

Junior Division Prose (16-20 years)

Hayleigh Bursey, Mount Pearl

**The Last Will and Testament of Private Samuel Leighton (an excerpt)**

He told me one afternoon when we was waiting for the next operation, that our life couldn't be like how it was before. I didn't know if he meant that we couldn't live together or if we were too jumbled up in the head to live rightly. We was half of who we used to be; there was no way we could be together and survive. Our only option was to smile and pretend like half our country wasn't slaughtered right in front of us. It was the proper thing to do to. "Settle down and raise a couple a kids," our commander had said with this look in his eye that reminded me of my father. Joe and I could never have had that. He took his own pride that day he cried next to me, and he took my belief in God with him.