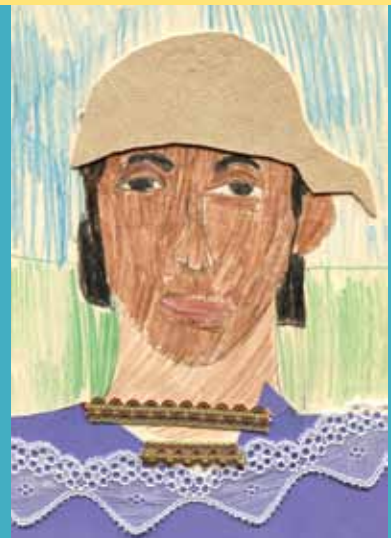


BREAK OUT!

Poems and Art by Class 4-301
of C.S. 21

BEHIND THE BOOK • *New York*



MISSION STATEMENT

Behind The Book's mission is to motivate young people to become engaged readers by connecting them to contemporary writers and illustrators. We bring authors and their books into individual classrooms to build literacy skills and create a community of life-long readers and writers. Our programs take place in underserved K-12 public schools, are part of the class curricula and meet the Common Core Standards.



Visit us at www.BehindtheBook.org
and our blogsite
<http://behindthebook.wordpress.com/> Behind the Book
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PREFACE

How to make history and non-fiction writing come alive to fourth graders? That was the challenge teacher Juanita Johnson of C.S.21 in Brooklyn presented to Behind the Book. With Doreen Rappaport, esteemed author of many books about African American history for children, Behind the Book created a program combining the study of slavery with writing poetry for Ms. Johnson's class.



The students were each given copies of Doreen's books *No More! Stories and Songs of Slave Resistance* and *Escape from Slavery*. They were assigned different slaves to research, with the eventual task of writing a biographical poem about the slave, just as Doreen had done in her books.



During Doreen's two visits to the classroom she discussed researching a biographical figure, how to look for the essence of the person, and the importance of a hook. The students researched and prepared first drafts for Doreen to critique. Doreen gave constructive criticism to help the students make their messages more powerful.

After final drafts, Barb Korein, BtheB's teaching artist, worked with the students to create portraits of their subjects. They discussed the similarities on every face (eyes, nose, mouth, etc.) and then students measured their own heads. Lo and behold, from the top of the head to the nose was the same distance regardless of the size of the person! With photos of their subjects in hand, the students created their portraits by drawing and using collage materials.

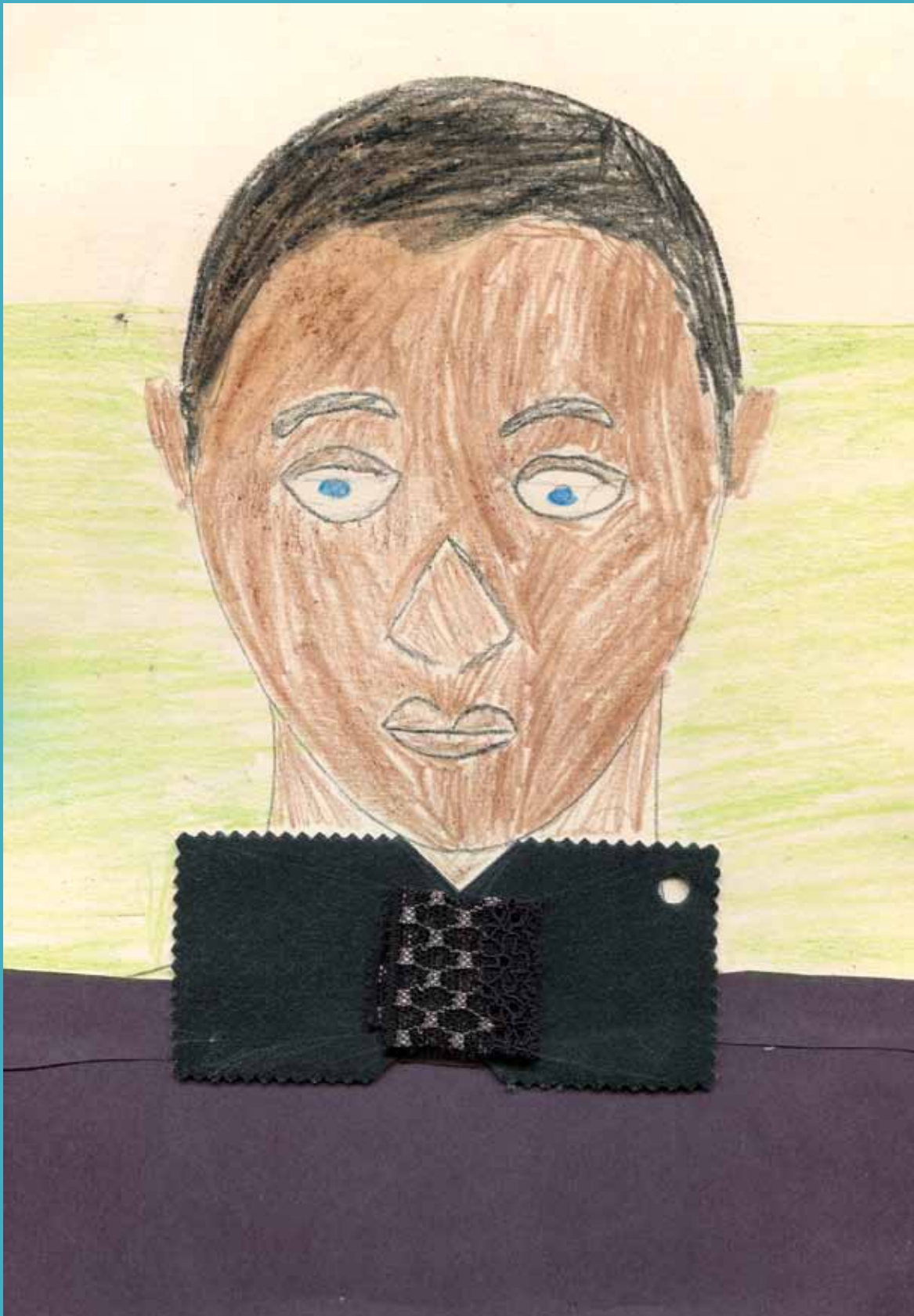


What you see in this book is the result of a lot of hard work. Congratulations on a job well done!

*We dedicate this book to our parents, and grandparents,
and our ancestors. We wouldn't be here without them.
We also dedicate this to our teacher Ms. J. Johnson,
Ms. Doreen Rappaport, and Jo from Behind the Book.
They helped us and taught us a lot about our history.*

CONTENTS

Booker T. Washington	<i>by Laila</i>	7
Run Away	<i>by Marquis</i>	8
A Brief Moment of Freedom	<i>by Kayla</i>	11
Olaudah	<i>by Cyrus</i>	12
She Was Only A Slave	<i>by Revon</i>	15
He's Not Scared	<i>by Amir</i>	16
John Scobell	<i>by Ridwan</i>	19
Suzie King	<i>by Ashanti</i>	20
Determination	<i>by Felicit</i>	23
A Slave Owner Speak	<i>by Diallo</i>	24
Born Free	<i>by Rayana</i>	27
A Delayed Woman of the Year Award	<i>by Laronda</i>	28
Rebellious	<i>by Zane</i>	31
A Slave Owner's Lament	<i>by Brianna</i>	32
Captured	<i>by Anthony</i>	35
Break My Body But Not My Soul	<i>by Jerome</i>	36
The Prophet	<i>by Mariah</i>	39
Harriet Tubman	<i>by Aniyah</i>	40
Harriet	<i>by Collin</i>	43
A Grandma's Love	<i>by Geanna</i>	44
Untitled	<i>by Kiara</i>	47
Sing Adeline Sing	<i>by Tahmel</i>	48
Where's My Brother	<i>by Nieziah</i>	51



Booker T. Washington

The white man in blue uniform
Talking word that sounds important
Peeking out from my mother's arms
I watch my mother's face
Was it shocked or surprise?

I watch my mother's tears
Rolled down her checks
For what ever the white man said
It was then that I realized
That James Burrouojh's plantation
Slaves were free
My mother and I were free

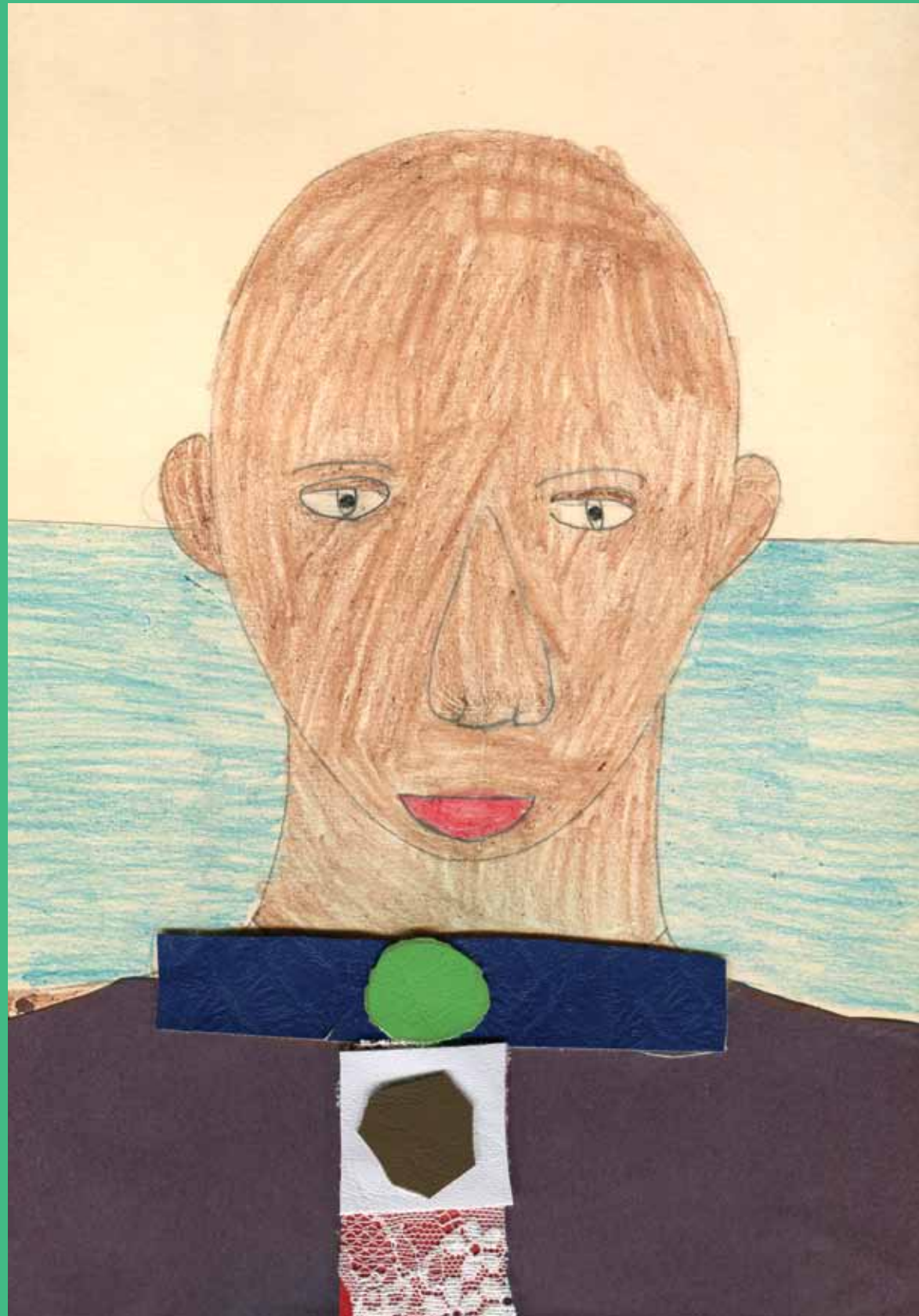
Laila

Run Away

Eliza's master's word surprised her
Eliza was going to be sold
She always knew it could be a
possibility
Eliza had to go to the River of Ice
The water rises
And rises and rises
Lord, Lord! She cried

Marquis





A Brief Moment of Freedom

Like a frightened rabbit scared and trembling
He scurried at my command
Just when he thought I'd gone
He made a triumphant discovery
No more chain, Peppel hands and
Legs were free.

I forgot to bound the chains
I forgot to close the iron gate
Peppel led the men to freedom
Not so fast, the guards are alerted
Then Peppel jumped!

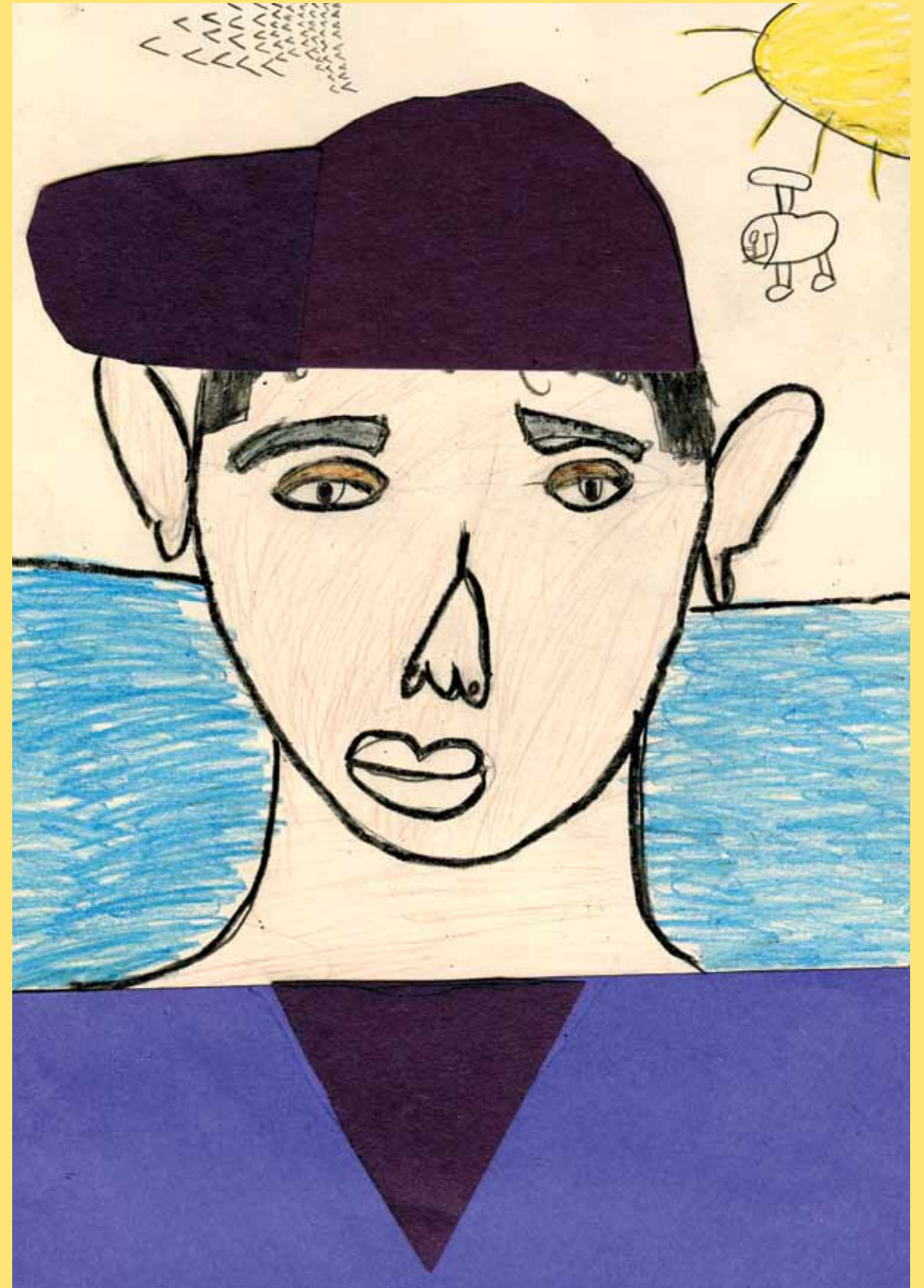
Man over board! He couldn't swim
Help at last-a boat was lowered
Take it or die, a decision was made
Peppel a foolish slave
The white face was staring at Peppel
Captured once again!

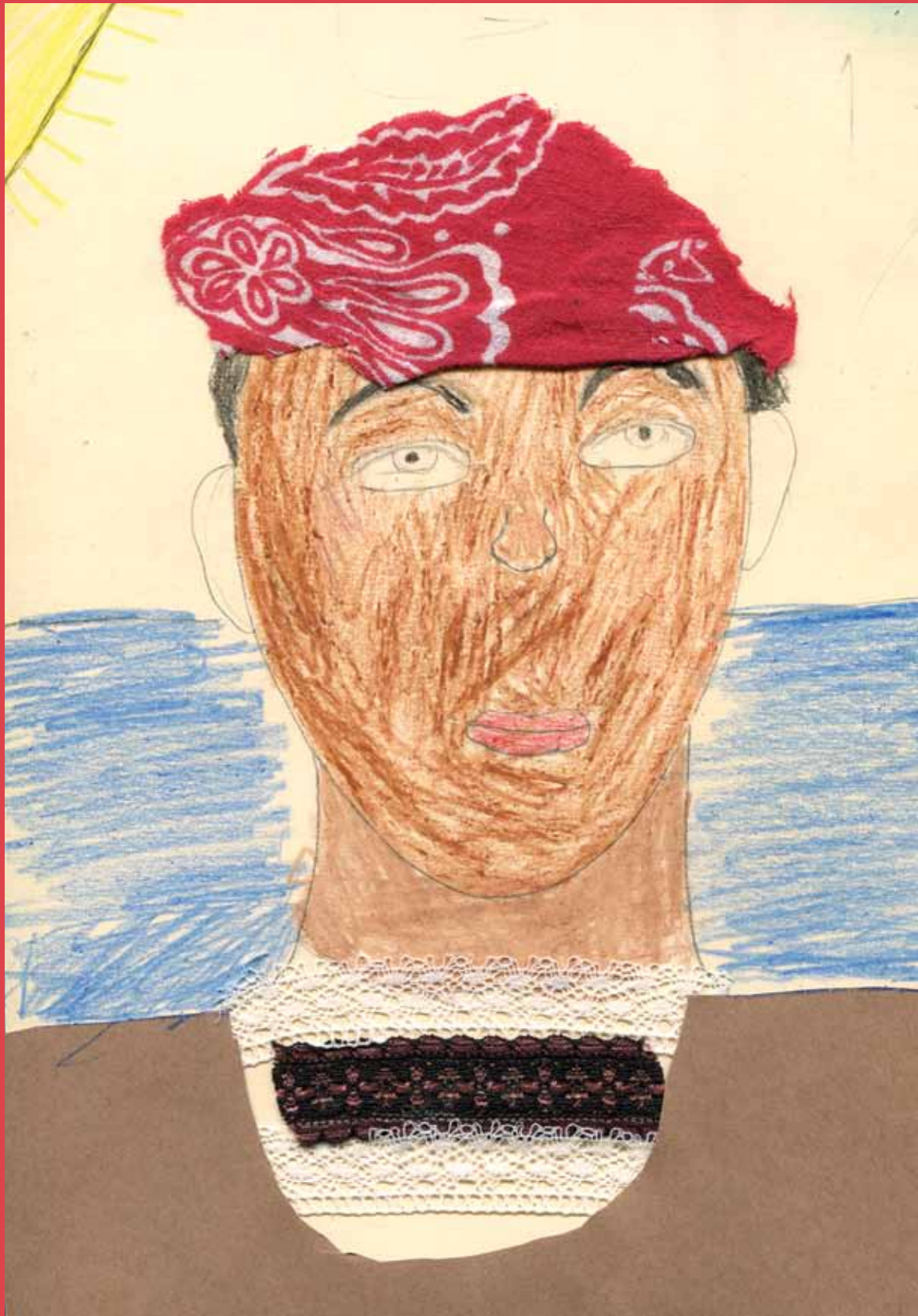
Kayla

Olaudah

He was a little boy
In the world of evil men
With pale complexions and faded skins
They made him walk the plank
Chained by his wrists and legs
They threaten to cause him harm
The thought of death was upsetting
His name means fortunate
But was he?

Cyrus





She Was Only A Slave

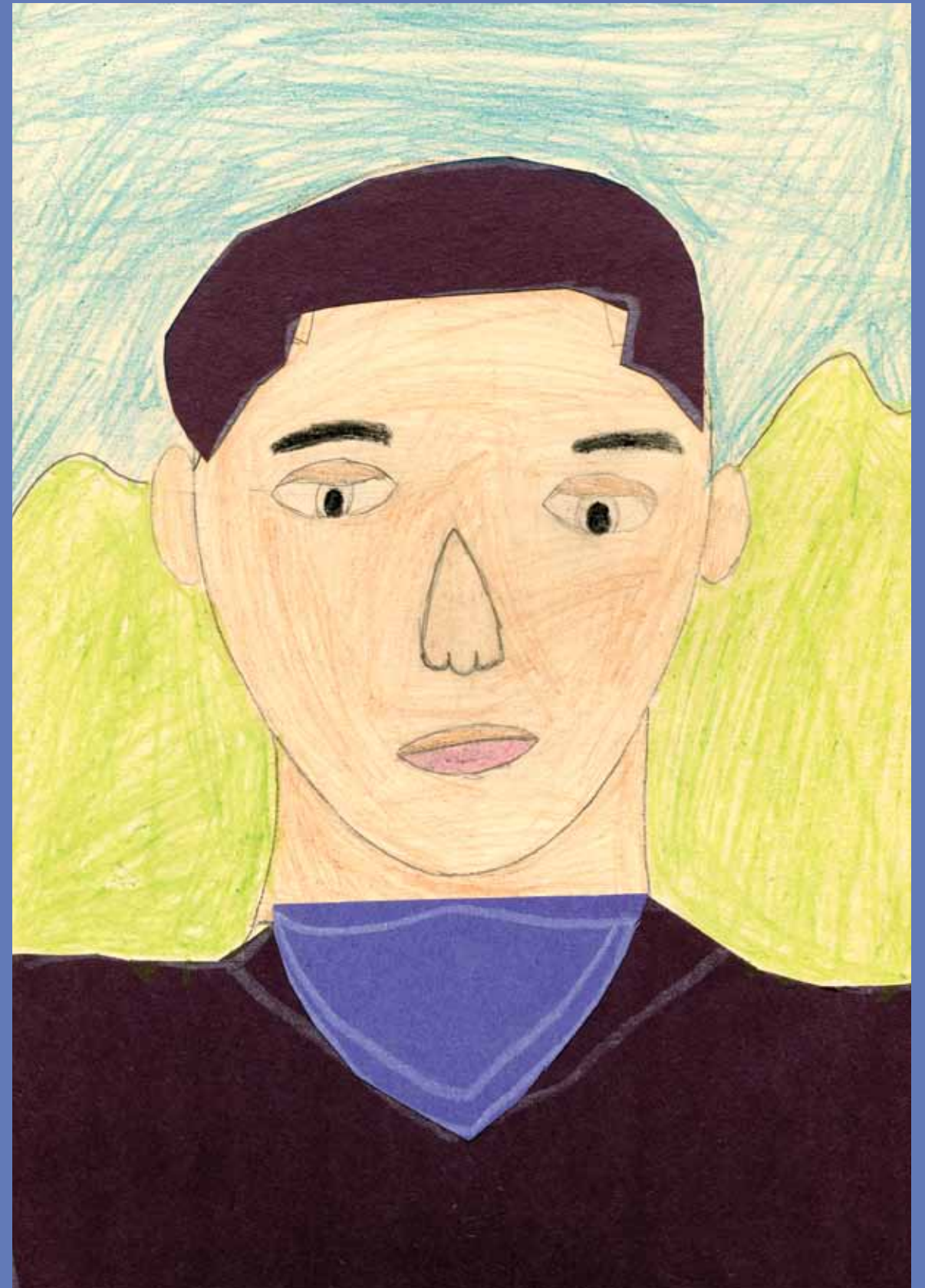
She may have been a slave
But her children made her a mother
She loved, cherished, and
Protected them like no other.
For her children she was brave.
All she had to lead her was the North star.
Never knowing how far she could go
She waded through slimy waters
And almost lost a child
But when she reached the end of her journey
Her freedom she had won.

Revon

He's Not Scared

John Scobell was a
Runaway slave but
Never was scared to take a chance
He teamed up with people,
He can trust but never did
get caught.
He was a spy who plot against
the enemy.
He was a confident man.
He was a poor man and didn't
own his land.
He got whipped by a slave master
He stood his ground
John Scobell was a proud man

Amir





John Scobell

Someone would say he was a spy
but one thing for sure
he was no stranger to the dark
and lonely streets of Virginia
John Scobell was quick-witted man

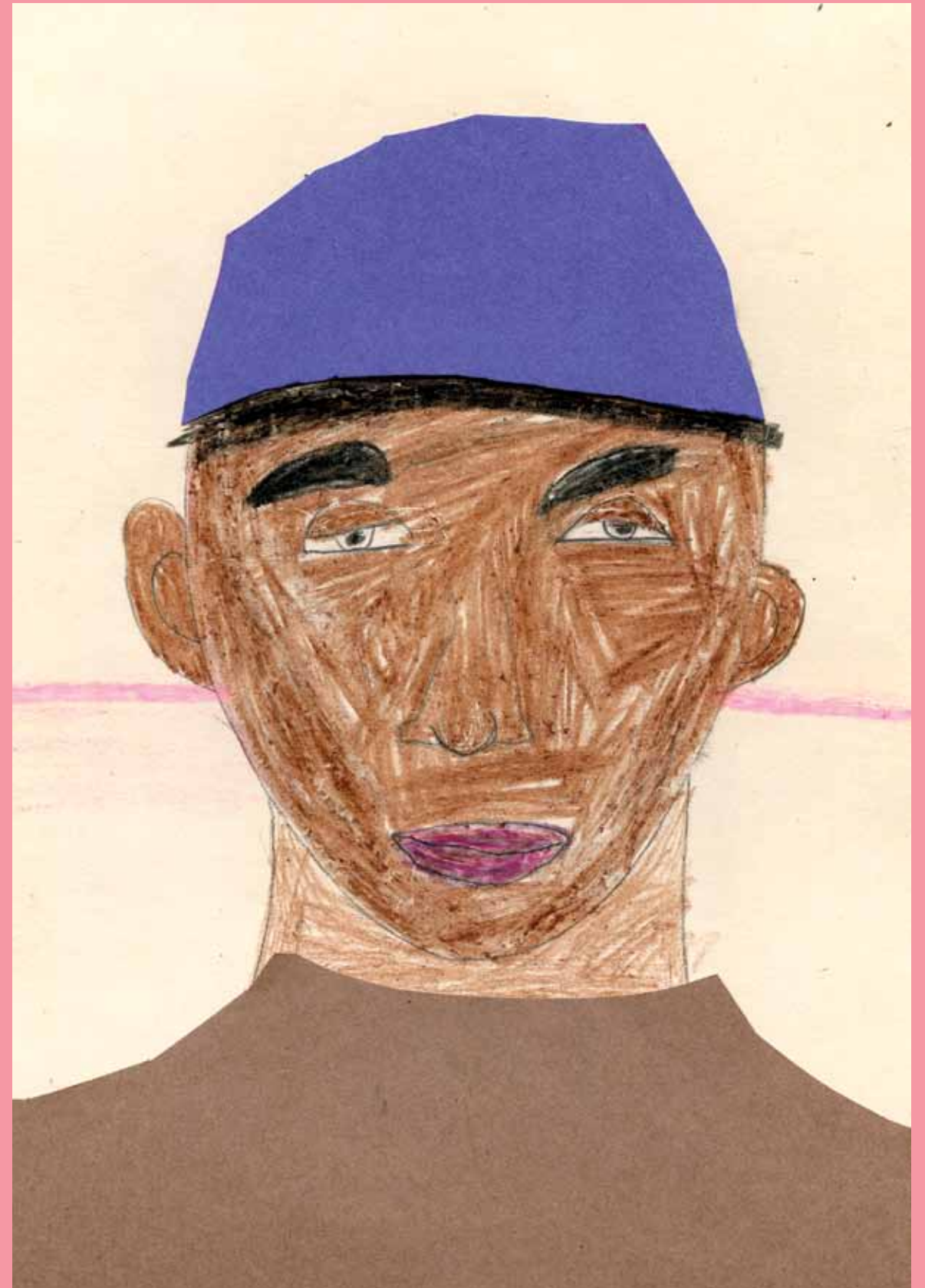
He knows how to keep a secret
confident, careful, and discreet
he had a plan which he shared
with only a few trusted men
John Scobell got the job done

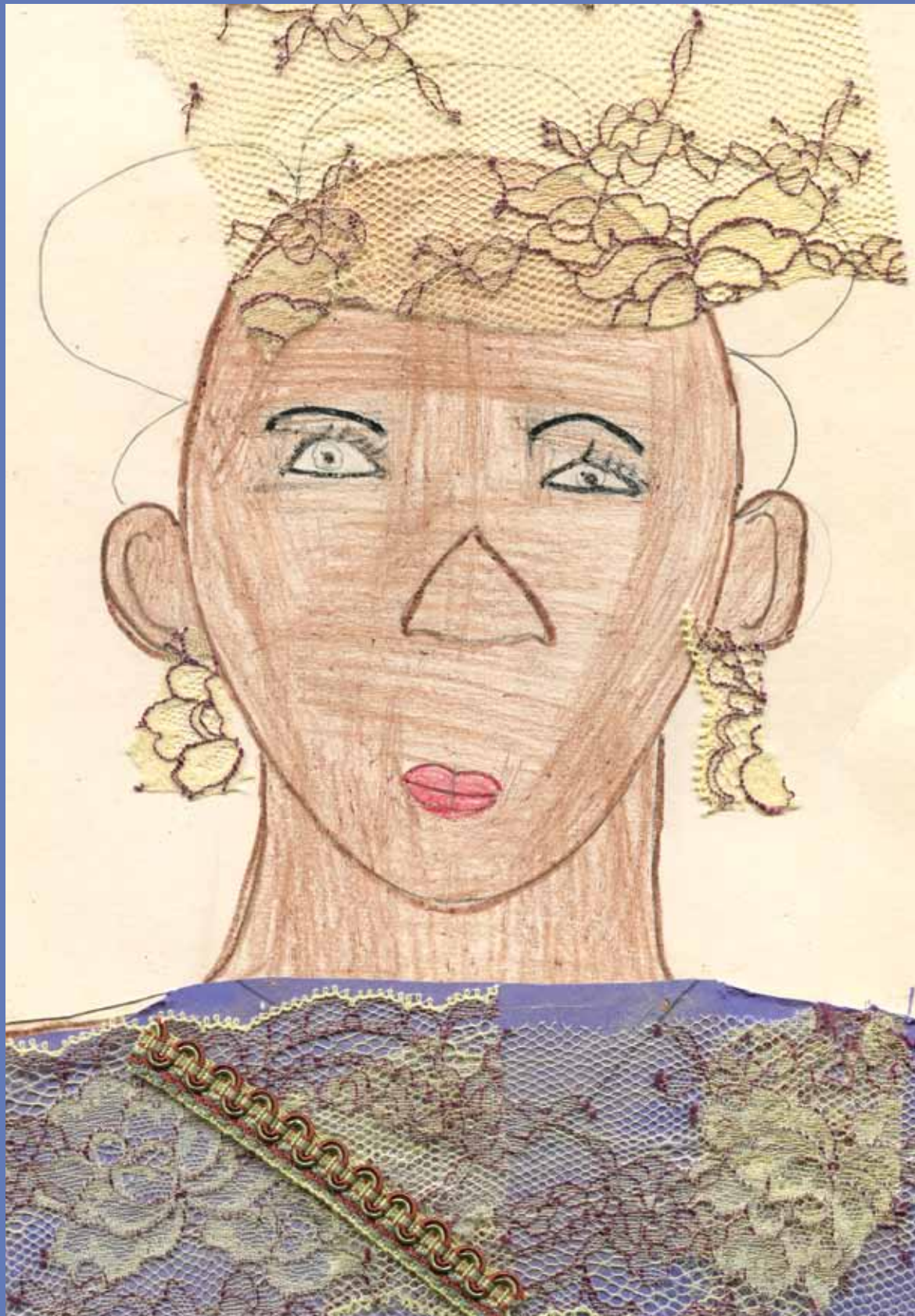
Ridwan

Suzie King

Clippety, Clop, Clippety-Clop
Over the hot streets of Savannah Georgia
Suzie King looked down
Down on the hot pavement
When all she wanted was to look up
And stare at the horses manes
But Suzie didn't dare
Stare a white person in the face
Hiding what her grandma gave her,
Suzie and her brother went to school.

Ashanti





Determination

The bull frogs croaked
The crickets chirped
Mud clings to her clothes to
Drag her down

Caroline followed the North Star
Clinging and guiding her children
Through the night, through the swamp
Com on children, keep going
The North Star and the drinking gourd
Lead them safely to the other side of freedom

Felicit

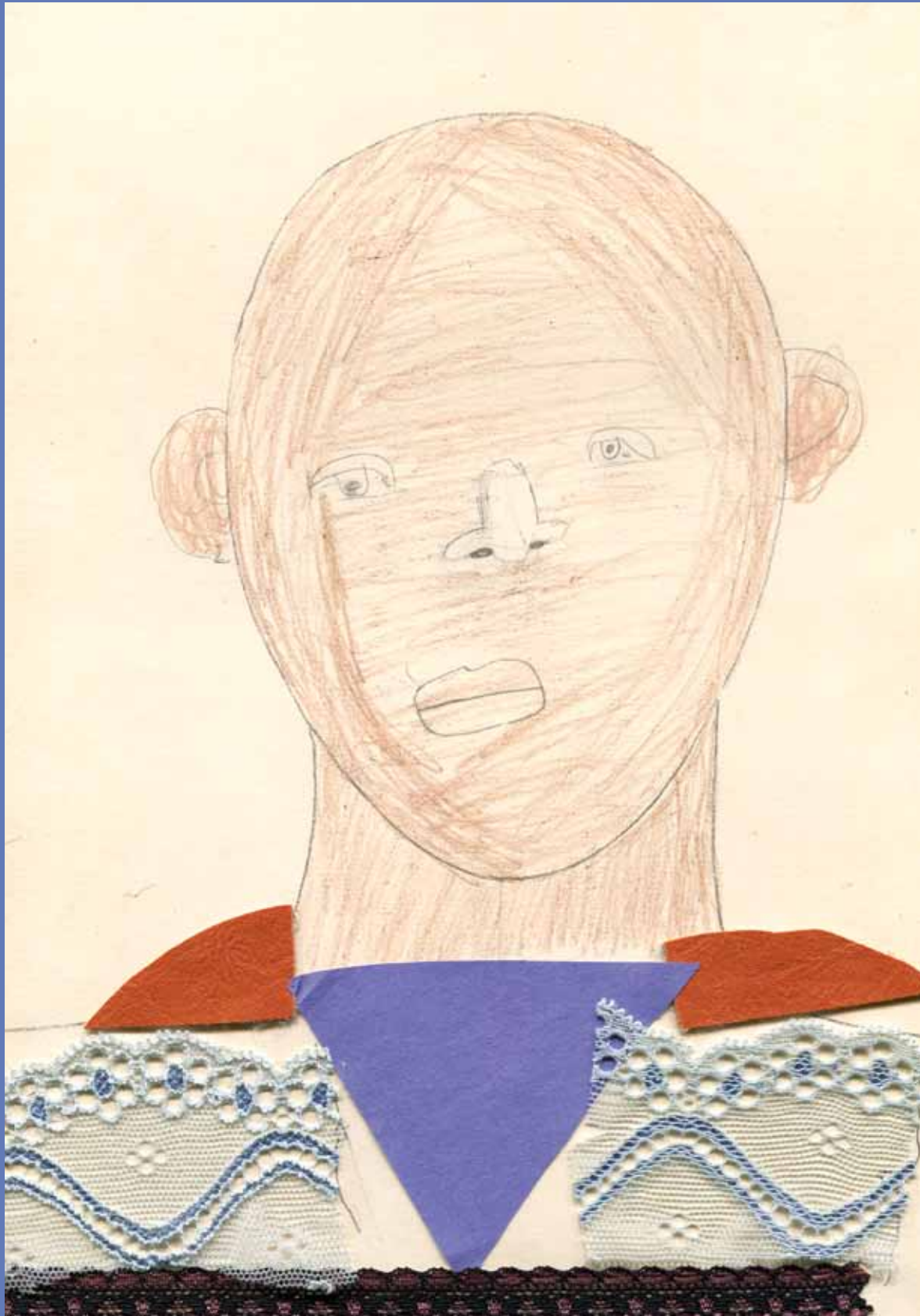
A Slave Owner Speaks

The girl took the news
very hard
The young mother cried
We paid her no mind.

She overheard my secret plot
So the stupid girl sneaked
out of her cabin one night
And escaped to freedom.

Diallo





Born Free

Born a free black
Work the Underground Railroad
A conductor and documenter
Runaway slaves know him by name
Providing food, clothes, shelter,
money, and transportation
Recorded their courage to escape
Someday will make history
Ask Faith or Charlotte

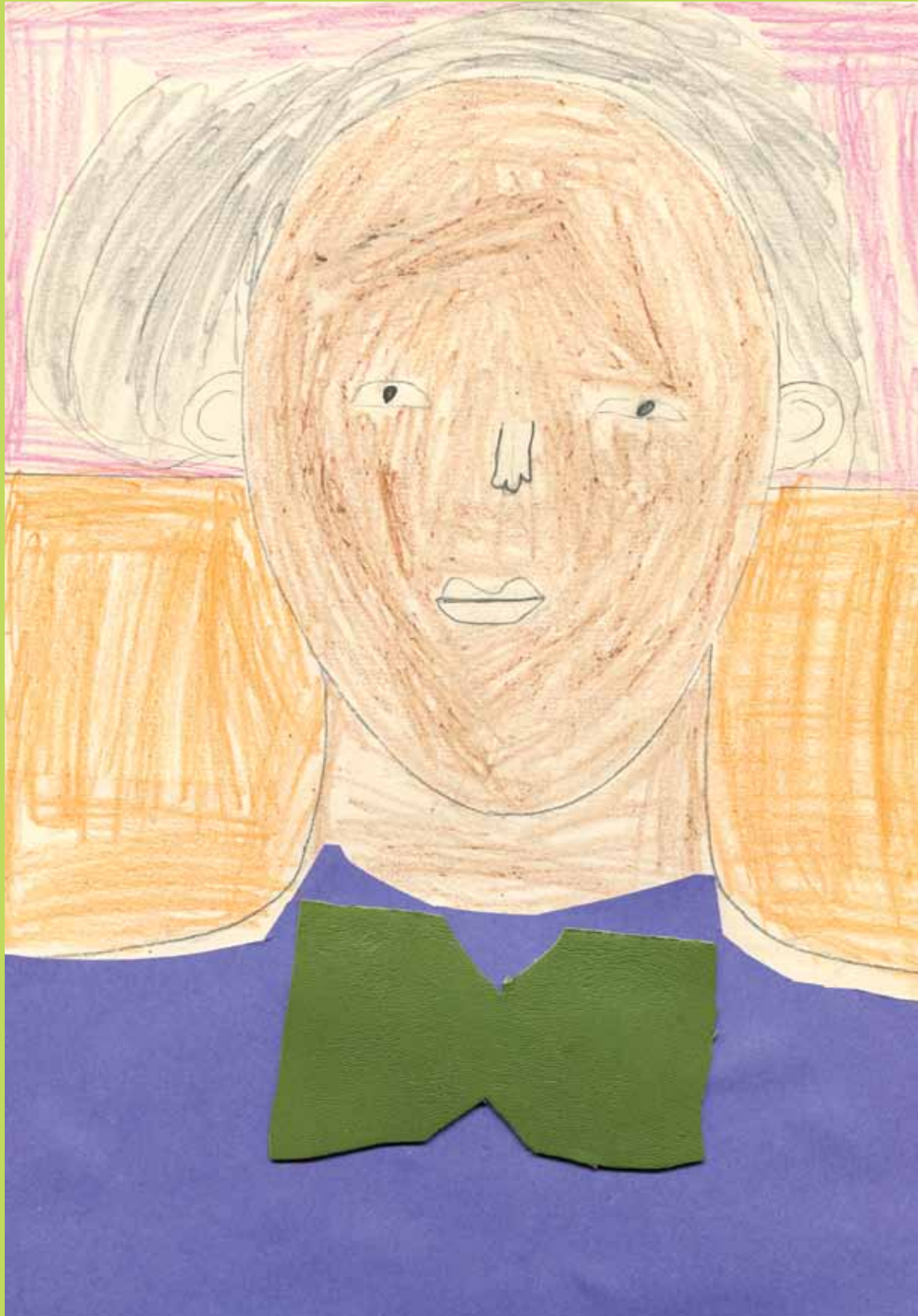
Rayana

A Delayed Woman of the Year Award

This award goes to
Miss Harriet Tubman
For being the
Best conductor of the
Freedom Train
For being fearless,
Courageous,
Clever,
Selfless,
Caring,
Determined,
Choosing to be a
Slave no more.

Laronda





Rebellious

Six days a week
His body aches
Pitch fork in hand
Through rain, hail and
the broiling sun.
His back scarred from the cruel lashes
His body scarred and his spirit grew stronger
A Tightened rope around his leg
Covey's breath upon his face-sneering
No more! Frederick knew he wouldn't
take it anymore.

Like a ferocious lion he springs
Seizes the slave master by the throat
Until blood gushes out
"Persist or Resist?" Covey asked
"Resist!" came Fredericks reply.

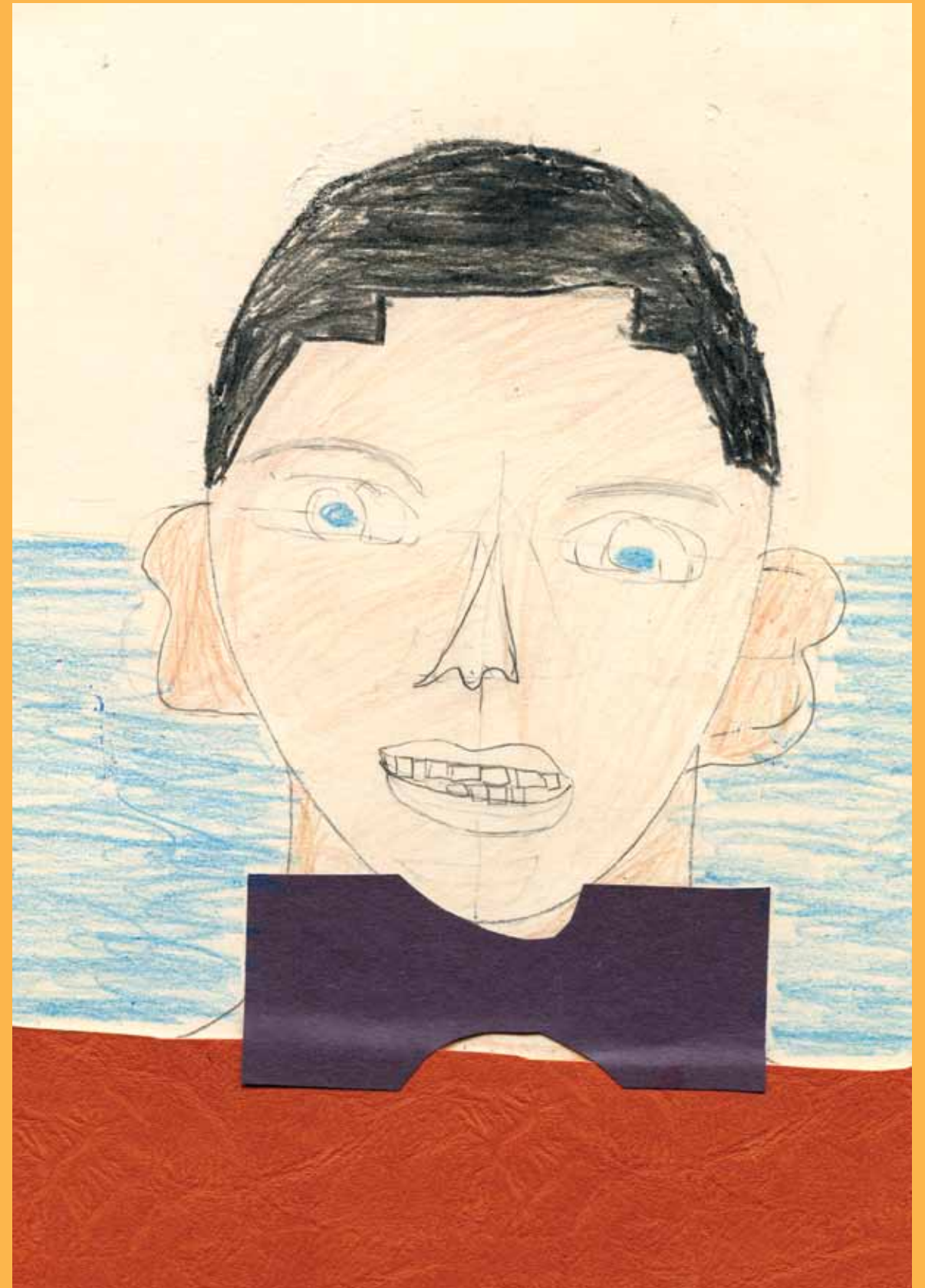
Zane

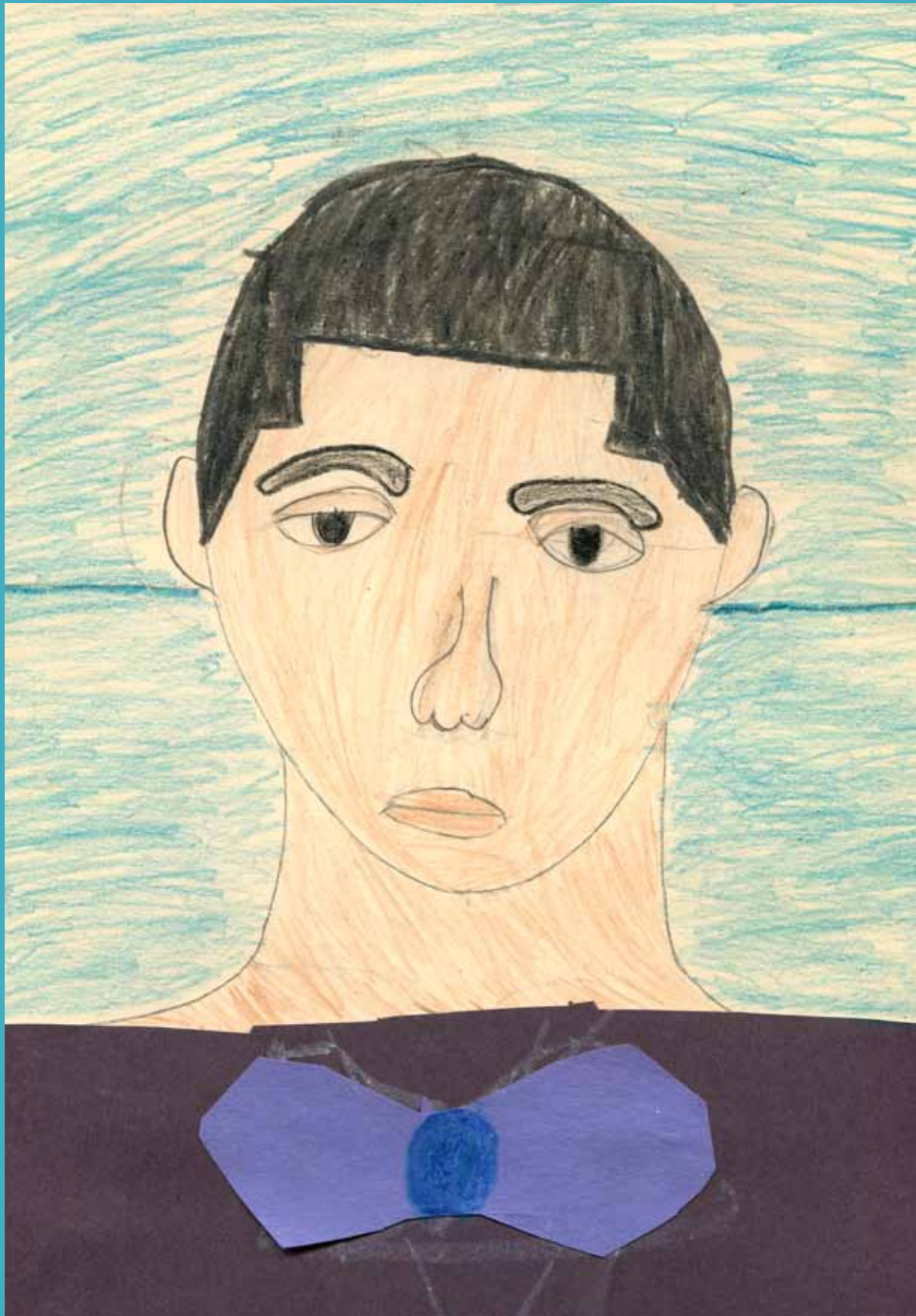
A Slave Owner's Lament

If I catch her, Lord help her
I shall sell her, and her child
My slave hunters will search
Every corner
They will catch that slave and
Bring her back.

"Hurry," I see her on the other side.
Get her! Get her!
I won't stop until she's mine
Again
A good slave was Eliza
Now I lost her

Brianna





Captured

Strange men grab me and
bound me in chains

Like a captured animal—walking
Time seems endless—climbing
Where am I? I'm scared—on a sailboat
Push, shove, push, shove, PUSH!

These chains that bound my ankles—hurting
Vomit, moans, cries, stink, I'm gagging
Where am I? I hear my language being spoken
Then I understand. I'm Olaudah a slave—
sold and resold

Anthony

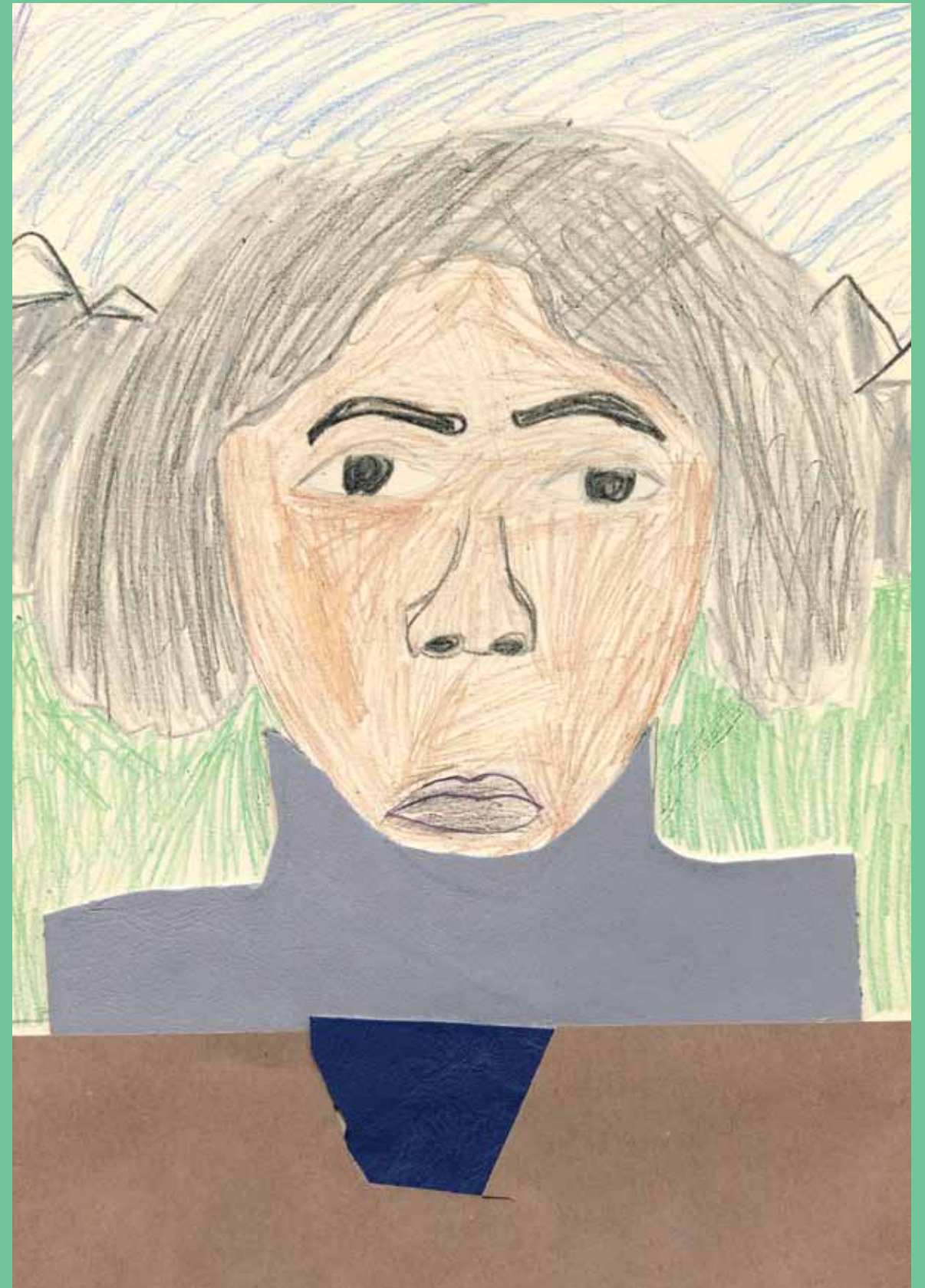
Break My Body But Not My Soul

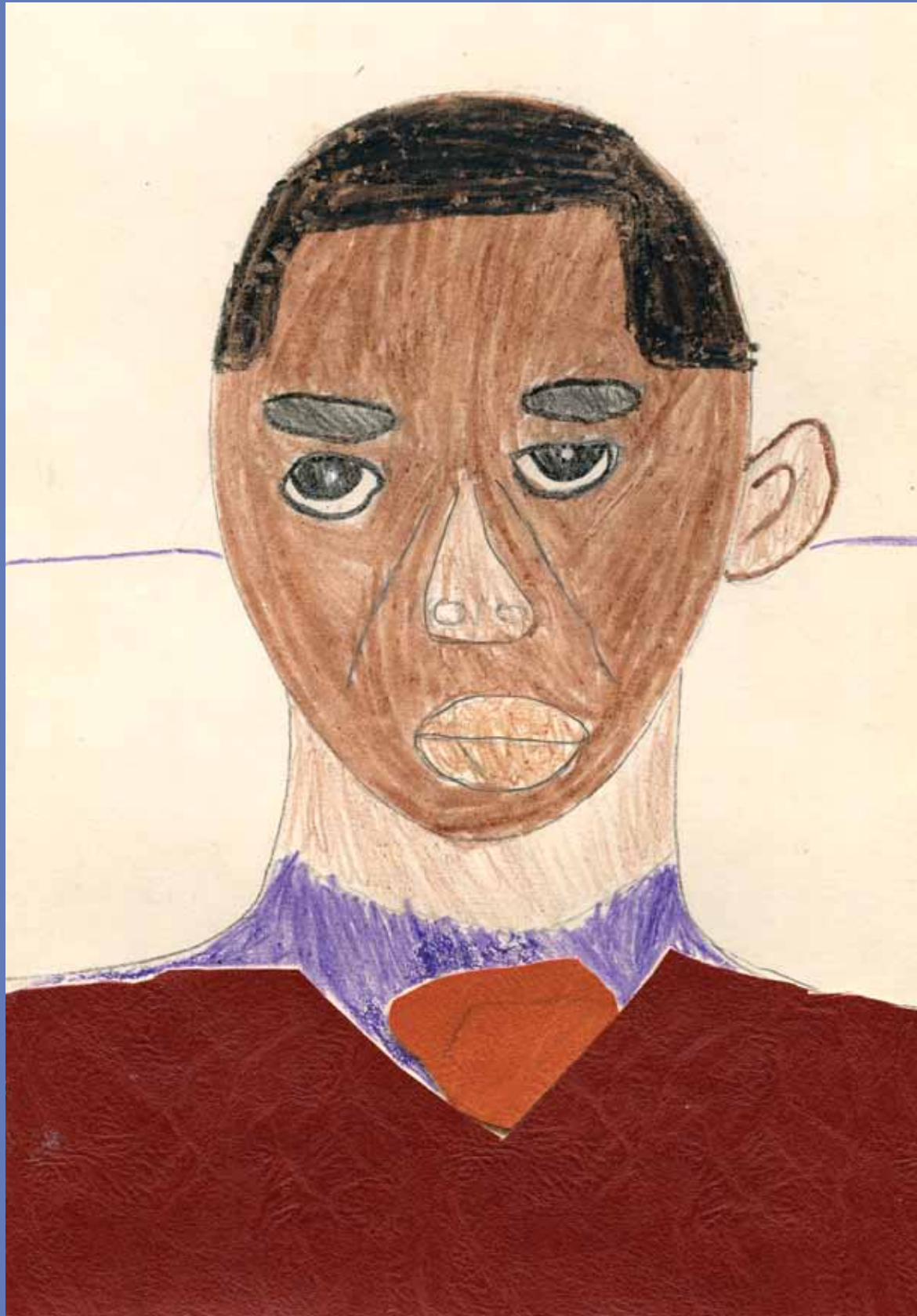
Frederick, your bravery is admired
Armed with your strong muscles
Your fist and your teeth
You decided enough was more than enough
And you showed him
You stood up to the whip master
He may have broken your body

but he could not beat your soul.
And he knew it too.

Master Covey the whip master
He cannot whip you anymore

Jerome





The Prophet

Rebellious as never was
Seen before
Was willing to kill and die
In the name of freedom

Chosen by God-so he said
To lead his people out of
Slavery
Led seventy slaves in a rebellion
Left many whites dead along
The way

And poor Nat Turner
The chosen prophet
Gave up his life
So others could go free.

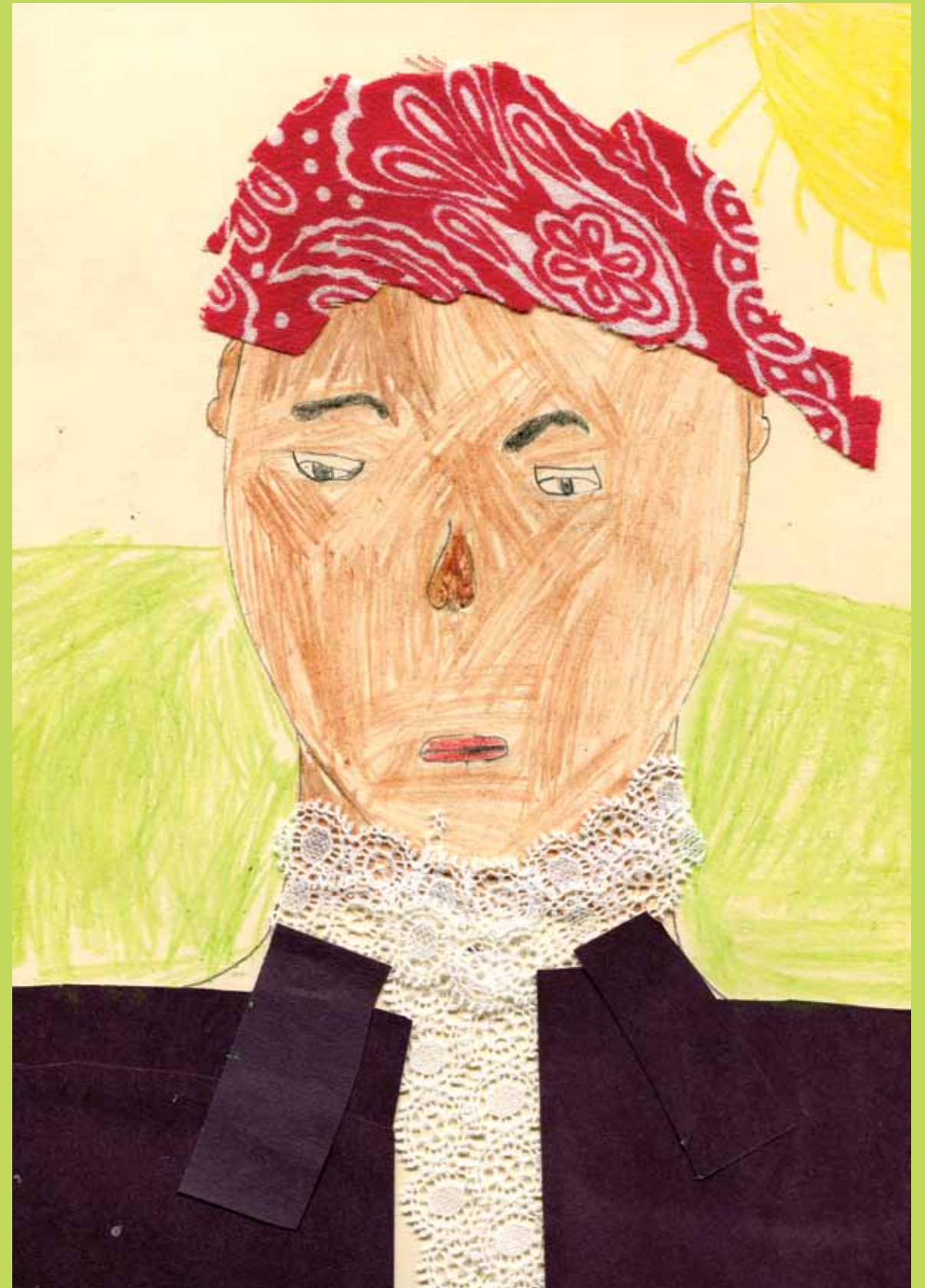
Mariah

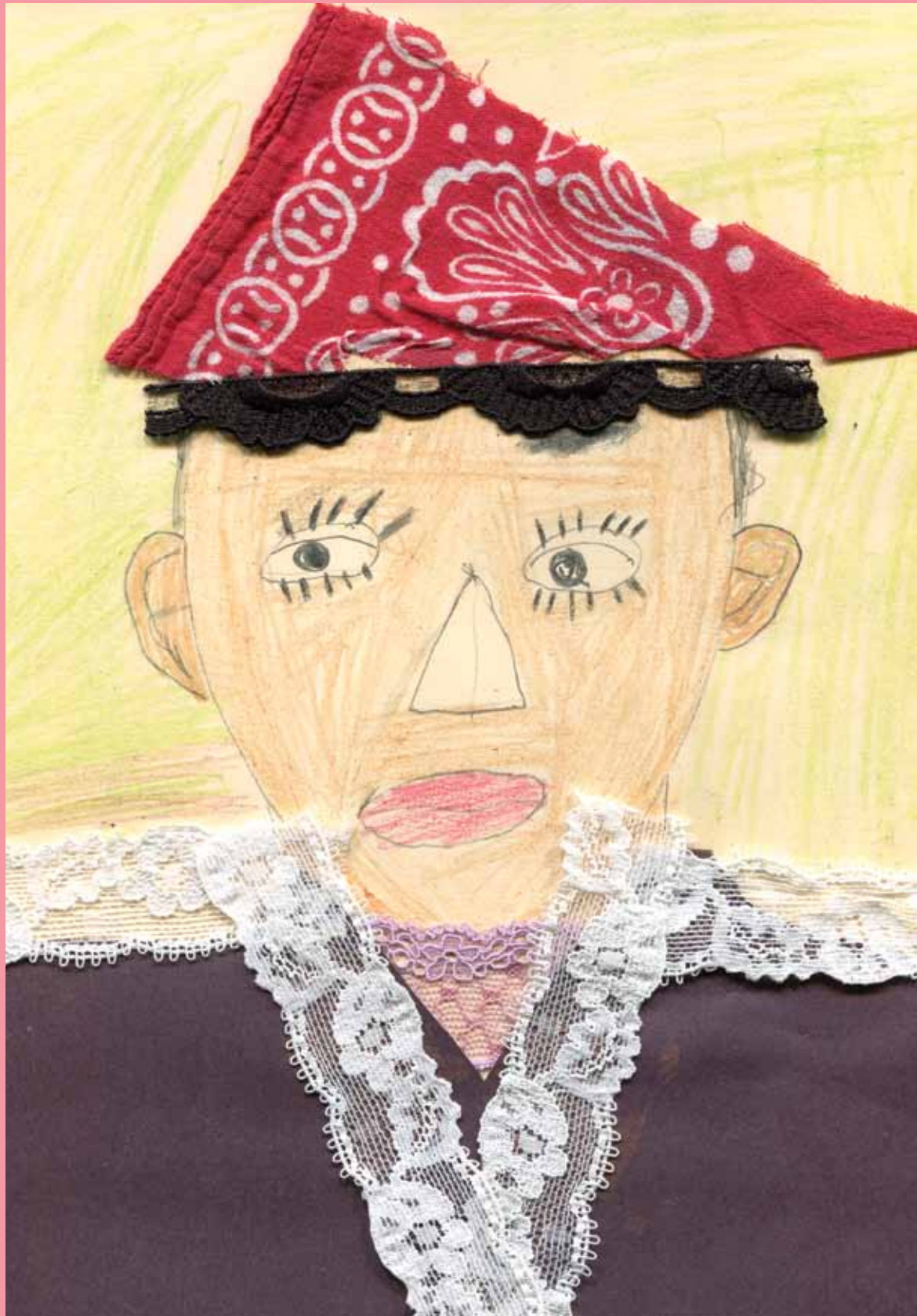
Harriet Tubman

An underground conductor
A fugitive from the white slave owners
no whistles, no horns blowing
but get on board little children

Go down Moses to the Gospel Train
Harriet Tubman made
"A thousand gone"
A thousand slaves gone from slavery

Aniyah





Harriet

Started working at the age of five
Hit in the head and almost died
Married John Tubman a freed slave
Harriet learned not to be afraid

Decided one day to escape
The Underground Railroad had the gate
That led Harriet and others slaves
To freedom because they were brave

Escaped by wagons, boats and foot
Harriet a task she undertook
A nurse, a spy, a really brave scout
That's what Harriet was all about

A conductor she was but don't be fooled
There's was no engine on that train
Station to station slaves get on
There was no sign, don't look for one

Facing danger of being capture
Forty thousand dollars were offered
More than three hundred counted
While slave owners hunted
Harriet sleep in peace!

A Grandma's Love

I am
Grandma Dolly Reed
I raised two grandchildren
Suzie and her brother
I love those two.

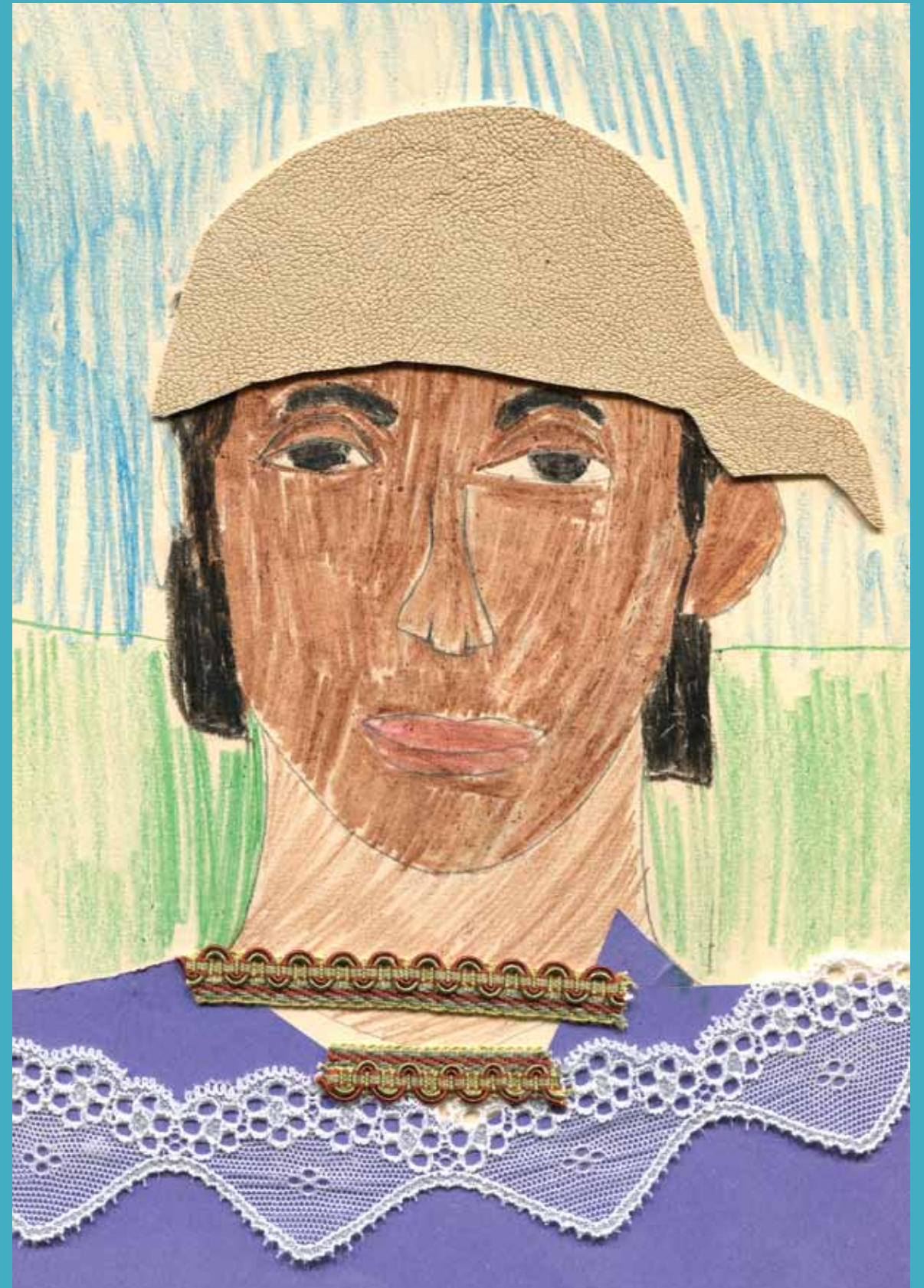
I didn't care how much
Whipping I had to endure
How much jail time I had to do.

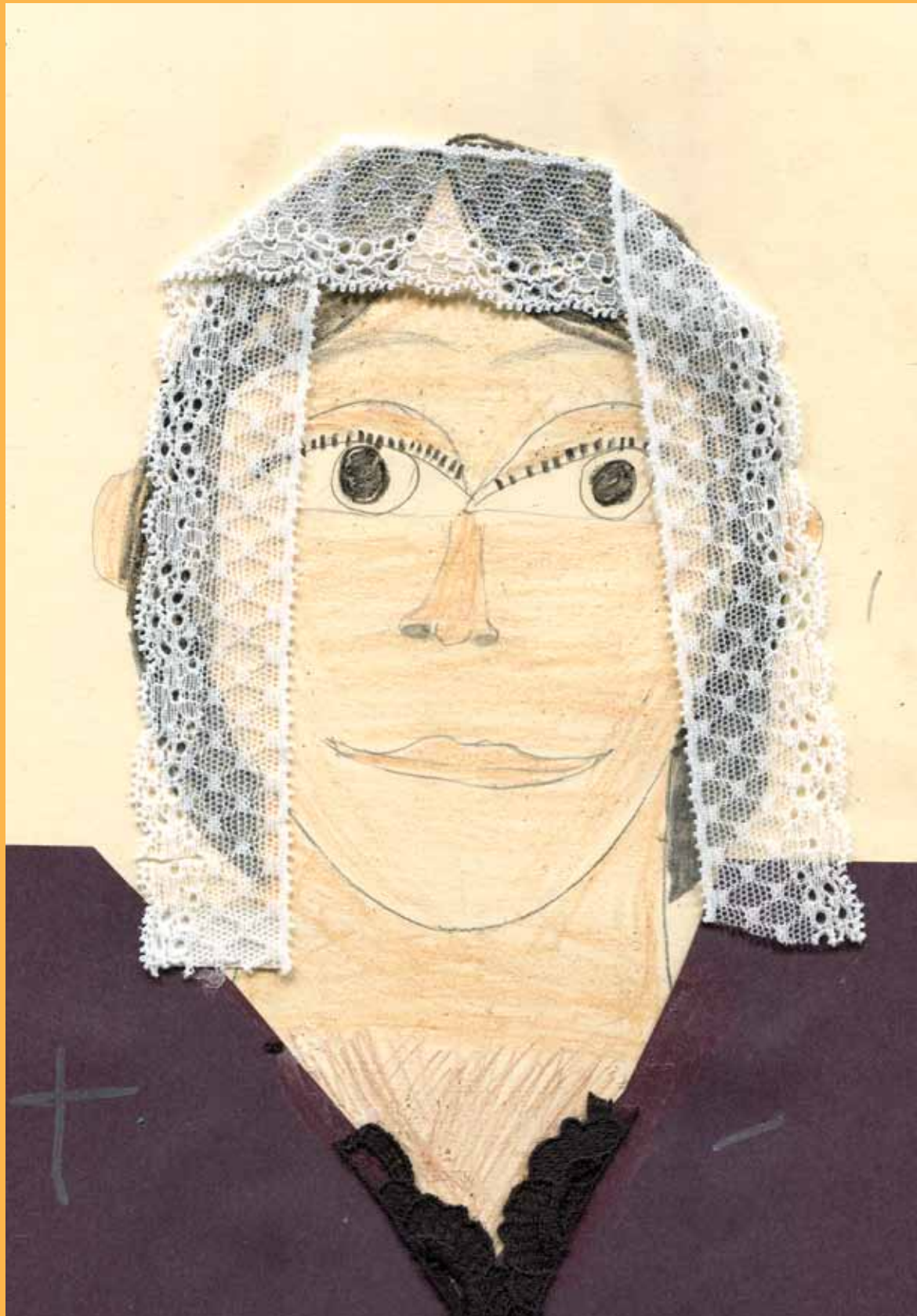
I was determined until
My last breath
That Suzie and her brother will learn to
Read and write.

So every morning before the
Sun was up
I wrapped their lunch
And hid their books
Tied up neatly in a package

Kissed Suzie and her brother
And shooed them out the door
Then I prayed, I prayed
They wouldn't get caught
Sneaking into Mrs. Whitehouse
Secret School

Geanna





Untitled

Lord, Lord! My mamma cried
In the dark, cold, icy waters
Mama! Mama! Baby Caroline cries
The water rises and covered
Her head,
My mamma Elisa a
Frightened prey and a
Fugitive.
The slave predators were on
Her heels.
She runs to a cabin.

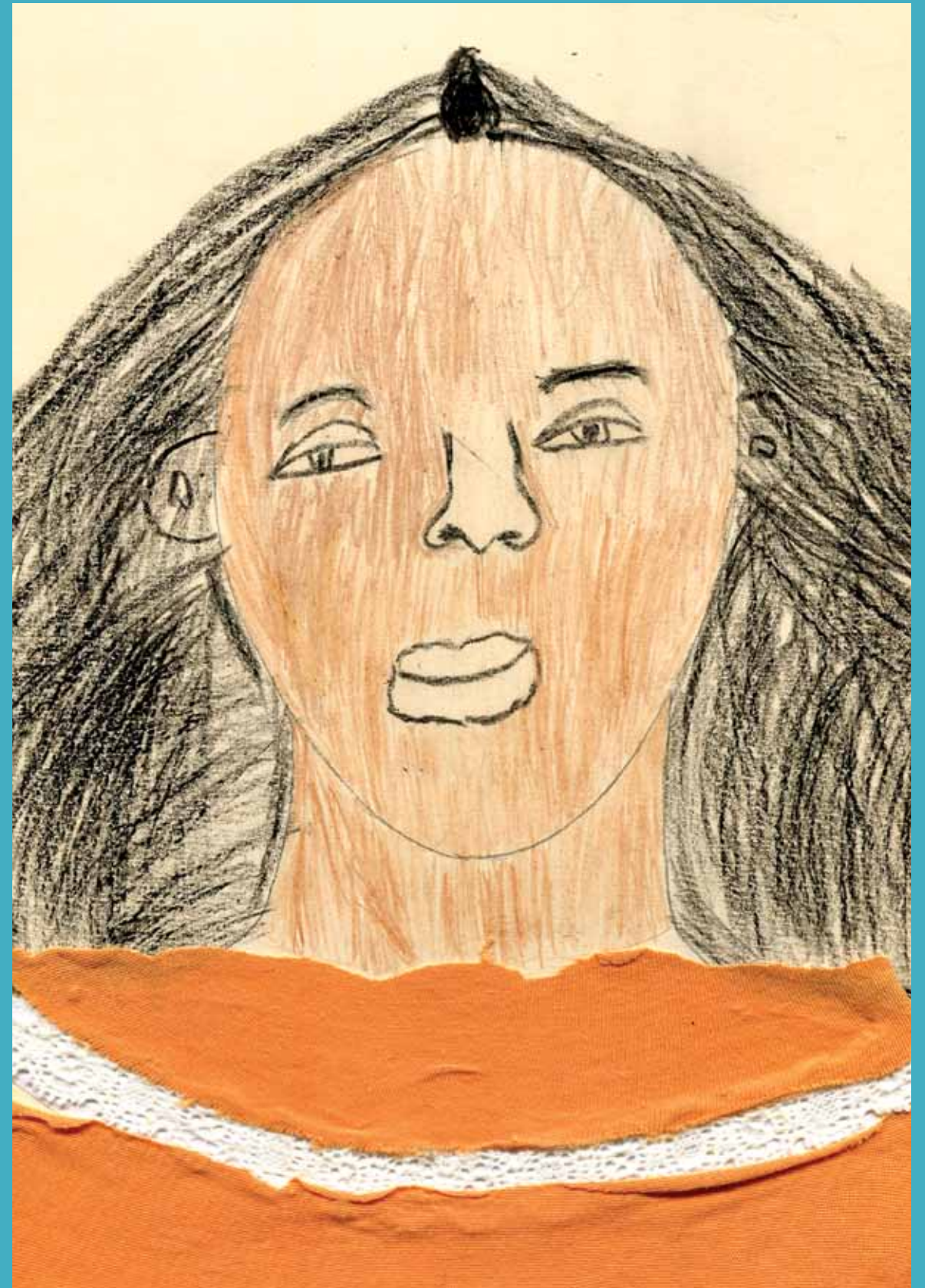
Kiara

Sing Adeline Sing

Sing Adeline sing
Sing your songs of comfort
Sing your songs of inner freedom
Sing soft, sing low, sing strong
Sing till people moan and groan

Sing but don't give yourself away
Sing, clap, stomp, and shake
Sing the song of hope
"Didn't My Lord Deliver Daniel?"
Sing Adeline, sing

Tahmel





Where's My Brother?

He thought he belonged to
no one
He didn't want his life to waste
So he seeks out other slaves
To tell their stories of escape

An interview with a stranger
proved to William
He was no longer alone
"What were your parent's names?"
William asked the man
"Your older brother's name?"

Question after Question
the answers were alarming
For the stranger he talked to
was none than his lost brother.

Nieziah



About the Visiting Author

In 1965, DOREEN RAPPAPORT went to Mc Comb, Mississippi, to teach at a freedom school. The experience changed her life. She met “extraordinary ordinary” people — black Americans who had been deprived of rights that she took for granted, and who were threatened with death every day. Their courage inspired her. They were heroic. She knew there had to be many more “unknown heroes,” people who helped change history. She set out to recover and write about this “lost” history.

She’s published 48 books with more to come.

She divides her time between New York City and Copake Falls in upstate New York, where she gardens and cooks in between her research and writing. She also travels across the country, visiting schools, and talking to children.

She’s married to a painter, sculptor and a great flower gardener. They have eight grandchildren.

About the Student Authors / illustrators

The authors of this book are students in the fourth grade at C.S. 21 in Brooklyn. Our class is made up of 23 students and we are 10 years old. Our teacher’s name is Ms. J. Johnson. We love to write books, especially books with famous authors like Doreen Rappaport. This is our first published book.

While writing and working with Ms. Rappaport we learned about the importance of education and about slavery and our ancestors.

We had a great time with Ms. Rappaport and we hope you learn from our poems and enjoy our book.

About Behind the Book

In the midst of shrinking education budgets, Behind the Book (BtheB) offers NYC students a refreshingly creative and empowering experience. Working with classes from Kindergarten through 12th grade, Behind the Book brings authors and their books into individual classrooms to build literacy skills and create a community of life-long readers and writers. Authors teach a series of workshops that engage and inspire students and culminate in the publication of a writing project, such as an illustrated book, a school newspaper, or a short story anthology. BtheB programs are part of the class curricula and meet the Common Core Standards. Behind the Book believes that every student deserves the freedom that comes from the ability to read and think independently.