

Second Prize Writing: High School Division

*What If?*

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Teacher: Sarah Shay

Survivor Testimony: Anita Lasker-Wallfisch

I'm weighed down by the world.

I don't want to cry for the way I feel inside, the way I was born

I just want someone to listen to me...

I feel so cold, so alone. My voice always is ripped violently away. Please, try to find me.

'Fool, Fag, Freak': a grave for my voice, I want someone to listen

What if I didn't have to feel this way, what if I could escape?

I can't help being born this way! You have to understand!

Anyone find me! Someone care!

Anita Lasker-Wallfisch. You, are there, hurt, so much for someone, so innocent

You are alone in the cold, and all I can do is to listen!

No one is there, but the window to your life, a mere screen, illuminates.

You don't want to cry for the way you were born! I feel you! I hear you!

'Forgery, Helping the Enemy and Attempted Escape': a grave for your voice, but I listen

You cry because you were born this way. I understand! I'm listening!

What if you didn't have to feel this alone? What if you could be free from this hell?

I was afraid.

The piano, my only savior, the keys that brought me resilience

You were afraid.

The blows that reigned, the innocence, soothing sounds of your childhood, a lone cello, gone forever

The blows that reign, hurt me so, from spit, fists, words

What if the world was fair? What if it wasn't consumed by poison all around?

What if the world was fair? What if you ended it all?

I'm sorry, I just don't want to be alone anymore

Blows of the teenage love, her hand so soft

People tell me the way I feel is so wrong, but it feels so right?

Someone find me! I'm scared.

You were scared, yet you were found

You screamed as hard as life would let you, even with death filling your eyes

Even with the light from your kin pooling around your feet

You found your voice.

You made everyone hear your voice, no matter the cost

What if you couldn't find it? What if you chose to give up?

We all want to ask these questions

Never will we find the answers.

But the truth is hidden where we find our voices

You found yours, but did you ever wonder, 'What if my voice is not strong enough? What if my screams should not be heard?'

I can't even comprehend, yet I listen, I find strength in your words

Never can I thank you enough, for carefully playing the story

A story I gladly listened, the 'What if's?' disappearing, only your voice appearing

My 'What if's?' disappearing, and I scream. I want to be heard.