

Gracelyn V.  
Grade 9  
Monclova, Ohio

### Your Eyes

When I asked you the question, I knew my hypothesis was right  
Your face became pale, nearly completely white  
Your eyes already dull and dead from suffering seemed to lose the last bit of their light  
After a long stretch of silence, you looked at me and stared  
And stared  
And stared  
And stared  
Then finally, you asked how I knew  
I looked into your eyes, they were a beautiful pale blue  
Your pale blue irises spoke of pain of various kinds  
That's when I remembered the signs  
You always spoke wistfully of birds, saying you admired their freedom  
You admired that they could come and go as they please  
You couldn't, not with the man that sticks to you like a disease  
The man who acts as if he has the power of kings  
The man who holds you captive, like a bird with clipped wings  
I can see it in your eyes, how you wish to rise and fly free from captivity  
You work long hours with no complain, at times it seems inspirational  
But the little amount you get paid is unsustainable  
Large is the burden of your debt  
Even larger is the gap of time in which you last slept  
The harsh treatment the man gives you for the smallest mistakes  
I can see it in your eyes  
Every word causes the cracks in your soul to become large breaks  
You yearn for sanitation  
Yet that house that you live in has an insect infestation  
Yes, house not home  
If it were a home, entering it would not make you look like a lamb prepared for slaughter  
You have no food or running water  
You truly are like a lamb, that house is like a fence  
A barrier  
But that barrier cannot hide the physical proof  
No matter how much you try to act aloof  
I can see it  
I can see them  
The bruises that map your skin  
The deep cuts and scarring on your thin body

The single broken tooth  
The bleeding wounds on your forehead  
The constant black bruised eye  
The cigarette burns on your arms you try so hard to hide  
The stories you give too inconsistent to hold any truth  
Not to mention you neglect to have ever stated your full name  
The tattoo on your wrist is something you "got for fun" you claim  
Yet every time you look at it, fear impales you like a spear  
Your paranoia knows no bounds  
Your anxiety keeps you from speaking up, not allowing you to make any sounds  
You always speak with discretion  
But it's not enough to hide your depression  
So you see  
It's your eyes  
Your eyes tell me the horrors you have faced  
Your eyes show me fragments of the memories you desperately wish could be erased  
Many say that the eyes are windows to ones soul  
They were right, I can see it  
I can see it through your eyes  
Your soul has been battered  
Like a mirror, it has shattered