

Jemma Clary
12th
Kimberly Handrop
Caddo Parish Magnet High School

I stand in front of the large photograph,
The joy in her young eyes seems to jump off the wall.

Two long, brown plaits cascade over each of her shoulders,
Tied with pretty ribbons.

Her simile acknowledges someone not pictured.
I can imagine her mother standing behind Annemie Wolff's shoulder

Begging her youngest to sit still
And please be good for Mrs. Wolff.

The youth and naivete of this four year old
Seems to fill the cold, empty room in which I stand.

I try to comprehend this quick snapshot of the past,
This romantic glimpse into the mischievous mind of Barbara Aal.

I try to comprehend the her swift death
At the hands of such evil only two years from this moment.

I can almost see her being swept along

In a sea of people of her same descent.

Forced under the entrance of the menacing Auschwitz

Completely unaware of the looming mantra sitting smugly above her head:

Arbeit macht frei (Work sets you free).

Unaware of the irony not lost on the adults around her.

I like to think that a small spark of humanity flickered through the guards

As her youth and innocence radiated from her small face.

That small face forever encapsulated in her portrait hanging on this wall

Next to her mother's.

The same attitude and fire of defiance lit in their eyes

The same youthful hope.

Their lives, taken too soon

But their struggle forever kept in this album of memories.

Bibliography

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