

The Path He Ran

David Ramos-Reyes, grade 10
Early College High School, Costa Mesa, CA
Teacher Melissa Cruz Alvarado
Survivor: Thomas Blatt

The bodies of innocents fade into smoke,
As mines continuously rupture the ground.
German soldiers fire at those who cry for freedom,
And ashes of the deceased envelop the sky.
There is seemingly no way out,
No end to this nightmare in sight,
Yet a nimble teenager by the name of Thomas Blatt continues to fight.
Past the mines and gunfire, he climbs over a fence,
"I just slipped out and was running" when the moment was most intense.

Through the forest, tall grass and past Germans,
His heart beat in unison with the thunder of gunfire.
And when all hope seemed lost
When a bullet tore through his flesh,
As his friends laid dead without peaceful rest
Thomas decided he would refuse to surrender.

He knew that hope was not the promise of safety,
But the courage to act, even when life flashed before his eyes.
He didn't know where his path could lead,
He only knew to never accept defeat.
Choosing to endure his pain for the chance to help future generations avoid another genocide.

Thomas spoke so the world would never forget,
So silence would never hide the warning signs again.
His courage to act became a map he hoped we all would follow,
And today I choose to walk the path he revealed.
A path that reminds me having hope doesn't mean waiting for fears to disappear,
But having the courage to move even when the way out isn't clear.

So, whenever I feel overcome by fear and doubt I'll simply slip out and keep running forward
Because honoring his survival begins the moment I stop standing still.
And it continues by remembering the cost of silence,
so history's darkest chapters are never again written in blood.