

“Truth Matters”

By Dasha Zerboni

You know it's bad. But, all the billboards say it isn't. They say it's safe, only half the nicotine of cigarettes. And it's flavored, as if made for kids. So, it must be okay. Your mom tells you never to vape, that it's poison and will eat your lungs from the inside. But, the newspaper advertisements say different. They say that it's pure, cool, a way to avoid that bad cigarette habit. And you believe them. Your school posts warnings, that it's addictive, that even one smoke can get you hooked. But, your friends tell you otherwise. "Just one hit," they implore. "It won't even matter. You just wake up and forget about it." And, you accept. Because your friends wouldn't lie to you, right? Wrong. You wake up like normal, but you can't stop thinking about it, no matter how hard you try. So, you do it again. And again. And again. Until it's all you think about. Until your lungs bleed from the inside. And, you're left thinking. Why did they lie to me? They said it was safe. But, they were wrong, and now here you are. And nothing can ever bring you back.