

2024 Elie Wiesel Competition

3rd Place Junior Poetry

Evana Santosh, 8th Grade

Old Donation School, Lisa Kilczewski

One Voice, One Sound, One Call

Rumors.

Hushed whispers and murmurs
The tangy taste of the tall tale drifts through the air.
Through muffled mumbles and guarded grumbles the grapevine of gossip runs
As time passes the fruits of the grapevine ripen,
Growing, Changing
And eventually rotting.

Rumors.

As the fabricated fable weaves its way through the cloth of conversation,
Finally reaching the end of the fragile material,
Each tug of injustice pulls at the unbound threads,
Choking them with the tight stitches of their situation,
Finally causing them to come undone.

Rumors.

The derogatory words take effect.
Promptly, quickly, swiftly,
In a matter of minutes many mouths have mentioned,
Within the ensuing hours every ear has heard,
Within days the sadistic snickers has made its way to the sufferer,

Rumors.

It's victim lets out muffled sobs.
Reddened eyes and a trembling body. Prompt #2
Covered face and clenched fists.
Glistening tears in a room loud with silence.

But...

Through the tangled and twirling grapevine
There is a single blossom.
Among the thorns and prickles
A solitary bud flourishes.
Among the spines and bristles,
Petal by petal, bloomlet by bloomlet,
Slowly but surely.
Peonies, sunflowers and roses, dahlias, tulips and orchids
Daffodils, Carnations and Hydrangeas burst forth

All because of one single flower.

Truth.

Through the knotted strands and twisted threads,
Gentle hands unravel it all,
Loosening the chokeful fibers.
Undoing the strings that strangle.
Revealing a complex, beautifully-patterned material underneath.

Courage.

Through the murmuring and muttering and mumbling
Through the disparaging whispers
One voice cries out "Stop!" Prompt #2
And it all comes to a halt.
And slowly the derogatory words shift
The ruthless remarks turn into ones of empathy
Capturing the essence of change.

Kindness.

Through the silently shed tears, a single call is made
"Are you okay?"
And gradually more people come together.
Demonstrating the core values of humanity.
Revealing the love that is there in the heart of everyone.
Exhibiting the compassion found at the core of every individual being.
Showing the principles of morality that every human knows of.
All due to
One Voice.
One Sound.
One Call.
That is all it takes.
Change.