

First Place, Middle School Poetry

Would I Have Done What You Did?

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Teacher: Rosanna Brichta

Survivor Testimony: Zelda Gordon

Night lying like a blanket on the ghetto,
silence pressing a pillow over the ears.
A bakery stands in the marketplace,
it is past curfew and the streets are deserted.
Not a light to be seen in a single window,
the darkness presses down on the ghetto.

Somebody sneaks out of a house,
Zelda Gordon runs silently up the darkened street.
One thought is lodged firmly in her mind:
Find food for my friends.
Would I have been so selfless?

A pair of armed Germans march into the market, prepared to fire upon anyone out at this hour.
Zelda moves silently towards her brother's bakery, knowingly risking her life for her friends.
Would I have had the courage to do this?

A German's flashlight suddenly beams on her,
shots shatter the muffled silence!
Zelda ducks, runs, stumbles unseen into her brother's bakery.
She is safe, unhurt, just frightened.
What would I do in her shoes?

Zelda, did you know you had the courage
to risk your life for your friends?
Or did your act of bravery surprise even you?
What was the source of your courage?
Would you do the same if time were to run back to that date?
I strive to help my friends, my family, my religion, my country,
but one question haunts me so-
would I be able to take that risk? Would I be able to find the courage
to save who I love, and leave a memory,
a memory to inspire all.