

Creative Writing Contest 2023

Taken by Sophia Friedrich

Short Fiction – 2nd Place

I remember growing up hearing stories from the elders who managed to survive. You would know it's coming when the leaves would change and wither away, when the wind was crisp and biting. They said that savages would come and slowly pick us off in preparation for their dreadful celebration. They'd kidnap us, gut us, and display our remains to ward off spirits. They'd always pick off the strongest and healthiest first, as if showing us the futility of our situation—that there was nothing we could do.

I was born small and deformed, so I managed to make it to the end. I watched as everyone I knew and loved were chosen, one by one, leaving me behind. I tried not to think of what my fate would be, but the changing season wouldn't let me forget. The number got smaller and smaller every day, and I wondered when I'd be next, when my time would finally come. And it was today when my luck had finally run out.

The sky is clear, and the sun shines bright as if mocking my plight. I can hear rustling behind me. As the crunching of leaves comes closer and closer, I can feel immense dread rise up in me, knowing I can't escape and can only vainly hope that I would be passed over. The noise stopped. Long, spindly fingers brushed against my skin, examining me, turning me over. A wheezing laugh was the only warning I had before I felt it grab my head. I had been chosen.

I feel the wind whip about me, and then I'm falling. I hit the back of the truck, slamming against the side. I can feel my side bruising. Suddenly there's a lurch, and we're moving. The vehicle speeds off as I panic, and before I know it, the movement comes to a jerking stop. The hand reaches down and grabs me again. As I'm dragged away, I take in my surroundings. I see a ghastly abode, and to my horror, I see my brethren's corpses surrounding it. Their eyes had been gouged out; their mouths hung open in jagged expressions of horror.

Creative Writing Contest 2023

Taken by Sophia Friedrich

Short Fiction – 2nd Place

I'm dragged through a dark corridor, and when we come into the light, what I see strikes fear into my very soul. Across a table are wicked tools of torture. The innards of corpses were

Creative Writing Contest 2023

Taken by Sophia Friedrich

Short Fiction – 2nd Place

TREAT" from a group of voices. I hear a crinkling noise as something comes closer to me, and an incredibly young voice says, "Wow! That's the coolest jack-o-lantern I've ever seen."