

# **The Fox and the Grapes**

A Creative Collaboration

By Shasta Sovereign

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Dear Reader:

The Fox and the Grapes is a part of the classic Aesop's fables, which may be near and dear to many of our hearts. In sum, it is a tale of a fox who is trying to catching some high hanging grapes. After being unable to get the grapes, the fox gives up his attempts and justifies this by telling himself that he didn't want the sour grapes anyway.

This tale is as relevant today as it was several generations ago. We wanted to see different perspectives about this tale, and this publication features pieces from all ages and walks of life. We hope you appreciate these entries.

This poses an important question. What do you do when you are on the brink of giving up? Are you like the fox and make excuses? Or do you find some inner reserve to push through? What is your secret? Please share.

In Inspiration,

Shasta Sovereign

**Awards:**

It was very difficult for us to pick awards for this special collection. In this collection, we had participation from 2 students in elementary schools, 15 students from 5 high schools in 3 different counties, 2 teachers, a mother and son team, and 3 other creative community members. Without further delay, the following are the awards:

1<sup>st</sup> place: Daejaaq Vang from Hayfork High School

Tie- 2<sup>nd</sup> place: Mercedes Thao from Hayfork High School

Tie- 2<sup>nd</sup> place: Paris Zuniga from Tulelake High School

Tie- 3<sup>rd</sup> place: Marilyn Stice Guerrero from Hayford High School

Tie- 3<sup>rd</sup> place: Shalynn Wilson from Burney High School



# Aesop's Fables

By Leslie, made in 1981





## Fox and the Grapes Interpretation

By The Always Reinventive Spilly Gypsy

One Early winter day with the first winter storm the proud fox roamed the countryside. His reddish-brown fur shone in the sun and the snow shining on his back with sparkle and glitter and on the surrounding bare bushes and tree branches.

Blackbirds with their beautiful blue silvery and velvet black feathers chirped in the trees and flew overhead, but everything seemed peaceful and serene in this beautiful snowy forest.

The fox looked around with his wandering gaze, through these bare snowy surroundings, since he has not eaten nor drank anything all day. His stomach was grumbling and growling he says to himself "I really need something to eat otherwise I'll sure starve to death" thought the fox.

Suddenly he caught sight of the last of the season's lush, beautiful violet purple vine of grapes growing high on a tree branch in the forest. The fox whooped out "That's just the thing I need to quench my hunger and thirst is some juicy lush grapes!"

So, the fox thought getting those juicy grapes will be a piece a cake, I'll stand on this here rock and leap right up there and get them right off the vine with my paws.

So, while he leaped, jumped, and took running leaps over and over, a blackbird sat perched on the branch above observed the fox curiously with wonder. The last time the fox tirelessly leaped up for the lush grapes he came tumbling down landing hard on his fuzzy face. This made the fox mad and very angry when he got up and shook his sore body. So, he snorted with frustration and defiance, and the fox said while walking away "I bet those Grapes are really not worth my efforts, they are probable Sour Grapes anyways."

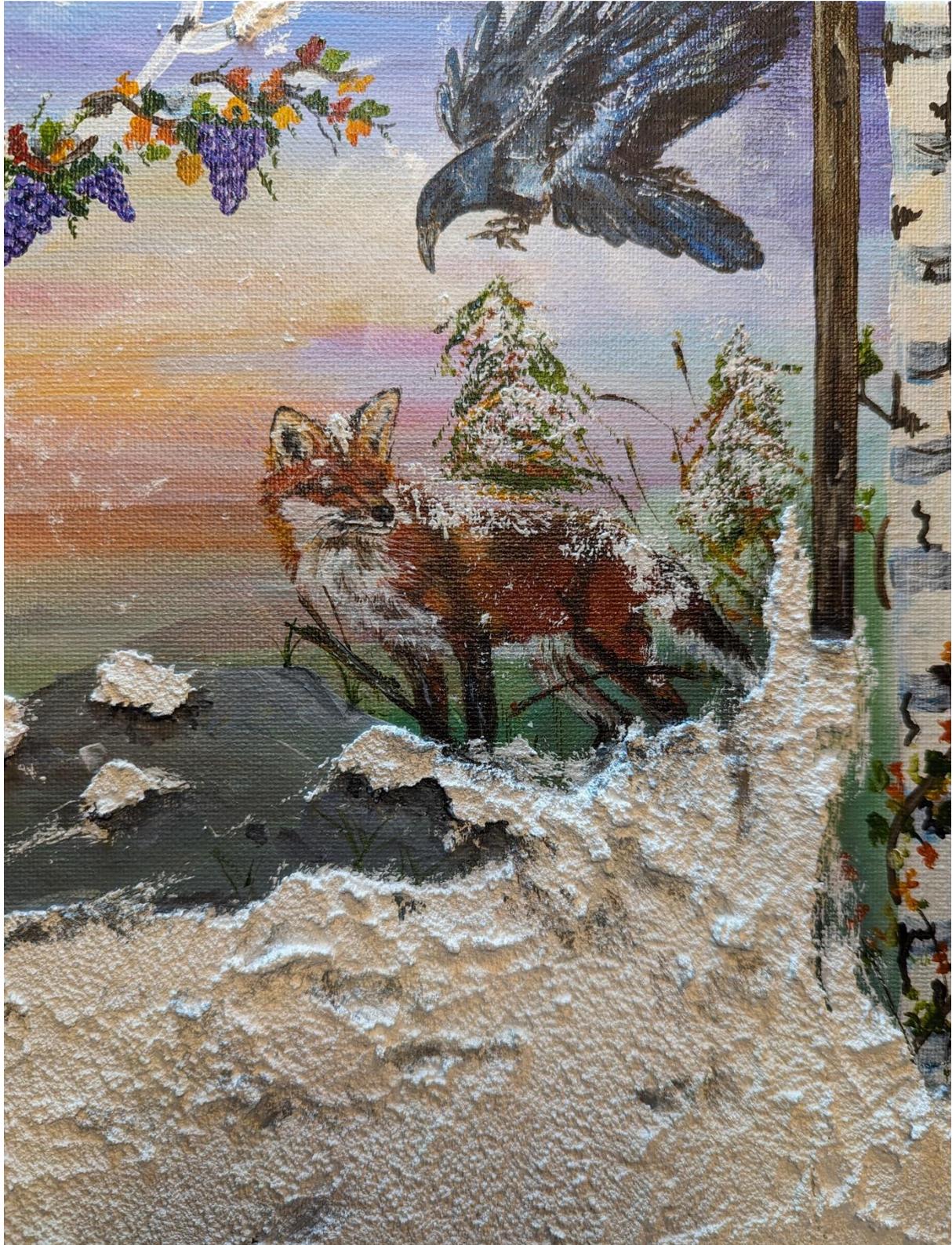
Now at this time the wise blackbird who had been observing him from the branch above flew after the frustrated fox and stopped him and said, "So after a few failed attempts you give up on those juicy grapes so easily and with never asking for help, when I myself have been there on the branch above willing and gladly would help you, but you stubbornly never asked for help?"

Now at this time the Fox looked up at the wise blackbird of the sky with surprise and said, "you would help me a sly fox of the forest" The Blackbird said, "yes we can do this together and enjoy those sweet juicy gapes of our success together as a team."

So, they went and yes, they enjoyed the fruit of the vine and the friendship of this new stormy day and many days to come.



First image is the fox coming out looking for food





Second image is him leaping over and over for the grapes





Third image is the fox landing on his fuzzy head in failure after so many attempts





Last image is the fox and his new friend enjoying their New fruits of success after helping each other





By Laurel Rulison

We sometimes miss out on great opportunities because our attention and aspirations are turned towards what may truly be sour grapes (popularity, etc.)





By Carson Rulison in 4<sup>th</sup> grade





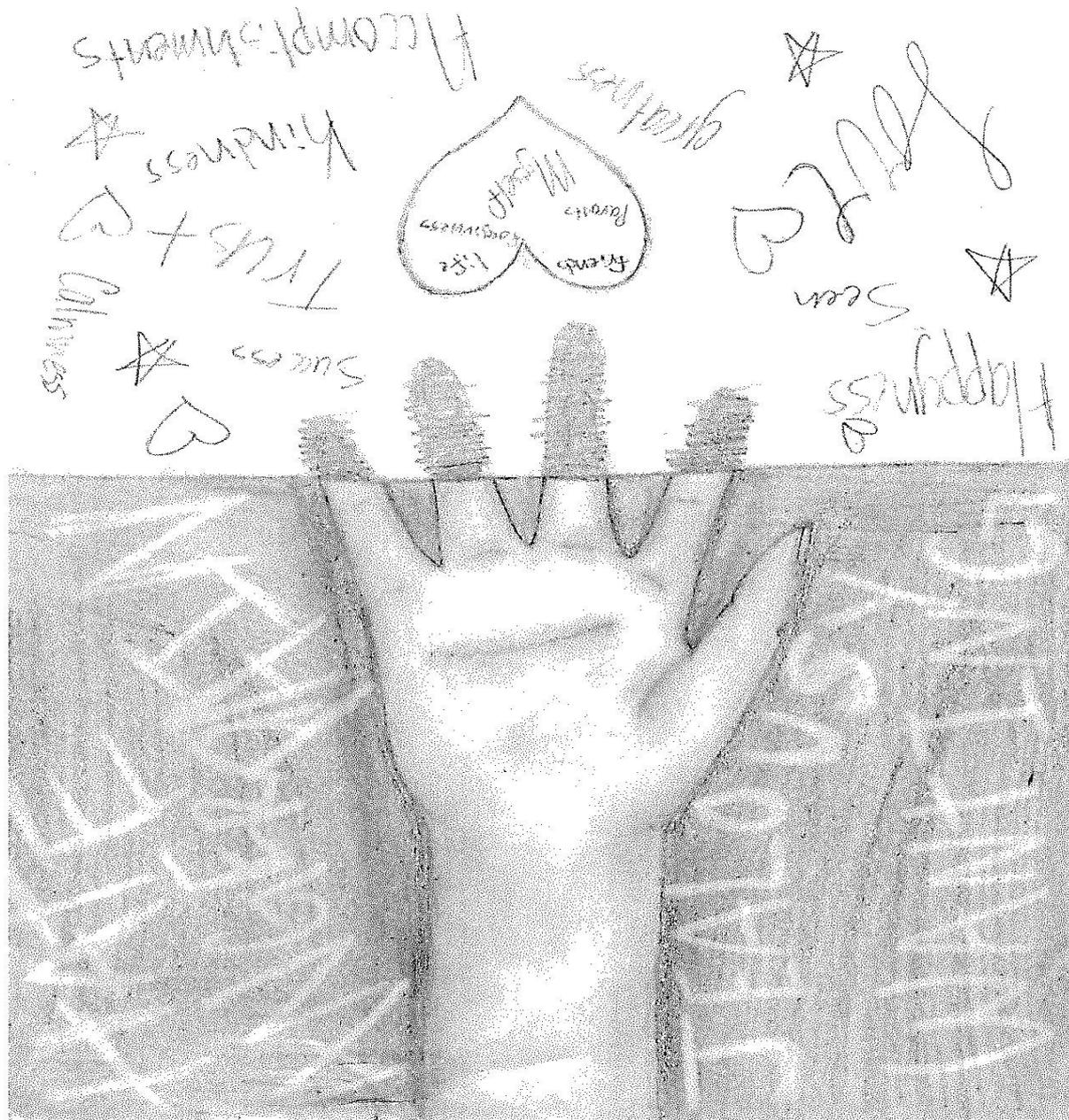
By Carlosabel Ortiz-Andalon, age 9





By RC Wroten, Weed High School

Reaching into others' lives can be hurtful. Not only the person's life you're taking out of, but yourself. With all of these negative emotions, it may be hard to find the positive in yourself. Which is why you take from the people that are close to you because you know that they like you far more than you like yourself. It can be really exhausting trying to reach for something that you don't like about yourself. That's one hard lesson that I had to learn. Still.



Words on top half of painting: happiness, accomplishments, trust, seen, kindness, love, success, calmness, greatness, change

Words in the Heart: friends, life, myself, forgiveness, parents.

Words on bottom half of painting: hate, pain, anger, jealousy, wanting.



## Wishful Thinking

By Cadance Scott, Weed High School

The piece that I created is called Wishful Thinking. On the top of the canvas are some hopes that we have; that we can be self-sufficient, that we can live sustainably and help to reverse the damage that we have done to our planet. And below that is the reality of the situation. It is a little painting in the ocean that has plastic pieces in it representing the way that we have and will continue to pollute the ocean.





## Dark Thoughts

By Renaissance Johnson, Weed High School

There are some specific choices I made to give in to the theme. Her hair is orange to represent the fox. Her shirt is green to represent the grapes. There is also a lot of symbolism in the chains. A lot of the time I see people afraid, angry and hateful when they are unable to reach the goals they want. They become spiteful and their head fills with words that are negative. That is what I wanted to reflect. But in reality, when that happens, we are just holding ourselves back out of fear of failure and embarrassment. I hope that shows in this piece, and I hope you like it.





## Sour Grapes mentality as a freeing perspective

By Sri

The Fox and the Grapes.

Growing up in the Hare Krsna movement, which has its roots in Indian culture and Hinduism, I was told that this story came from the Panchatantra, that Aesop's Fables and Panchatantra are one and the same. Regardless I heard the term, "Sour Grapes" often. Devotees would say this term and I don't know if it was in response to someone having the defeatist Fox's mentality with regards to an unfulfilled desire. Or if they were implying that it was best that the person has given up on the desire, for surely the fulfillment of the desire would end up being dissatisfactory.

As the cult I was raised in was all about achieving perfection or self realization by giving up desire, the second option is probably the correct one. Since fulfillment of material desires are seen as an obstacle to getting closer to God (Krsna) by the process of surrender, one was seen as better off (most fortunate) if one's desire fulfillment was thwarted.

This is a very relevant subject matter for me right now. Almost a year ago I shut down a huge part of me, the one that wanted a romantic or other intimate relationship with a man. I have been hurt so badly by most of my relationships, and I just told myself to accept what seems to be the most indisputable truth that there can be no permanence in relationships as we all go our separate ways at death. So why even get caught up in the illusion that I can find someone to share "love" with forever?

I am no longer hung up on any man and if I start feeling desire or missing a certain man or fantasizing, I shut it down. I've taken it even further and I now believe almost in every cell in my body that sex is very bad, an evil that has nearly destroyed my body, my self-esteem. I do believe that without this driving force of making myself worthy of a man I am physically and mentally in a state of depression. But I believe in the long run letting go of this desire and of putting so much mental energy into it, is going to be of great benefit to me.

Sour grapes mentality or facing reality and not letting illusion fool one? Time will tell.



## Invisible Lesson

By Shalynn Wilson, Burney High School

The dark *claws* pulling the fox down symbolize self-doubt, like you aren't good enough. The *eyes* around the background invoke the feeling of being judged and reprimanded, and the anxiety from people watching you. The *tongue* slightly touching the grape symbolizes the sliver of hope through the pool of negative emotions and actions. The *vine* wrapping around the fox muzzle symbolizes the feeling of being shut down at every turn, being shushed into silence and not being able to speak his mind.





By Paris Zuniga, Tulelake High School

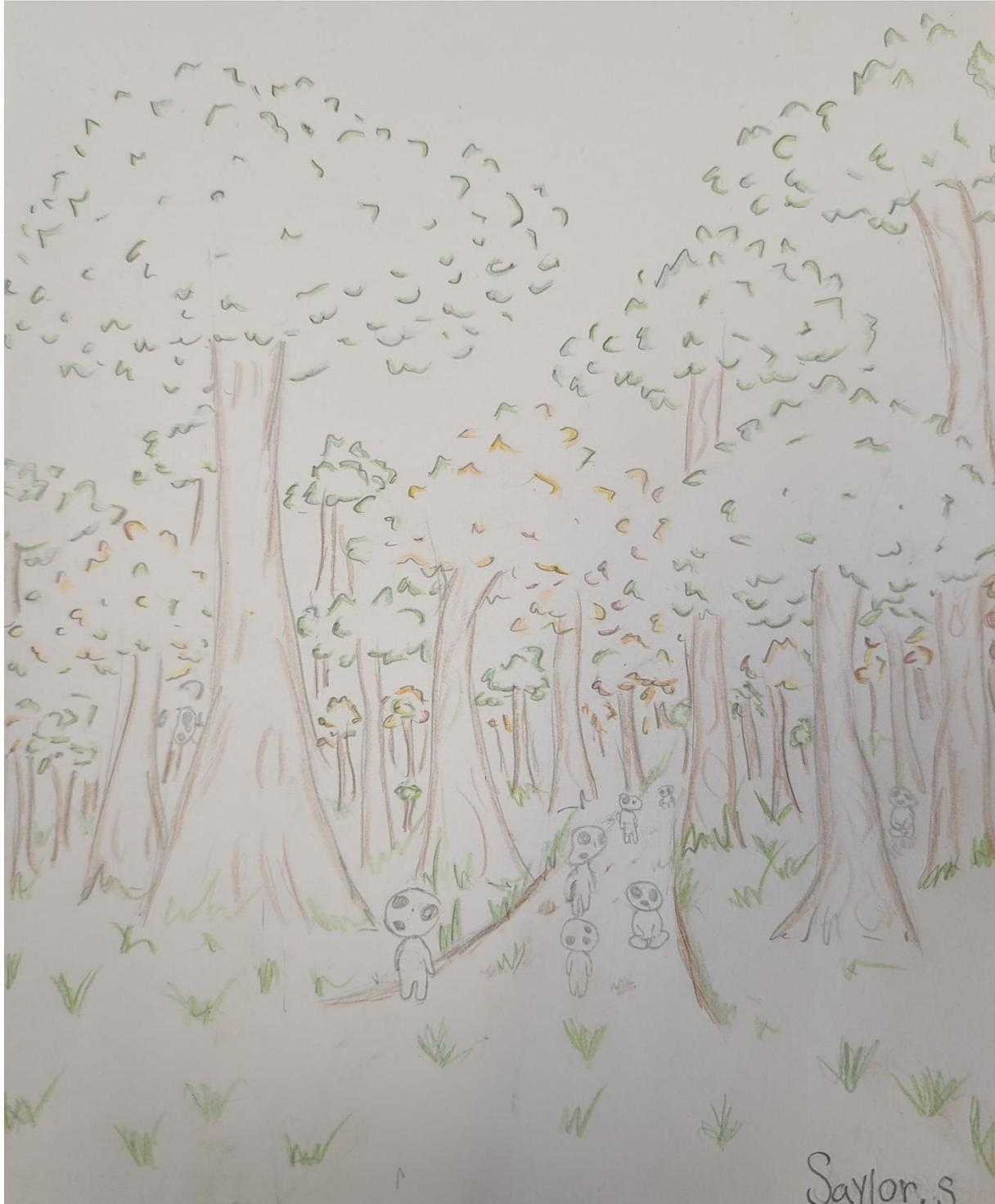




## Deep Forest

By Saylor Swartz, Dunsmuir High School

I used colored pencils to create what I thought represented the short story about the fox. The white creature you see on the path represents a long lonely path that the fox started to take after he got discouraged after each jump he took.





## The Fox and the Grapes

By Abby Camacho, Dunsmuir High School

This image shows that the fox is trying to reach up and devour the big juicy grapes. The fox missed the grapes a couple of times but is determined to get a nice refreshing treat.





## The Mindset

By Gracie Hunt, Dunsmuir High School

I used acrylic paint and colored pencils. I painted this because the whole point of the story was the fox having a bad mindset and giving up really fast. The green heart represents the bad mindset and the hand represents the fox being in control of that bad mind set. He chooses to act that way.





## Frustration of the Fox

By Hunter Hines, Dunsmuir High School

This watercolor painting is based off “The Fox and the Grapes.” You can see a clever fox standing on its hind legs, looking up at a bunch of juicy grapes hanging from a vine. The fox has a determined expression on its face as it tries to reach the grapes with its paws. The grapes are a vibrant purple color, tempting and delicious-looking. The background of the picture might show a sunny vineyard or a lush garden. It's a great visual representation of the fable's moral about not belittling what we can't have.





## Fox and Grapes

By Issiah Jackson, Dunsmuir High School

I conveyed that the fox wants the grapes more than anything. The fox wants the grapes so much, that he doesn't see the beauty around him.





## Messages

By Mr. Champe, Dunsmuir High School Art Teacher

Artist Keith Haring burst onto the art scene throughout the 1980's. His simplistic art and messages spread political and social messages. After reading Aesop's fable "The Fox and the Grapes," I felt a Keith Haring style acrylic painting was appropriate.





By Mercedes Thao, Hayfork High School

In the story of The Fox and The Grapes, the fox was walking and saw some grapes up high. As many know, foxes are known for being clever and intelligent. Having this in mind, when the fox tries to get the grapes by jumping, he fails to do so, which causes him to give up in frustration. This story conveys that some people will start despising things that happen to be beyond their capabilities upon their first try, when they are used to success. In my art piece, a fox lady is drowning in a lake while turning her back on the grapes that are way up high and out of the water. You can see how the lake is dark and gloomy while out of it is very bright and peaceful. The water symbolizes her pride or comfort zone against the world. She has completely turned her back on the grapes because in order to get them, she must get out of the water. The fish that swim around her serve as her overwhelming ego, which is why they are less detailed than the rest of the objects. Ego is known to cloud one's better judgment. The moral of the story is that people who relate to the fox, would rather drown in their pride and despise/resent something that they know they could never reach with ease.



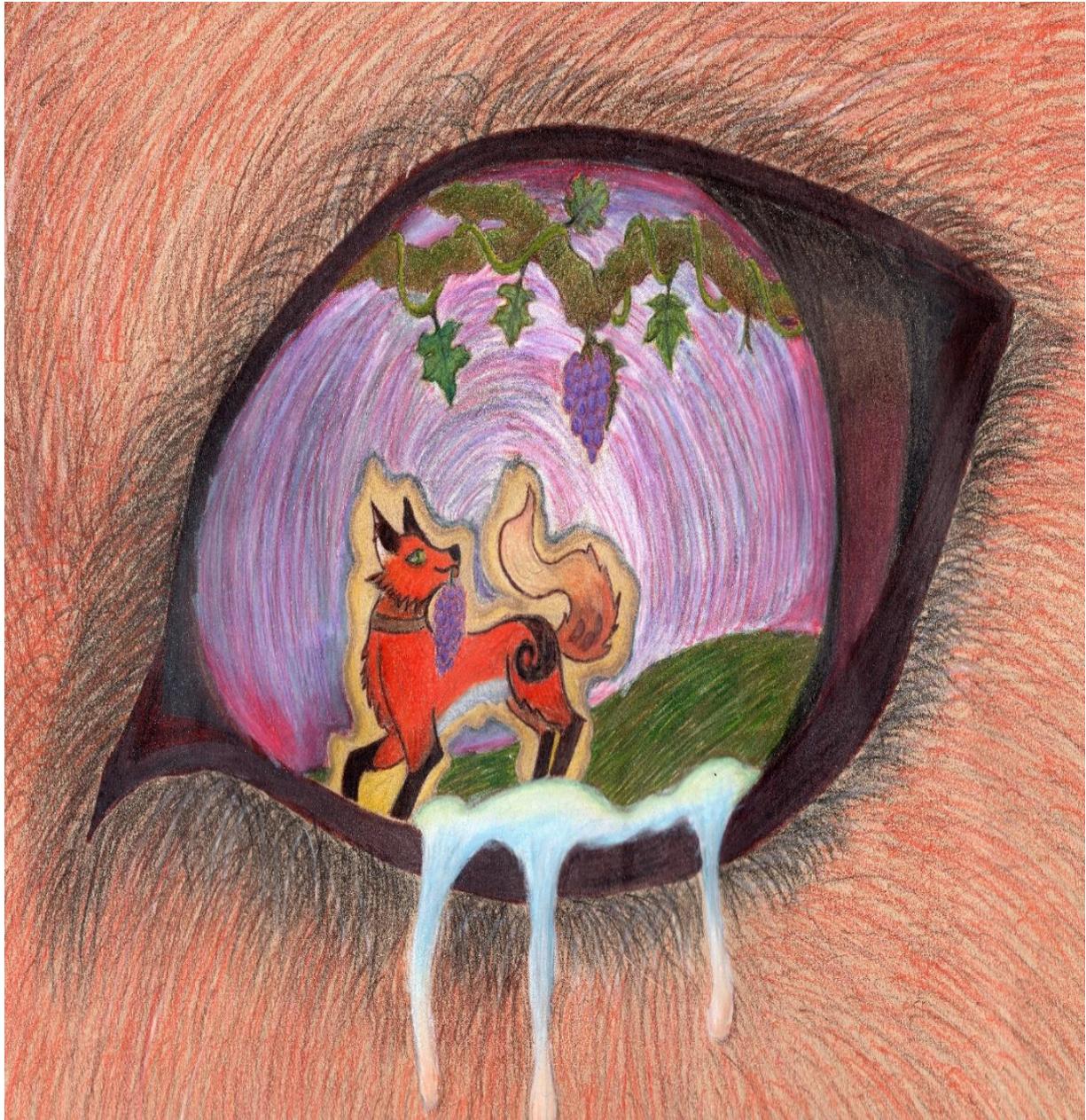


## Bitter Grapes

By Marilyn Stice Guerrero, Hayfork High School

Have you ever worked so hard at something that you became obsessed with that certain object, subject, or job? Even to the point of hurting yourself, or in most situations, others, maybe even the ones you love? It's a very bitter feeling that can leave you sour, fierce, cruel, ruthless, and relentless. This madness may lead you to make a decision you might regret.

The perspective of the eye is filled with anger, jealousy, and just plain madness. The fox's eye is blinded with jealousy by seeing from afar the other fox succeed in the very thing he wanted the most: the grapes. The grapes represent greatness, fame, and glory. And all because he gave up. He feels like the other fox is rubbing their success in his face and pointing at the grapes with its tail to taunt him, tempting him to do something he will regret.





By Daejaaq Vang, Hayfork High School

Moral: when people cannot get what they want, they sometimes tell themselves what they want is no good anyway. (Fox and Grapes by Core Knowledge)

In my art piece, the fox is going up the stairs of life. The big gap between the stairs signifies that victory is a big step away. No matter how hard he tries, he cannot reach the other side. Thus, he gives up. "I have a job and life already. What more do I need?"

Key points: The stairs, the sun, the dark tunnel

### Stairs

As you can see, the stairs play an important role in my art piece. It signifies the climb of life. There is an obvious difference in the stairs the fox stands on and the grape stairs which he cannot reach.

#### *Black and white stairs:*

The stairs he stands on leads down into a dark area, which means the stairs he walks on is a continuous cycle because he cannot see nor does he know when the stairs would come to an end. This means no matter how long he progresses and ages throughout his livelihood, everyday is the same cycle.

#### *Grape stairs:*

The eyes are instantly drawn to the grape stairs, that being the attraction of my art piece. I purposely only colored that staircase to draw the attention of my viewers. Putting myself in the eyes of the viewers, the grapes are my main attraction. Compared to the blank stairs that the fox walks on, it is clear what a glorious path he could walk on, had he tried hard enough to reach. But with his mindset as my reference, the only thing the fox can do is to jump rather than find other ideas to be able to climb that staircase. Concluding that the grape staircase can lead to a better life; happiness; the idea of freedom.

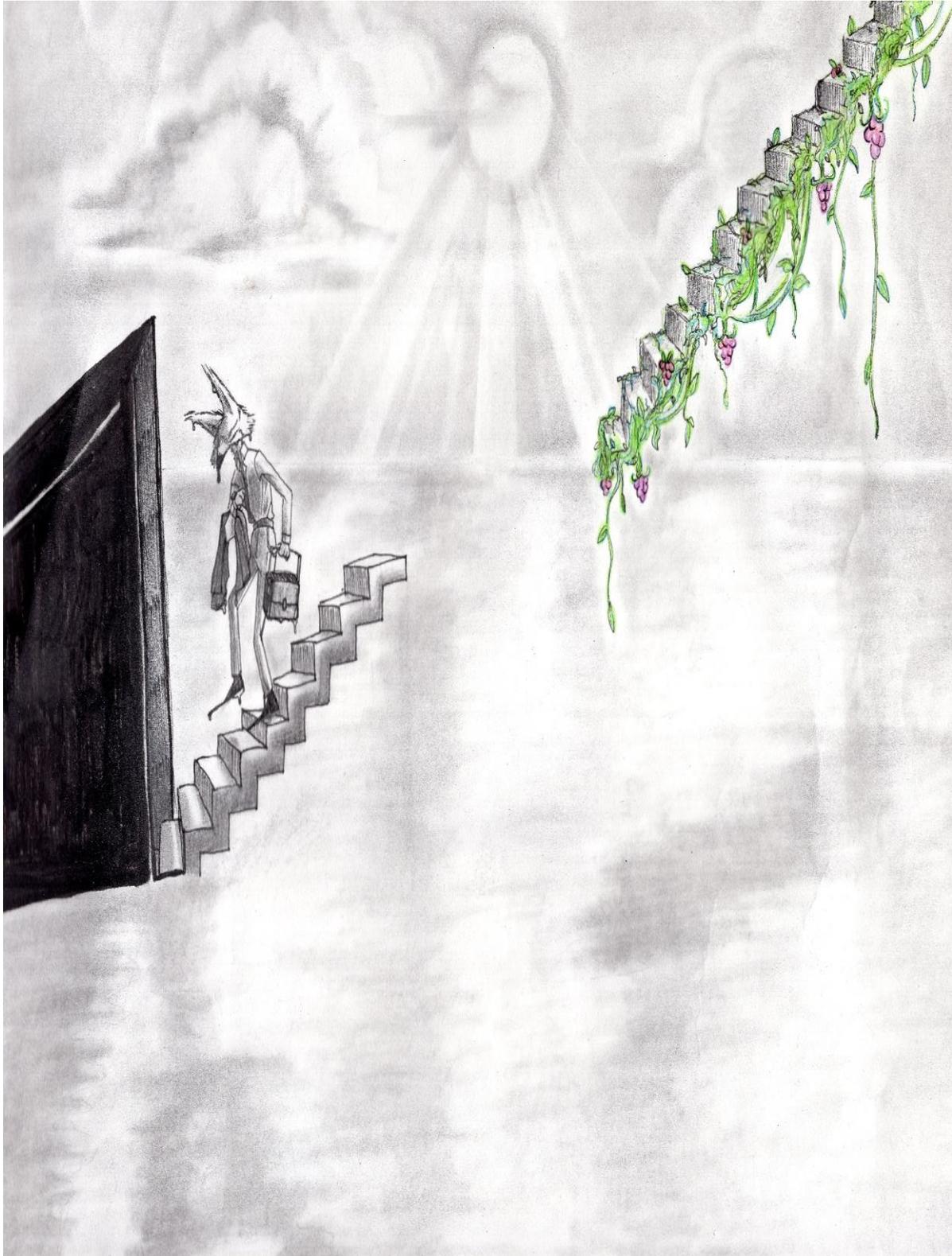
### The sun

The background is also an important factor of my art piece. With graphite as the majority, you can already tell what a beautiful scene it is. The sun doesn't set nor does it rise. So it remains a sunny day. I compare the sun to the dark tunnel he will continue his path on; It is always bright so there's nothing to fear and you can walk confidently to your goals. This means that even if you walk the dark path, there will always be a brighter side.



### The tunnel

As you can see, the tunnel is dark. It symbolizes the void in which people walk in when they feel they have nothing left. Just dark and continuous, you don't know when the staircase would end or how far you've come along. In addition, the dark color represents fear; anxiety; the bad side of life in a way.





## Cycle Of Toxic Love

By Ariel Xiong, Hayfork High School

Have you ever been addicted to toxicity to a point where, as much as you know it's bad for you, you still enable it through your entire life? All because that's what you knew. Or you weren't taught that it was bad in any way, that it was just normal, and you dealt with it. This is how I have interpreted the story with the fox and grapes. Something can be juicy and beautiful, and become a fantasy or a delusion. I like the grapes that will only make you want to taste something more, and yet, NOT enough. The roots are ties we can never truly break away from, like family, friends, lovers, etc. They will always wrap around our hearts, making it hard to break away from them. A quote that stood out to me the most was: "There are many who pretend to despise and belittle that which is beyond their reach." We despise and belittle ourselves, thinking we either deserve this toxicity or to believe it's normal while thinking that it's beyond our reach. But it isn't. The roots have exposed the fox and opened its vulnerability. Those roots will slowly go loose by cutting off the ties of what binds us. So we can heal slowly, grow anew to truly retrieve the grapes that can finally satisfy our hunger for what we truly strive for in the future.





By Anika Rourke, Hayfork High School

The Fox chews away at your self esteem, diminishes your dreams. The Fox is the culprit of every missed opportunity. It's an embodiment of all your fears and impatience. The Fox's sweet words of reassurance and safety will coax you to turn your back on everything. Those who walk away from the tree will never enjoy the fruits of life, instead devoured by their own indolence.





## Fox and the Bear

By Robin Hart

After leaping high and falling down hard, fox decided to give up on her pursuit of eating grapes. To feel better, the fox told herself “The grapes must be sour.” But she could not shake off that splinter of hope in her heart that her pursuit will be fruitful.

Carrying that drop of hope, the fox started walking back into the forest and found a fork in the road. She turned right. She walked for a little while when she heard Bear lazily chasing bees in the air. Bear was happy to see the fox. The fox realized Bear was always happy.

“Why the long face?” asked Bear.

“I am hungry and those grapes are out of my reach.”

“Follow me, Fox.” Bear said happily.

They walked for a little while, while Bear sung merry tunes.

“Look, what we have here,” Bear threw his hands up in the air cheerfully.

Fox’s eyes widened as she saw big purple and green grapes hung from vines within her reach. They both had so much fun eating the most delicious grapes. Fox and the Bear became best friends from that day onward. They shared many adventures together.

Life will test you  
As there will be many.  
Hold on to the one  
Sparklet of faith and hope

The journey will be joyful  
With a cheerful Bear.  
Discouragement, despair  
Doesn’t get us anywhere.

Lift someone higher  
Love someone deeper  
Leave all bitterness behind  
Taste sweetness in life’s honey, be kind



We think we will be happy  
When we get rich,  
Or when we have made it in life.  
But friendships, peace, joy  
Are never bought with money.

Blessings cannot be bought  
In the good friends we meet.  
On life's journey, these are  
The lighthouses guiding,  
Us to pathways  
Who make this life complete.





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