

HIGH SCHOOL CREATIVE WRITING

HONORABLE MENTION

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The Cloaked Savivors

The cold stings on every bump of my skin, but the numbness blankets my body. Almost like a herd of sheep, we huddle together- yearning to be inside. The Mediterranean cries out, it was our savior, but now it taunts us with each crashing wave. Wailing children, grumbling stomachs, and grainy coughs linger in our ears. We fled a war, only to be ambushed. Now, instead of missiles raining overhead, we fear fevers and sore throats.

A strange man comes by and whisks away my family. His face is covered, but his eyes are fearful. Baba and Mama tell us that we are heading to a warmer place, perhaps a shelter. Everything passes by so quickly. All we see are children, barefoot and optimistic. Their muddy feet kick a soccer ball. White tents. A sea of white tents. Is this our hope? Is this our future?

He hands Baba five masks and three bars of soap. He warns my father in broken Arabic that we wash our hands, but my attention turns elsewhere. The sun is starting to fall, an array of violet, orange, and crimson. The salty air burns with each breath, a sickly sweet freedom.

Mama and Baba are busy, so I creep outside. My foot sinks in with each step. I look up to see people rushing in and out of a large tent, all of them covering their faces. It brings back a memory, an eerie one at least.

My home was bombed, maybe five or six or seven years ago. All I remember is my body being submerged in the remnants, and all I could see were covered faces. They could not do much, it wasn't their fault. Yet this killer that left my country in rubble, evidence of its ruthlessness, is invisible to the outside world.

These cloaked men, they are the same. The missiles and a virus. I guess they are the same- both invisible towards those who do not see the consequences. I trudge towards the biggest tent, and frightened chatter fills my ears. Cloaked men and women rush between each bed, just like when they rushed between the clouds of debris that swathed the remains of my home. These men and women, they do not know me. And yet they help me.

Mt. Diablo Peace & Justice Center - 2020 Art & Writing Challenge

These cloaked saviors, whether fighting with stethoscopes or flashlights, are the antidote. It took fear and helplessness to unite us, yet it should not. We have finally realized that we cannot be ignorant anymore, and this tragic virus has revealed flaws in our mentality. We cannot continue to ignore problems that don't affect us personally. Because when one is suffering, we are all suffering.