

Writing: 9-12th Grade. 2nd Place.

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"Enslaved by Silence"

How can one possibly stay silent,
Allowing the world to be bound by heavy chains?
If one word could free the hurting
How can one possibly stay silent?

How can we, miracles of God,
Betray and persecute another?
How can we, clay of our Creator,
Turn on our fellow kinsmen?

We are all equal,
Human.
How can we stay silent
When brothers and sisters suffer?

How can we allow such hypocrisy,
We who speak of love
Yet wield bitter hatred?
Let us do what we claim, in secret and in the light.

Silence hangs the innocent,
Silence kills and silence maims
Silence is a harder burden to bear
Than speaking out.

Silence muffles the injustice of the injured,
It gags the mouths of those who fight it.
It ties the hands of those who waver
And sharpens the sword of the oppressor.

Silence enslaves the victims
And binds the neutral too.
Silence frees anger and hatred
Allowing their children to wage war.

Yet still we linger in silence
Afraid to be hurt for saying the truth
In war there is no middle ground,
No one can stand alone.

We must stand together, never hesitate
To speak aloud, to protect the hurting.
Defend the helpless, don't allow those who hate
To steal away anyone's freedom.

For if we don't
We will be left all alone, unable to stop the silence,
Bound by its ropes and chains,
Scorned by those who use it.

Freedom is just
One word away.
If we all join together
We can push back the choking silence.

Let us all speak for love
For though we are so small separated,
We can be more through each other.
Let us all never be silent,
For silence is death.

Let us never again
Be enslaved by silence.