

Lyssa Harmon

Caddo Magnet High

10th Grade Teacher: Morehead

Their Spirits

Sitting on the edge of your rough,

Dirty ball cap, do you know what

The teardrop collected on

Your brim has endured?

I am the dark billowy smoke

That loomed, menacingly, over Auschwitz.

I watched as each and every person

Became acquainted with the

Sharp presence of death.

I watched as those who were

Dying, a death like freezing,

Longed to reach out with hands like winter branches,

But did not have the strength to touch just the

Friendly liking of Death's fingertip.

Fathers and mothers and children,

Crying like a howls in wind.

Families ripped from each other's

Sorrowful last good byes.

I watched them become part of me,

As their lifeless bodies

Were burned like roaring bonfires,

And willowy, wispy souls were caught in

The upward current of the smoke.

I heard as prey begged predator for life,

As the reeking smell of power destroyed men,

And as circumstance devoured the will to live.

Many threw out hope, as if it were a mangy dog.

I smelled the stinging, musty scent

Of the bodies, of the living and the dead.

Bodies wasting, rotting, giving away

On the many who would not

Join that popping mass of fire just yet.

I saw the frightened masses

March into chambers,

Where they would go to

A timeless forever sleep.

I built and accumulated

As the dying's ear piercing screams

Rebounded off the chamber's

Harsh confinements,

Like an animal's last gripping fight for survival.

I grew and grew,

As their remnants in smoke

Hurtled into my retched,

Inhumane existence.

As their souls, their stories,

Their collected untold memories,

Blended with my wicked smog,

Filled with names that will be ultimately forgotten.

I am the lost.

I am the unlucky ones

Who were conquered as Death

Swam through their lungs.

As you watch the pitter patter

Of the rain bounce off ongoing traffic,

Will you remember why

The clouds still cry?

Will you think of those wispy souls,

Who touched the high parts of the heavens

And danced in the silky mist of God's white blanket?

Do you know what worlds are pouring down on you?

Would you comprehend that as these people

Slept on the needed comfort of pure, light clouds,

They became the raindrops that nourish your land?

That you have bathed in the lives of nameless souls?

Please remember the lives,
The lost feelings,
The words that were never spoken,
Those millions of possibilities
That now belong to the dead.

Please, will you wonder who sits upon
The dirty, worn edge of that drenched ballcap?
Will you hear the pitter patter of the rain
And mistake it for a million heartbeats?

Remember those who are
The tears of those heavy, burdened clouds.
Remember the stories of those
Who have washed over us.

Bibliography

Wiesel, Elie, Wiesel, Marion. Night. Hili and Wang, 2006.

Spiegelman, Art. *Maus II: a Survivor's Tale: And Here My Troubles Began.*

Pantheon Books, 1991.