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11th Grade

Literature, PTSA Reflections

Selfish

Cold. Dark. Lonely. Words that were seemingly etched onto the dungeon. She knew this was what it felt like to be trapped, but she couldn't bear to face it. The dark, pitiful eyes of the boy seemed to be engraved in her soul, and it continued to haunt her. She felt strangled, as the boy spasmed and squirmed in his cage. However, the two sides of her soul argued, *This isn't right, he's pained. But you've provided him with everything, it's just his job.* She wanted to keep him, he was loving and adorable, even with all the things she put him through, but with the continuous experiments, his health was getting worse, and he struggled everyday. The images of her sitting on the floor, teaching him numbers and letters, running around on the field with him, all the earlier memories flashed back to her. Everything before this. Before she started the Experiments. *Your moral feelings are ruining everything, let's go,* she thought, and she took one glance at the boy, before heading back upstairs. His eyes were wide and pleading, begging her to set him free from the pain.

As she reached the first floor, she looked around desperately. The smell of aged wood and the feeling of the old couch, with its worn fabric rough against her skin, reminded her of the time when her father would tell her stories. She saw the dried-up field of flowers that used to bloom, the place where she would blow bubbles with her father while her mother tended the flowers. The figure of her mother smiling tenderly seemed to appear, but it disappeared just as fast as it

appeared. But everything was gone, because of her stupid, stupid mistakes. It felt like spiraling down a dark pit of doom. Everything seemed to relate to her situation - the chemistry problems reminded her of the Experiments, the words in the poem seemed to symbolize her parents' lives. Slowly, while drowning in her thoughts, she disappeared into her world of fantasy as the atmosphere melted into a fog.

Figures of her past emerged through the thick fog. She could see her mother, her father, and everyone she lost. She wanted to reach out towards them, but she couldn't move. The figures swirled around her, with peaceful expressions very much unlike the look of betrayal she had expected. Suddenly, the atmosphere turned into a warm, sunlit room, with her as a young child on her father's shoulders, with both laughing. Her dancing to her mother's music. Making pancakes with her family. All the earlier memories came flooding back, as warmth spread around the place. All of a sudden, the sky turned gray, and she saw her family drift away, while the image of doctors whispering while she cried silently stood in front of her. The image of her a couple years ago screamed "No! I'm not going to let them go!", while everyone she lost withered and shrieked in pain. "Honey, it's better for them to go," whispered the nurse sympathetically. The sky seemed to hiss, *You were so selfish. But aren't you still in the same situation?*, while the tortured look of the boy swirled around her. *He's the only thing I have left, the only light of my life*, but her speech had abandoned her. Everything seemed to evaporate, and she was back, with the sun now shining in her bedroom. She had caused this destruction that left many half-dead, unable to live but unable to die, just like the boy. *I can't just leave everyone like this, I need to convince the Devil to change this*, she thought, *You know that the chemicals aren't doing*

anything. You're just adding on to the boy's pain. Years earlier, a plague had struck her town, a plague that would cause insanity, spasms, and other painful symptoms. As an act of desperation, she agreed to a deal with the Devil; to start a series of Experiments that tortured the subjects. In exchange, the Devil agreed to let the infected people live, but she didn't realize they would live in pain. After months of disbelief and hope, she finally agreed to let them go. As a result of the Experiments, the boy was left crippled and in pain. *You are going to let him go,* she whispered to herself.

The staircase seemed like it went on forever, and with her hands shaking, she gripped the key to the dungeon. *Clink.* The key jiggled in the lock. *Clank.* This was it. She was going to let the boy go. Tears streamed down her eyes as she reached for the needle of death, and her hands shook violently like an earthquake. The boy's big, brown eyes stole her heart, reminding her of all the fun adventures they had before everything went down. He was as innocent as an angel, and he believed her each time she injected him with the horrid chemicals that brought him closer to eternal pain. *It'll be alright, you'll get better this time.* Those empty promises. *Clank!* The dungeon door swung open, and there he layed, whimpering and writhing in pain. She scooped him up in her arms, and raced up the long, winding staircase that had trapped him under for so long. They burst through the front door, and the bright sunlight shone above. *He hadn't seen the sun in ages,* she thought, as she watched the boy squint and smile, the first time in a while, and reached towards the sun. *He deserves to be in the sky when everything I did forced him under.* "I...I'm so sorry," she whispered, and hugging him one last time, she took the IV cannula, and pierced it in his arm. The saline solution flowed through his body, but soon switched to midazolam. *Lidocaine.* He closed his eyes. *Propofol.* His movements stopped. *Rocuronium.* He

suddenly laid limp in her arms, and taking one last breath, he sighed with a glimmer of a smile on his face.