

First Name: Jackson

Last Name: Topo

Grade: 6

Submission: Perhaps One Day

I shuffle home from a tiring day at school. I yank open the front door, and drop my backpack on the floor. I trudge up the stairs to my bedroom, flop onto my bed and let my covers smother me. Home at last.

Home is where I feel safe. I can relax and be myself without being judged. I feel as though my home is a retreat; I can come home from a miserable day, and put it behind me. I like knowing what to expect in my day. Every morning my mother wakes me up for school. At night there is always a hot meal on the table for me. My parents bought this house more than a decade ago, with the vision of raising a family. It holds many fond memories of Christmases and birthdays. Portraits decorate the walls and school assignments are posted on the fridge. Eleven years later, it is a reflection of who my family is. I sometimes take having a home for granted; all of my friends live in houses, so I picture everyone living in stable homes. Sadly, this is not the case.

There are currently an estimated 300,000 homeless people in this country. When people spot homeless people sleeping on the street, they assume that these people always were homeless and always will be. We speak of them as though they are an entirely different species. They are humans. The homeless have families and possibly even kids that they love. These people were once children like us, they didn't want to be homeless. Due to complications with drugs, money or mental illness, they became homeless: something that I can't even imagine happening to me. Imagine a stressful day and having no home to go to. Homeless people sleep on cold, hard cement or on uncomfortable subway seats. When it rains or snows, there is nothing to protect them from the elements.

There are others, who have a roof over their heads, but are struggling to make ends meet. When my mom was a child, she lived with her three siblings and her mother. My granny was living on Social Assistance and my mom was often jostled around from one house to another. At one point, her and her siblings were sent to different foster homes. For a few months, they had to live in a person's basement with no kitchen or bathroom of their own. My mother will never forget these years of her life. Now that she is an adult, she truly appreciates having a home.

I believe that everyone should have the privilege of having a place of their own, where they feel safe and comfortable. If everyone gives a helping hand and is compassionate towards the homeless, anything is possible. Perhaps when the rain is pounding the sidewalk, everyone will be toasty and dry in their homes. Perhaps one day.