



Southend High School for Girls

AN ACADEMY GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Southchurch Boulevard, Southend-on-Sea, SS2 4UZ

Headteacher: Mr J Carey MEd (Cantab), BA (Hons), LLE, NPQEL

Friday, 1st December 2023

Dear Parents, Carers and Students,

Please find below information and updates from this week.

Year 7 Reading

Year 7 students have completed their first Star Reader assessment via the Accelerated Reader website. The Star Reader Assessment gives pupils their 'Zone of Proximal Development' (ZPD). This helps pupils and parents choose books from the school library and outside school which are at the appropriate level of challenge. Reading lists for Year 7 can also be found on the school website under the 'curriculum' section. When pupils have finished reading a book, they can take a short quiz online. Quizzes can be found here [Welcome \(renaissance-go.com\)](https://www.renaissance-go.com), and are available for thousands of books on the Accelerated Reader website. The software calculates the number of words read per book, and SHSG achievement points are awarded when pupils reach certain milestones. Pupils who read over one million words are awarded a special certificate, badge and enter the SHSG 'Millionaires Club'.

Congratulations to Ariana H (below) in 7Aurora who has become our first SHSG Reading Millionaire of 2023-24! Ariana has read over 1 million words since joining us in September. Being the first Year 7 student to reach 1 million words since the start of term, Ariana has also won 300 points for her house, Aurora.

A separate letter has been sent to parents of Year 7 pupils this week about the reading programme. You can find further information on the 'Reading' section of the school website '[here](#)'. For more information about supporting your child with reading at home, and book recommendations, visit the links below:

- [BookTrust: Getting children reading | BookTrust](#)
- [Words for Life | National Literacy Trust | Words for Life](#)
- [Young people | Reading Agency](#)



CPA Showcase – Creative and Performing Arts

The CPA Showcase has started in reception. Each half term two mini exhibitions of work from the Creative and Performing Arts Faculty will be on display. We currently have a selection of portraits from year 12 Art students which will be on display until the new year. The starting point for the year 12 portfolio is the theme of 'Identity', which students can respond to in any way they wish. All of these students were asked to draw a portrait of themselves, and these resulting sustained drawings and paintings show sophisticated skills, individuality, and a diverse range of styles.



Southend Festival of Performing Arts – SHSG 2023 Winners

Last Friday the school choirs took part in the Southend Festival of Performing Arts - formerly the Southend Musical Festival - performing in back-to-back competitive classes. Adjudicator Gaynor Keeble praised the choirs for their atmospheric singing and intonation, with the Chamber Choir going up against St Bernard's Choir. SHSG won, achieved a Distinction, and they took home the Chas Waller Challenge Shield, with engraved winners going back to 1923! In addition, SHSG Choir returned to school with the jumbo Samuel Riley Cup and lots of smiles.

On Saturday evening, the Chamber Choir returned to the festival for the Premier Class for Choirs, in which they were awarded another Distinction. Notably, Layla Z. accompanied the choir at the piano with real poise and ensemble awareness. The new line up for Novem Consort went up against the feared Southend Vox Chamber choir, a dynamic ladies' choir which featured none other than Miss Cowper singing in the altos. In a repeat of last year, they proved too hard to beat - but there was only one point in it. Novem Consort were awarded 90 points which gave them the first Outstanding award of the singing category in the festival. They took home the Dulcian Madrigal Trophy as well as the Claire Singer glass bowl for the 'most moving performance'. Well done to all the students for these achievements and thank you to staff and parents who supported these visits.



Train Strikes - Tuesday 5th December

We are aware of the planned industrial action on the C2C line due to take place on Tuesday 5th December 2023. It is likely that no trains will be running on this day and therefore alternative travel arrangements will need to be made. This is a normal school day and all students are expected to attend school. Absence, due to the train strike, will not be authorised. Please can I remind you with all absences, it is the parents' responsibility to inform the school if a child will be absent from school as early as possible on that day. Please do so by calling the pupil absence line or, if the absence line is full, emailing office@shsg.org.

The library will be open at 7:30am and will close at 4:30pm to help those students who may need to be dropped off a little earlier or leave a little later.

Christmas Jumper Day – Thursday 14th December

Christmas Jumper Day is back again this year to help raise money for Save the Children, a charity that helps children both in the UK, and all over the world. Donations are £2 and can be paid via ParentPay. Wear your most Christmassy Jumper!



Arrangements for the last day of term - Wednesday 20th December

On the final day of term, students will be dismissed at **12.25pm on Wednesday 20th December**. Please note that food will be available to purchase at break, but the canteen will not be providing lunch on this day. If your child is entitled to a free school meal and you would like the school to provide a packed lunch for them, please indicate on the form '[here](#)'.

Any students who are unable to go home until their bus arrives and are unable to arrange alternative travel arrangements may stay in school until the bus arrives at the 3.30pm. Only Stephenson's buses and Maymist coaches will be picking up at 3.30pm. Ami Coaches will be collecting students at 12.30pm. Students staying in school will be supervised and will need to bring a packed lunch.

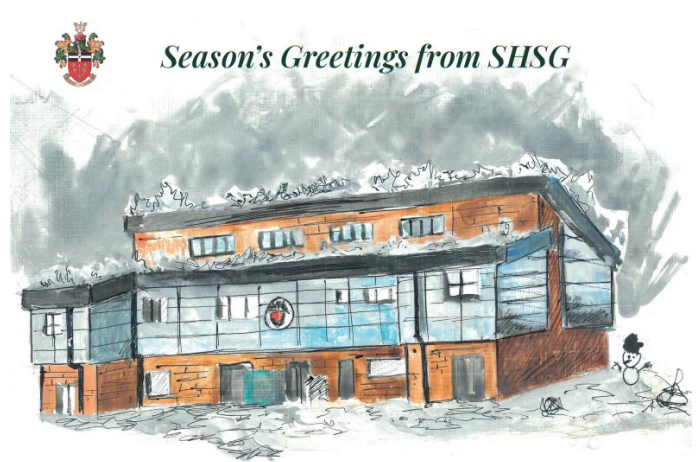
Please complete the form '[here](#)' by **Tuesday 13th December** if your child will need to stay in school until their bus arrives on 16th December. *Please note that you do not need to complete the form if your child travels home by other means of transport.*

Please see the end of term schedule of the day below:

	Time	Lower School Year 7/8/9	Middle School Year 10/11	Sixth Form Years 12/13
Period 1	9.00am-10.00am	In lessons	In Lessons	Assembly
Movement Time	10.00am-10.05am	Movement Time	Movement Time	Movement Time
Period 2	10.05am-11.05am	In lessons	Register for P2 then down to Assembly	In lessons
BREAK	11.05am-11.25am	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK
Period 3	11.25am-12.25am	Register for P3 then down to Assembly	In lessons	In lessons
		Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal

Christmas Card Competition Winners

This year's Christmas Card competition entries were extremely competitive! Therefore, we have decided to take three of the designs to print and send out to the wider community. Congratulations to Charlie, Gabriel and Ibadat in Year 12 for their stunning winning designs! All three designs are attached to the end of this letter, including smaller copies below.



Cursed Pen 2023

The English department are delighted to announce that Alexa S from Year 12 is the latest winner of our long running Halloween story writing competition with her chilling tale, "She Always Looks Behind, Never in Front". Alexa has been submitting excellent entries to our competitions for some time now and is a worthy winner. Our two runners up are Cerys B in Year 11 with her story, "The Smell", and Madison B in Year 7 for her story, "The Darkest Secret". Well done to all the students who entered, as always, we really were impressed by the quality of their writing and the range of their imaginations.

In addition to the story competition, the inaugural Cursed Poem competition drew several fine entries, and though the competition was close, we are proud to announce that Reeham K was the winner with her poem, "The Cursed Night". You can read their remarkable work and the work of other entrants on the English Blog [here](#). I have also included Reeham's poem at the end of this letter.

Poetry Live Trip

The English department took a group of Year 10 students to Dominion Theatre in London last week. The students got to hear poetry that they will be studying for their GCSE read out by the poets that wrote those poems. In addition, there were sessions from a senior examiner discussing how to analyse an unseen poem and how to compare unseen poetry. All the poets were fantastic, but students were particularly impressed with Imtiaz Dharker's poetry which was spellbinding. In addition to hearing the poets read the poetry, the poets explained their poems and took questions. The students thoroughly enjoyed the trip and Maya W even managed to grab a cheeky selfie with Poet Laureate, Simon Armitage, leaving the English department rather green with envy. The students who went on the trip were a credit to the school in both their behaviour and in their engagement with the speakers. Well done to them and to the English department for organising the trip.



Reminder Year 11 Parents' Evening

The Year 11 Parents' Consultation Evening is due to take place 'virtually' on Thursday 7th December. The system for booking appointments will close to parents at 6.30 pm on Wednesday 6th December. Please note that several teachers teach more than one class in the year group. Therefore, it will not be possible for these teachers to see all the families during the evening. In these situations, teachers will be inviting the parents of those students that they most want to see at Parents' Evening to a meeting before the places are made available for general booking by parents. As a result, you may have received some meeting notifications in advance of being able to book your own meetings. In the event of you not receiving a request to see a specific member of staff and that member of staff having no more remaining places, please talk through with your child how they are progressing in the subject concerned and contact Mr. Morgan, your child's Head of Year, if you have any specific concerns.

Young Carers at SHSG

At SHSG, we are aware that some of our pupils are young carers. A young carer is someone under 18 who is caring for a family member or friend unpaid. Young carers often take on practical and/or emotional caring responsibilities that would normally be expected of an adult. Research suggests there are at least 700,000 young carers in the UK, but many do not realise they are a young carer. It is common for parents, carers and children not to be aware that the young person is in fact a "Young Carer."

We know that young carers may need a little extra support and we are committed to ensuring that all pupils who are young carers are identified and supported effectively.

What could make someone a "Young Carer"? One or more of the following:

- A child who supports another person (could be a parent/carer/grandparent/ neighbour/family friend)
- Supports someone with mental health issues, emotional support.
- Supports someone with physical care, disabilities, helping with medicines.
- Supports an adult that has alcohol and/or drug issues.
- Has part or all responsibility for practical tasks such as cooking, shopping, cleaning and other household duties.
- Has part or all responsibility for the care of a sibling – getting up/ready for school/ getting to and from school.
- Supports someone with communication difficulties, such translating, reading and writing.

Why is it important for the school to know if your child is a Young Carer?

- The school can provide a trusted adult in school that the child is able to talk and be listened to about any worries and concerns they have in school and at home.
- Offer emotional support, help with isolation, conflicts, health problems such as anxiety.

We can offer to make a referral to Southend Carers, which is a local community support that offers clubs and activities for registered Young Carers. Or you can contact them directly, their website address is www.southendcarers.co.uk. Their telephone number is 01702 393933 alternatively you can email info@southendcarers.co.uk. If you think your child might be a young carer or could be affected by any of the issues we have highlighted, then please get in touch with their Pastoral Support Team or Head of Year.

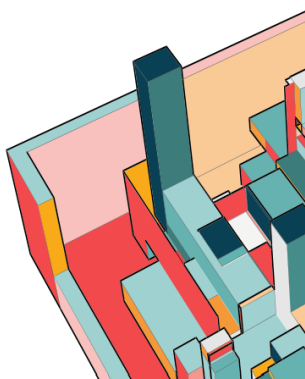
Careers talk from 'Old Girl' Emily

This half term's online registration Careers talk came from 'Old Girl' Emily. We fondly remember Emily as a student here for having the tenacity to secure herself work experience at Channel 4. Emily pursued journalist Jon Snow down to Southend East station after he had given a talk to students at SHSG! Emily's outgoing and gregarious personality has served her well in her career at Global, a major media company. Emily described her career journey to date as being more of a 'climbing frame' than a ladder, an evocative image in an industry where many jobs that our students will end up doing haven't been created yet.

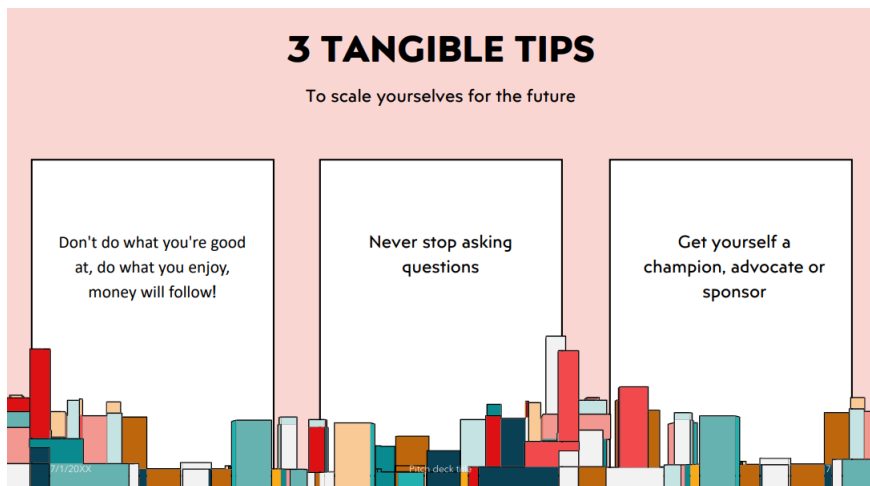
WHO AM I?



My name is Emily, I'm a 2007 SHSG graduate, who's now a Senior Product Manager with over a decade's worth of experience in the Media industry and previously reported into a board member at Global Media.



Emily had three tangible tips for SHSG students:



Emily kindly offered to share her Linked in profile for students and provided an extensive motivational reading list.

- *Predictably Irrational* - is about how the human brain is often irrational in its decision making and in predictable ways, he has a few books and they are all worth a read.
- *Atomic Habits* - how to develop good habit by breaking them down in smaller commitments.
- *The Psychology of Money* - insight into how money messes with people and 12 little stories to help explain.
- *Never Split the Difference* - book on negotiation, people try to get to yes but getting to no is actually more helpful sometimes.
- *Surrounded by Idiots* - book on personality types and why groups often conflict.
- *Utopia for Realist* - a book about the fact that we often are not communicating with the real facts.
- *Quirkology* - similar to *Predictability Irrational* but nice little insights.
- *The Art of Thinking Clearly* - a book about giving you insight on where your brain trips you up each day

Message from Tempest Photography company

*****Special Christmas offer: £5.00 off a Print in a tube (available until 1st December)*****

This is a reminder that your group photographs taken earlier in the year are still available to view and order via the Tempest Ordering website. A weblink is supplied below which will take you directly to your photograph and allow you to browse the products available and place an order should you wish.

Whole School Group - <https://htmp.st/230257-176WSG>

If your order is intended as a Christmas gift, we recommend placing your order before 1st December to give the best chance of receiving your photograph/s back in time.

Thank you for your continued custom with Tempest Photography.

SHSG Parents' Association Winter Concert Raffles – reminder

The SHSG Parents' Association will be holding a raffle each evening of the Winter Concerts which are due to be held on Monday 4th and Tuesday 5th December.

First, second and third prizes are winter hampers provided by Year 7 students.

Tickets cost £2 each and can be purchased on ParentPay until Monday 4th December 2023. Once purchased tickets will automatically be entered into the relevant evening raffle. All donations support the school.

Do not worry if you miss the cut-off date; raffle tickets (and additional raffle prizes) will be available on the night.

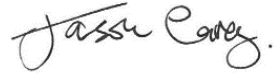
Thank you for your continued support.

Key Dates

The calendar on our website is regularly updated and contains key dates of activities and events that are taking place in school. A full list can be found [here](#).

Have a lovely weekend!

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jason Carey". The signature is written in a cursive style with a period at the end.

Jason Carey

The Cursed Night

In the darkness, shadows dance with fright,
Under the moon's pale and haunting light.
Whispers echo through the chilling air,
A cursed night of despair.

As the clock strikes midnight, the veil grows thin,
Revealing the horrors that lie within.
Ghosts and ghouls awaken from their sleep,
To haunt the living in the darkness deep.

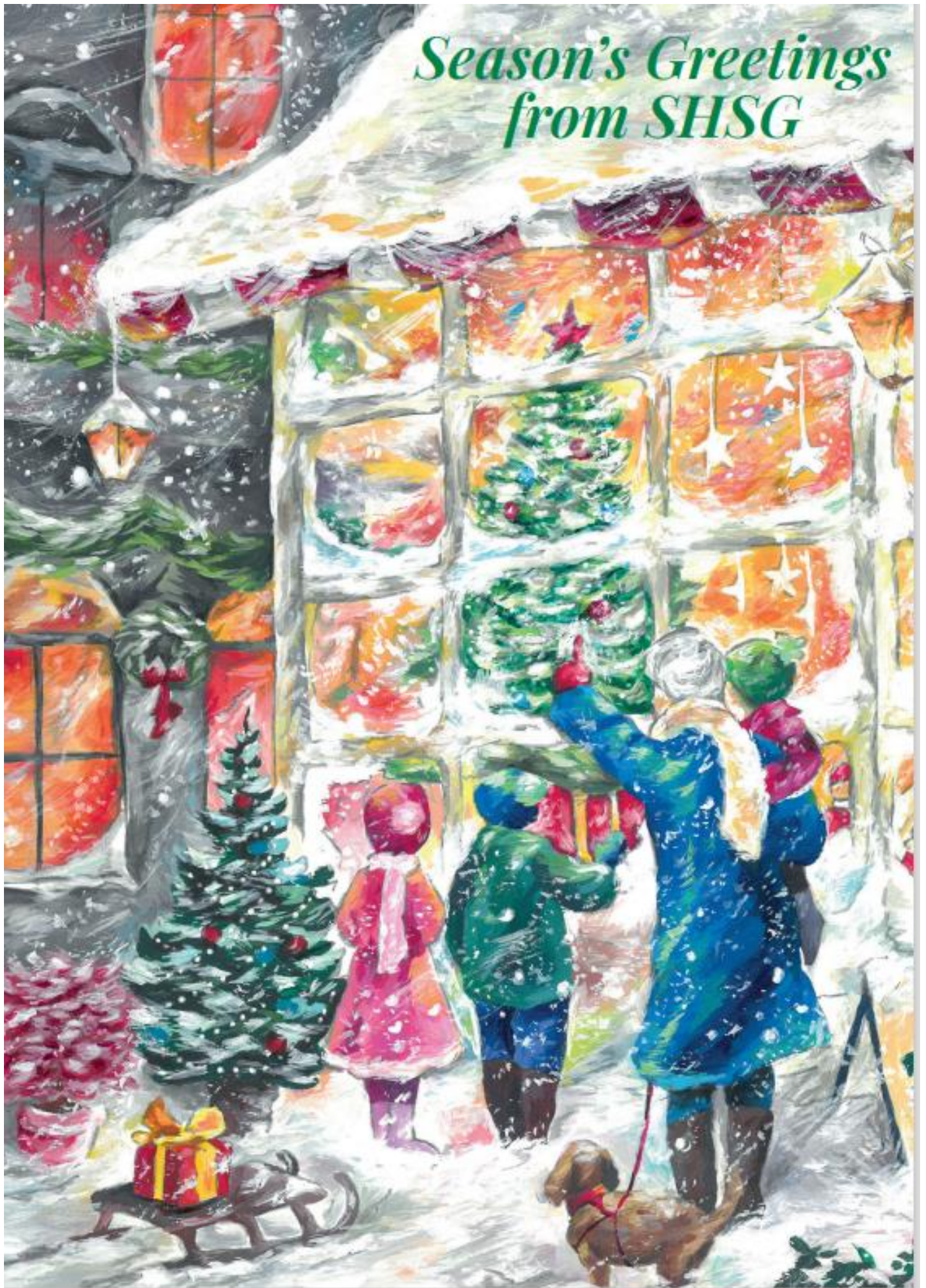
The wind howls with an eerie melody,
Carrying the echoes of the souls in agony.
The trees sway with a sinister grace,
Their branches reaching out to embrace.

Admst the darkness, a lone figure roams,
Searching for solace, a place to call home.
But in the cursed night, there's no escape,
Only the echoes of sorrow and heartache.

Yet, in the midst of this cursed night's reign,
A glimmer of hope begins to sustain.
For even in the darkness, there's a spark of light,
A flicker of courage that ignites the fight.

A glimpse of bravery admist the despair,
A hero emerges with a solemn stare.
With every step, they defy the night's dread,
A beacon of hope, their path they tread.

*Season's Greetings
from SHSG*





Season's Greetings from SHSG





Season's Greetings from SHSG

