



7th Grade Best of the Best, Round 4

Beneath the Surface

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Branches slashed my face, sending blood down my cheeks. Every one of my pores was filled with sweat. My feet moved mechanically, synchronized with my thudding heart. They were close behind. I could not, I would not go back.

They only saw the surface. They only saw my black skin and labeled me inferior. They did not know of the human soul that lived under by cursed flesh.

The sound of the dogs came closer. I leapt to the shadows beneath the trees looming above me. I hid myself in their dark depths, thankful for the first time for my black skin. My bare feet bled and were blistered from running through the shadows.

The full moon glowed over me, its light threatening to give me away. Its brightness seemed to mock me as I ran. Even the moon was white. The whole world seemed to be made for people with a white surface.

I tripped over a branch and fell to the forest floor with a loud moan. My ankle shot pain up my leg, begging me not to make it run. I ignored its pleas and desperately tried to escape and run away from these evil people, the mocking moon, and my own dark skin.

It was a failed attempt. I had barely limped ten steps when the dogs' snarling teeth were in my face. Tears burned my face, tears of anger, hate, and fear.

"Please!" I pleaded to my captors. "Please let me go!" My breath was short, and my whole body was splattered with blood. I gasped for breath. "Deep down we're all the same! That's what really matters! Please let me go."

"Take advice from a dumb negro?" a gruffy man spat in my face. "From the looks of things, all that 'lies below' you is blood, and most of that's on the surface." The men laughed as they hauled me to my feet.

The mocking continued as they marched along, tugging me by a long rope like a disobedient dog. Running for days took its toll on me. Stumbling over rocks and logs,



new wounds appeared on my body, and I collapsed in the grass a bloody heap. The surface of me drifted away, and my soul was free at last.