

### Prose Third Place

#### **“If I Could Give You The Moon and Stars” by Sadie Tebeau Petoskey Middle School, 6th Grade**

The blades of grass tug at my ankles, pulling me closer to the sweet comfort of earth. The waves erupt into splashes, a cloudy white everytime time they touch the soaked sand of the night time beach. I peer over the sandune, time seems to be frozen. The moon rests in the sky, its luminance lighting up the sea. The stars are like fireflies surrounding the lotus of a moon. I turn my head to the side and stare at the sky. There she is. I think. A smile spreads across my face. Six years she’s been gone and yet it was almost as if she was still there next to me.

Her sweet song filled the air. The birds seemed to chirp in sync with her angelic voice. My pupils were wide. I stared at her in astonishment. Her voice made me feel like I was running through a field, my arms spread wide. My grandmother was the most perfect person I’ve ever met. She was sweet yet she stood her ground. She still hadn’t noticed me admiring her from behind the oak tree. She saw me and smiled.

“Come mi amor, sit,” grandmother said, patting the spot on the bench next to her. I walked over and sat next to her, my head rested on her shoulder.

“You know, I won’t be here forever. One day I’ll be gone and you must continue your life on your own. I know it sounds sad but if I could give you anything, it would be the moon and the stars,” grandmother said. The sun was lighting up her face and making her look like she was straight from a dream. She would give me the moon and the stars. The thought made me smile. It felt as if she had taken “I love you” and made it ten times more meaningful. I look out at the glimmering lake. I felt like I was truly home.

One year later I hiked up that dune, and there my grandmother was, singing that song. I sit next to her and close my eyes. The sun warms my eyelids, my toes sink into the sand. Her song ends and I open my eyes.

“I won’t be here forever and I can’t gift you with everything but know if I could, I’d give you the moon and the stars” she smiled at me and then started to walk back down the dune. Every year for nine years, my grandmother would tell me that. Every spring on my birthday.

On my fourteenth birthday, I hiked up the dune once again, listening out for my grandmother’s song. Only I didn’t hear it. I reached the top and no one sat on the bench. No birds chirped, no breeze blew. I let out a shaky sigh and sat on the bench. Running my fingers across the wood, I felt a dent that wasn’t there before. I look down and see a small moon and two stars carved into the bench. I would give you the moon and the stars. I thought. She was gone and yet still there with me.

The sun was setting on my twentieth birthday. I hike up the hill and sit down on the old bench. By the time I’ve reached the bench, the night sky is covering what was once the bright sun. I tilt my head to the side until I find the two stars that lay closest to each other to the left of the moon. If I could give you the moon and the stars. I whisper. I start to hum the melody that has been engraved in my head since I was a little girl. The animals close their eyes as the eyes of the night sky open hers.