

*Caged Hope*

Alma Miller, grade 9

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Teacher: Ruthie Skaist

Survivor: Itka Zygmuntowicz.



I was drawn to Itka Zygmuntowicz's story because she was born near the town where my great-grandmother grew up and, like her, was thirteen when the war began. I ultimately chose Itka because of her poetry and the hope it gave her. In her testimony, Itka says, "I had no control of my life. Spiritually, I could think and feel what I wanted." **She explains that she imagined the poems she would write if only she had pencil and paper.** Though physically powerless, she used her imagination to create meaning and resist dehumanization.

I illustrated her poem in which she describes herself as a bird with clipped wings. I drew the bird caged in Auschwitz. The surrounding birds and books represent hope and the poems she would one day share.

Itka's story reminds me that inner freedom and creativity can sustain hope and gives me strength to face my own challenges.