this town, from all my late ways, I’ll soon meet my end, But before that I shall vow to you that it is my duty you, brave men, to relentlessly defend, I swear on my life, that we will travel together, high and low, until death do us part.”.

The children’s redemption

**Stanciu Andra Diana, Agapie Nicoleta, 12th Grade
„Mihai Eminescu” National College, Buzău
Coord. Teacher: Caloian Liliana Adina**

I felt the unforgiving wind as it was blowing uncontrollably, making the cloak I was wearing flowing relentlessly under its power. The blanket of darkness was so thick that my own two hands were lost in its abyss, my eyes trying in vain to look at them. Where was I, actually? The wind’s power abated, its breeze caressing my face. The quietness seemed to have covered the entire Earth. I slowly lifted my hand near my left ear and snapped my fingers in order to make sure I hadn’t gone deaf, but in that very moment a hand grabbed my arm and pushed me back, whispering into my ear: “You’re the only one...the only one who can save us”. Large, reddish eyes were gazing at me, so close to my face that I could feel the creature’s breath, while the wind, hastening as quickly as a flash, was aggravating the thundering lisp of

the leaves and the crackle of the branches, washing away the quietness that once almost took me on the verge of insanity. The creature's grasp became even more powerful; I was trying vainly to escape from it, but any struggle of mine ended up with scratches and deep wounds on my arm, made by that rough hand, which obviously was not human.

"What are you?" I managed to mumble while my tears were running down my cheeks.

"We don't have enough time. We need to leave right now. Sha'kol is waiting for us. We don't have enough time."

The voice, hoarse and hissing, spoke perfect English, which confused me. Why was I able to understand such a creature's words? And who or what exactly was this Sha'kol? The reddish eyes kept on gazing at me aggressively, as if their sole purpose was to drink my soul. The grasp became unbearable, so I started to cry buckets, while the beast was forcing me to run behind it. The darkness did not vanish by any means, even though I could notice weak beams of the moon's light, our path was still benighted. I gathered all the courage I was capable of and asked the creature with fearfulness what its name was and where we were heading.

"You can call me Karsath D'ghal. I'm the night watch of the Sha'kol, the place for which we're heading right now. We don't have enough time, my child, soon enough you will wake up. I must introduce you to the children."

There was no logic in what it had said. Its answer was echoing into my mind constantly; I was trying to give meaning to those words. Before I even knew it, though, the creature chucked me, without hesitation, in what seemed to be a bottomless pit. The lisp did not end, the reddish eyes were still chasing me and between the thundering noise and the unforgiving wind, I began to scream. I did not have anything to hold to. As I was falling deeper into that pit, grimly, almost whispering voices were getting closer to my ears: "It's her", "She will save us", "Karsath was right". As these voices became clearer, I understood that the bottom of the pit was getting closer. And I was right.

The force with which I hit the ground made me jump out of the bed crying. I could not stop. I started shouting my aunt's name, who came to me all in great hurry and then tried to calm me down. I told her everything that had happened in my dream and she listened with great concern, even though I was aware of the fact that it was a harmless dream and that a girl my age did not have anything to worry about. It was a foolish thing to have been affected in such a way that it had made me wake up crying and shouting my aunt's name, but never before in my life had I felt such consternation.

After ten minutes, I finally managed to calm down, I caught my breath, the trembling ceased and the tears dried on my cheeks, but the thought that such a creature would want to separate me from aunt Lys and take me God knows where did not leave me for many days ever since then.

We were living on the outskirts of the town Torrhen, in a small house, having the Barrowton village as a neighbour which was, unfortunately, at a day and a half's walking distance southward and, if I can call something like that a neighbour, the Children's Forest, which unfortunately was at only a couple of miles away from us.

No one had ever had the courage to set their foot in that wood; they said it was haunted by the spirits of children who had been, thousands of years ago, mercilessly killed by the Mad King who had thought there was no better tribute than a human fresh out of the womb, for the so called Gods who had cast over the whole land curses meant to destroy the peasants' ploughlands and some royal houses, and also to spread some incurable diseases at that time, which had killed thousands of people, leaving that land inhabited only by a couple of thousand people. The initial name of the Children's Forest was simply the Garenghall Wood, after one of the most powerful Gods thought to have been responsible for the entire hell, but it was changed as soon as the children's tributes proved to be efficient in one way or another. I had read all these things in the days after that dream, at Miss McFinch's library, where I was lucky enough to find a book on the history of Torrhen, the foremost leader during Mad King's reign. I just knew that in the whole dream, in which Karsath insisted on my being introduced to the children, those "children" were the spirits of the forest.

I had two more dreams about the Children's Forest.

In the first one Karsath showed up. In other words, I could only see his reddish eyes piercing through that thick blanket of darkness. He told me the same things, grasped my arm with the same brutal force and rough hand and chucked me without a slight hesitation into the same pit, whispering at the same time encouraging words. He was afraid I would wake up. I had to meet the children. My struggle proved to be in vain. That fall was by far the most frightening experience, therefore my awakening was only natural. Cold sweat was dripping down my spine while I was obsessively trying to catch my breath. I could feel the dampness of my skin as I placed my hand upon my cheeks. Had I been crying the whole time?

In the second dream, things changed a bit. Karsath was nowhere to be seen. I was already at the bottom of that pit. I stood up on my shaky legs, and moved forward, no more than two steps. I stretched my arm and felt the moisture of presumably a wall fully covered in moss. Suddenly, an inner voice told me not to be afraid, I could not afford to wake up. I was determined to control my emotions thoroughly this time. Little did I know what was going to happen. In a twinkling of an eye, large, eerie tree roots came out of the ground and swooped upon me, making my whole body inert. For a moment I thought I was going to be crushed to death and I had the urge to scream, but then I remembered the inner voice's warning. I could not wake up. The grisly roots covered my eyesight and the fear was growing constantly inside of me. I was afraid. I could no longer continue.

"So you're the one who's supposed to save us, or am I mistaken?" said a hoarse voice among the deafening lisp of the leaves.

I opened my eyes in order to see who was talking to me. I was looking for a human silhouette, but the actual speaker was a tree. It was right in front of me, triumphant, at least five metres high, with an impressive leaf adornment. I thought I was going mad. Was I really going to talk to a tree? All of a sudden, I noticed in the middle of the log, the same reddish eyes I had seen at Karsath, the main difference between them being the fact that they seemed to be kinder.

"You really do understand my tongue, don't you, child?"

I nodded slightly and looked around hoping to find my way out of that forest, but everything I could see were impressive trees with threatening eyes, gloating over me. But then I remembered. It was just a dream. They could not harm me in any way.

"Listen closely, child. Before long you will be awake, so mark my words! You are our real leader, the only one who can save us."

"Save you from what?" I asked.

"Our souls. You have to save our souls. We're the spirits of the woods. This place is called Sha'kol. We know you've been delving in books for information regarding our origins, but one thing was left in the book you've been reading, the fact that the Mad King offered us as tributes to non-existent Gods. There was, however, a real danger, one that the King had chosen to turn a blind eye on."

The tone of his voice became really grave and the kindness in his reddish eyes vanished. For a fleeting moment, the tree stopped talking, and nothing could be heard around it, only the wind inching its way discreetly among the branches. I feared he wouldn't continue speaking and wanted to say something but, as if he had been reading my mind the whole time, the creature carried on with its words as if nothing had happened.

"As I was saying, we are the spirits of the children. Our innocence is unencountered, therefore unimaginable dangers, hidden from your pure eyes, are always gravitating towards us. You will have to ask Lys more about this. We don't have time anymore. You're waking up."

Lys? Did he mean aunt Lys? I couldn't see any correlation whatsoever. The tree's voice unexpectedly became panicked, it started shaking and I could feel its struggle trying to find the right words.

I began feeling dizzy. My eyelids became extremely heavy and my legs could no longer bear my body's own weight.

"Ask Lys who she actually is! She's the great-great-granddaughter of the witch who resurrected you after the Mad King's army took your life away in honour of the Gods. The reason why she chose you is still

unknown to us, but by doing so you were blessed with the power to ease our pain. I am begging you! Release us!”

The voice became harder to comprehend. “You have to come back to us”. My head was spinning and the reddish eyes were looking at me with astonishment. “You’re one of us”. I collapsed on the cold ground. “We’re begging you! Release us!”. The last thing I heard was the concerned voices of the trees gathering around my weak body lying helplessly in the forest, haunted by creatures unknown to mankind. I closed my eyes.

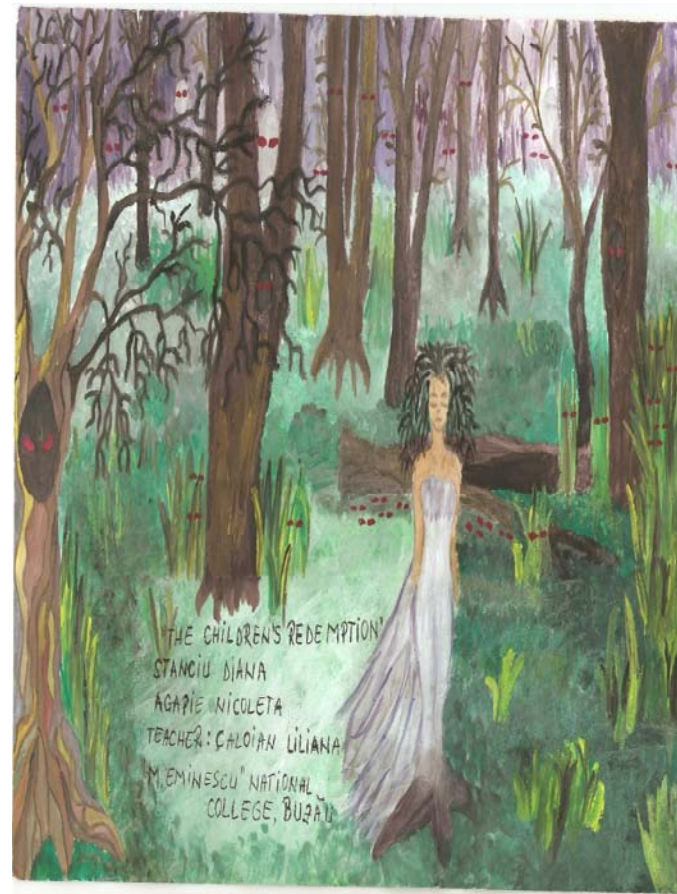
I woke up calmer than I’d thought I would be. It was a dream, indeed, but I had the feeling that what that tree had told me was true. Sha’kol was real but was aunt Lys in fact a bad person? Why didn’t she tell me about my powers? Just knowing that I could release the children’s pain made me want to jump out of the bed and head straight to the forest. Which, more or less, I did. The thought of asking aunt Lys the truth crossed my mind but what were the chances of her telling me the truth? I could not afford any kind of lies. Looking back at my childhood I realised some curious things, for example how I had been told that my parents had abandoned me and that only aunt Lys had wanted to raise me, how I had never been allowed to read any books related to witches of any kind, whenever she caught me reading one of those she would grab it from my hands and, without a word, hide it some place I never knew about. I could not believe how ignorant I had been until then. I had to go to the Children’s Forest and save them all. All the children

killed by the Mad King.

The following day I told my aunt I would go to Miss McFinch in order to read more about Torrhen’s history. I hadn’t taken anything but water and some food with me. The trip wasn’t going to last more than a few hours anyway. I was going to move quickly.

Once I was in front of the forest, I began feeling my head heavier. I collapsed on my knees and felt my tears as they were running down my face. I was not able to control them, although it was understandable, the pain was more and more unbearable. All of a sudden, I heard the same hoarse voices from my dream encouraging me to enter the forest. I sat bolt upright and made a great amount of effort to step forward. The dizziness became unbearable alongside with the noise inside my head that made me want to scream. I collapsed once again and in that moment the whispering of the children became clearer, they were extremely close. I raised my head and noticed Karsath. I smiled at him as if seeing an old friend and wanted to tell him why I was there.

“Don’t talk, child, you’re too weakened. I will carry you to Sha’kol. There you will be able to release our souls.”



“What do I actually have to do, Karsath?” I asked him with all of my power. His answer startled me.

“You will have to become one of us again. Only then will you be able to release us from this cursed forest.”

He raised me, this time with all the gentleness he was capable of and started slowly walking towards the centre of the forest. I was not able to clearly see the path as my eyesight was still blurred. “Will I really

not be able to return to the human world?" I asked myself with some sort of regret. Maybe it was better that way. I was one of the children's souls. I was their leader. I had to save them no matter what.

Winter Is Coming!

Popa Rares, 6th Grade
Secondary School Traian, Craiova
Coord. teacher: Velicescu Daniela

White is the ground, blue is the sky,
 Snowflakes are falling like butterflies.
 The snow on the houses is sparkling;
 It's magic. Winter is coming!
 Children love it when it starts snowing,
 They want to play forever & stop growing,
 They shout "Hooray" for a reason.
 Winter is their favourite season.
 The End!



Thanks, God!

Caras Cătălina, Bălăsa Andrei, 11th grade
Henri Coanda High School
Coord. Teacher: Corina Vasile

I thank you God:
 For the Skies and for the Stars.
 When I grow I want to *give*,
 At your neck, some pearls to string.

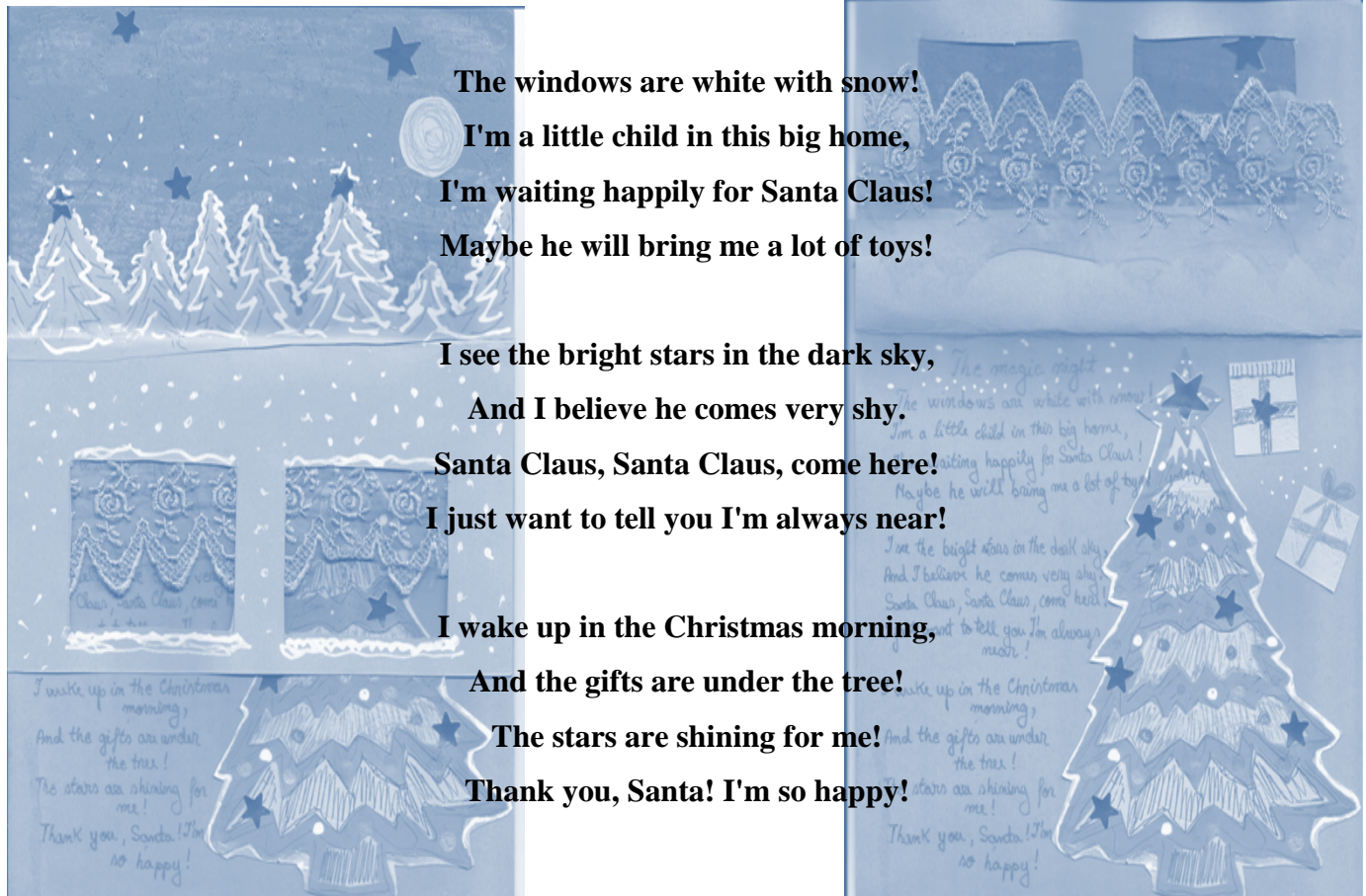
I thank God:
 For the trees and for the flowers.
 And when I am big, I want to sing,
 To embrace ye with the colours.

But until I am big,
 I'll pick flowers, I'll raise stars,
 I'll do these things to offer you
 Many thanks for your lovely Day,
 Oh, dear, wonderful, MUM!



The Magic Night

Popescu-Vieru Ariana, 6th Grade
"Henri Coanda" Highschool
Coord. teacher: Popa Verona



Friends Are Forever

Iurcuț Cătălin, 9th Grade
Marmăția Technological High School
Coord. Teacher: Grigor Adriana

Once upon a time there lived two great friends in Sighetu-marmatiei. Daniel and Alex had been friends since their childhood. Now, they were studying at a college, which was at far distance from their place. On the way home, they had to cross a river and pass hills. They used to go to college together. Their friendship was famous in college.

One rainy day the two friends set out for college as usual. They were chatting while walking. Perhaps they were discussing some point of atomic theory which was taught the previous day. The two had different opinions which led to heated arguments. This was followed by abusive language on both sides. Things got so bad that in a fit of anger Daniel slapped Alex. Shocked by the unexpected gesture, Alex stared at his friend and wrote on mud: *"today my best friend slapped me."* They both resumed their walk and now there was a deep silence....

Meanwhile, they reached the river which was overflowing that particular day. Alex was not a good swimmer. He tripped and fell into the river. He began to drown and flew with force of water in the direction of the flood. Daniel saw this and without thinking for a second, jumped into the river. With difficulty he could drag Alex out. He helped Alex restore his normal breath. They were exhausted. When Alex became normal, he wrote on a hill that *"today my best friend saved my life."*

Daniel, who was observing all this, could not help asking "why did you write it in the mud that I slapped you and why are you writing on the hill when I've saved your life?". Alex replied that *"we should soon forget the wrong done by our friends and dear ones, as writing on mud gets erased in no time, but if they do something good for us we should always remember their kindness just as writing on stones is forever."*

Saying this, Alex hugged his friend and they went home as if nothing had happened...



A Letter to Santa Claus

Varzaru Andra, 5th Grade
"Henri Coanda" High School, Craiova
Coord. Teacher: Teodor Mariana



Dear Santa,

I'm a normal 10-year-old girl who has a lot of dreams, hopes and wishes like any other girl in this world. Now, I'm writing this letter to you, because you can make children's wishes come true. You usually bring toys to the children, but I don't want toys. What I'd like this Christmas is a different type of present and I'm sure you are the only person who can help me so, please don't overlook my wish.

Before I let you know what I want, I have to tell you my story. My parents divorced when I was a baby. Since then, my father has never wanted to have anything to do with me even to answer my phone calls. I don't know what I did to make him hate me so much. Maybe you know, Santa... My only wish this Christmas is for you to call and tell him how good I've been since he left me and my mother. I'm

doing great at school. I take part in all the local contests and I even help out other kids when they need. I'm very happy when I make them smile.

I just want my father to hold me close to his chest and to feel his warm embrace. Tell him, please, that I want to feel his love instead of having to imagine it. Although I believe my father hates me, my mother taught me not to be spiteful. She encourages me to love him and the other people around me. She always gives me good advice and is always next to me. I love her so much! Please, put a happy smile on her face! That's why I want you to tell my father that I love him and I can't wait to see him.

I hope this letter will find you and you'll have time to read it. I really want you to make my wish come true and let me know if you could talk to my father. With this letter, I'm also sending my unconditional love and a BIG hug for you, my dear Santa.

Yours,
Andreea

My Garden

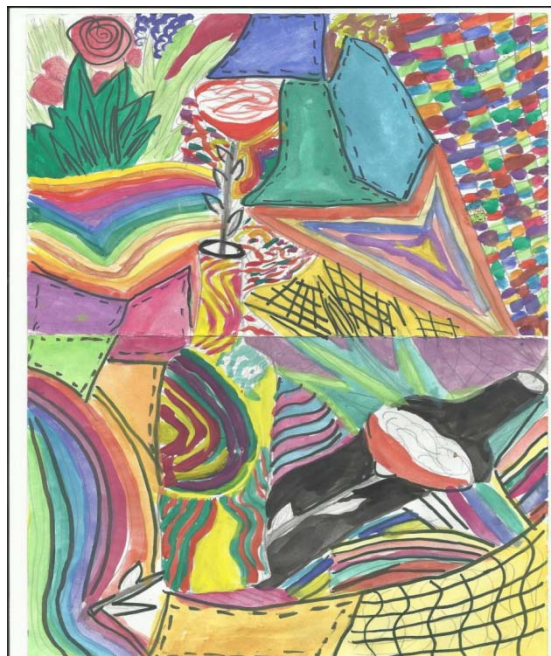
Varzaru Bianca, 5th Grade
"Henri Coanda" High School
Coord. Teacher: Teodor Mariana

My garden is a place
 A lovely place of happiness.
 With coloured flowers, pink and red
 Roses, lilies, daisies, tulips spread
 Through all this place, filled with love.

My garden is a room
 Where I often stay
 to smell the flowers and play.
 As I enjoy the beauty and the grace
 Of all the beautiful flowers
 in this dear and sweet place.

With pride I walk around my garden
 Every day and when I have time
 And savour every scent and smell of flowers
 For it makes everything
 Joyful, happy and exciting.

My garden is a wonderful place
 Where lovely things mix and match
 The garden of my heart
 Where I planted all good things
 Giving my life its start.



Slenderman

Bola George, 12th Grade

Al.I.Cuza Technological High School, Slobozia

Coord. Teacher: Păduraru Mirela

I have chosen Slenderman because he is a fictional character and also a Nordic mythological creature. He is a creepypasta originated as an Internet meme created by Something Awful forums user Victor Surge in 2009. The Slender Man is an alleged paranormal figure purported to have been in existence for centuries, covering a large geographic area. Believers in the Slender Man connect his appearances in with many other legends around the world, including: Fear Dubh (or, The Dark Man) in Scotland, the Dutch Takkenmann (Branch Man), and the German legend of Der Großmann or Der Grosse Mann (the Tall Man).

The Slender Man is a being male in appearance who looks like a man with extremely long, slender arms and legs. He also appears to have 4 to 8 long, black tentacles that protrude from his back, though different photographs and enthusiasts disagree on this fact, and therefore it is theorized he can 'contract' these tentacles at will.

He is described as wearing a black suit strikingly similar to the visage of the notorious Men In Black, and as the name suggests, appears very thin and able to stretch his limbs and torso to inhuman lengths in order to induce fear and ensnare his prey. Once his arms are outstretched, his victims are put into something of a hypnotized state, where they are utterly helpless to stop themselves from walking into them. He is also able to create tendrils from his fingers and back that he uses to walk on in a similar fashion to Doctor Octopus. The superhuman stretching ability could also be seen as a similarity between himself and Mr Fantastic. Whether he absorbs, kills, or merely takes his victims to an undisclosed location or dimension, he is also unknown as there are never any bodies or evidence left behind in his wake to deduce a definite conclusion.

His face is pale and slightly ghostly, and almost appears to have been wrapped in a type of gauze or cloth. His facial features are also an object of debate, and many people believe that his face looks different to each person, if it is seen at all. He sometimes is portrayed wearing a hat, which is sometimes a bowler, a fedora, or sometimes a top hat.

He may also be seen wearing a long flowing necktie or scarf, which is either red or grey.

He often keeps his long, pale hands crossed politely behind his back or hanging loosely at his sides. His suit is black, sometimes portrayed as pinstripe in artwork, a common misconception thanks to the very similar Jack Skellington from Nightmare Before Christmas. He has long coattails which he lets flow proudly. He wears long dress shoes, which are always shined a perfect, gleaming black.

It is often thought as well that he enjoys stalking people who become overly paranoid about his existence, purposefully giving them glimpses of himself in order to further frighten them. For this reason, it seems like Slenderman very much enjoys psychologically torturing his victims.

He also often appears to float or drift around rather than walk, which suggests the possibility of him being an ethereal being rather than a creature or a man. This would also explain why he is able to remain mobile in spite of his poorly proportioned body.

Much of the fascination with Slender Man is rooted in the overall aura of mystery that he is wrapped in. Despite the fact that it is rumored he kills children almost exclusively, it is difficult to say whether or not his only objective is slaughter.

Often it is either reported or recorded that he can be found in sections of woods, and these generally tend to be suburban. He has also been reported to be seen with large groups of children, as many photographs portray. It is commonly thought that he resides in woods and forests and preys on children. He seems unconcerned with being exposed in the daylight or captured in photos.

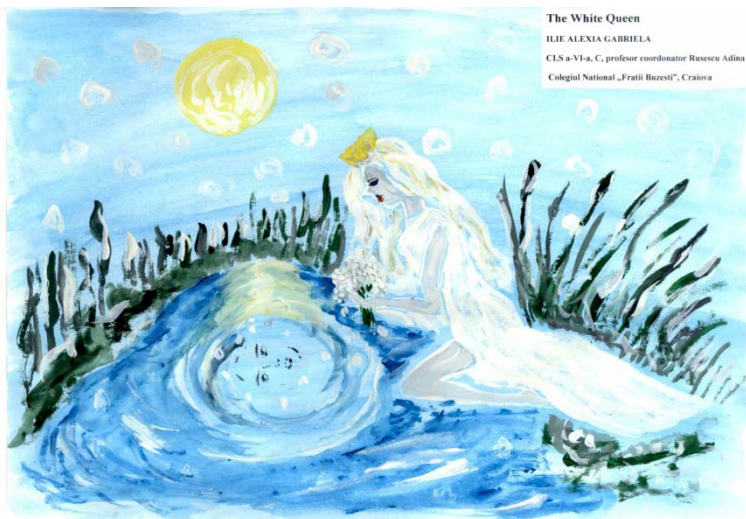
"There has been a big misconception about my pal the Slender Man due to the appearance of this article. He does not have hair or a face. Everything else is correct. There is also some questioning as to

whether or not there is more than one. I find that unlikely. As of now, Slendy has 3 or 4 known accomplices.

These are Hoodie, Maskie, The Rake and possibly The Observer. Not much is known yet because the next episode of the Noah Maxwell ARG has not yet been released. In the Marble Hornets ARG, Hoodie and Maskie are possibly his followers. In the Everyman HYBRIDS ARG the Rake seems to be working with him, but we aren't really sure if that is true or not."

In conclusion Slenderman is a creature who stalks people, children especially, and many controversies have been issued on the existence of him. It is considered one of the most scary creepypasta with Jeff the killer, The Rake because he has a scary way to traumatize people.

The White Queen



Ilie Alexia Gabriela, 6th Grade
„Frații Buzești” National
College
Coord. Teacher: Rușescu
Adina

Time passes like light breeze of the wind. The Earth is clothed in a white coat under the veil of the clouds.

It's winter. I am looking out of the window. Snow stars are falling from the sky. Everything is white and lifeless. The first snowflake that I have piled in my hand, freezes my heart. The sun is fading while the god Chronos is closing his tired eyelid. The white and bright

forest looks like an ice castle from the stories that were told by grandma. The Queen Winter is slim, dressed in a sparkling evening gown made of snow. The moon is dancing on the lake, in the middle of the forest. The trees are wearing ice flowers. In the forest, a sigh is heard. The White Queen with a cold look is walking on the footpath, adorned with snow. She is like a glass woman with her elfine, beautiful face, wearing diamond shoes and icicles in her hair. All the light of the pale sun is reflected on her face. Now the lake is frozen. It has become a bridge under the cold breath of Queen Winter.

“ Night without season, what would you like to give you in return?”

The days go by like the flight of a sparrow and we browse through our thoughts, sounds and images. So winter will be over and a new season will come on our lands.

Me

I'm travelling the world
 With my bicycle and skateboard
 Like in action movies I do
 It's not false, it's true !

Every day and every night,
 I'm going from side to side
 Exactly like "Bonnie and Clyde"

I say "I'm right! "



Tuguran Mihai
8th Grade

"Henri Coanda" High School
Coord. Teacher: Pasăre Denisa

The Frozen Night

Anghelina Adelina Maria, 5th Grade
„Frații Buzești” National College
Coord. Teacher: Cotescu Diana



The twilight is on the golden borders. The wind is singing to the childhood's gate. Dark fabrics are installing on the crystalline sky. A shining queen is appearing on the obscure scene with her dress of stars.

The hill is gazing glamorously to the show made by moon. The solitary trees are standing still in admiring the beautiful moon, being fascinated by her presence. On the transparent windows, you can see the crystal moon, straining out from behind the clouds. Slowly, it begins to snow over the white paradise that is invading the nature. Thousands of snowflakes are dancing in an unlimited reel. The ghostly branches are decorated with frozen flowers like a silver ornament. In the houses, the fire is purring in the stove, while the winter's fairy is painting frozen stars on the steamy windows.

The whole nature is dreaming in the winter's frozen night!

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Many thanks to all of you and we apologize for those who cannot find their paper or drawing here. It is either because we couldn't scan them or we didn't have them on mail.

COORDINATOR

CORINA VASILE

EDITOR IN CHIEF

ANDREI BUMBAC

EDITORS

MIHAI DANIEL ILIE

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