

## Intermediate Essay 3rd Place

Molly C.

Banch 618 Stittsville

Zone G-5

### Something to Remember...

It was a silent day for my whole family. Remembrance Day always was. The breeze tickled my back but I didn't laugh. Some people just didn't understand how hard a simple smile could become.

Every Remembrance Day my family and I went to the beautiful water fountain on the tip of the block to pray for all that we and others had lost because of the terrible wars of the past. We walked in complete silence, eyeing the ground. I was sure that if I looked into Mamma or Danylo's eyes the tears would begin falling. I also knew that if I started to cry... I would never be able to stop.

Happy children ran past us, laughing. Sometimes I forgot how to laugh. Seeing them made fire burn inside me. Why did they get to laugh and play? Didn't they care? Didn't they know that it was Remembrance Day?

I didn't know what I would do if there wasn't a day to respect and reflect on people like my Tato. He gave us everything... but in return he died.

Thinking of my home, Ukraine, was so hard. I wished I had a potion to make myself forget that night when Tato was snatched from our family. I woke up that morning feeling awfully cold for he had been cuddling beside me. The moment I realized he was gone I knew he would never come back.

My family wept for years, until we got that letter saying that he had died as a Nazi Soldier. He had fled the Nazis leaving them in his dust to help what Hitler considered "the enemy". For that he paid the ultimate price.

Things were different now, ever since my family had moved to Canada. It was safer and cleaner but still missing something. My Tato. And all the other soldiers that fought for what was right... no matter the circumstance...

I snapped back to reality as we reached the fountain to pray. I didn't know about those happy children from earlier but for me Remembrance Day was a time to reflect, to thank and to honor the many soldiers that sacrificed for us.

To my great surprise there was another family there too. That had never happened before. A girl that looked maybe a year younger than me had soft blue eyes, fresh with tears. I wondered who she had lost? Maybe she was just doing the right thing. Honoring the soldiers wasn't just showing kindness, it was showing strength and love for the peace they always keep giving us.

For some reason as the cold pavement touched my bare legs against the side of the rushing fountain a new side of me was transformed. I regained confidence and knew that Tato would always be by my side. That he will always be known as a hero. As I whispered my thanks, I let it all cover me like a warm blanket, that I would never take off again.