

The Devil Floating in the Sea

Etty Last

POETRY, HONORABLE MENTION (Grades 7-9)

Close your eyes and imagine the wind from the sea
crawling through your hair.

Ripping through your light lace dress.

You take a step closer to the water.

And another.

Until your feet are deep in the wet warm sand.
The sand in between your toes. soaking through.

You take another step and your feet get wet from the warm water.

Another step to the water and it splashes up your legs,
getting you even more wet.

A finger as soft as the wind traces a line down between your shoulder blades,
leaving a line of chills where it touched.

You tilt your head back and let your light hair float in the wind,
lifted as the wind gets stronger.

The finger flattens on your back, followed by a palm of a hand,
and then by another.

The arms extend around you.

Hugging you.

Shielding you from any bad.

Keeping you warm.

Lips tickle your ears and you let out a laugh.
The words that come out of it are laced with mischief and love.
Through the smile, you can hear it say "Hey there, you"
You laugh again, but louder this time.

“Hey to you too” you answer.
short but full of care.

You turn around, still in his warm and protective arms,
and look up into the eyes of the person you love so much.
The eyes that are the same color as the sea behind you.

And now it's your hand's turn to roam.

They go up that bold chest and up that perfectly soft face,
Clean-shaven.

You lean in close, resting your head on his shoulder,
deeply inhaling his warm and sweet-smelling scent.

His arms are still passing down and up your warm back.
Soft and continuous.
like your love for him is.

He takes your chin in his hand and lifts your head to look into his perfect eyes,
“Do you love me?”

You know the answer to that, and so does he. Or at least you hope he does,
because what you feel for him is so strong.

You close your eyes and think about what happens when you say those
perfect words, and smile.

You open your eyes as you get ready to answer the question, but what you
open your eyes to is not what you closed them to.

Instead, there stands the devil.

His blue eyes replaced by red.

Red like blood.
Red like the fire of hell.
Red like your heart.
Red hot like your love for him burns.

He pushes you into the water, and the last look you get of him is full of sadness.
Sadness for the love he thought he lost.
Sadness like the heart he thought he broke.

You think of that face as you float on in the endless sea of forever.

The sound that you let out stays with you when you float in the big sea,
Just the sound that burned like your love for him.
Your love for him is as big as the sea you're in.

Which is endless.

Then you think, all that is left of you in this world is the broken heart
And the footprints you left by the beach.

And while forever comes, passes, and is gone,
Your answer to him was still "yes."

Etty Last is in 9th grade at Bais Yaakov High School. She moved to Minnesota from Israel three years ago. She loves to read, write, and to paint.