

# 2010 *What Matters?* Competition

## YEAR 9/10 WINNER

Thalia Penninkilampi, Penrith High School

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### **It's Not Fair**

It's not fair!

Why do I have to water the garden, when it is obviously my brother's job? It's not fair that I only get one dollar more pocket-money each week, when I do twice as much work! Does he get paid for breathing? I should get more, plus fifteen is a big year for girls, we have expenses. While we're on the topic, it's not fair that I have to dry the dishes. The dishes will dry themselves, that's why it's called a "dish dryer". My room is not messy, it's just organised differently to the way you like it.

It's just not fair!

I'm prepared to be reasonable. I know you will probably want to buy me my own car next year, once you've finished paying off my braces. I know money doesn't grow on trees (and no, that wasn't a theatrical eye-roll, this is a theatrical eye-roll). I am not a drama-queen, nor am I a princess. But this is child-slavery! I wouldn't say anything, except I think it's against the Geneva Convention or something.

### **IT'S JUST NOT FAIR!**

Medine was also someone's daughter. She died when she was only sixteen, only a little older than I am now, in a place called Kahta in Turkey. Not a place well known to the world while she lived, but it's known to the world now, because it's the place where she was buried alive by her father.

Her death was called an "honour killing" rather than a murder - her family felt justified in doing it, because she disgraced them by talking to some boys. They felt that their reputation had to be restored, so her father and grandfather dug a deep hole in the ground and threw her into it. Then her father and grandfather shovelled the dirt back into the hole, one spadeful at a time.

How can a father dig such a hole? How could any culture allow it, or expect it? How did her grandfather feel, digging it? Did it make him feel better? Did they speak to Medine while they shovelled the dirt back in on top of her? They had tied her hands behind her back, so there was no way she could climb out. What did they say when they went back to their homes, to the rest of the family after it was done? How could Medine's family do this and then go on living as if she never existed?

So what's really not fair?

It's not fair that I get to go to school every day, when there are girls like Medine who can't. It's not fair that I can speak to any boy I like, when there are girls who could die if they did. It's not fair that a father could bury his own daughter alive, and call it pride. It's not fair that a family could allow such a thing, and afterwards wipe every trace of her from their lives, and call it honour.

It's not fair that Medine was not alone: there were at least sixteen reported "honour killings" between 2003 and 2007 in her province alone; there is no way of knowing how many have died, and what their names were. The fact that these murders keep happening, that's not fair.

If there's anything I could change, I would change that.