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Rutendo:

the chief's granddaughter

Colette Choto Mutangadura



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Colette Choto Mutangadura 2009

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DEDICATIONS

This book is dedicated to my late father the late father Muchabaiwa C. Choto who told me so many stories and encouraged me to excel though I am a woman. "Women in developed countries are just like men," he would say.

To my late mother Christine J. K. Choto who was strong, harsh and hard working, encouraged me to fight for rights, "speak out," she would say.

To my husband Charles Tauya Mutangadura; the man who encouraged me so much and my best friend. I dedicated this book and my life to you.

To my daughter Ruvimbo Noeleen Muhau and her husband Jabulani who are always welcoming when I come to Harare for workshops and meetings. "You have a workshop with Zimbabwe Women Writers." They would say.

To my daughter Beverly Rutendo Sande and her husband Pasi who would drive me to and from around town for what's their in the writing exercises. "Where can we take you to today?" they would cheerfully ask.

To my late daughter Marceline Kudakwashe Mutangadura smiling at the manuscripts and making corrections. "I think I will be a writer like you mummy, it's very challenging."

To my son Charles Tafara and his wife and his wife Dineo. "Read Bessie Head Letters mum, they are very interesting."

To my daughter Regina Hazvinei Hove and her husband Newton, "When will your manuscripts get published mum?"

To my son Zororai K. George, "I will carry your bags mummy and have a wonderful writing workshop."

To my grandchildren Tinevimbo, Vongai, Thando, Zvikomborero, Sheunopa, Rumbidzo, Sindiso, Malaika, Caprice, and Tauya J.R. "I haven't much time to tell you stories as my grandmother used to do but I am leaving stories in this book."

To my dearest and only brother Musavhaya Peter Choto, his wives and children. My sisters; Esther Choto Mateu, Mary Choto Mpofu, Beata Choto Mehlomakulu, Winnie Choto Kankuni, Rita Choto Kakurira, Micheala Choto Muoderzi, Albertina Choto and their children.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Flora Viet Wild without your appreciation, encouragement, workshops and love I wouldn't have come this far. Thank you sister, and *sahwira*.

Zimbabwe Women Writers; the great facilitators, thanks for bringing us together in writing skills in sisterhood love and helping us see the world as our audience.

Giving my special thanks to the board chaired by **Mrs Mtshiya**. The staff and the Director **Mrs Audry Charamba** and our field officer **Mrs Keresiya Chateuka** and finally to the Editor **Eresina Hwede** who made it all possible for the publication of this book.

The Catholic Church at the Mt St Mary's Hwedza, St Paul's Musami teachers and friends. I have been blessed to receive education and faith. Thank you. You are the greatest and make people great.

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PREFACE

The name Colette Mutangadura is reminiscent to creativity and inspiration in writing. Born and raised under the controlling thumb of the colonial masters and a patriarchal society; Colette somehow found her space in the literature sector. As early as 1983, when publishers, husbands and male writers were still sceptical about women writing publishable manuscripts Colette published her first novel *Rinonyenga Rinohwarara*. Subsequently she became a founding member of the Zimbabwe Women Writers (ZWW) in 1990 and from then on campaigned tirelessly in her home area of Goromonzi and beyond to form women writers' groups. More and more women followed her example.

Through telling their stories and writing them down, women gained a new self-confidence. They gathered strength through the bonding with other women of other societies and over the years Colette has been their role model. Her motto: "We are women writers, let's not sit on our hands but use them to write. Let's not sit on our heads but use them to develop our creative energies."

Colette Mutangadura's new book is most timely. It is a courageous attempt to create a society blind to colour and acceptable to all humanity. It is an entertaining romance story from real life, educating and witty. It will inspire more women - and men - to contribute imaginatively to the future of Zimbabwe.

Flora Veit-Wild

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CHAPTER 1

Rutendo opened her eyes after a brief doze. She was tired, the bus was crowded and noisy and after three breakdowns from Marandellas to her home in Wedza she could do with more than a doze. She watched as the trees and cattle raced past and the countryside that was familiar to her now and her heart leapt with joy. The thought of her mother and father hugging her put a smile on her tired face. For a time she thought about the things they used to do together with her younger sisters, climbing up the hills near their home, gathering firewood, eating wild fruits, the housework and oh the garden! The things that she used to hate now she missed and she hated the fact that slowly she was walking away from that life. She had been part of this environment from the day she was born - 23 May 1953 and twenty years later she was finally walking away.

Despite the fond memories about her home, the memory of her father's garden darkened her happy thoughts. The near freezing dam water which they had to fetch water from in the early mornings to water the crops brought goose pimples onto her skin. The garden was much of a do. Father made them work very hard in the garden. Well, gardening had to be done because that was their livelihood and much of the money that was used to send them to school came from the selling of bananas, tomatoes, garlic, onions and vegetables. They virtually survived on gardening as their father was no longer employed. Then she began thinking of her friends at school. School days indeed are the best days. There was some manual work yes, but many hands made it light. Her mind wondered off to what she really liked about school days and surprisingly she thought about the love songs they used to sing when they had little else to do. Still gazing through the window she murmured, *"Don't let me cross over."* It came as a surprise to her that this was the first thing that came to mind yet she had not said yes to any man.

Her day dreaming was disturbed by people next to her talking about the unrest in the area of the Zhanda, a youth political movement which would beat or even kill for false rumours or some truth. If the Zhanda youth knew that so and so was still in possession of a dip card or heard rumours that one had a dip card then one was liable to die, have one's home destroyed and all the unknown suffering could befall one. For this reason the Rhodesian Government had sent some of its troops to protect the chiefs in their homes because they were said to be puppets of the government.

She got down at the township and saw a few familiar faces but they looked different in a way she could not describe. They looked unnatural to her. There were a lot of whispers among both men and women alike. She could sense that there was something going on or very wrong. She greeted them and read unrest on their faces; each wanted to say something to her but then hesitated. When she had carried her suitcase on her head somebody called from behind, 'Rutendo, wait a bit.' The caller was one of her mother's church mates; she struggled to remember her name though. "It is said that there are soldiers now guarding your grandfather's homestead because he is a chief, so when you approach home you must be careful lest they shoot you, I mean the soldiers."

Mavhu Chiterengende went on looking sideways as if to check that nobody was overhearing. In a very short time she had said a lot to alert her of the danger which was at her home. The Zhanda might attack her now as she walked home because she was the chief's granddaughter. Although home was quite near, she was very frightened. So she walked on as briskly as if she wasn't carrying a heavy load.

She imagined herself getting killed before finishing school and walked faster. She will be killed but what has she done? She was now a twenty year old young lady in her final year of teacher's training. How many of her age mates had managed to go beyond primary school and most of all how many girls had managed a minimum three years of school? A reasonable number could not read and write and the most pathetic thing was they did not even know how valuable education was. They walked blindly through

life, happy to have their husbands and brothers lead the way. If only they knew how much understanding, confidence and freedom came with just knowing how to interpret printed material, they would kill just to stay in school one more year. A much privileged girl she was indeed, bouncing with a big bust and chocolate brown complexion which she was proud of. She wasn't beautiful but neither was she ugly. She had an education which was deprived of many girls of her age simply because they were girls, but here she was educated and was now going to die, just die? These thoughts brought her near home and from behind some trees a voice boomed, "Halt!"

She trembled and almost bolted into the woods but she quickly relaxed when she saw that it was her father. He told her that they now had to shout before they enter the courtyard because of the security guards. He went on to tell her also that to the people outside she had to tell them that they hated having these soldiers around guarding their homestead as if they were traitors. Together they entered the courtyard and her father didn't have to announce his entry because they knew him. She could see three white khaki uniformed men lying in front of the tent they had pitched next to her grandfather's house. It wasn't near nor was it too far. Rutendo's father warned her that she shouldn't say she went to school or even spoke in English but should pretend that, like many other girls in the area, she didn't go to school.

Rutendo was happy to see everyone home though. She went around her grandfather, the Chief's compound greeting everyone. This was a huge family and Rutendo was beginning to forget some names. Every time she came home there was someone new in her grandfather's compound, a newly married woman, a new born baby and someone who had just come to stay. She was born in this chaos and she was used to it but she knew anyone else would find it strange, very strange. She spent more time with her grandmother Ndayavaya than she did with her mother. When she talked to her mother there was nothing much to say not because they were not close but because mother was just mother. She had no time for small talk, she was either giving her instructions on what to do for the day or she was scolding her for this or that. Grandmother Ndayavaya was her friend and she could say anything. And where

was Wonder? He was her favourite cousin and confidante. She could say anything to him like he was a sister. She expected him to be waiting for her because he knew she was coming. Wonder eventually showed up, he had been sent somewhere by their grandfather the Chief, an apology. He was more than happy to see her and he had all the stories from all the friends in the neighbourhood. He knew what was going on among all the boys and girls of their age and it was always good to touch base with everybody before actually meeting them. It was the age of comparing notes with peers and Rutendo knew it would always be like that. No matter where she went she would always come home and want to know what her peers were up to.

Not many people dared to visit their place, except for a few relatives and those who had something to report to the chief. She didn't see the soldiers at close quarters but she noted that two were short and aged about fifty or so and the third was younger although not too so young. She had a chance to observe the younger soldier because he was always wondering about. His hair had the colour of winter grass and his complexion was almost the same because of the sun. He was tall and lean and unlike the other two soldiers he had no moustache. He kept his face beard free and Rutendo watched him shaving daily sitting outside his tent. He carried out most of the duties such as hoisting the flag, signaling the little plane that brought in their supplies, fetching water and so on. Many times this soldier would chat with Rutendo's father who was also an ex - soldier of the Second World War. They talked about guns, and her father seemed to like discussions about the war quite a lot with the youngish soldier.

Barry thought about how he had felt by being posted into the remote reserves of Rhodesia. He had left his job as a Bank Teller to take his part in National Service in the army. He had found the army quite challenging but his new post had almost put him off. But, there was no choice; he had to serve for the stipulated time then he could go back to his job. Barry, having been born in Rhodesia felt it his duty to serve loyally and rally behind the Government.

On this particular morning he woke up feeling very lonely and

bored. He took up his pair of binoculars and combed the country side. He enjoyed looking at the Hwedza Mountains as they lay stretched out like a contented lion. For a time his eyes roamed the countryside catching even the rock rabbits as they chattered and chased each other as if to welcome the new day. Soon he would climb the trees to see the scatterings of Africa. He brought his binoculars back to the chief's village. Among the early birds was the strange girl who had arrived in the company of Muchabaiwa the previous day. Barry was quite familiar with all the boys, girls, men and women of the chief's village. Who was this strange girl? She was not familiar to him and was eager to find out more about her.

He focused his binoculars on her as she walked in and out of the kitchen hut carrying out her chores. She walked upright with her head high and stood with her feet together. Of course, there was something different about her; she definitely was not like the other girls in the chief's compound. Her dress was just the right size with a belt around her neat waist. She was not tall or short neither was she fat nor thin but just the right size or so the youngish soldier thought. Her hair was plaited neatly into four 'buns' and she walked briskly around the home, quick as a fox as she handled her work. Surely Barry had not seen the girl the three weeks he had been around. Then she was gone.

Barry went on with his business. He hoisted the flag, fetched some water, made breakfast and waited patiently for the small aeroplane that brought their rations. When he met Sergeant Muchabaiwa, the chief's eldest son, he wished he could ask him of the girl visitor, and then he thought it proper to wait and hear from him rather than inquire as this was procedure to report any persons who would come to live within the homestead for security reasons. He kept looking around as they talked but she was nowhere to be seen. Only the girls whom he had seen around walked past without saying a word. Barry did not say anything either because he knew there was a language barrier and communication would be very difficult but for some reasons he believed there could be some communication with the strange girl he had seen and was eager to find out.

Barry's duties were routine and soon he began to find them monotonous. This day he did not focus his binoculars at the countryside. He looked at the chief's homestead. He caught sight of the girl and smiled to himself. She was standing upright, facing the soldiers' tent. Her oval baby face wore a smile, and then she bent down to sweep the yard again. Barry noticed that she always got up earlier than the other girls. She was second to the chief's first wife, Ndayavaya. Barry convinced himself that she was different from all the other village girls who would shout when they talked and bray when they laughed.

He mentioned the new girl to the other soldiers. John, one of the older soldiers told Barry it was custom for the Shona people to send their girl children away for some special training when they were about to marry. Usually they would be sent to a relative away from home for the training and John supposed the strange girl could have been sent somewhere by her parents and that's why she was away. The reason why she was so different from the rest was that she was now putting into practice what she had learnt before she is given away in marriage. "It must be a very good training. She is so different from all the girls I have seen around here even some much bigger girls than her do not behave the way she does." John shrugged his shoulders but Barry believed there was something more to this and was sure he would find the answer to this riddle.

So, everyday Barry would look out for the girl and he would usually see her early in the morning as she busied herself in her mother's kitchen. He enjoyed observing her, her clothes, the way she walked and how she talked. She did not make many gestures as she spoke, he noticed, she was polite but confident when she spoke. "No scratching or looking away as most black people did when they spoke especially to elders and more specially strangers," Barry said one of the days to John who just shrugged his shoulders non-committally. This girl seemed to be particular about hygiene and cleanliness because each day she would change into a different dress. This was surprising as most of the people in the village never changed their clothes regularly let alone bath every day. Her clothes set off her light chocolate complexion.

Barry talked about the girl again to John and the other soldiers one morning. "That girl does not seem to be visiting. She is in charge of many things; she knows her way around this place. Mr. Muchabaiwa leaves the receipt of visitors to her and handles most of the work he would normally do."

"Why are you so concerned about that girl?" snapped the other soldier. "No I am not worried but just that I have found her different from others." "She is not any different; these blacks are all the same. You won't be able to understand them. They never want to tell the Whiteman the truth. They are all damn shit!"

John was not really amused by the fact that he had to leave his family and stay here guarding the chief who did not seem to have faith in the Government after all. The chief was always enquiring when they would leave.

"I tell you this Chief is in the same boat with the terrorists. He is not disturbed by any news of their whereabouts." John said looking really driven to the end. "I can never understand these people. They do the opposite of what they say."

"You mean the Chief's rousing welcome that was all pretence? He gave us the biggest of his goats and we still have the meat. Do you not think we have something to learn from them so that we understand one another? We must not just look at them like the face of a coin and think we know them."

"Yes," John said dropping himself on his stretcher bed. "He has been telling me that he wants to brew some beer and celebrate their good harvest, which is impossible as long as we are here." "Did you tell him not to celebrate?" Barry inquired.

"Of course, I would not allow them to shout and scream all night here. We would not get any sleep at all, I also think that the terrorists might take advantage and sneak in pretending that they are villagers coming to celebrate and that could be quite detrimental to us."

"You are right," Barry said as he bent down to pump up the primus

stove they used to do their cooking. He was just thinking about the strange girl and how she could fit in this whole picture of ceremonies and terrorists. He stifled a laugh, strange to think of terrorists and ceremonies.

"They would be shouting calling out their demons and saying that the Whiteman has not come for any good," John went on trying to make Barry see the point. "Uh, I see." Barry stretched himself up and walked out of the tent. He thought John was right but at the same time he thought him wrong. The soldiers had to negotiate with the Chief not to give him a blunt "No" as if they ruled his home.

When Barry met the Chief's eldest son that day, he straight away spoke about the girls. "Why don't the girls greet us? All the boys and men talk to us." "Our women do not understand your English. How can they speak to you? What do they want from you that they should talk to you for? You are strangers. Women have nothing to do with strangers because you never know how strange the stranger may be," the man laughed.

Barry laughed too and knew that the man was right. "Do women here go to school?" He dared ask. "Only a little; so that they will be able to write letters to their husbands when they work in the cities." "Why don't you educate them further than just reading and writing?" Barry asked really concerned.

"They don't need education. They will not have any use for it. They will be troublesome to their husbands." "Do you really believe that?" Barry asked even more concerned than before.

"Well the time will come when they will be educated too but for now this is still debatable among us Africans. Women have enough work in the home and for now we must concentrate on the men. Men will need to work with Whiteman and therefore must learn his language." The man then began to talk to somebody who was nearby without even excusing himself. Barry knew a dismissal when he saw one and he felt the need to change the subject. They talked about life as soldiers. Muchabaiwa talked about his experiences in Burma in the World War II.

"Many of us died in this war and the British gave no thanks to us," there was bitterness and pain. Barry could sense that these people had a reason for distrusting a Whiteman. "You should have claimed some compensation," Barry said. He was at a loss on what to say. Muchabaiwa was an intelligent man and Barry knew he was making the situation worse by saying something as shallow as what he had just said but he could not keep his mouth shut. This was his kind on the chopping board and in as much as they messed up he had to defend them, blood is always thicker. "Do you ask for a thank you when you deserve it?"

Barry blushed. "No. I think there was an oversight and that should be able to be rectified." He knew that was not an answer to Muchabaiwa. He was bitter because the government took him for granted and Barry knew he would feel the same and probably worse. He, Barry remembered that his father had been given a fertile farm with virgin soils in Rhodesia because he had served in the World War 11. Muchabaiwa looked forlorn and distant. Barry bade him farewell for the day and left for his tent. There was nothing more to say.

He started polishing the guns because Hwedza is humid and cold. The soldiers feared that their guns would rust. He was facing the inside compound of the chief's village. Eighteen families lived in the chief's village which was set in a horseshoe form at the foot of a beautiful hill near Nyamhembra River. Each family had four huts, a kitchen, a granary, the boy's hut and the girl's hut. The people in this village were the chief's sons and their families. Barry had learnt that there was a son from each of the eighteen wives in this village. He had also heard that the chief had two homes. His other home was in the mountains where the Nyamhembra River joined with the Kurongonora River. He sometimes went there to visit. Half of his wives lived there with their families.

It was interesting to see the village at work in the mornings and evenings when they prepared their meals. The pounding of mortars awakened the soldiers in the early hours of the mornings. During the day very few could be found in the village. Nearly all men were out except a few who seemed to have something to do with the chief's court.

As he sat and listened to the women's laughter and chatter he saw the girl again. Quickly he took his binoculars and focused on her. She was walking towards the soldiers' tent. She stopped and turned quickly because somebody had called her. She answered calmly to a shouting voice and continued walking on. Barry suddenly stood up. He walked towards her but just then she entered into one of the huts.

Barry stood rooted where he was. If he had met the girl, what was he going to say to her? How would they communicate? But he needed to see her close. When he went to the garden each morning to fetch water, he found it had already been watered. The girl must have been working there in the morning when she finished sweeping the yard. He had an idea. He would go earlier to the garden the following morning. He had to meet the girl.

She was watering the vegetables with her two sisters one August morning. It was cold but their little dam was warm so they were paddling right into the water as they filled the tins.

"Rutendo," her sister's voice called, almost frozen with fear. She followed her gaze and saw the soldier with brown hair. He was quite near to them and she nearly said "Good morning," but remembered what her father had said.

The soldier was good looking. His face was kind or was it just her imagination? He looked at them and then finally stretched out his hand. "Hullo," he said. His face brightened up even more with the smile and his blue eyes shone in the early morning light. He was carrying his gun and tin.

The three of them shook his hand returned his greeting in their language. Then he signaled to her and also with words indicated that he wanted her to draw water for him from the nearby well. He also indicated that he wanted some onions and tomatoes. She nodded in return and did as he had asked. She carried the tin for him, walked in front while he walked behind. At their tent, he gave her dishes to wash and she responded to what he was saying. Then she heard him say, "You know John it's a pity that these people don't educate their children. She is quite civilized and does exactly

as you say. She is lovely too, don't you think? She made my blood run as I walked behind her and with those full breasts ...” “Be careful Barry,” the older man's voice cut him short. “You know she is the chief's granddaughter and we will be punished for any mischief. Now give her the money for the tomatoes and onions and let her go.”

Barry came to her smiling but she didn't smile back. “Here,” he said trying to make her understand he was paying for the items. “A shilling for tomatoes, a shilling for onions and six pence for helping me.” He stretched his hands and put them on his head to show the carrying she had done and she nodded and clapped her hands receiving the money.

“You see, she is smart and I like her.” She didn't hear what the friend said and she ran away with the money to her mother and told her how she had pretended not to understand English.

“Don't you go near him again because one day you will forget and speak to him in English. You know White men do not want people who lie, you will get yourself shot. You see he is a soldier.” She went back to the garden and told her sisters about Barry and that Barry had said he liked her and they all laughed about it.

From there on Barry would come to their garden but her father would be with them most of the time giving them instructions and supervising them. Barry would ask one of the girls to carry water for him and their father would delay Barry chatting him up when it was Rutendo's turn to carry the water. Barry also shook their hands each time he met them and sometimes held Rutendo's hand for longer than necessary. She knew inside her, Barry liked her. He had said so. Her father must have seen the silent communication and stopped Rutendo from going to the garden in the morning. She had no reason except that her two sisters could handle that. She didn't argue because she understood. She had not gone to the garden now for two days and was doing some ironing at home. The iron would get cool and each time she would take it outside to blow the charcoal to life. She sat reading a book. Out of the blues she had a gentle tap at the door and it was Barry. He walked into the grass thatched hut which was the girls' bedroom. They had a

small table and two chairs, a bed that was not very presentable which she used. The knock surprised her because her people would shout "Go go i," when entering anybody's home. Barry was there standing near her. She stood up quickly still holding the book in her hands. *Animal Farm* by George Orwell, she had read the book over and over again. He looked surprised but she could not explain his surprise then she looked around. He laughed and then sat down on the other chair that was in the room, took the book from her hands and looked at it and then she knew, she could now explain the surprised look on his face. As he sat down on the chair and looked at the book and then back to her, she glanced at him and then looked away and she knew what the next question was going to be.

"So you can read after all and speak English? Tell me about yourself then." His voice wasn't angry and she knew he was not going to shoot her like her mother had said. "I have nothing to tell you," she heard herself saying. "My father doesn't want me to be friendly or get involved with strangers especially whites and he would kill me if he found me talking to you especially in this room so I would ask you to leave now."

"But you do want to speak to me, do you find anything wrong in you speaking to me?" Barry asked looking at her squarely. She took her time and then sighed, "I don't know." She faked ignorance. Barry laughed and then said, "You work really hard and always keep yourself busy. I always see you doing this or that. I have never seen you resting. Don't you think you must take time to rest?"

"Yes," she replied. "I must help my parents during the holidays like this, you see." Barry laughed. "Indeed you can speak English and I cannot believe my ears. You know John said to me your eyes looked literate and I didn't believe him." He stopped just watching her looking really fascinated. "So tell me, what are you doing at school?" She told him that she was a student at the teachers' training college. Barry was quite taken aback then looked at her and laughed. She was not quite sure what he was laughing at this time. Then he stopped when he saw her puzzled face.

"Oh I am not laughing because you are going to be a teacher. Not

the least but because you made me look such a great fool. Oh boy, I wish I had known." He was laughing again.

"Mr. Eeeh," she said. "You must leave now because my parents will be very angry with me for chatting with you like this after I promised that I wouldn't talk to white strangers." Just as she was saying that her mother walked past the doorway and then the soldier stood up. "Well call me Barry. I am sorry that you might be in trouble with your parents but you are old enough not to be worried by such trifles."

He stretched out his hand and said, "And you, what's your name?" "Rutendo," she almost whispered because her mother had passed again. Barry walked out. He stopped and looked back and then just smiled.

That evening she got such a talking to. Her mother reminded her of the tragedy which had befallen her mother. Rutendo's mother's mother Ngonya had had a child by a white farmer who lived at a nearby farm. She cried as she tried to make her understand that such history could repeat itself and that her father would think that her mother had influenced her in that direction. She went on to say that she would rather have the Zhanda movement beat Rutendo to death than see things like that happen to her child. Amid much crying, her mother said this with the hope that this would help her to understand and take heed.

She cried too and promised her mother she would have nothing to do with the white soldier Barry and told her how Barry had found out that she was able to read and speak English. She promised her that she would never speak to or see Barry again. Her sister Kuda asked how grandmother, Ngonya, had managed to get involved with the white farmer whose language she could not speak or understand. They all asked many questions about the whole story and what happened to grandmother, the reactions of her parents and the community and then their mother for the first time told the whole story.

"Well," mother said with a deep sigh. "I heard this story from other people and not from my mother herself, you see. She would not

even say a thing about it. My mother also died when I was very young so I didn't get to speak about it with her." "Oh God," Kuda sighed. "Who brought you up then?" Rutendo was happy that Kuda had driven her mother's attention away from the real issue of that evening and got her to speak about her own mother, their grandmother, Ngonya.

"You see," mother continued after a long pause during which they all waited anxiously. It wasn't often that their mother would sit down for idle talk and they were afraid she might not finish the story. "This white farmer used to send his foreman to call the villagers to work on the farm when there was a lot of work to do. During this time cloth was being introduced to black people and every girl wished to wear cloth instead of the skins that were used to make clothing those days. My mother was beautiful. When she put on the cloth she transformed into a real angel." They all laughed.

"Mother have you ever seen an angel?" "Well she was really beautiful, is all I can say and I could say I almost look like her." She said this with a frown on her face and they all laughed again. She was never comfortable talking about her beauty or anyone referring to it. Indeed mother was beautiful and if her mother was like her then surely their grandmother was also beautiful.

"Well what happened then?" Kuda was the one to ask again. This white farmer, I am told, would come to the fields to see how the workers were working and he spotted my mother. He called her Ingonya and spoke to her in mixed Shona and Boer. He was a Boer I suppose. Jan showed everyone who was there that he loved my mother. I mean that's what people said. Jan, it was said, chose Ngonya to help Mrs. Jan in the kitchen. When the day's work was done Ngonya had a bigger wage than the rest. Nobody thought Ngonya could be dilly darling with the boss." Mother paused and looked as if she was trying to see in the past what had really happened.

"I think," mother went on. "My mother was raped by this white Boer and was afraid to say she had been raped. Then you see she became pregnant." "Moi!" Rutendo exclaimed.

"Well you, especially you," she said looking at Rutendo. "You must know that men are men. It's the woman who must take care and guard against such dangers as rape from happening." "What did she do after that?" Kuda came to her rescue again because now mother was about to preach to her about Barry and her acquaintances with him. For a moment she stared at her mother and then looked down. Inside her, she was kicking herself about the white soldier that had the guts to get into her bedroom.

"Ngonya's parents were angry with her when it was then discovered that she was pregnant by the white farmer. They were not only angry, they were ashamed. This is what will happen here if you entertain this white soldier. Everybody will laugh at us. They will say: "Look at the girl they educated. What became of her?" Her mother's voice quivered and she knew she was restraining herself from crying again. She went on to talk about how disappointed the missionaries at the mission would be if it happened to Rutendo.

"Just think of what people would say and how they would regard us. Your father would butcher you. I swear by my mother's grave." "Mother," Kuda cut in. "What happened to your mother? Was she butchered?"

Rutendo was relieved again that her mother would answer that question, start talking about her mother again and not talk to her directly. "No, oh no my dear," she replied now a bit calm. Now Rutendo thought if Ngonya wasn't butchered then she too wouldn't be butchered if that happened to her.

"She was sent to her aunt in Manicaland and she stayed there until she gave birth to her son, uncle Andris." "And Jan," she ventured to ask. "What happened to Jan?" "I ii ii my child." Her mother was quiet for some time pushing firewood into the fire.

"There was real trouble. He waged a rebellion against our village. He came one morning riding a black horse and shouted standing in front of my grandmother's hut. It was said he had shouted, "Ingonya! Ingonya! *Hupi loo ina Ingonya?*" He spoke in the Lapa Lapa language. Many people crept into their huts. He fired a gun

shot into the air and demanded to see Ingonya.”

“Then it was said,” mother carried on after much hesitation, “her father and two of his brothers went out to meet the white farmer. They told him that Ingonya had gone for a visit and would return in a short time.”

Jan was still riding his horse and said that he would like Ingonya to come to the farm as soon as she had returned. He put his horse into a run leaving a cloud of dust in his wake. “Did grandmother Ngonya come back?” Rutendo asked again. She had almost forgotten her mother’s anger because she was now calm as she recalled the story of her mother’s reputed ‘bad life.’

“No never, and Jan came over and over to find out if Ngonya had returned and threatened that if she didn’t come he would do something. And so they told him, someone would be sent to Manicaland to fetch Ngonya.”

CHAPTER 2

"Jan was very angry. He came to the village many times. He would fire shots into the air each time and promising the villagers that he was going to cause real trouble if Ngonya didn't return and he did."

"The day was a Friday," mother screwed her face to try and recall the story as it had been told to her. "Yes it was Friday." Jan was riding his black horse again but now he had twenty men with him, farm labourers, I suppose. He fired the gun into the air as he always did, ordered his men to open the cattle kraals and take all the cattle away to his farm. People stood dumbfounded. Many women cried until they could not cry anymore. "I would rather die than see my children's cattle being driven away by the white oppressor, son of a Boer," old woman Sadzi shouted. "How will I offer thanks to my ancestors for the well being of my children, some of them have such happy homes and well to do husbands? If these cattle are taken away from us how will we tell our ancestors how happy we are for the good that we see in our lives. My ancestors will think that I am not grateful to them and want my cattle to multiply and never sacrifice one for them. Never!" She shouted running after the dying dust of the long driven cattle.

People of the village ran and stopped her and held her promising that men would go and take back the cattle that very day. Men of the village hastened to a council and talked about what they could do. Women cried and put the blame on Ngonya's mother for having received the sugar brought by Ngonya from the white farmer. One went on to say that if Ngonya gives birth to a child that child's name should be "Sugar" because Ngonya had lost her virginity and all the cattle for it. Ngonya's mother cried until she could cry no more.

"Ngonya my beautiful daughter, you have made me ashamed this day and ever after. Oh, how could you have behaved like you did not suckle my breast?
Ngonya my pretty girl; is it your wish to put this white beast onto your chest?
Have your arms really held him?
And what did you say to him as he looked down on you?
Ngonya my daughter, my dearest one,
You have made me the talk of this day,
The woman who couldn't counsel her dearest one,
Now you will bear your little one
Who will be different from the rest of us?
It's not easy to kill one my dear,
Because today could have been my last day,
If only the earth could open up and swallow me alive.
Ngonya my dear and only daughter,
I am sleepless since the day of the news
Now I think every pair of human beings speaking together,
Are speaking about me and you my daughter,
Never will this world be sweet to me again,
I feel inside of me my dear,
My heart is so thin from thinking and worry
And I know you too are not restful."

These are the words Ngonya's mother used in her anguish for her pretty daughter who was now the victim of many bad omens among her people."

Rutendo could picture her mother having the same suffering but then said to herself, "Oh well maybe such things won't happen to me." "The elders of the village," her mother went on, "talked about taking up arms and going to Jan's farm to fight him and take back the cattle. But then they remembered that Jan had a gun and they had only spears and axes. Their guns had been taken away from their fathers by these same white men who are still giving them hell of a lot of trouble. Yes, many elders could remember how their fathers' guns were taken away from them after the rebellion. Ngonya's father cried during the council and all the other old men tried to console him but the old man put his face into his hands, his grey beard jutting out and shouted. "Ngonya my daughter! What

sort of son-in-law is this you have brought me?

He takes away my cattle while others do receive.
If only he had taken mine alone, yes it would have been alright.
Now I have to pay for your bad behaviour.
But what, what Ngonya shall I do?
To repay tens and tens of cattle from other people which have been taken because of you?
My father and mother have forsaken me today.
Where are they there in heaven?
Oh, you all my ancestors,
Hear me now, I am lost at thought."

Then he sat down relieved and comforted by the wise words of many elders who were there at the council. "Don't worry, each day has its own parcel for each one of us. The cattle will be returned to us. Isn't it you have already sent someone to call Ngonya back here? Let's then wait and see what the white man will do after her return."

After much deliberation they came to a conclusion that they would go to Murehwa District offices to report the matter to the District Administrator there. So a delegation was sent and the District Officer said he would send the police to investigate the matter." Her mother sighed on this note and asked for some water to drink.

"So the people brought the cattle back?" Kuda was anxious to hear the whole story. Mother drank the water slowly, swallowing it heavily as if she was throwing stones into her tummy. She remained silent for some time and then drank again, handed the cup to Kuda and pushed the logs into the fire again. The children all helped with the fire so that the story would resume. She cleared her voice and then began.

"The District Officer; was also white and didn't do anything. You know, blood is thicker than water. How could he put his fellow white man into trouble? To him Jan had done what he did for a good cause. No policeman was seen and not a word was said. Then the old men secretly went very far away for a month and when they came back one night, the whole village was awakened at night

and made to leave carrying all their useful weapons and other useful belongings. They went into the farm by night and with the help of the farm workers, managed to take all their cattle including some of Jan's, about twenty or so." "Because my grandfather, Ngonya's father had to be paid for Ngonya having to bear a coloured child. Rain fell for four continuous days soon after they had left the farm with the cattle. It was said the rains had been sent by the ancestors so that the people could have an easy escape. Pregnant and nursing mothers were left behind in the custody of friends and relatives in the other villages nearby. And that was the end of that village. The people of that village walked for four days on the way exchanging Jan's cattle with those who wanted to slaughter for meat and emphasizing that they should not keep the cattle but slaughter them. This they did so that if Jan pursued them he would not find his cattle as they would have been slaughtered.

Then these villagers started living in a new village and that's when Ngonya was brought back to her people and now she had this new baby boy who was already learning to walk. Many people, it was said were afraid of little Andris and some even fainted when they saw him. He looked very different from all the other children. Previously such children were killed at birth and Andris was the first of his kind among his mother's people." She paused and looked around like she knew her children would have questions. "Why? Why would they kill a baby?" Rutendo asked surprised. She knew about twins and albinos but not coloureds.

"A coloured child was as strange as twins and albinos and they were killed because they would bring calamity to society. Christianity brought all this to an end." "Mother," she asked timidly. "Your mother then got married to your father?"

"Yes she was married, to my father. He was quite rich and paid lobola for Ngonya of twenty heads of cattle, ten from Jan and ten from Mudzingi." They all laughed. "My grandfather used to swear boasting saying; 'I swear by Ngonya who enriched me with ten heads of cattle, ten from Jan and another ten from Mudzingi'." "Well after all your mother wasn't a bad daughter. It was only a mistake and if her father had not taken her away from Jan maybe she could have been Jan's wife. Jan was disappointed because he

loved Ngonya and knew that Ngonya was now carrying his child and wanted them both and I suppose that's why he had tried to force her people to bring Ngonya back to the village." Kuda said laughing.

"Ah well," her mother said with a happy note now in her voice. "Wounds leave scars and when they are fresh no one ever realises that they will ever heal." "How did it happen that you were orphaned at such an early age?" Kuda asked again.

Rutendo thought that Kuda shouldn't have asked this question as she should have remembered how bitter mother felt about her youth, having to grow up at Nhowe Mission and finally staying with her step-mother. Surely Kuda was opening up scars and everyone could see the change in her face. She thought of some words to sympathise with her mother but she mumbled and could not get a straight sentence across. Kuda knew it must have been hard to grow up without a parent especially without a mother.

"Girls," she would say when something was going wrong. "You are lucky to have a mother." Mother was a very bitter woman, maybe because she had lost her own mother at a very early stage. She used to have these tantrums and would use all sorts of vulgar words when she got angry. But that was because when she lost her own mother she was only about three and didn't get any guidance. She probably was reflecting on what happened to her when she was growing up. She probably heard more vulgar than anything else. But she was a friend to her daughters in her happier moods she chatted and laughed much.

"My mother was; to a certain extent antisocial after that tragedy, I mean after her affair with Jan." She continued. "She didn't want to socialize much with the other women of her age in the village and just carried on with her daily tasks on her own. She could make clay pots, weave grass baskets and bracelets make bead head bands so beautifully no other woman would match her art." Her mother blew into the fire again and said, "Ndati," which was her name. "My grandmother would say. You have failed to resemble your mother in every way. My child Ngonya was a woman created when God thought of creating a woman." They all laughed at this

saying but she really thought that people were so different that there is a reason for one to think that God has paid particular attention to some kind of people than to others during his creation. "Oh yes," her mother went on with the story pulling her face. "You really didn't see her and it's a pity no photograph of her was taken because many people who talk about her say she was immaculate. She was such a beauty and had all the qualities of a woman." Mother paused on this note pondering.

Although their mother was a beautiful woman she had grown to be harsh, rude and without respect when she chose to. Was it orphan hood that made her so rough? Many a time Rutendo watched her father's gentleness being driven to ends when mother started to shout and grumble. All the same she was happy she had a mother who had helped her in many ways. "It's true you are different from your mother, I can see." Kuda laughed.

"Hiya," agreed their mother meekly. "Well," she went on. "Because mother Ngonya was the best in all what she did, she was the most beloved woman of your grandfather Mudzingi. It was said that he always boasted about his wife beating his chest even at festivals." She paused, pushed a log into the fire, blew it hard, and then coughed.

"Hii, my children," she proceeded with her story. "My mother Ngonya made real history and not just a mere story. She was smart, it was said, and bathed her coloured child twice a day while other children were bathed once in a week or even in a fortnight. She probably thought that maybe Jan would one day find his way to her and when he did he had to find his son very clean and smart." "So grandmother must have still been in love with Jan. It was hard for her to forget him especially the fact that Jan had not seen his child must have been a real cause of pain for her." Vongai cut in.

"I should think so," her mother almost whispered. "So well girls that is the story of my mother Ngonya. We better clean up this place and go to sleep. Tomorrow we are going to plant some winter maize in the garden. It should be ready by November and then when you come back for Christmas holidays you will be able to

enjoy good food and also get new dresses for Christmas." She stood up and everyone else followed suit. The girls continued among themselves talking and commenting on the issues in grandmother's story long after their mother had gone to her bedroom.

The following morning was a busy day and at about four o'clock, the three girls were up. Mother, Kuda, Vongai and Rutendo had a whole morning of hard work ahead of them. They agreed that by ten o'clock they should go home and have breakfast and break for the day.

At first they worked quietly because that was mother's instruction lest the nocturnal spirits would think they are disturbed by the early risers. They finished planting before Barry came to fetch water. Rutendo was now determined that she would have nothing to do with a white man. She would avoid him and if she would accidentally come across him, she would just exchange greetings not hold hands as they used to do. Why would she involve herself in things that have no future like her grandmother did. The end result would be a heart break.

With these thoughts she tried to think of the other men who were proposing to her. The thought of Barry drove that completely out leaving her confronted with a strange feeling; she was now feeling for Barry. What is it that she was feeling for Barry? She asked herself again and again.

Was it love she was feeling? No was the answer. She couldn't fall in love with Barry. He was white and she was black, a black poor girl whom Barry has seen struggling to make ends meet. She drinks tea only at festivals and Barry had no notion of marrying her at all, but what is it then that she should do to free herself from the bondage of her feelings. She would tell her heart many times to forget Barry but it was hard, very hard.

It could have been better if the whole drama was confined to the women folk but that was not to be. The following morning Rutendo was asked by her grandmother to take some herbal brew to her grandfather's court (*dare*) and she found him with her father. Rutendo knew her grandfather must have been suffering from one

ailment or the other and he trusted his first wife to do something about it. The Chief never visited the clinic or hospitals. He relied entirely on traditional medicine and grandmother Ndayavaya was the chief in that department. She wished later she had not gone there at that very moment because her grandfather, the Chief with several wives, almost a hundred children and over a hundred grandchildren never bothered about girls. As far as she could remember the Chief had always asked for her name every time she was sent to his court.

This particular morning he was sitting outside his court at the fireplace (*dare*) and was talking to Muchabaiwa his eldest son believed by many to be the heir to the throne. As Rutendo approached with a small gourd in her hands her father raised a finger and she stopped. She was supposed to wait until she was asked to approach.

"These white people are snakes." The Chief spat like the white man was standing in front of him. "They all pretend not to like us and they treat us like we were animals but leave them with any of our women and they will be on them." "Yes they do like our women." Muchabaiwa said glancing at his daughter. Rutendo wished she could run away.

"You told me about your wife's mother." "It was a big scandal I understand and everybody from her area knows about it." "Keep your eyes open. Make sure they don't spend their time with our women. They have no respect." "I will make sure of that Chief." Again he glanced at his daughter. "I think she has something for you."

The Chief then looked up. "Ah, is it from Ndayavaya?" He had the habit of calling his wives by their first names and Rutendo always wondered if he remembered all of them. Rutendo approached and knelt before him, "Yes it is from Mbuya Ndayavaya Chief." "Ah thank you. She is yours isn't she?" He asked looking at Muchabaiwa. Rutendo was really irritated at the way he just dismissed women. To her he was just like the white man whose reputation he had been trashing, they dismissed blacks with a blink

and he did the same with women. Maybe she just did not understand, maybe that was the way a Chief was supposed to behave. He had bigger fish to fry.

"She is my first born. She will be finishing school..." Rutendo did not wait to listen to rest of the conversation. She knew what was to follow. Despite everything that stood in the way of a girl child she knew her father was proud of her. He had tried to send her brother beyond standard 3 but the boy was just not gifted enough and she a girl, the 'oh she is just a girl' had made it. Come December she will be a qualified teacher. She felt her heart smile.

Rutendo kept wondering if the chief had seen her talking or holding hands with Barry. Besides the failing eye sight the Chief was old and took naps most of the afternoons. What happened during that time was his eldest son's responsibility. Rutendo was forced to conclude that her father was the informant or was the Chief just shooting from the hip? "Please let Barry go, and let it be." But she couldn't forget the white soldier. She kept thinking about him, day dreaming about him and getting restless at night thinking about Barry. Was it magic the white people had that was drawing her to the same abyss that had trapped her grandmother Ngonya in a life of misery? Had Barry hypnotized her and she could not think straight? Was there something in her blood, passed onto her through her mother from her grandmother Ngonya that attracted white people? Was she destined for misery, disaster and confusion?

"Well," she finally said to herself. "I ought to do what my parents tell me to do. I have to obey. I have nothing to do with that white man soldier and I don't want to see him again or disappoint my parents. Finish."

CHAPTER 3

It had been a whole week since the day she had talked to Barry. She had been getting up very early in the morning with other women of their village to fetch firewood as the summer rains were approaching. They had to have a big stack at home so that nobody would have to work in the fields then go out to look for firewood and disrupt field activities. Summer days are difficult days for women in the villages because they have to get up very early in the morning to do housework before they leave for the fields where they will return when it's almost dark and start their cooking. They have very little rest indeed. So she had to ease her mother from the burden of firewood.

This particular Saturday morning, she hadn't gone cutting trees. She woke up and went to the cattle kraal. They were going to milk one of their cows because their father had bought bread. It was a good day because many days they had to do with porridge. Kuda carried a small can with water and she carried a jug and a clay pot.

Milking was her hobby. Her brother Musa had taught her men's jobs before he went to town. She could harness their oxen, throw a loop and get hold of a beast's horns from afar, milking and ploughing the fields.

They had an old cow which they called "Very nice" because they thought its white face pretty and didn't give much trouble. She threw the lasso and got it by the horns and pulled it out then tied its legs and began to milk. A thought came into her that they should have some milk left to get sour so that they could eat it with sadza the following day when she had come back from cutting trees. She told Kuda the idea and they both agreed. She let go of "Very nice" and brought out its calf to feed. She then climbed onto the poles hitch which surrounded the kraal, with the rope in her hand. She threw the lasso and successfully got "Salisbury's" horns. This young cow was called 'Salisbury' because Rutendo's father had bought it with the money he had earned while working in Salisbury.

Salisbury however didn't take this for a nice game because never had it been treated like this before. It jumped into the air then went into a run. She was taken unaware and was pulled down the poles where she was standing. She fell right on top of a bull which started running right around the kraal with her on its back bellowing then threw her into the muddy cow dung on her belly. She sat up quickly still with the rope in her hand, laughing. She tried to steady the young cow when she saw Barry's hand steadying the cow and taking the rope and her hand to help her up.

"Oh, thank you," she laughed. "We still have to milk it though," she said breathing heavily. "Help me to pull her out of the kraal." Barry laughed too and said. "I thought you could be hurt and ran to help. That young cow is still tough you know but you are much tougher than her," she laughed. Barry helped her to pull Salisbury out of the kraal.

He helped her to tie it to the tree and watched her tying its hind legs. She took some water and washed her hands which were all dung. She also washed her arms, ordered Kuda to go to the house to get some more water as she had to wash the cow's teats. She fed Salisbury some salt while Kuda was away and Barry was looking at her asking the names of each one of the heads of cattle and how it was named. She gave the information to her fullest knowledge and Kuda brought the water with her father in tow. Barry and Kuda carried on a casual chat while she whistled and washed the cow's teats. Kuda fed it with salt and she knelt down whistling as she milked.

"Baba," she shouted. "Can't you give us a bit more salt because we had brought only a small bar for one?" "Let me bring one more," Her father responded and Barry looked at her. She looked at herself. Her pink dress just cow dung. He kind of read her mind and said, "You are a real tom boy, milk maid." He winked and left. Her father brought the salt and wanted to know why the cattle had been bellowing. Kuda told the story while Rutendo finished her milking. She then untied the young cow.

After breakfast she harnessed two spans of their oxen and she

could see Barry and his mates standing up and watching her. She took the whip with Kuda leading upfront out of the courtyard. They were going to bring some of the firewood home in the wagon. She ran back to the hut to take her brother's fiber sun hat which had got into her possession since he had left for Salisbury but unlawfully of course. She whistled to the dogs to come along with her and they did.

Still in full speed she climbed onto the moving scotch cart and the wind blew her dress right up covering her head. She fell into the bottom of the cart with a bump and when she got up she saw Barry and his friends laughing. She laughed too and Barry waved at her. She waved back. It was late afternoon and she was shelling some nuts after the firewood expedition when she heard Barry's knock on the door. Yes it was Barry and she said softly, "Come in."

Barry walked in and she gave him a chair facing hers across the small table. He smiled and she could see that he was restraining himself from laughing. "Well how was your journey to collect firewood? I am sorry you fell. Weren't you hurt?" He laughed a bit. "Oh, very little," she laughed loudly. "Or may be I shall feel an ache afterwards but now... Uh," she said pulling her face. Barry reached his hand into the shelled nuts and said, "May I have some of these? I like them."

"Oh yes of course." She pushed the reed basket close to him. "I was just wondering if you don't get easily hurt. I was telling my friends about that incident at the kraal when you fell into the mud and a few minutes after you fell into that cart and you were laughing. I wish you could take a day's rest, just a day." He ate some of the nuts he had taken from the reed basket.

"I am resting now and in two weeks time I will go back to school and leave my parents with much work to be done. Let me roast some nuts for you. They taste much nicer when they are roasted." She stood up and Barry stood up too. She walked past him and he held her hand. "Rutendo," he said. "You have such a beautiful name, what does it mean again?" Before she could answer him Barry had taken her into his arms. He was kissing her and for a time she didn't know what to do. The nice long sweet feeling went

on. Then she remembered, "Oh no." She pushed Barry but didn't say anything. "I love you, Rutendo," Barry said. She was now standing some distance away from him with her heart pounding her chest as if trying to find its way out.

"I love you so much Rutendo and can give you parents what they demand." Barry walked towards her searching her eyes and she looked at him. She searched the blue-grey eyes and then she realized he meant it.

"Oh Mr. Barry, you know," She was quiet. "Please leave me alone. I can't tell you right now but some time and please don't do that to me again." She said looking at Barry. When she looked at this very moment later she realized she had not said anything meaningful. She was just a bundle of confusion. Was she admitting she had fallen for him too and he had almost disappointed her by not saying it? And Barry too was a bundle of nerves, how could he propose marriage in the same breath that he was telling her he loved her for the first time.

"Oh I am sorry," said Barry. "Let me kiss you to show that we are old friends again. I don't want our friendship to be broken by that kiss." Barry walked towards her. He held her into his big arms again, and kissed her on the mouth. He would kiss take off his mouth kiss again and again and then he was kissing her neck. She sort of awakened from a dream. He realised that she had changed her mind and stopped.

"So Rutendo, next time I come along you will roast some nuts for me but now I better go." He walked away and stood on the doorway. Just then her mother walked past the doorway. Barry looked in and winked at her. "So see you," he said and left.

She stood there for a time confused. What was happening to her now? She definitely must avoid Barry because right now she didn't know what it was that she was feeling. Was it love she was feeling or pure lust? No, she said to herself. She didn't think it was love neither was it lust. It was just a new feeling, a sweet new feeling. If asked she would say she wanted to kiss him again. If it was love she needed time to decide if Barry was the man she loved or not.

"No," she kept telling herself. "It wasn't love she was feeling for the white soldier." She had said this before and still it didn't ring true.

That evening when she prepared the evening meal she was extra quiet. She had very strange feelings in her and it had all to do with the fear that her mother might have seen her kissing the white soldier. The conversation remained very tense. Her father, sensing bad vibes between the two chipped in with the answers to her mother's few questions. Rutendo could not remember what they were talking about. Their voices drifted in and out of her brain. She was anxious and expecting to be questioned about why she was kissing Barry. Oh God, sins have shadows. She was not happy not because she wasn't obeying her parents but because she felt she was not in control. Now Barry had left her with nothing stable in her. Rutendo was used to be in charge, at home, at school and in her personal life. She thought about how she could answer if she were asked. Then she decided she would swear by her grandmother's grave that she had not done anything her mother thought she could have done with Barry. After all a grave is not really anything of significance then if she lied swearing by it there would be no big offence, she thought.

She was sitting there with many other thoughts crossing her mind that she didn't hear her mother cautioning her about the spilling *sadza*. "Rutendo!" she called loudly and angrily. She looked at her and she thought for a moment that she had asked her about what she was doing with Barry that day. Then Oh! She remembered the cooking and went on hastily to her pot.

Her father laughed and commented that the arguments his wife always raised brought confusion. "See now how Rutendo has been behaving, absent minded she was. Why? Because you want to know how I spend every penny. Rutendo should be wondering if that's what it means for a woman when running the household. Don't you think that I ought to spend some money on beer some times? Honestly I could spend a few shillings one time or the other. You see me drunk many times when I come home from the bar. Where do you think I get the money from? Do you think that I receive alms of beer from the bar?" Her father began coughing and she was

relieved to hear that they weren't talking about her and the white soldier but she had no recollection of what they were talking about.

Her mother was quiet now. She could see on her face that she didn't want to pursue the subject but she was angry. She kept pushing firewood into the fire and blowing on it unnecessarily. She also gave Rutendo commands on what to do with the cooking. It was a silent evening for the whole household. Their parents could be very vicious when they were in bad moods and everyone knew this so there was no fighting among children that day. They ate quietly and left for bed.

The dogs barked fiercely the whole night. At one time she woke up and looked outside through the window and saw a torch flashing round the chief's compound. She thought of Barry. Barry was not asleep. He might be awake guarding the chief's premises from the storm of the political life that had just been born into their country. He was being loyal to his government but she couldn't understand the loyalty.

Alone in darkness, when sleep was proving to be evasive, she tried to think about what was right; to fight for the liberation of her country or be a white man's girlfriend? What about these soldiers at her homestead? Were they doing the right thing or not? She remembered Sister Wilfride's words when they were at school. "Girls you better fight for your education now because when your Zimbabwe comes along you will find that only those who are educated will benefit from it."

"She was right." She thought as she watched the torch now nearing their hut and she could see Barry clearly. Yes it was Barry. He stopped and looked at the hut. Her heart was thudding very fast. The strange and sweet feeling was back and at that very moment if she could have things her way she would have walked into the darkness to be by his side. She wanted to call him and ask what the trouble was but, "No," she said to herself. Barry was on duty, and then she saw Barry walk away. The dogs continued barking. The dogs never barked when there was nothing to worry about. She heard her father open the door or was he closing it. He also had been disturbed by the barking of the dogs and had probably woken

up to check on the situation outside. Then she thought, "Oh my father is awake too, if I had spoken to Barry as I had intended to do, I could have gotten myself into real trouble and if Barry had tried anything ..."

"Oh *mai!*" she sighed and fell on her bed. "I will be lucky if I go back to school safely after these holidays. The days are so trying and she had never had so much confusion. What should I do? Be a member of the youth movement and take part in their activities? Keep seeing Barry and falling into his arms anytime he wished?"

The Zhanda, her father never wanted to hear about politics involving young people in the country reserves. To him they were not well informed and uneducated therefore it was dangerous to act on something they didn't know quite well and as far as the Zhanda were concerned her father used to say that they were a group of robbers who went round stealing money from the people in pretence that they were a party movement. "Why do they operate only at night?" He would ask.

The days went by very quickly and the more she tried to avoid Barry the more her heart was tormented in wanting him to talk to her. Everyday she would get up and do something she knew would not get her in contact with Barry and when it was time to rest she would sit outside with her sisters and shell the nuts or go to her grandmother's hut for some stories. But all this was just what people would see and deep down she didn't want to do any of it.

Three days had gone by if not more and she was talking to her grandmother Ndayavaya, the mother of her father. She heard Barry's knock as he entered the hut. She was kind of ashamed to see him like he had come to announce that he had kissed her. It was a feeling that seemed to say; "my moments should not be shared with anyone else."

"Good afternoon," he said offering his hand to granny Ndayavaya and then to Rutendo. He squeezed her hand in his big palm and she felt hot. Her grandmother replied in Shona and Rutendo was surprised that she had understood what Barry was saying. "So," he said taking off his gun and leaning it against the wall near him.

"The milk maid is hiding here. I have been looking for you and you know what, I nearly searched for you in that little dam of yours where I first saw you wading in the water that morning."

They both laughed so much to Granny Ndayavaya's amazement. Granny asked what they were laughing at and Rutendo lied that Barry had said that they had grown a lot of vegetables in the garden and he wanted to go down there to buy some now. She looked amazed then asked why he had to carry a gun every time. Whom was he hunting? This time it was Barry who wanted to know what grandmother had said and she had to lie to him saying that she wanted to know whether the gun was not too heavy to carry all the time. Barry did not seem to believe her though and she knew then that when people speak in different languages they do understand each other somehow. This is how grandmother Ngonya could understand Jan maybe, she thought.

"Oh, you two bore me stiff for not believing my interpretations. Grandmother, can I roast the nuts and forget about the conversation that you two want me to interpret for you?" Ndayavaya nodded, a curious look in her eyes. Rutendo was worried her grandmother could be reading too much into the way she was conversing with Barry. "Good," Barry said rubbing his hands like he was cold. She went to her mother's kitchen and brought a pan. She did not light the fire because there was enough live amber to roast the nuts. When she looked up, she saw Barry looking at her curiously. "You are a good cook milkmaid" he laughed. "Is that my name now?" she asked laughing. "Shall I put some salt so that they taste savory and should I make them dry, how do you like them?" She poured water onto the roasted nuts and the aroma engulfed the room and it was just lovely.

"I am not particular, go ahead and roast them your way." Barry said throwing his leg on top of the other looking really at home in granny Ndayavaya's kitchen. Rutendo realized how easy it would be for Barry to go on dating her without anyone raising dust.

She put the nuts in a plate when they were crispy and salty. "Let's go and sit in your hut and eat from there together." Barry asked casually and again Rutendo realized that a boy from her own

culture and village would not have put across such a request. Rutendo could not remember explaining anything to granny Ndayavaya, she just nodded in agreement and followed the white soldier. They walked out, Barry carrying his gun and the plate and then she remembered.

She was Shona and she was feeling something about the set up the hut wouldn't be the right place for the two of them and she quickly said "Let's sit under this tree, I feel so hot." Barry frowned and looked at her with a look that she did not understand. "It's because you have been near the fire." He sat on the stone and she sat on the bare ground. "You know Rutendo; I have a story to tell you today."

"Oh good I like listening to stories. My grandmother is a great story teller and that's why I spend most of my time with her." He looked at her and again there was something in the look that she yearned to interpret but could not. He said, "There was a white man who fell in love with a certain black girl. They were of different cultures and backgrounds but that didn't hinder their relationship." So that was the strange look in his eyes Rutendo realized. The courting business was no new territory for her but there was something about Barry that made her just rumble without thinking. "Was the soldier not married?" She asked looking at Barry but she knew she was moving too fast and was it not a rule for a girl to pretend not to understand? She knew if granny were listening she would kill her. "No not soldier, the white man." She tried to do some damage control.

Barry laughed. "You are a whiz, you know Rutendo. I think you should have continued with your education and would have obtained a university degree. You wouldn't be just a mere school teacher." He laughed again. Rutendo sighed with relief, crossing cultures was a lot fun. "I have the intention of pursuing my education if I will have the money and time but I don't foresee it happening with all these other siblings behind me. I have a big responsibility of helping my parents and that is reality but if I get a chance I would like to further my education."

Barry was looking at her thoughtfully. He was just thinking if the world would tick his way he would have a lot to say in Rutendo's

life. "Well," he finally said after some silence. "Let me continue my story." Another sigh, "The white man bought a farm, and opened a school for the farm workers' children. He put his wife in charge of the school because she was a teacher and could also manage the farm because she knew a lot about animals and farming." Barry finished his story and looked at her.

She laughed and then said it was a good and interesting story but she wanted to know if the white man wasn't married. "Married, sure he was but the girl's culture did allow such kind of marriages so that was not a hindrance to the relationship." A faint smile touched his lips and the eyes radiated more light. Rutendo watched him with more interest. "I have another question. Wasn't the white man a Christian?" Barry frowned and said, "To some extent, yes, but that wouldn't stop people in love to marry. Would it?"

"Well it does," she answered. "If the girl herself was a Christian too...," something caught her ear. "Let me go and listen to that song." She stood up and rushed into her hut where a radiogram was playing Jim Reeves song "Don't let me cross over."

The words went,

"I am tempted my darling,

To steal you away,

So help me my darling stay out of my way."

She was singing along and Barry walked in. He put away his gun, offered his hand for a dance and there she was in Barry's arms waltzing. She had learnt the steps at school in the dancing club. Barry was surprised and he stopped for a moment.

"So you can dance too?" She didn't answer but went on with the song.

"I am faced with a heart ache, but not of a cheating kind.

I know if I lose you, no other dream will I have left,

So help me my darling, stay out of my life."

She was so taken in by the song that Barry took her unaware and started kissing her. "No Barry," this time she was much stronger than before. "You are a married man, white as you have mentioned and we are people of real different worlds." "Nonsense," Barry

looked angry. "Colours or worlds do not stop people falling in love. I can take care of you if you will say you love me. Don't you love me Rutendo?" She jerked her head to look up into his eyes, she was totally surprised by how well he had managed to pronounce her name, just like one of her own. She kept staring at him and could see hair rising and falling on his chest. She stepped back, her chest was getting clouded.

"Please leave me alone Barry, my head is tipsy turvy." Barry started to go but retraced his steps. "I had forgotten. What will you be doing tomorrow, Sunday? I was just thinking you and I could climb those hills together. I think it will be fun?" "I don't know," she said looking down like she was afraid looking into Barry's eyes would make her betray herself. "Oh well here," he said hastily giving her a two pound note. "It's not for buying any favour from you, no, but I have always wanted to give you something," he said this handing it over to her.

She couldn't believe her eyes. Two pounds was a lot of money and although she was in need she couldn't accept the money from Barry, so she politely declined. "I have seen you can dance so well and also you always wade in the water when you water the garden so you can either buy yourself some gum shoes or high heeled shoes to wear when you have your dancing lessons at school." She was about to decline the money again when Barry shoved it into her hands, kissed her twice and then left hurriedly.

When she went to church the next morning, she debated whether she had to confess that she had been seeing Barry or kissing a married man and at the same time disobeying her parents. In her head they all added to one thing, her heart desired Barry and was it a sin? She was very confused and she finally decided not to receive Holy Communion but when it was time to receive she found herself up, genuflecting and walking towards the altar.

Inside her she was praying that God strengthens her and guards against sin. She didn't walk with her head high as she used to. Those who knew her could have read that there was something wrong with her and of course there was.

CHAPTER 4

She met her friends after church and they talked about many things. She decided to go home through the township instead of taking the shorter route. One of her friends Media Choto wanted to know what it was like living with the white man at one's homestead and having soldiers around.

It was the most dreaded questions and she didn't want to answer but she had to say something. *Should she say that the white soldiers at her home were some of the finest gentlemen on earth and she was having a good time with one of them, or should she say what her father had advised her to say? Yes, what her father had said to her was right.*

"Oh you know Media. I hate those soldiers terribly. You know now that we all look like traitors. I have learnt that my grandfather himself is not happy about it at all, because you see, the government may call back its troops and how will the community regard the chiefs? There is nothing my grandfather can do about this or anybody for that matter because this is a government policy and you know how they impose their laws on us."

She bubbled on and on trying to be very knowledgeable and intelligent but Media, probably relising her friend was trying to throw her off track cut her. "You know Rutendo I have heard that you are in very good books with one of the soldiers and some of our Party members wanted to talk to you about it."

She looked blank. She started swearing by all her dead relatives, by her great grandmother's grave and by her father's white faced cow that she had nothing to do with the white man. Simply because she could speak some English, Barry would occasionally come to her to ask the names of hills, rivers and trees. To her surprise she was angry by the time she finished trying to convince Media that her heart was not bleeding for the white soldier with drying wheat hair and blue eyes.

Media could not understand her anger. "Well," said Media. "I think we are better off without this subject." She tried to laugh it off but the air remained tense.

She could not think of anything else to say. She was battling with herself. *So did people know that she had been kissing the white soldier? Who could have let the cat out of the bag? That's why there is this saying, "Walls have ears and eyes," she thought.* She was quiet the whole way to the township while other girls chatted on this and that. They talked about their boyfriends and how they were so much afraid to be alone with them because they are the type that would take advantage and could rape them in order to have the girls accept them in marriage quickly. She thought of how unfortunate the women were. They could not propose love to men even if they felt strongly about them. Oh, how unfortunate. The girls always had to wait for the boys to propose to them. If only things could be different. She thought deeply, she could have proposed to one of the teachers at the mission school whom she thought was a real good man but the man greets her politely and then carries on with what ever he will be doing.

They reached the township Rutendo still pondering in her heart and not contributing a single line to the courting business the others were so excited about. She had the two pound note with her but she could not use it here. All her friends would wonder where she got so much money and they would easily conclude that the white soldier had something to do with it. Though she would have wanted to talk about her relationship with Barry to anyone who cared to listen she knew this had to be a secret for a very long time. They walked into Mr. Chimombe's store. Many youths were there dancing to music from the radio. As soon as they entered many of them stopped dancing and their eyes focused on Rutendo, She could feel their eyes on her back and she walked stiffly towards the counter.

Mr. Chimombe, the owner of the shop was the branch Chairman of the ZAPU Party. Rutendo had once told him how girls from her school had left school and were fighting side by side with all those who were trying to liberate the country. He smiled as he saw her and then shook his head. She didn't know what Mr. Chimombe

was shaking his head for. *Whether it was that she was one of the informers who were being guarded by the white soldiers or that her secret affair had been discovered?* As she was still thinking of what to say one of the big boys in the crowd walked up to her and said: "Mr. Chimombe, these are some of the people we should thrash to death if we got a chance."

She wanted to run out of the shop. She looked around and saw everyone looking at her and what she saw in their eyes was far from love. This same group of youth, her peers and playmates since she was born, used to admire her and compliment her every stage as she went up the academic ladder. She had sat with the same people when they were introduced to the idea of liberating the country and together they had formed the first committee and she had been elected the secretary. Where then had she stepped on the wrong stone? Was it about the white soldier? Rutendo had never let her mind boil the liberation struggle down to one single white face. Now she was facing them on different platform, she was the Chief's granddaughter, an educated young woman, she lived with white men in her backyard and she was having a swell of a good time with one of them. *If they knew that in her pocket was a two pound note from the white soldier they would skin her alive*, she thought.

"Why, why should she be?" She heard Mr. Chimombe's voice very stern and protective. She looked at him and saw that he meant what he said.

"You all know that Rutendo was our secretary at one time and that she has been with us many times and has been contributing helpfully. Now she cannot be with us through no fault of her own of course. Their homestead is under surveillance and they are under guard. We hold our meetings at night and she can't be with us." Mr. Chimombe paused for a moment to serve a customer who had just walked in. The man joined the discussion as if he was there at the beginning.

"Mr. Chimombe," he said scratching his head. "These youths are no longer fighting for freedom of this country. They should not be operating at night. They steal our fowls, cook and eat at night. And the chief has been hearing a lot of cases of girls who have

fallen pregnant all as a result of these late night meetings. Why can't they operate during the day?"

Mr. Chimombe gave the customer the sugar he had bought and then said, "That's why I pity you people for not having finished your education. You sometimes do not understand. Well Rutendo can't be with you and that's no making of hers, and you want to beat her up for that?" "Hiya Guveya," the shop owner said putting his hand on top of hers that was lying on the counter and switching to her surname, a sign of respect. "I know you very well and I will always stand by you. By the way you said last holiday you were locked up in Macheke prison for trying to dine in an 'all white' restaurant?" "Yes," she agreed though she had not been anywhere near the restaurant drama but some of her friends from school who were strong activists had tried to dine in the restaurant and had ended up in prison. Her father had warned her to keep away from politics. She had no knowledge about politics like the ones who lived in towns and the city. She had to learn first before she could be a politician. Mr. Chimombe knew the truth and Rutendo understood what he was trying to do.

"Jailed," there was an echo of surprise from among the youths in the shop. "That's why I didn't come home last holidays." Rutendo said her spirit once again reaching for peace. "Oh, so how did it go?" She didn't see who had asked but she could see on most of their faces the changes going through their brains, she was now a heroine for having done such an act. A few minutes back she was a traitor but now she was standing above them all, Rutendo, a girl of royal blood rising to protect her own.

"Our principal, he is British, heard that we had been locked up. Early the next morning he drove to Macheke prison and spoke to the officer in - charge and in no time we were released. You know how the whites have a lot of regard for each other; I don't think if it had been anyone else we would have been released. We surely would have served a prison term. We had to spend one week at school as a form of punishment from the principal."

"I think Guveya should not be involved in this politics too much. You have your name down in the police books so if you make one

more mistake they will have a reason to lock you up for a while. That means you leaving school and that will be too bad. You know knowledge is power and for this country to be successful after we have gained independence we need people who are educated."

Rutendo could see that many of the illiterate who were in there were not happy at all but others who were going to school were pleased with Mr. Chimombe's wise words. The wise words also made Rutendo remember the same wise words coming from the nun at school. "Girls you won't get anything from your Zimbabwe if you don't have education. You will not enjoy it at all." She would say this everyday after their evening prayer and then they would sing their so called National Anthem.

*"If you believe what Nkomo says, Zimbabwe will be free,
Zimbabwe will be free x 2
One man, one vote, freedom kwacha.
And Africa will be free."*

The song always concluded each evening. The nuns always encouraged the students to get the best education and often said: "Now see girls how your men have to go to South Africa or to some other country to find educated girls to marry. Are you not angry when your men have to leave you for other women? All the doctors have foreign wives because you girls do not have the education that matches theirs, please do get educated and you will not be thirsty for the knowledge you hunger for." These words, Rutendo never forgot and she cherished them in her heart.

After looking around to see if there was anyone who didn't belong to their group, as some people were often sent to be vigilant of any spying outsiders, Mr. Chimombe inquired about the progress of the movement. James whom they had nicknamed "The Whiteman is mad - *Murungu ibenzi*." Walked to the centre of the group that was now crowded around the counter and addressed them. "We are operating fairly well. Maradza, Shiri, Chirinda and Gumbonzvanda villages have been covered and the dip cards have been destroyed. We also have forty pounds in hand." "Sii - ii," whistled the boys.

"Yaa - aa," Mr. Chimombe said at last after a long silence. "So there is a lot of money in these villages. Well we ought to sit down one night and have the money shared so that we encourage you to work well when you have to." "Mr. Chimombe," one boy cut him short. "Now look!" Rutendo could see the boy looked angry and to her surprise he was staring at her. "These girls who never patrolled the area we have been covering are now gapping their mouths because they have heard there is money to be shared. If the money is to be shared to them as well, then I won't take a penny of it." He slapped his cap on the counter.

"Nonsense," Mr. Chimombe answered angrily. "We Zimbabweans who are looking forward to liberating our country from colonialists are not expecting any payment at all except to free our country from the bondage of the Whiteman's rule. If you ZAPU youths are so active because you want money then don't ever step your foot here and tell me about your operations. If you have that spirit in your hearts you will be very greedy and make serious mistakes even committing crimes." Mr. Chimombe stopped and he was breathless.

"Mr. Chimombe," Rutendo said almost in a whisper. "I don't expect to get a share of the money. I haven't worked for it and please let them know I am not expecting anything." Of course Rutendo had the two pounds that Barry had given her and would be getting a little more from her father from the sales of his vegetables and fruits, not that she would have wanted a share of the money if she didn't have. She had felt the hostility and she knew getting a share of the money would have made her peers forget her heroism at the restaurant quick.

There were murmurs among them and Mr. Chimombe's eyes focused on each and every one in the room as if asking for each and every one's opinion. Did they still want to have him as their advisor and chairman of the youth group or not. Then there was silence and it was Rutendo who broke it. "I still want to work with the youths when I am here for holidays Mr. Chimombe but you know I can't do that at night especially now that our home is being guarded. They would like to know where I would be coming from or going and you all know what this would mean to this operation.

I have also heard rumours that we are being suspected of holding meetings at night somewhere. My cousin Wonder..." and she stopped because she knew she was involving Wonder before consulting him. Wonder was a baby when it suits him but he could be a reasonable adult when a situation called for it.

When she looked for Wonder among the crowd she could see that he had not been pleased but he agreed that he had been questioned by the soldiers at their home about the party's movement and when they held meetings. "Yaa aa Wonder," Mr. Chimombe looked rather surprised because Wonder had not reported such incidents which were very vital to the party operations.

"Yaa aa sir," Wonder answered and confirmed that he was going to tell Mr. Chimombe but had intended to tell him alone. "Yah," Mr. Chimombe went on after a pause. "Thank you Guveya for revealing this. Please keep us informed if you hear anything that could send any one of us here to Hwahwa or Gonakudzingwa or any jail at all. These people want to keep our country for themselves and their children. This is our inheritance not theirs. It is our duty to liberate our country and we shall do so. Let me see." Mr. Chimombe said this looking at his calendar. "Friday night, yes Friday night will do. There will be a bioscope here at the township and so we could meet briefly before the bioscope starts and discuss a few things."

Just then someone hurried in and gave a signal that someone unfriendly was coming. So the radio was switched on immediately and some music began to play. The boys and the girls really went wild as if they had been dancing all along. Some jumped into the air and others twisted and curled while a handful ran or walked to the beat of the Chachacha music that was playing.

Rutendo looked on as if she didn't belong to this generation, surprised with the so many dancing skills the youth of her time had acquired. They were enjoying themselves very much indeed. Then one of the white soldiers entered the room. It was Mr. John as Rutendo knew him. The dancing slowed down. Mr. John walked as if he didn't see anybody else except the shop owner.

"Good afternoon sir," Mr. Chimombe said politely. "What can I do for you?" Rutendo also greeted Mr. John because he was standing near her. She didn't hear the response but certainly he had murmured something. *Was it pride or that feeling of superiority over other people or races that made whites sometimes so irritating, arrogant?* She wondered.

Mr. Chimombe was putting on a smile and just trying all he could to be friendly to this stranger. He kept his eyes on the youth like he was afraid they would pounce on the white soldier. "Do you have Stuyvesant?" John asked scanning the nearly empty shelves.

Mr. Chimombe shook his head reaching for a pack of Gold Leaf. "What do you stock in your store if you haven't all these kinds of cigarettes I am asking for?" The soldier said in disappointment. "Only Gold Leaf, that is in demand here in our area. It's rare to find anyone around here asking for Peter's Stuyvesant or any of those types you were asking for. Try other shops may be you will be luckier." Mr. Chimombe tried to explain. Try to think of it this was the first time he was serving a white person in his shop. He wished the white soldier a good day but he didn't reply as he strode out the crowd parting to allow space.

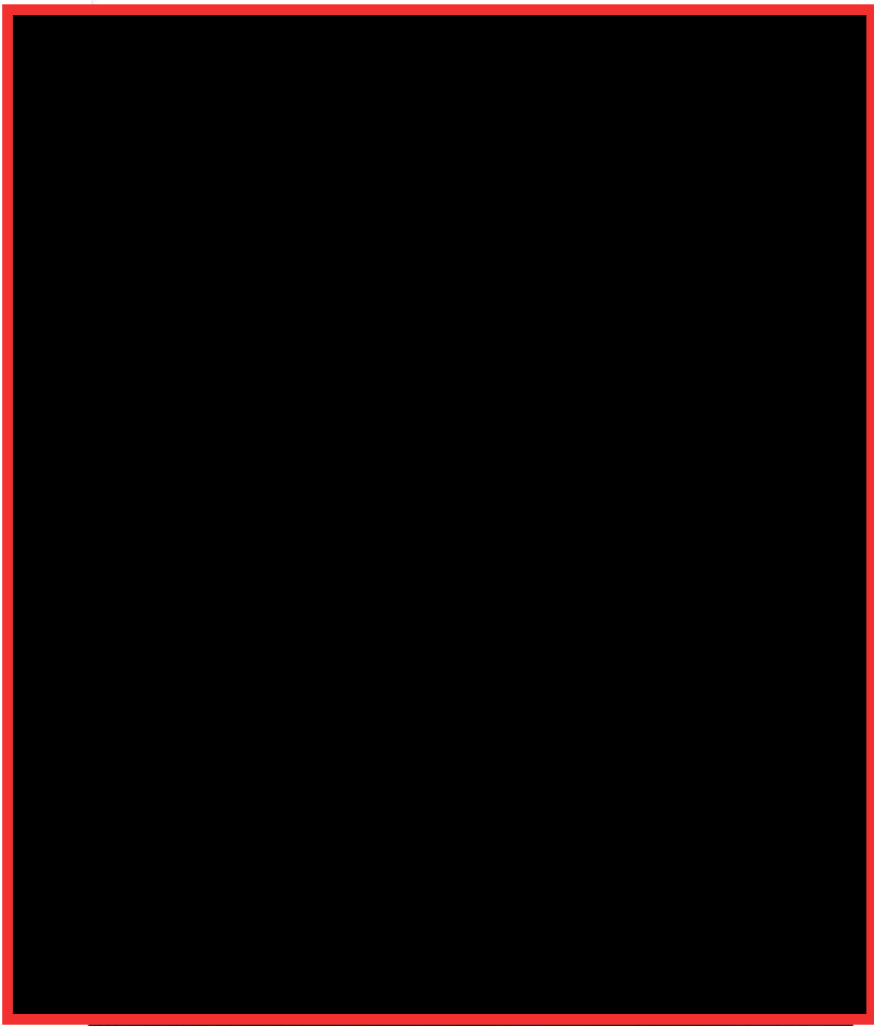
Mr. Chimombe and Rutendo looked at each when the soldier walked out. Everyone in the township stared and wondered why he would be walking carrying a gun among defenseless people. This infuriated the people though they could not speak out but each one ought to have been saying; *who do these people think they are?*

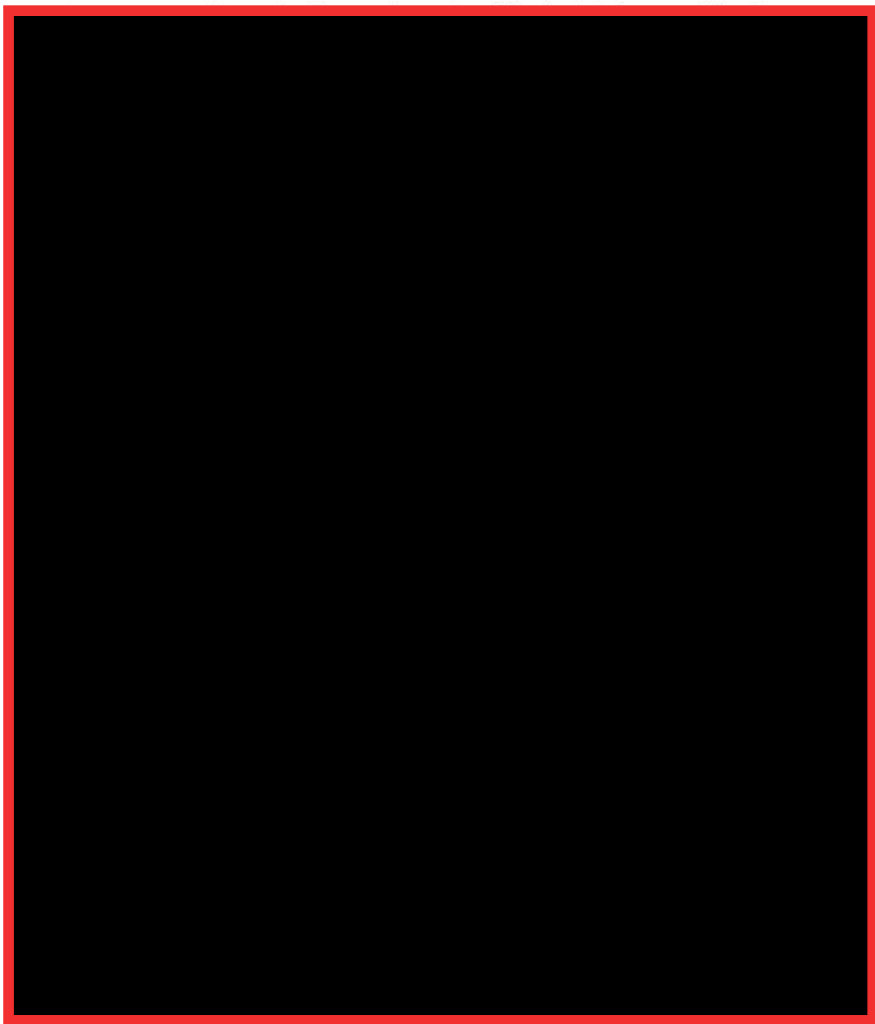
In Mr. Chimombe's store they hurriedly finished up arrangements for Friday night. Rutendo was just thinking that would suit her because she would have a good reason for leaving home in the evening. A bioscope was one thing her father would not object to and the soldiers wouldn't dare stop her.

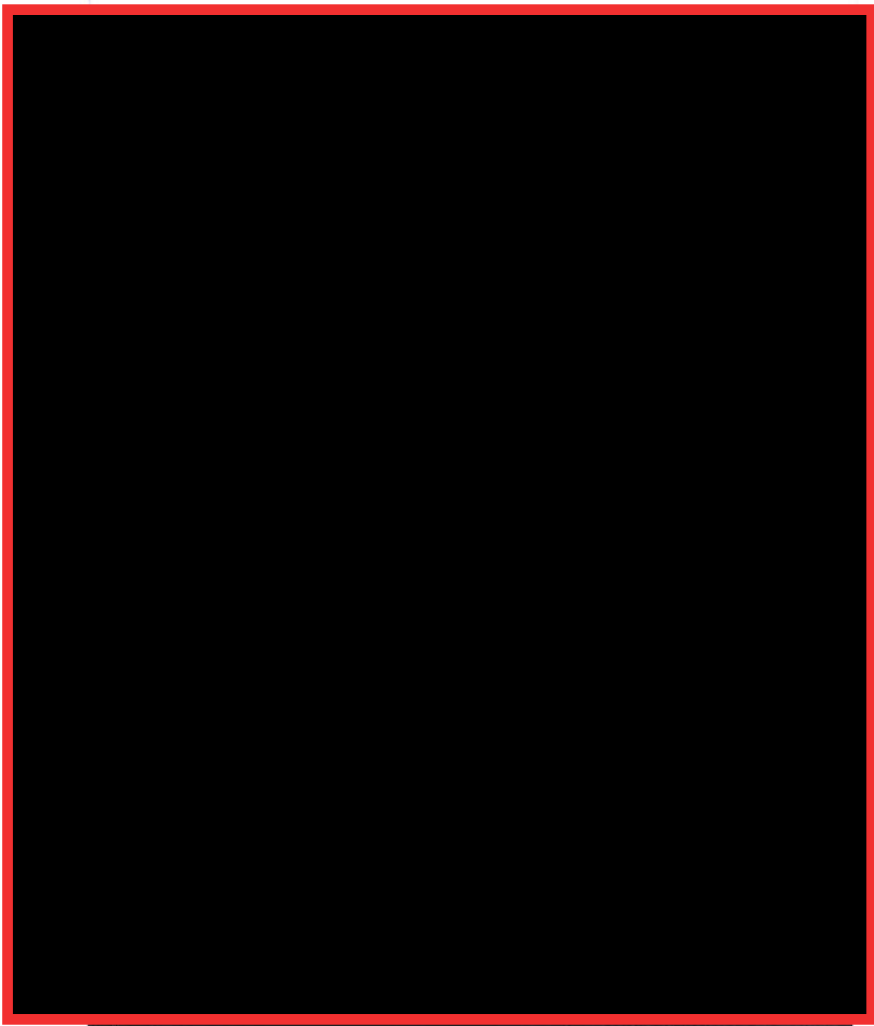
Media and a few friends of Rutendo wondered about the Mizhanje fruit trees near the township but it was before the season for Mazhanje. The other girls were talking happily about their boyfriends again and how they were looking forward to getting

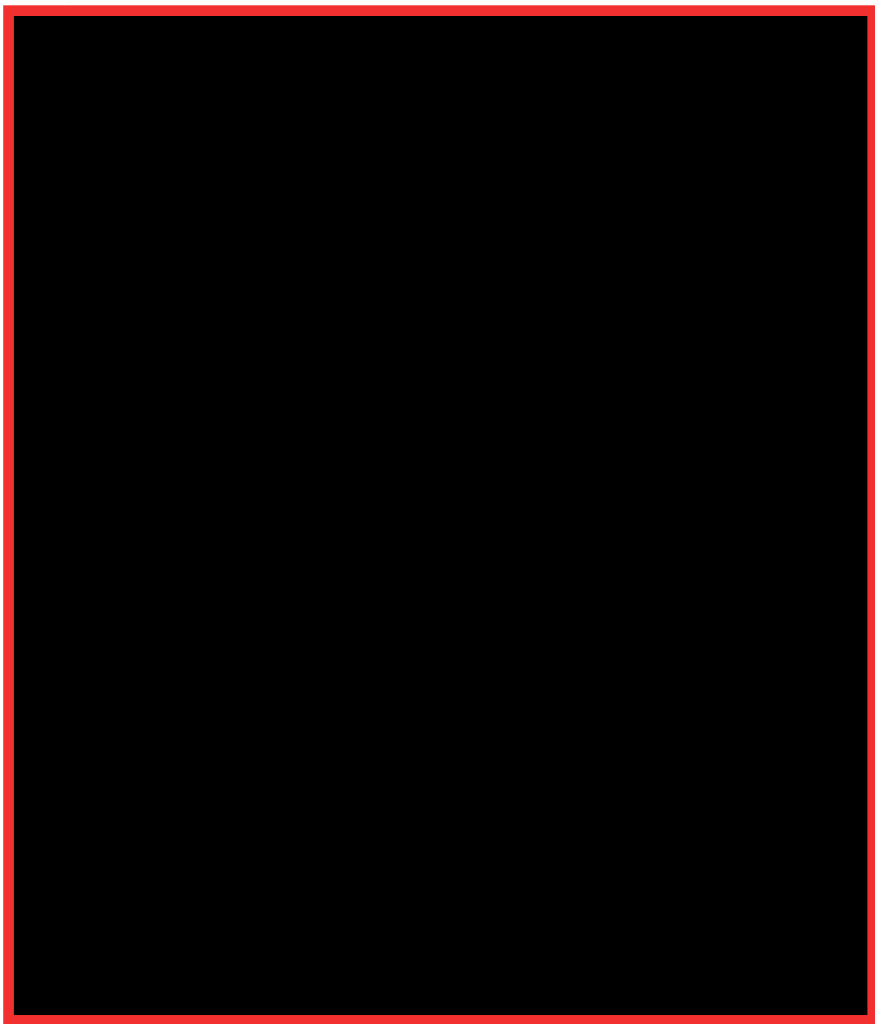
married soon but Rutendo was quiet as if she was a nun or thinking of becoming one. They really had a lot of laughter and much fun coming up with all sorts of fancy ideas of how married life would be like. There were lies, the truth and pure fantasy but Rutendo was far away. Hers was not fantasy but real. She was daring to cross the great divide between the whites and blacks and at this very trying time in the history of her country.

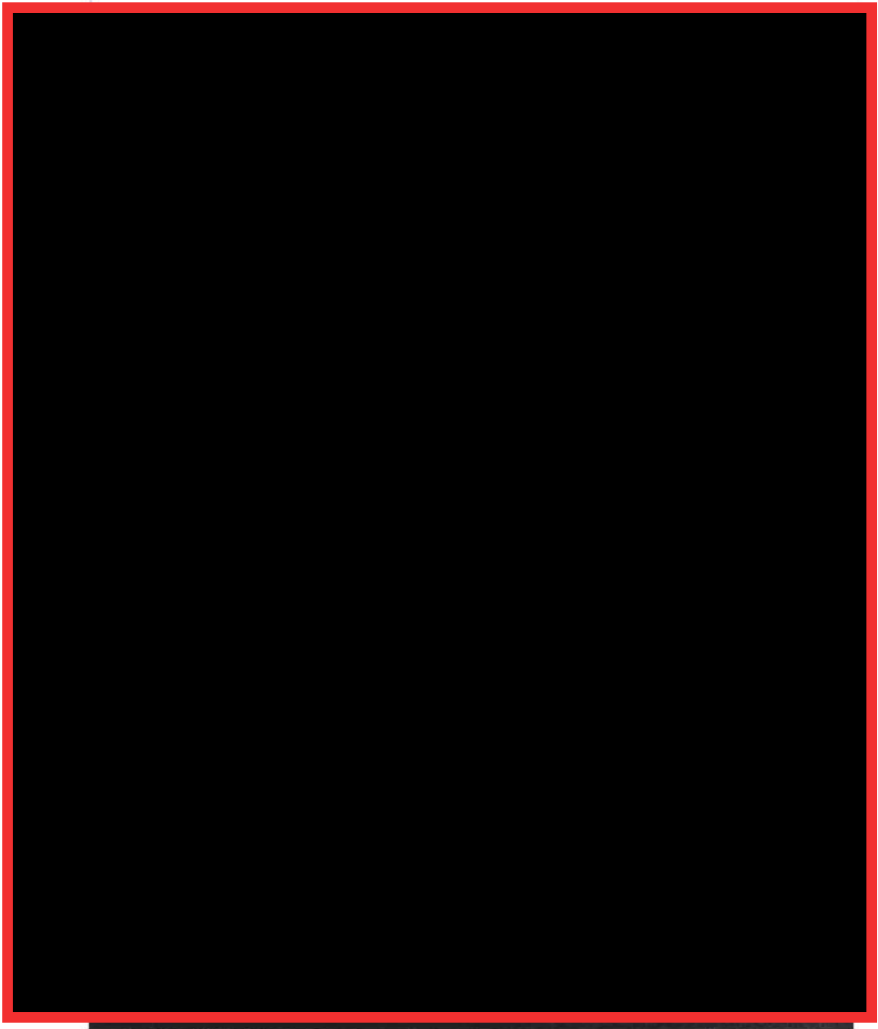
Media said something but Rutendo did not steer and she had to shake her. "Rutendo," she almost shouted but she wasn't far from her. "Yah, what is it?" "Do you know anything about this new teacher?" "You mean the Gumbonzvanda new headmaster? Yes I have seen him once or twice." She answered. She was happy she had something to say but her mind was swimming with images of herself and the white soldier. *Did she love him?* She asked herself not for the first time. Yet her heart tormented her she didn't know with what because she knew she could not marry Barry under whatever circumstances. They were people of two different worlds and more still under the political scenario that was very difficult to work out. She heard Media's voice again fading in the distance as her mind drifted back into the thoughts of Barry. The thought of the white soldier had changed her and it was turning out to be a disease of certain kind. It lit several flames in her body.

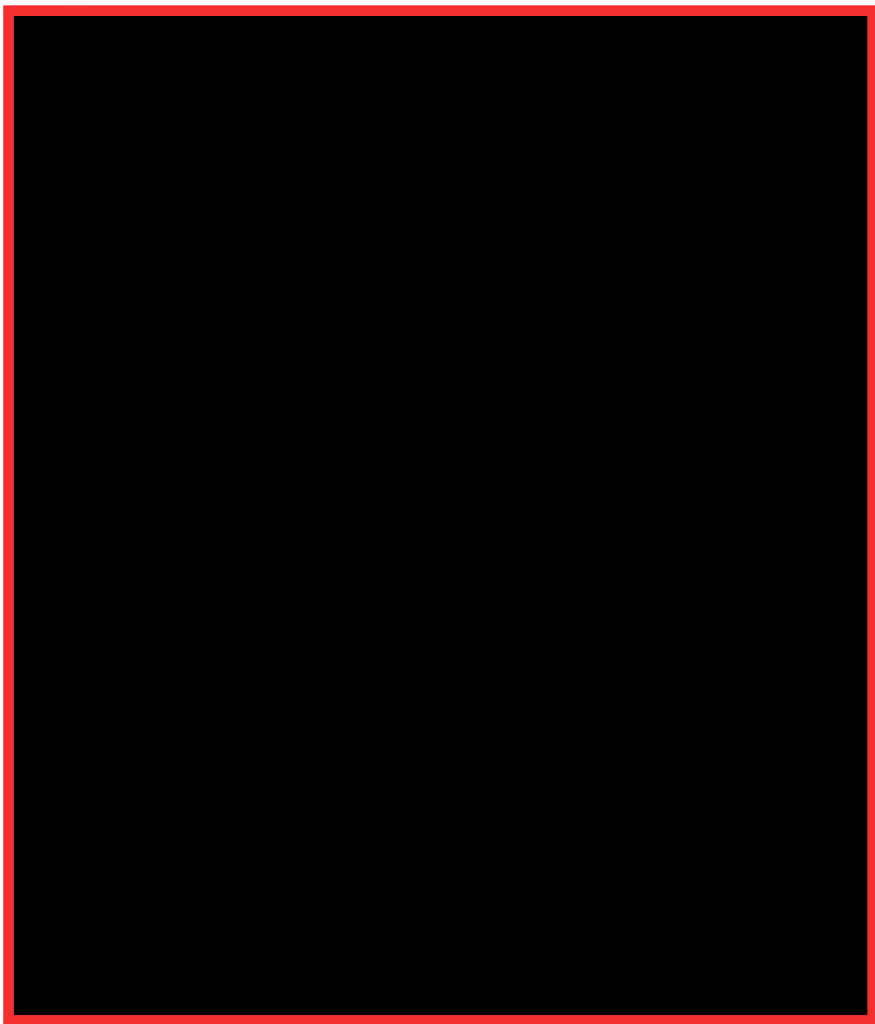


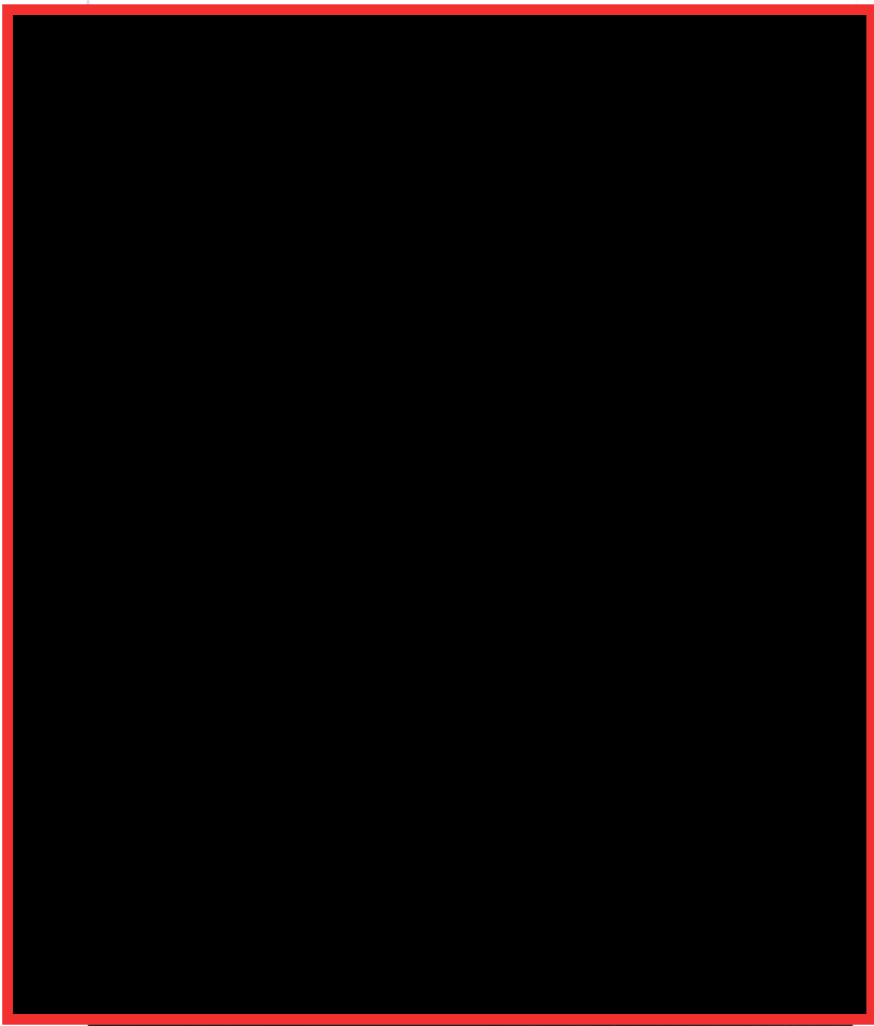


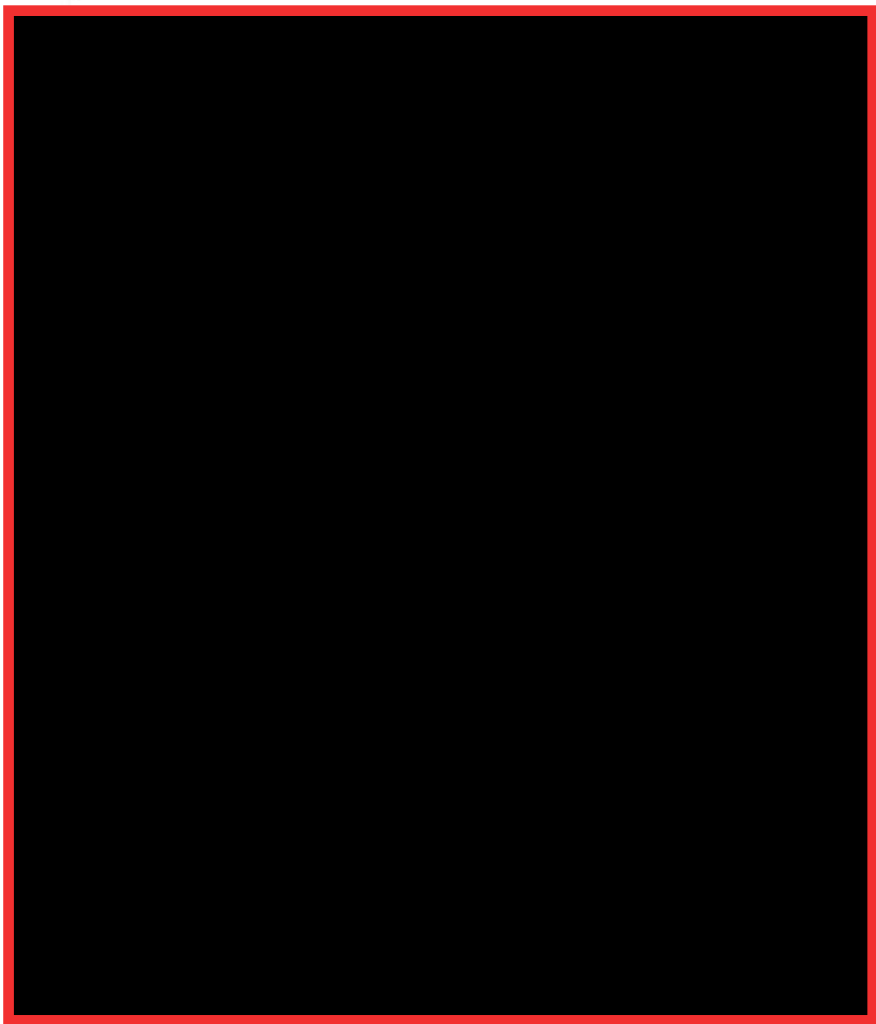


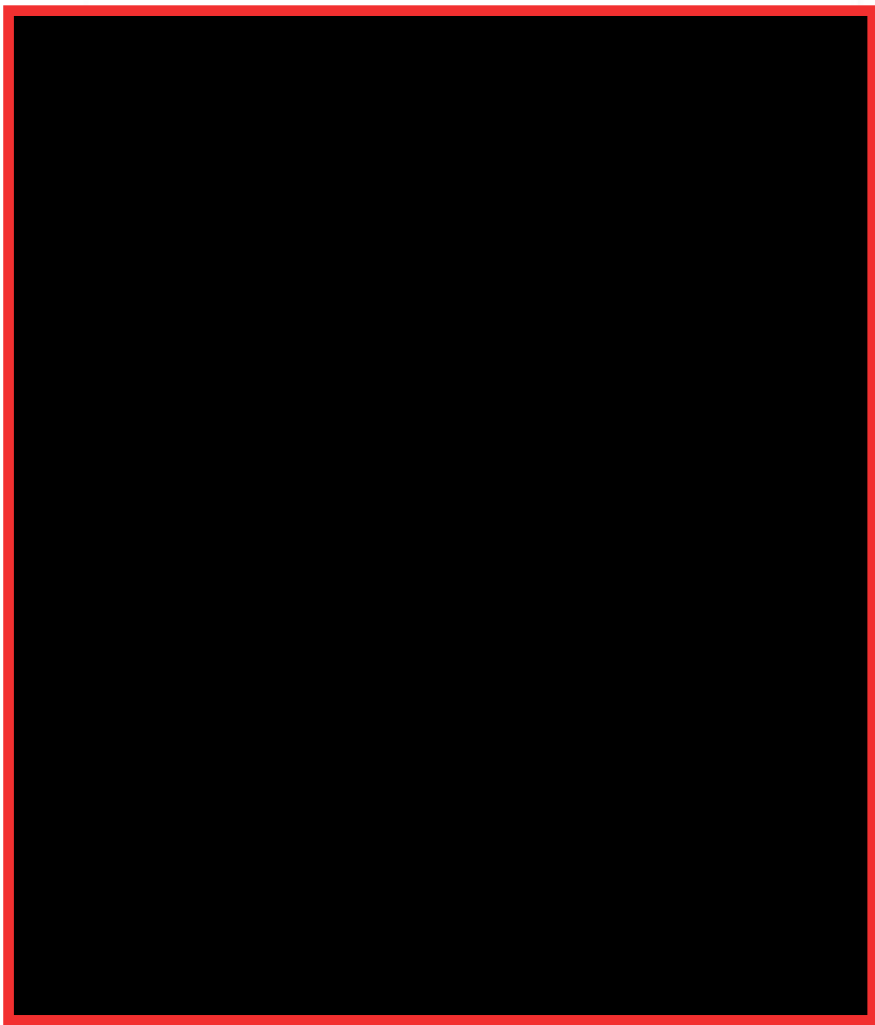


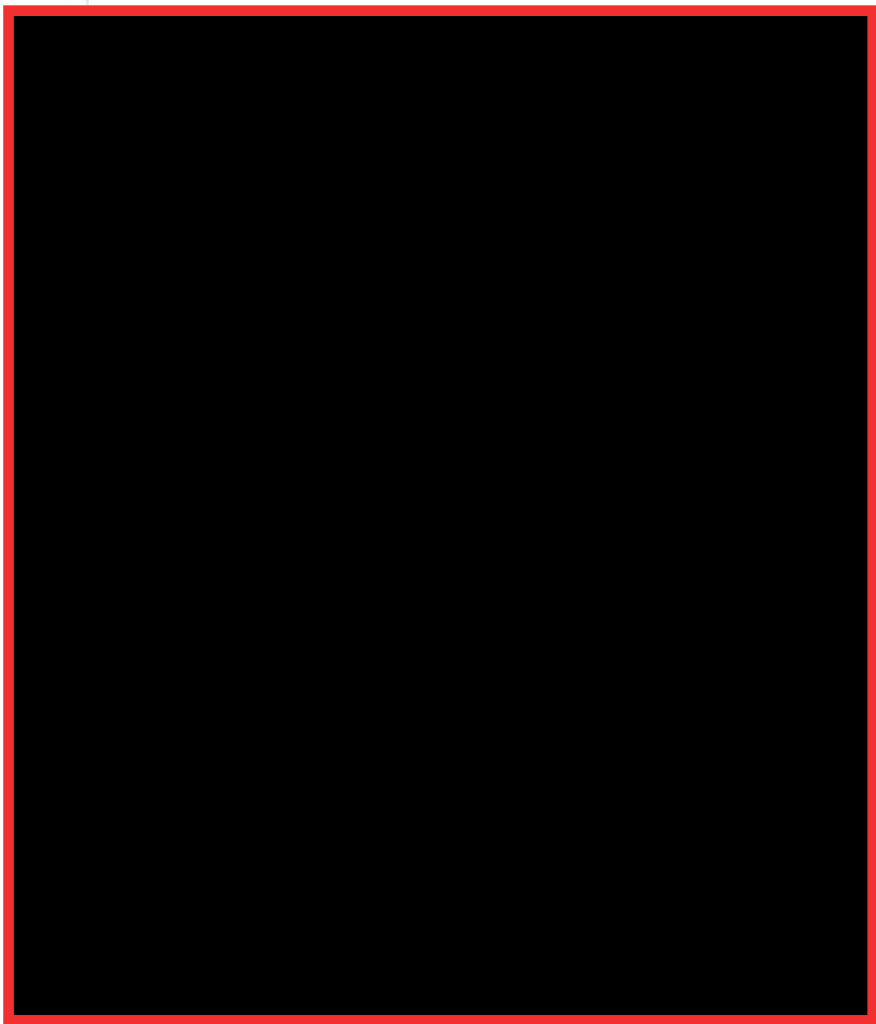


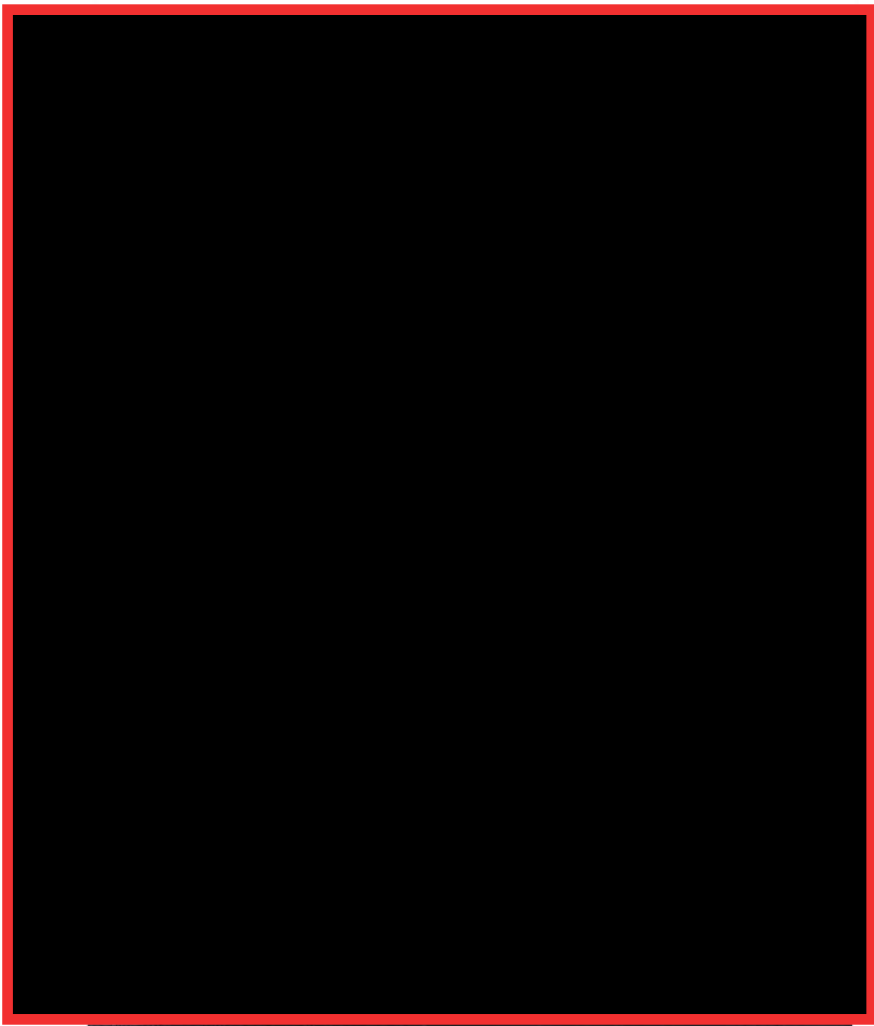


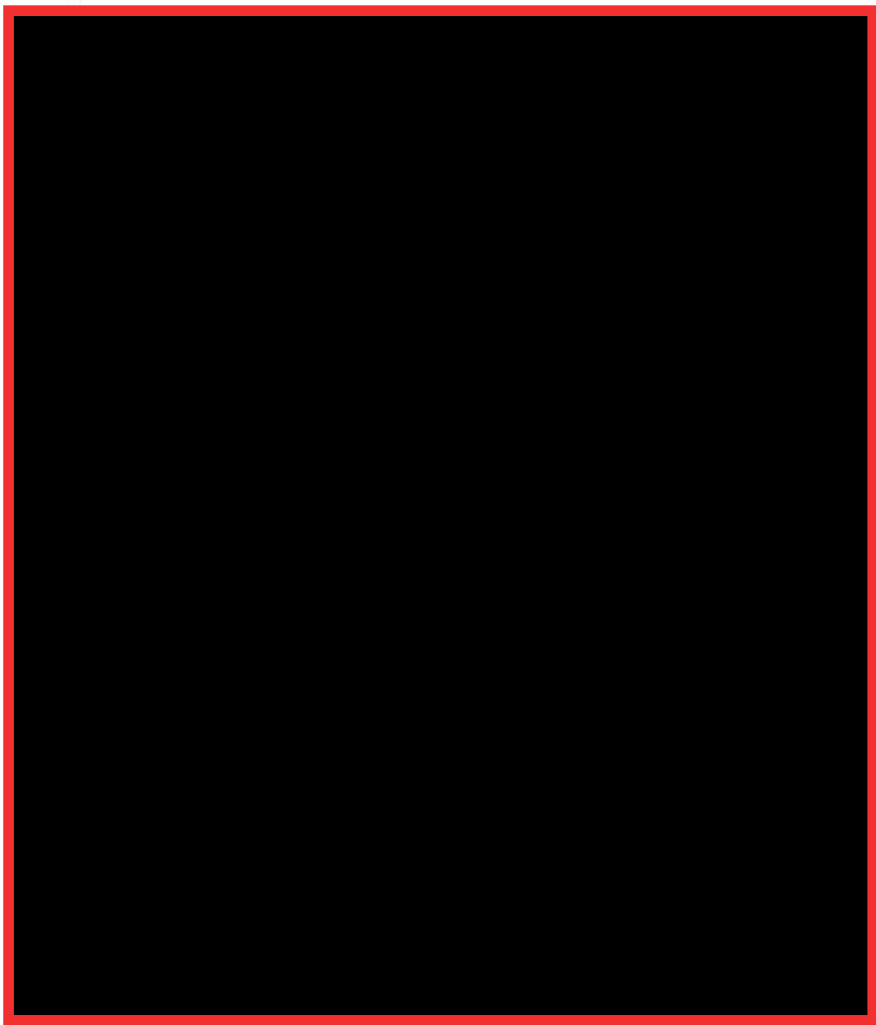


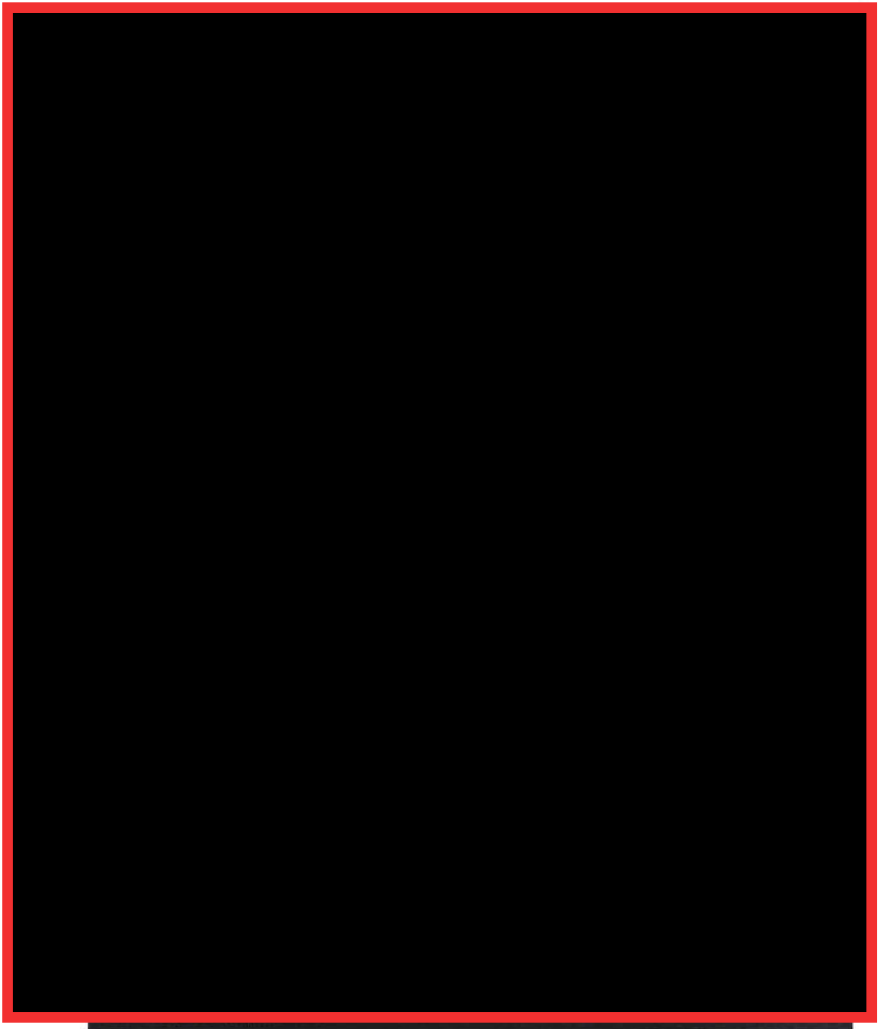


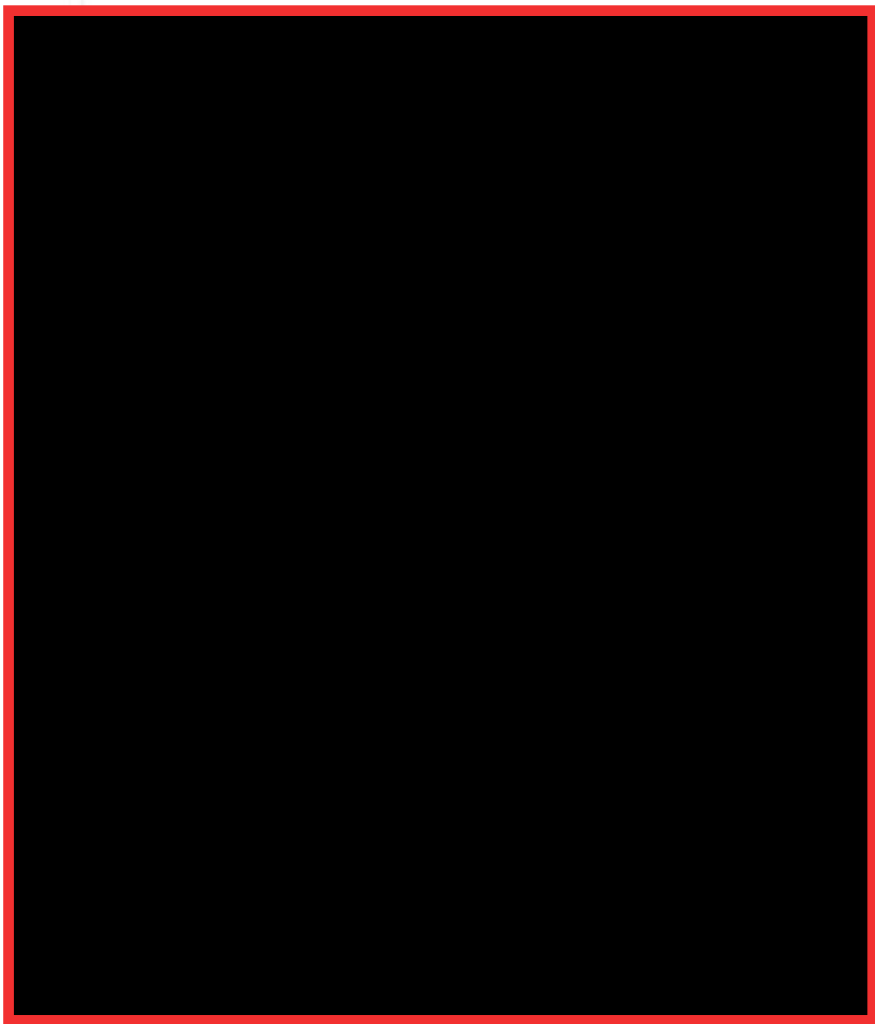


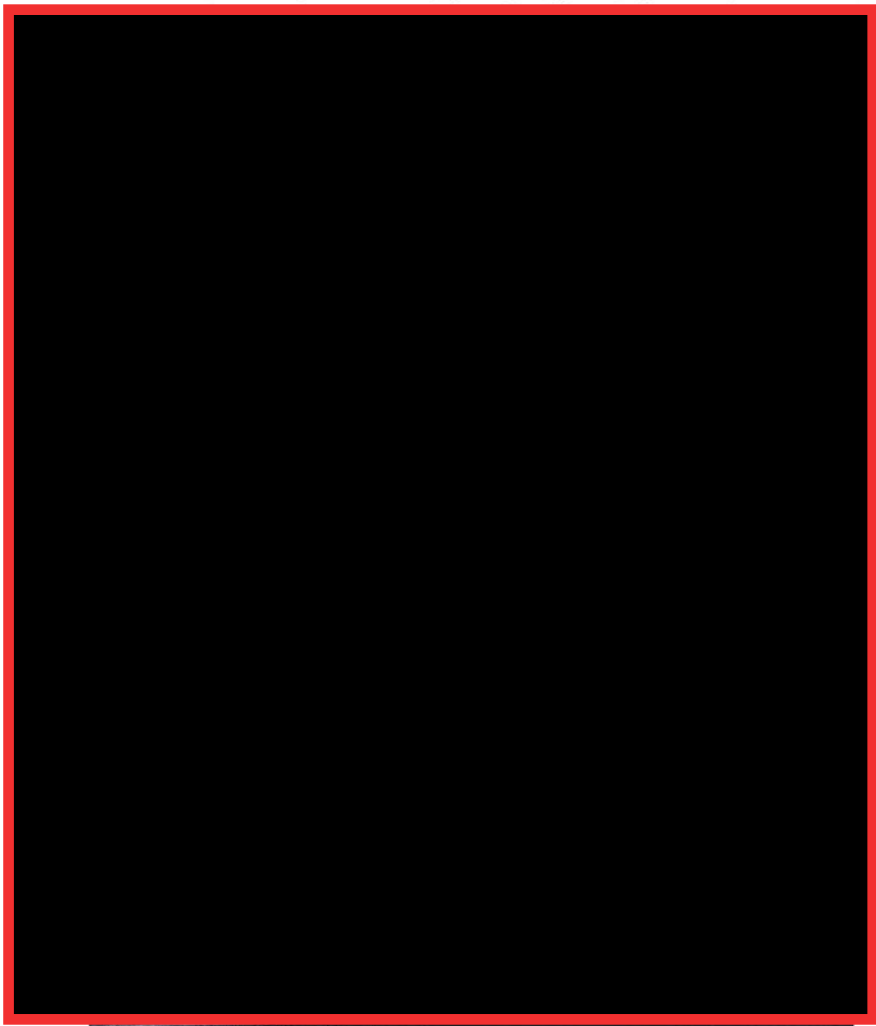


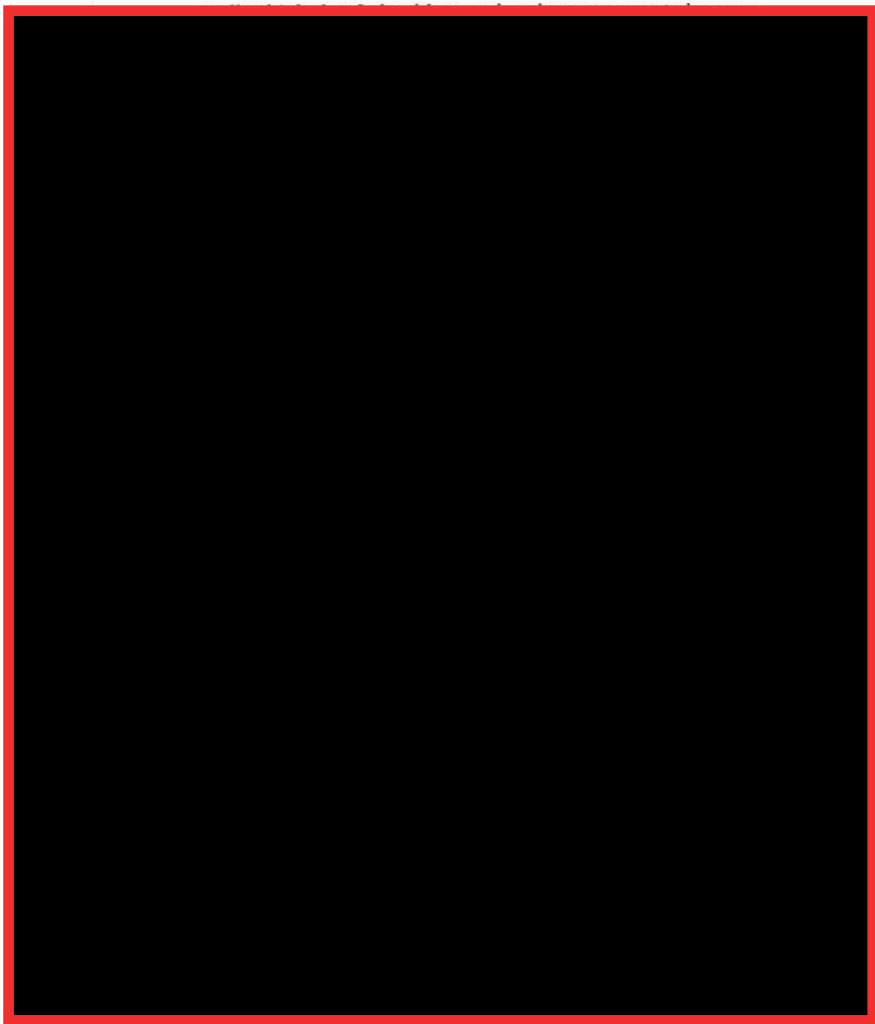


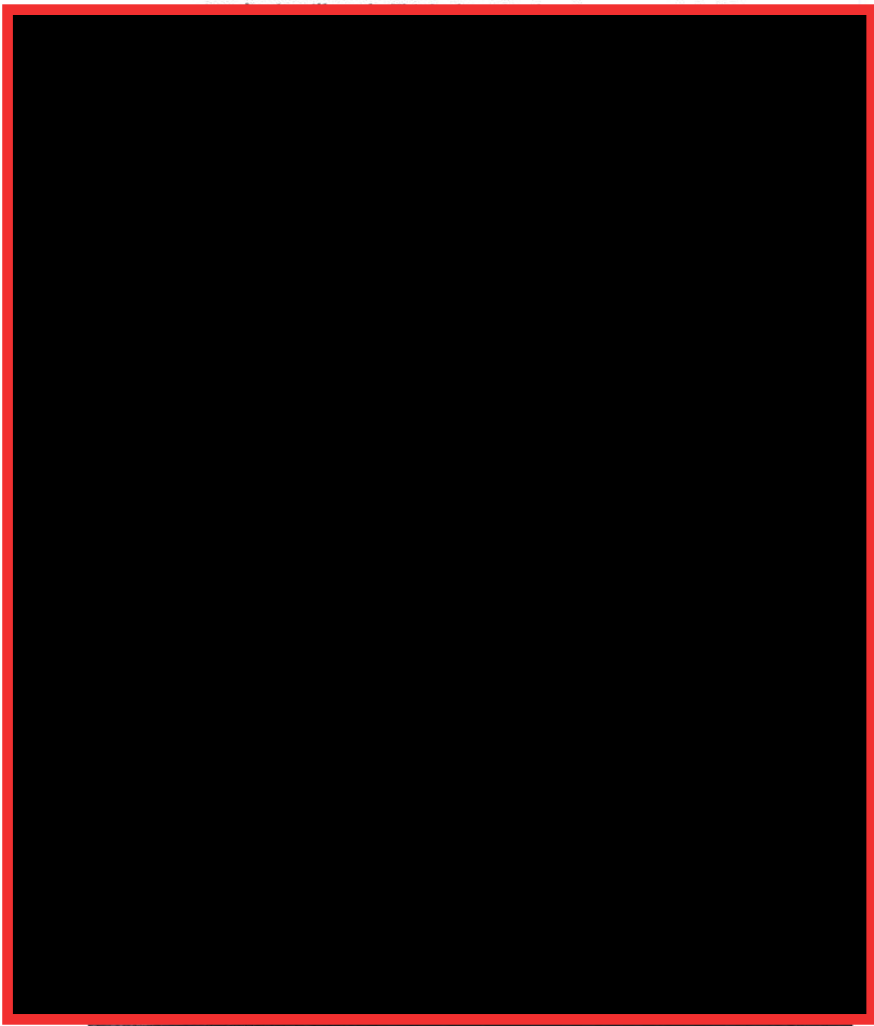


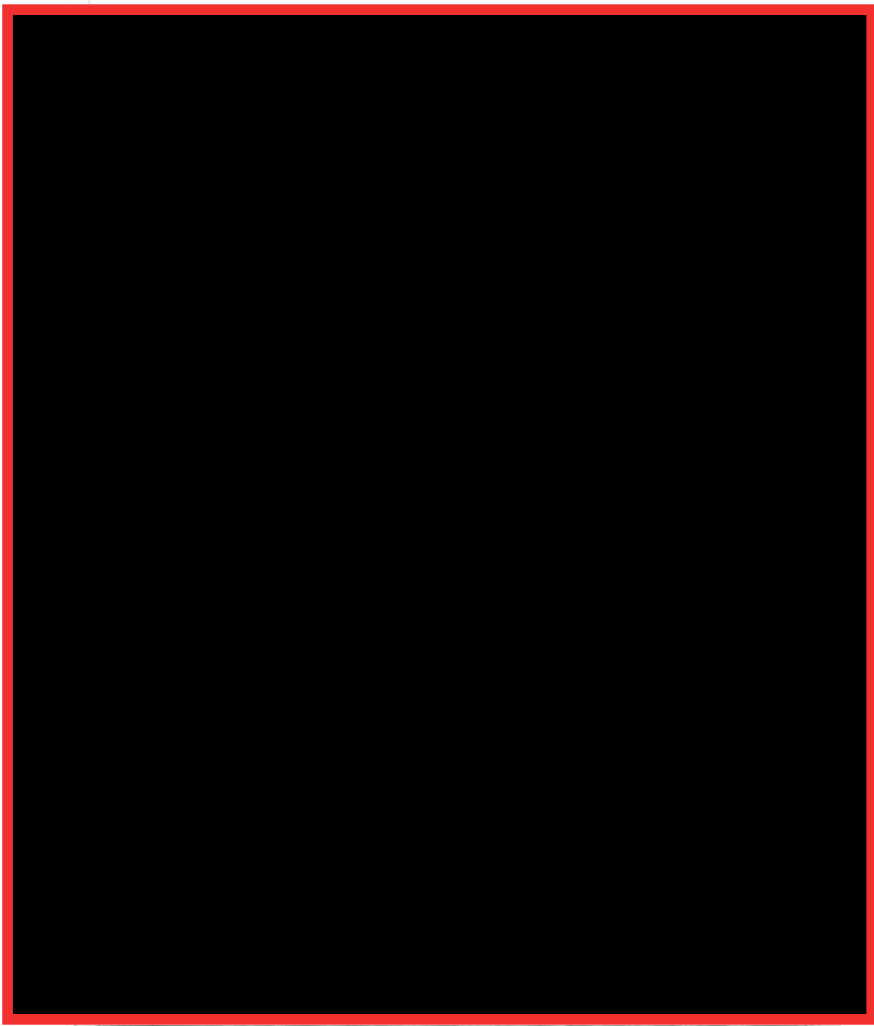


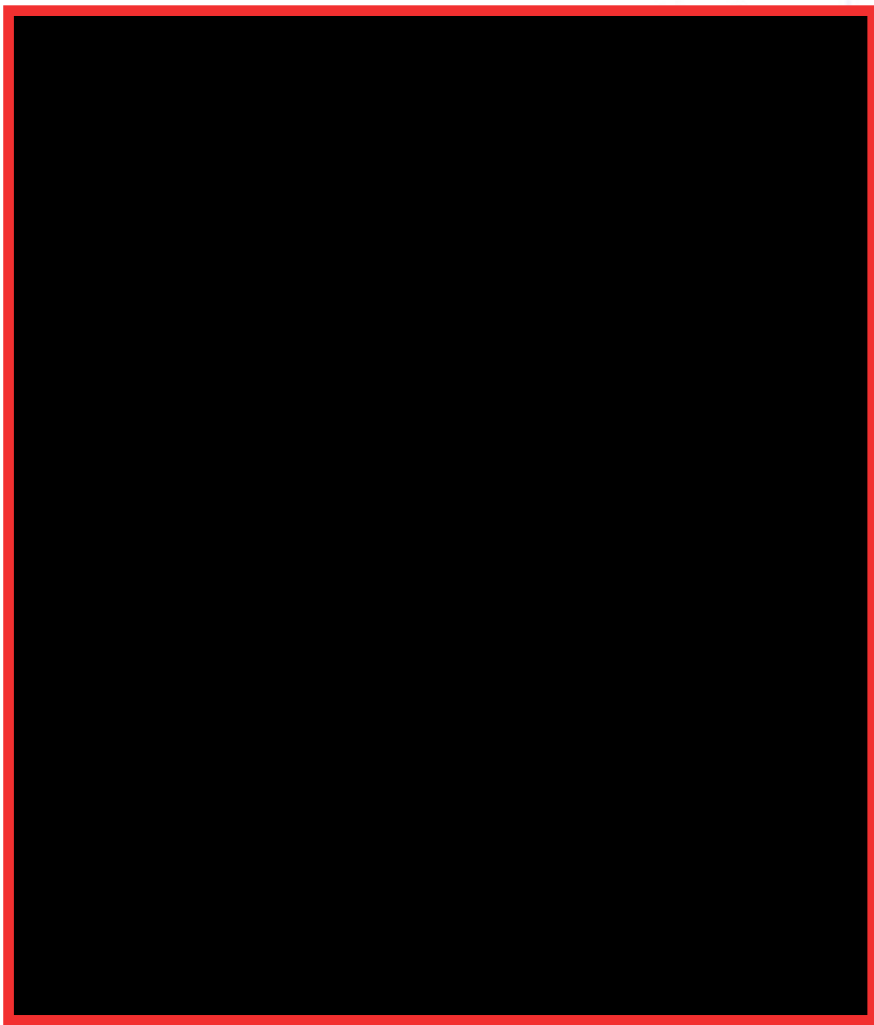


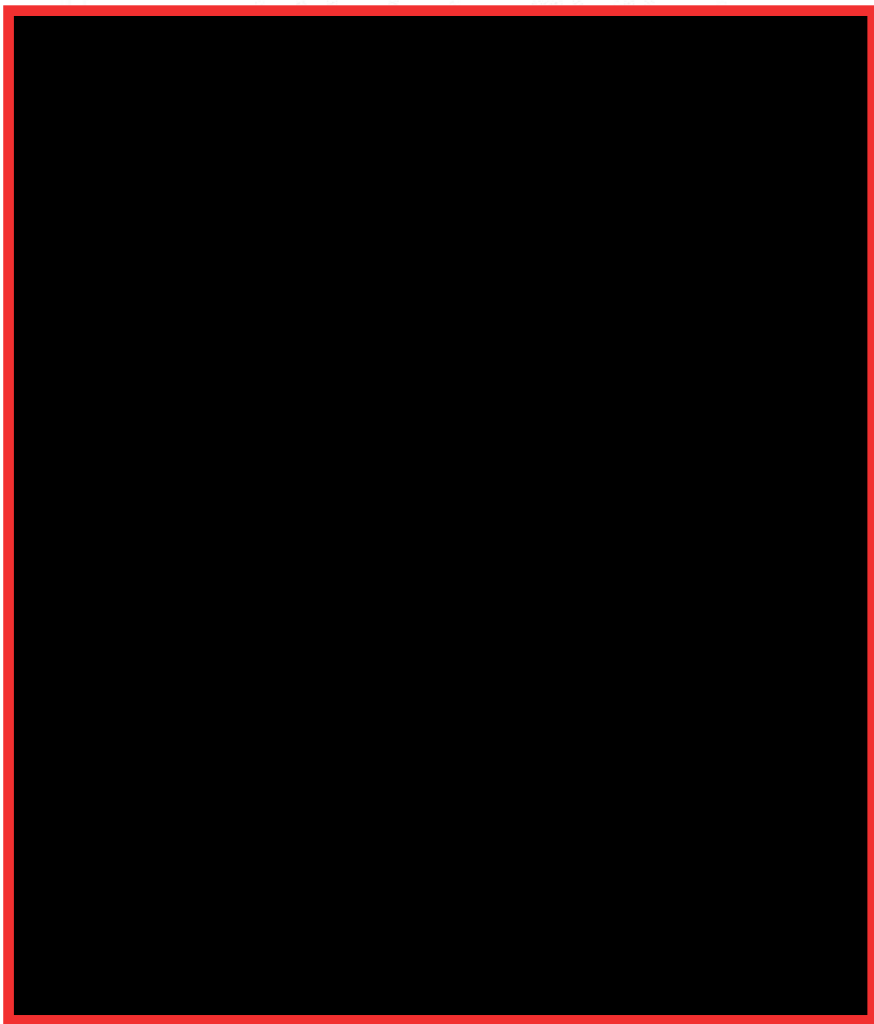


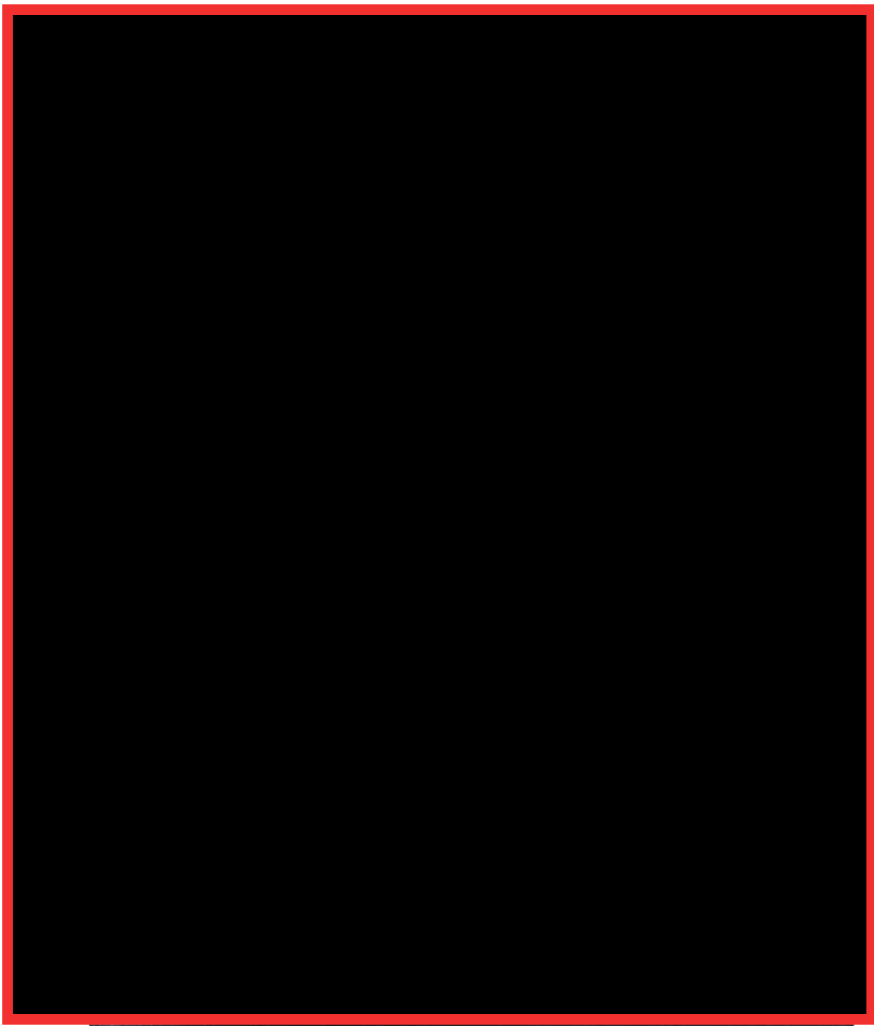


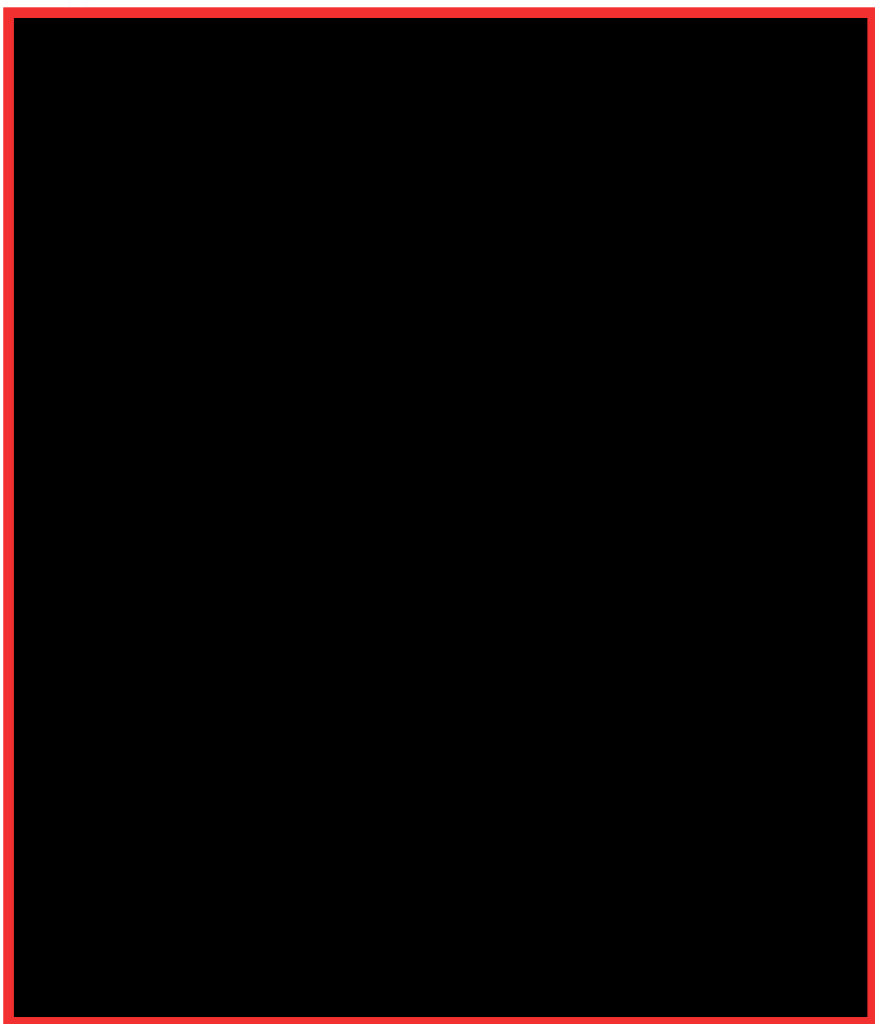


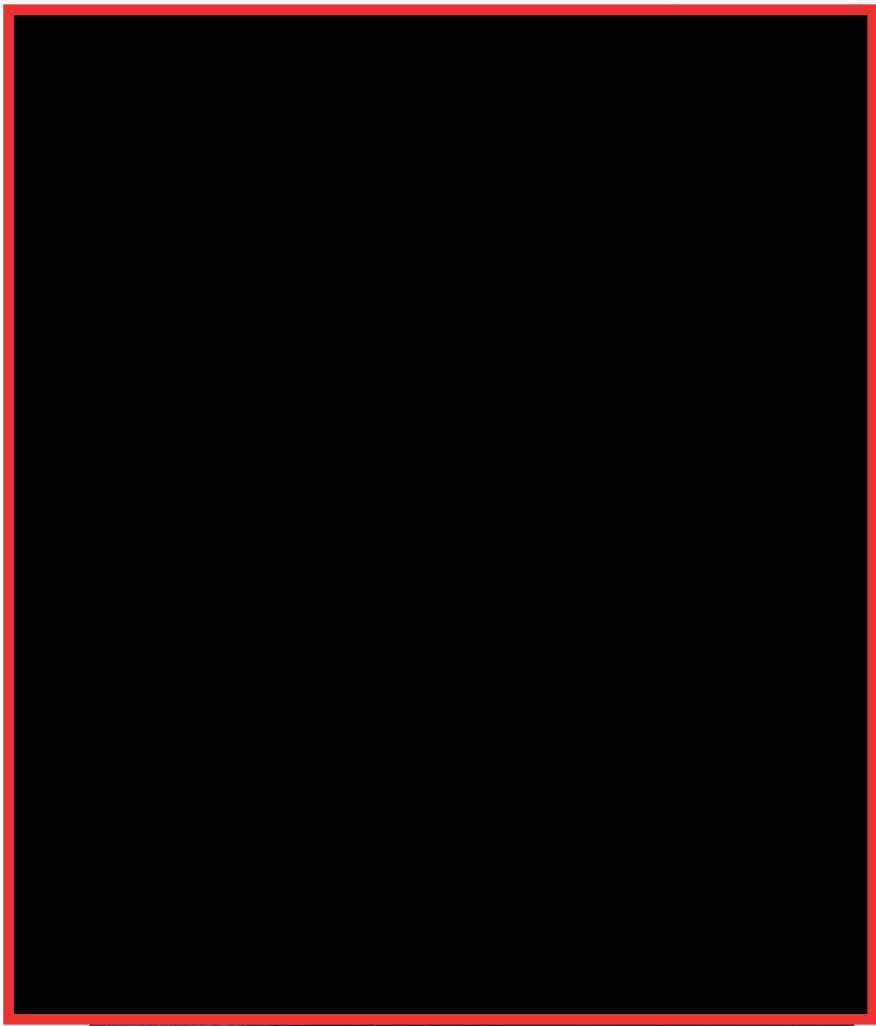


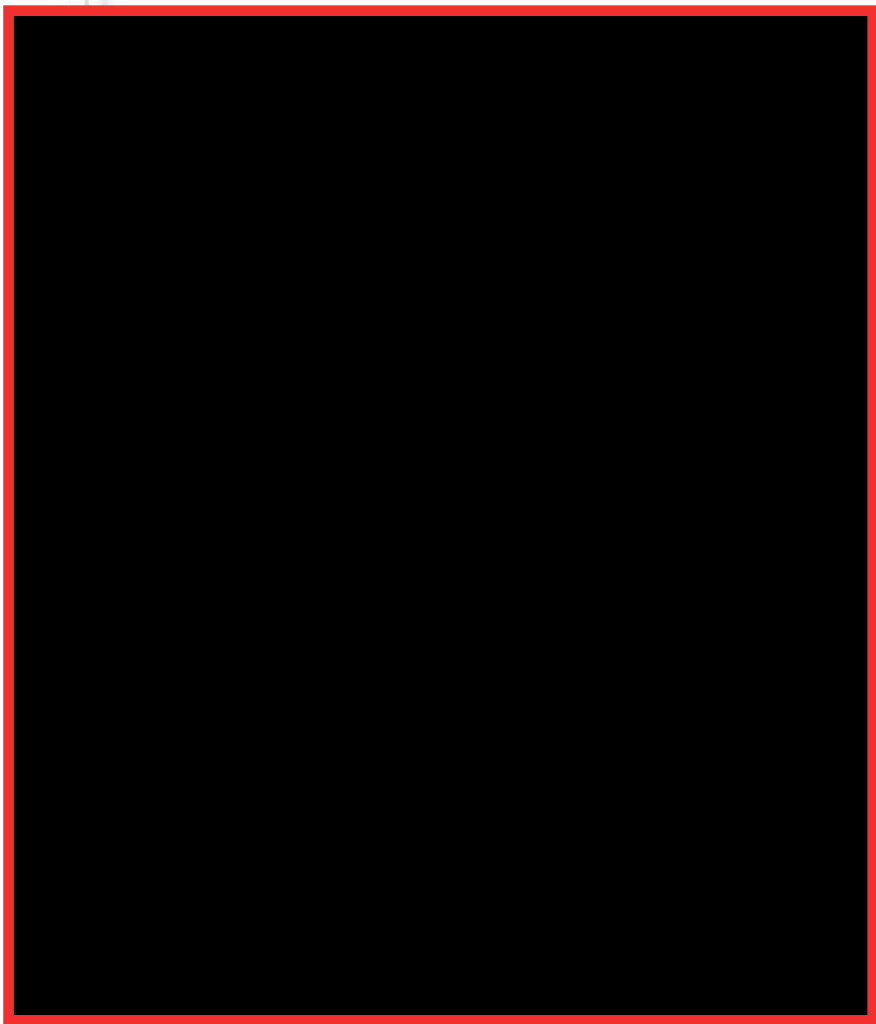


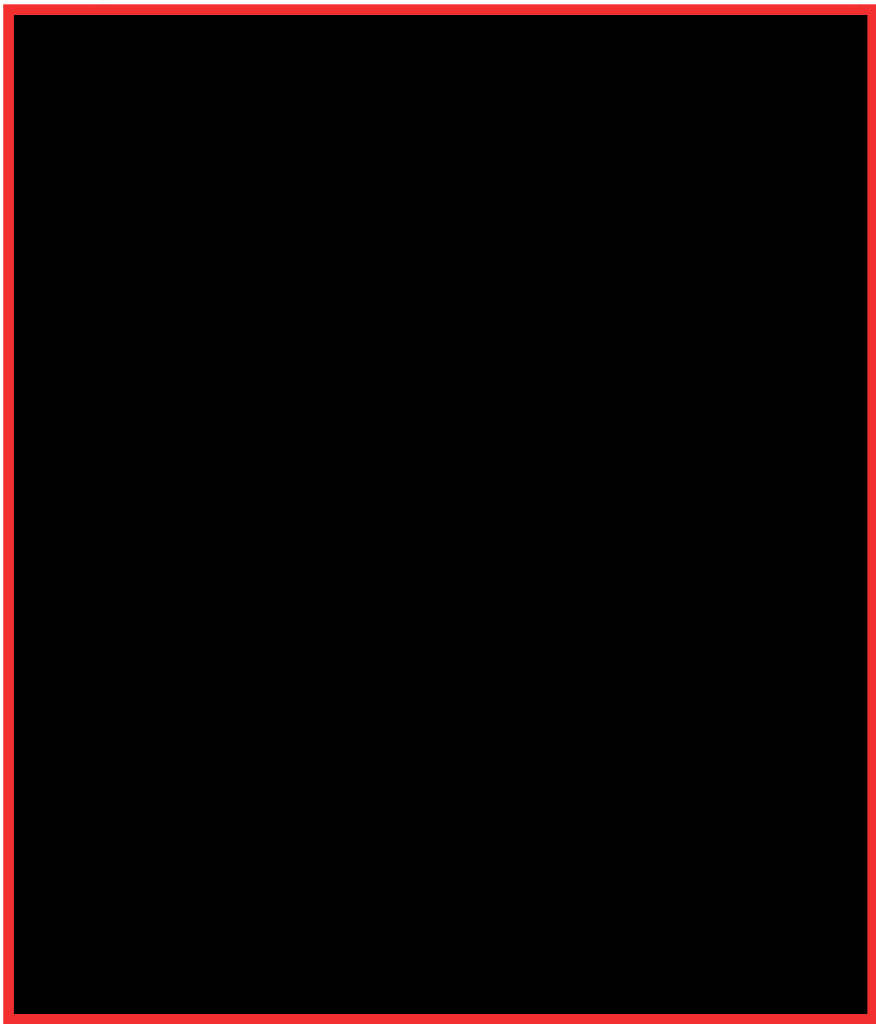


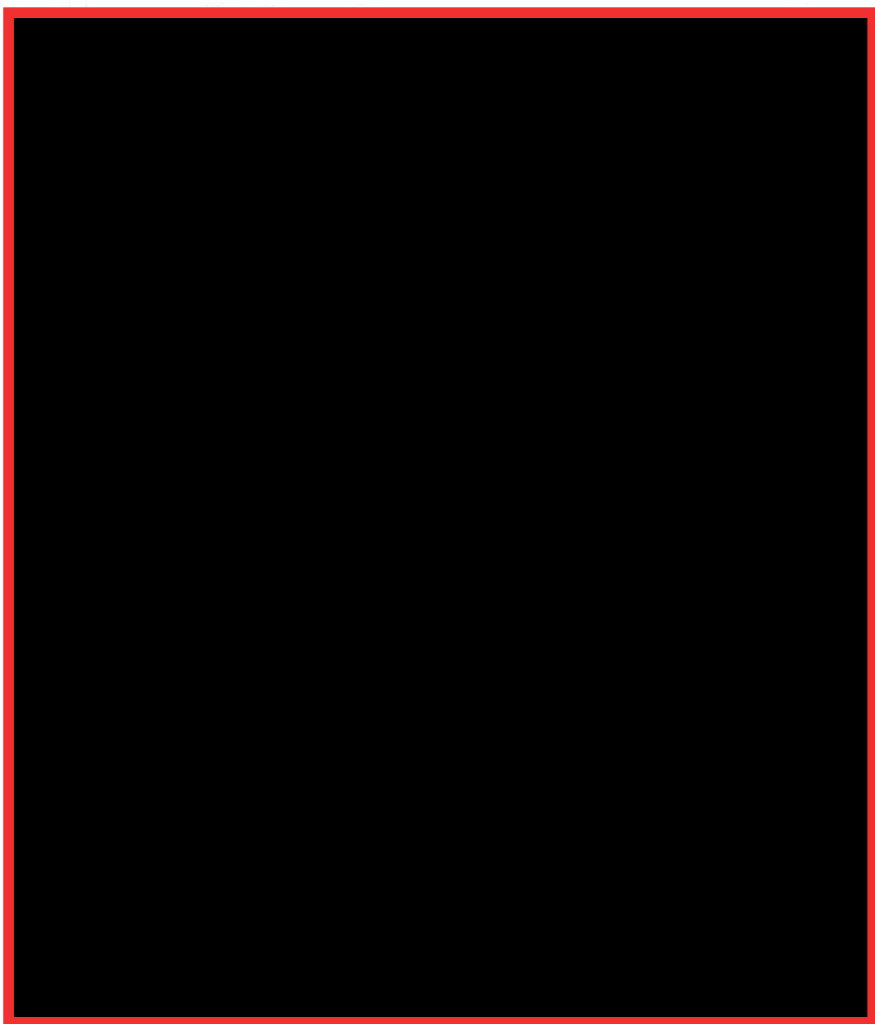


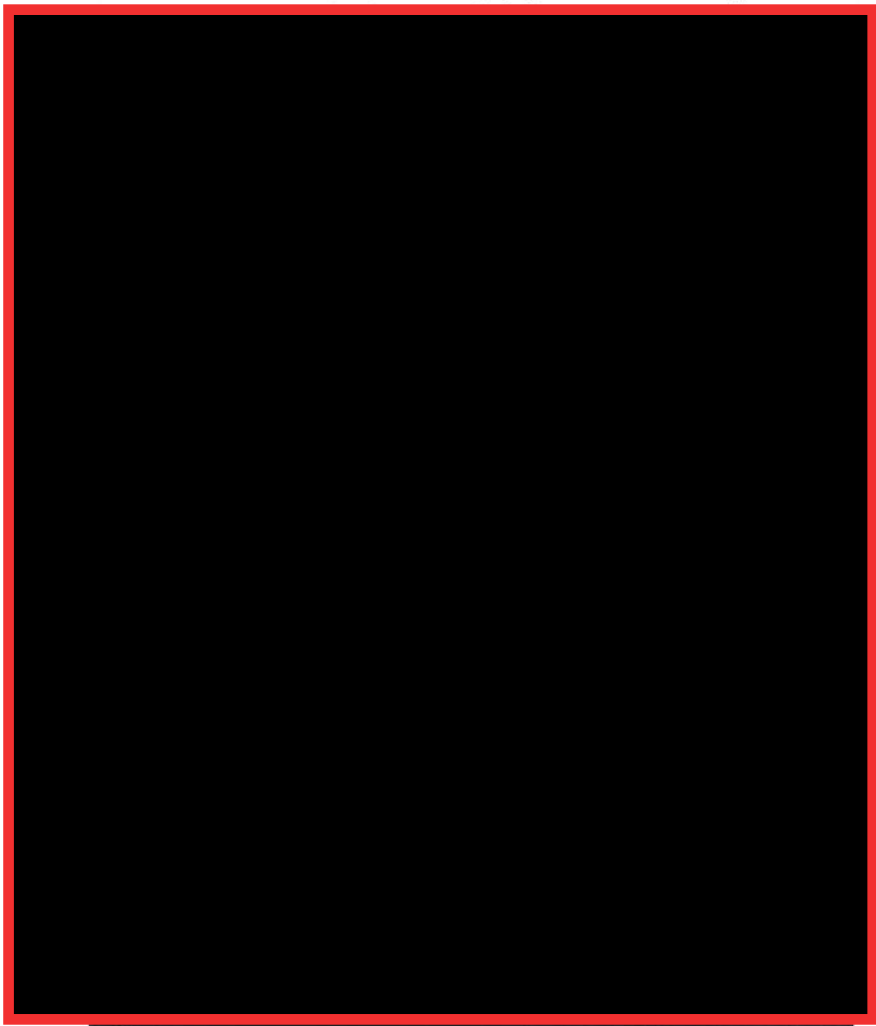


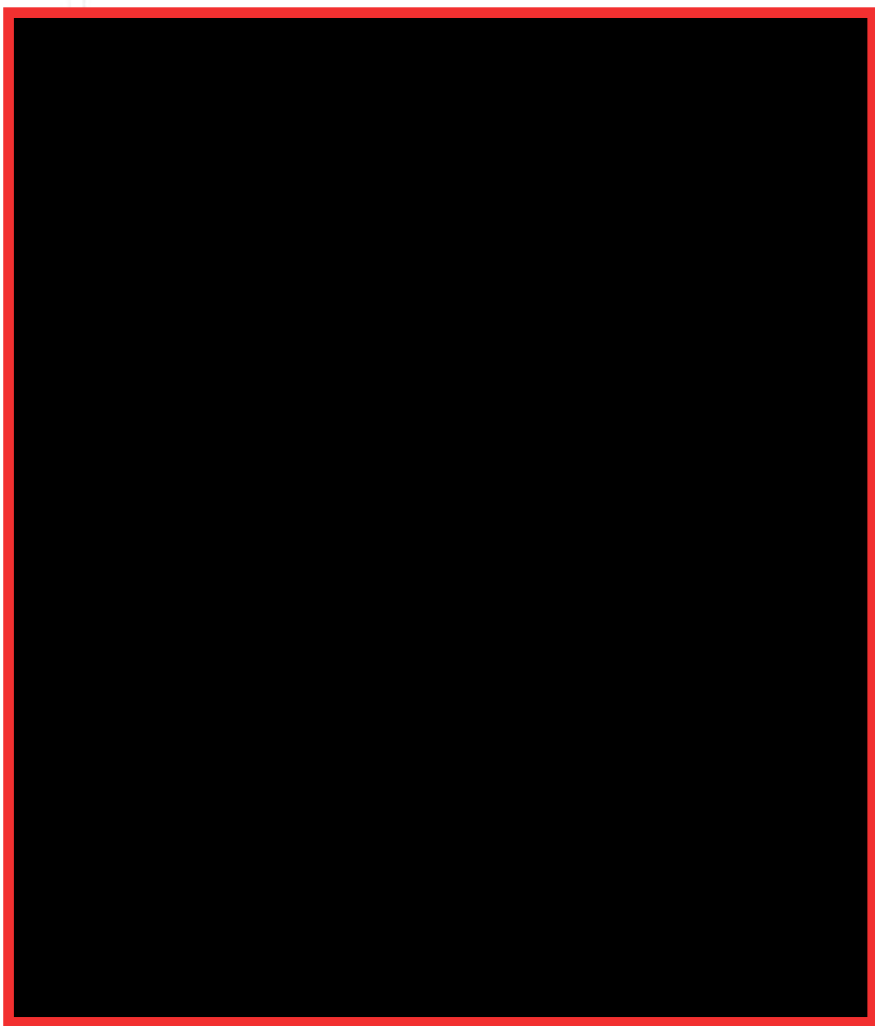


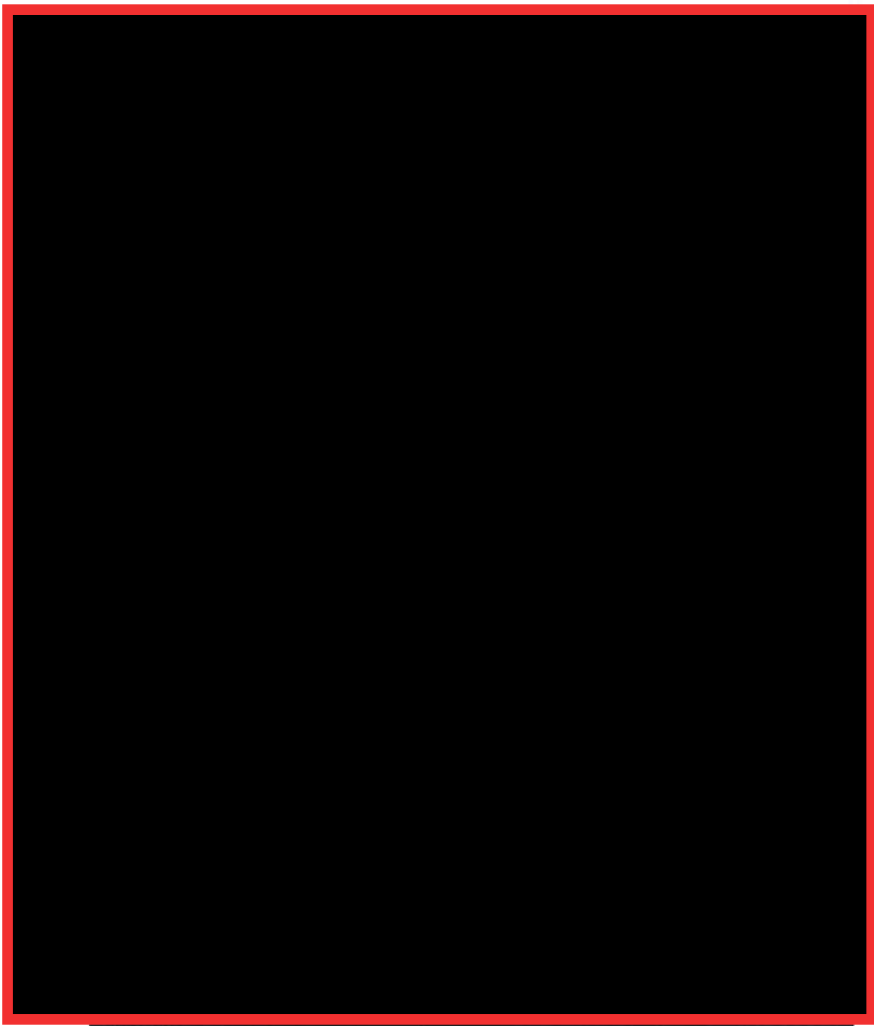


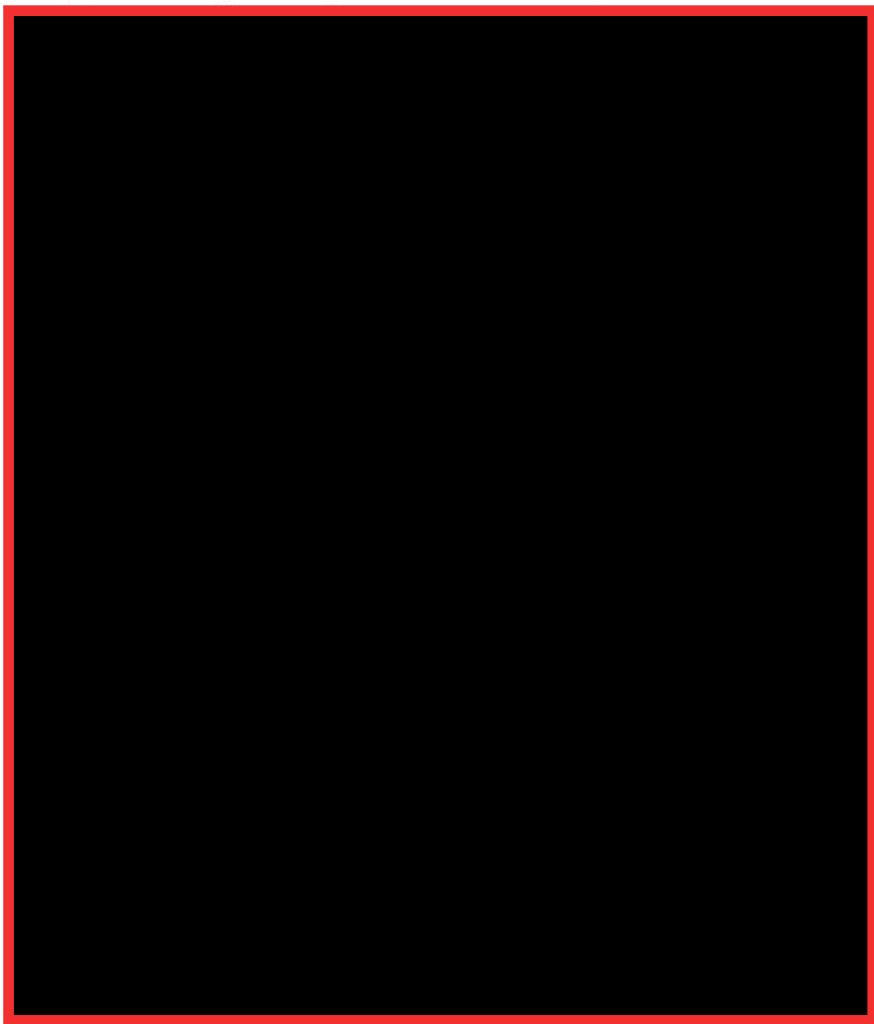


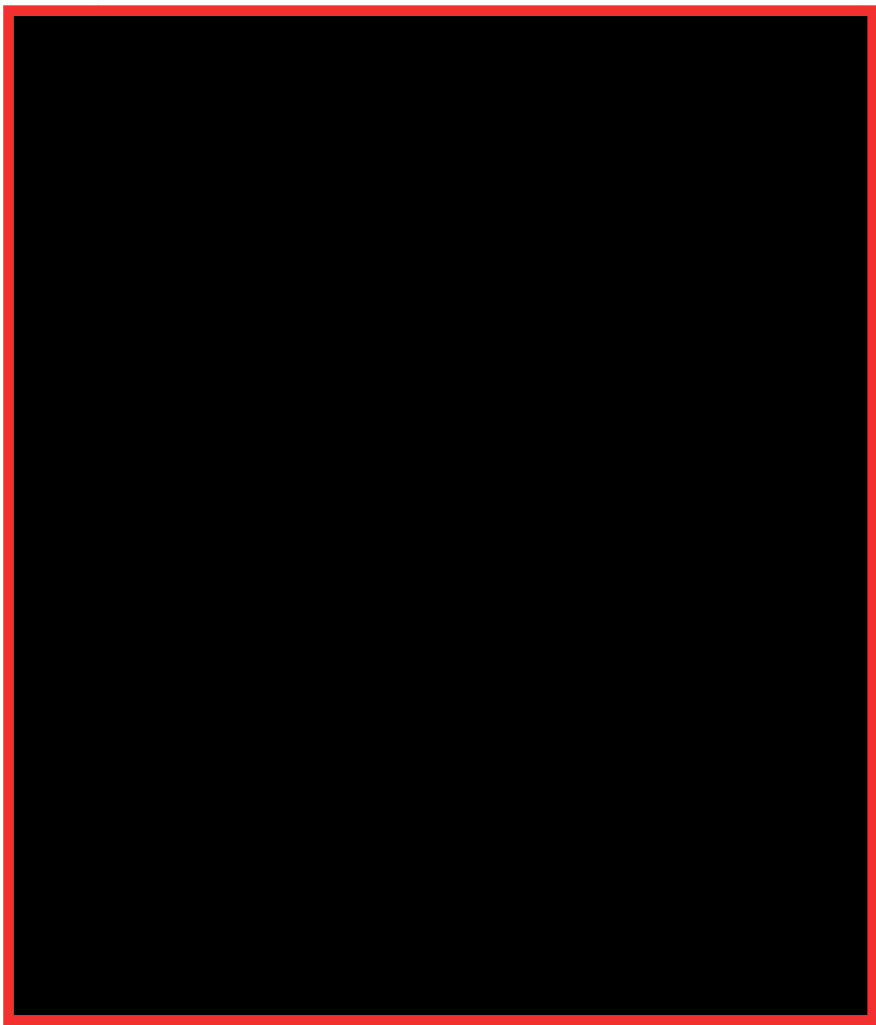


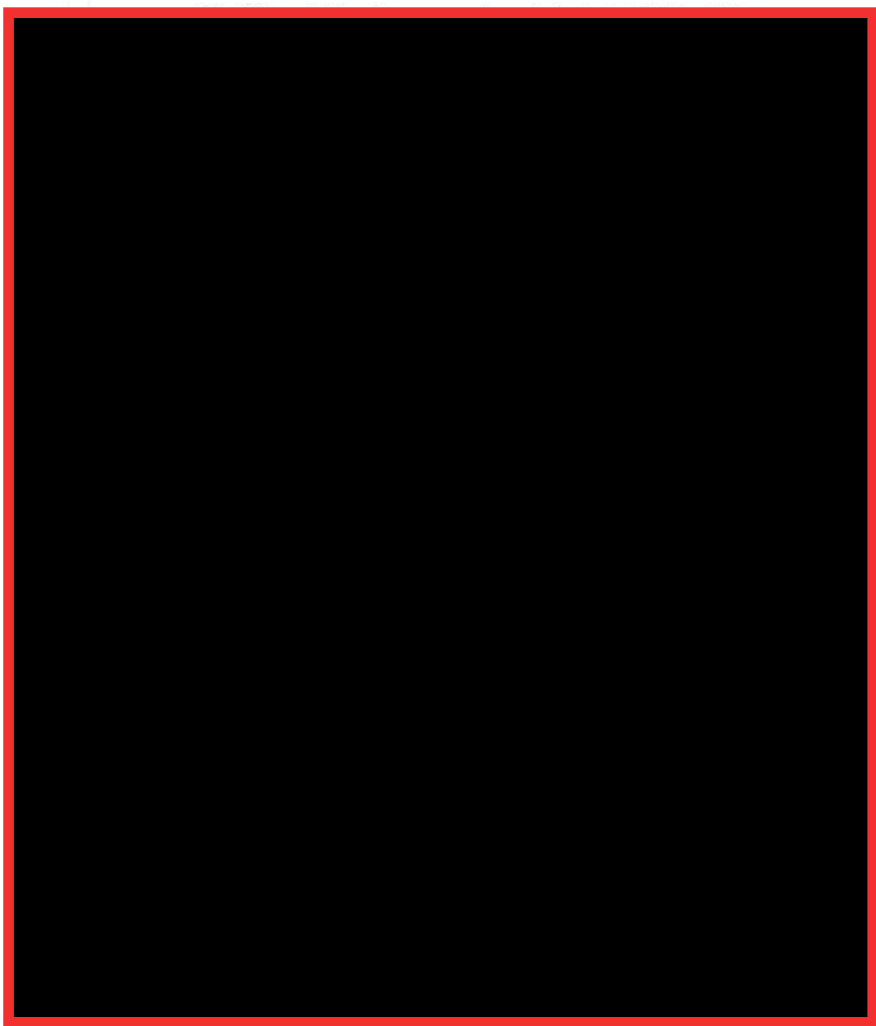


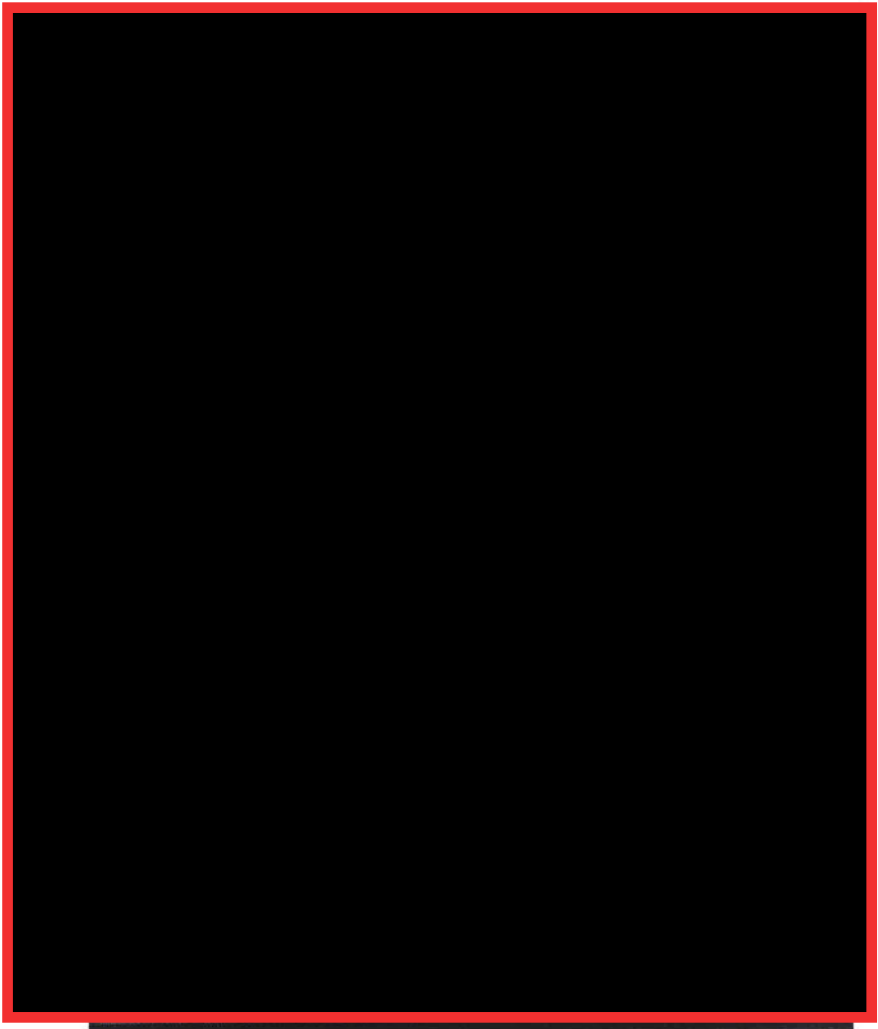


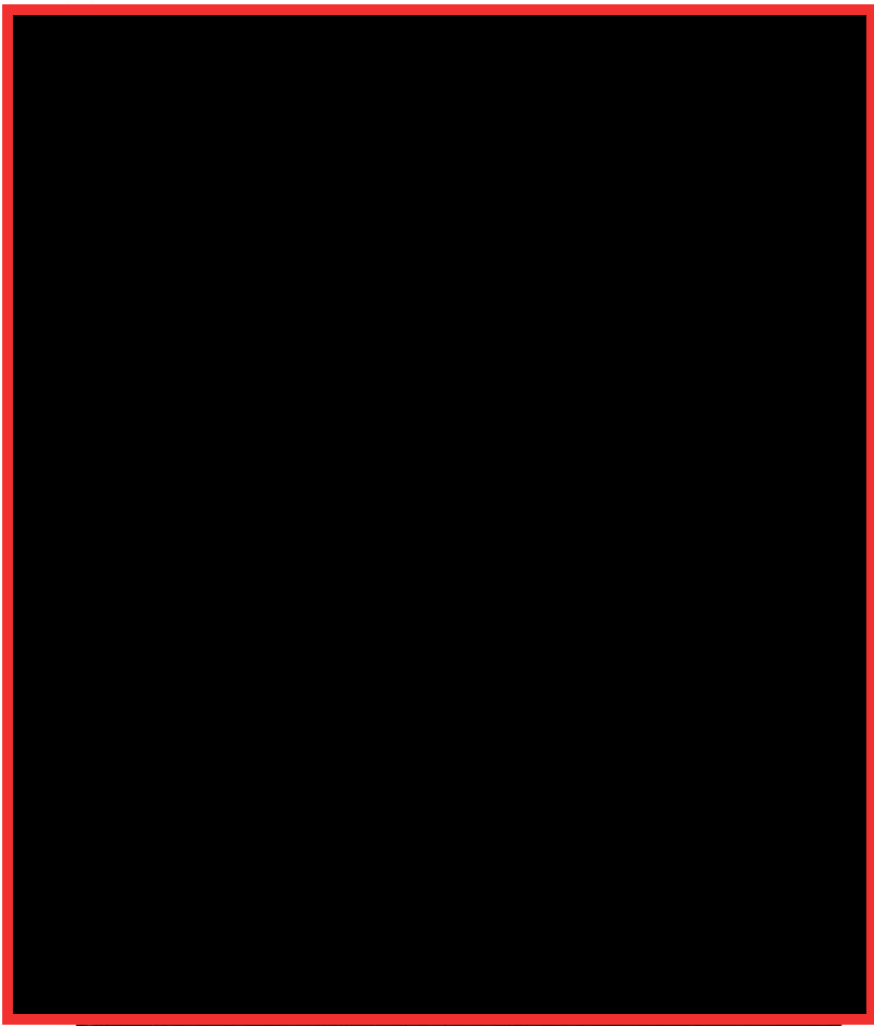


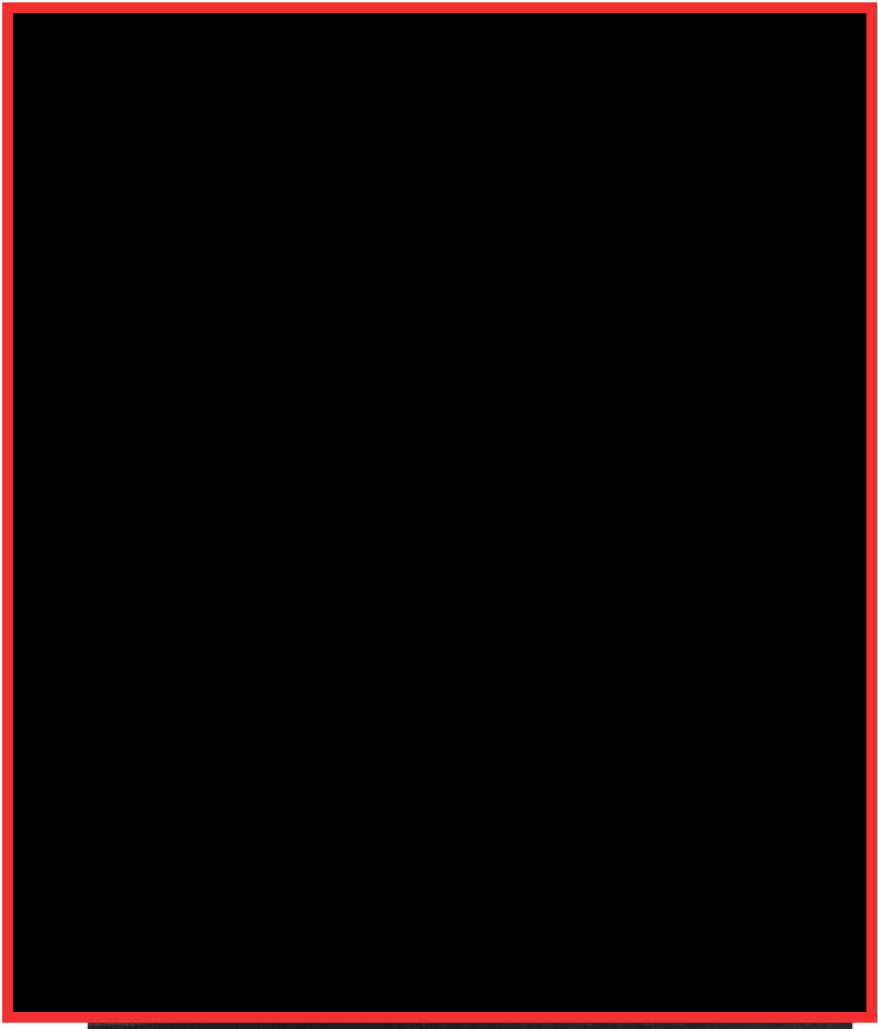


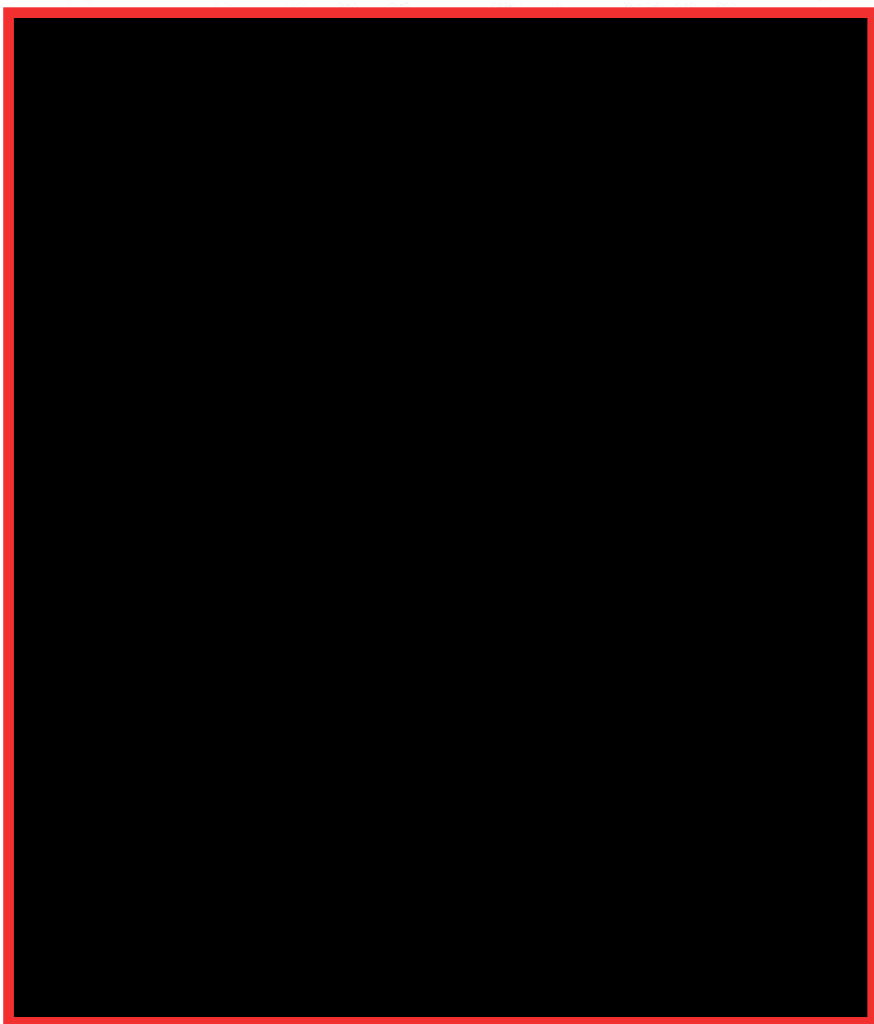


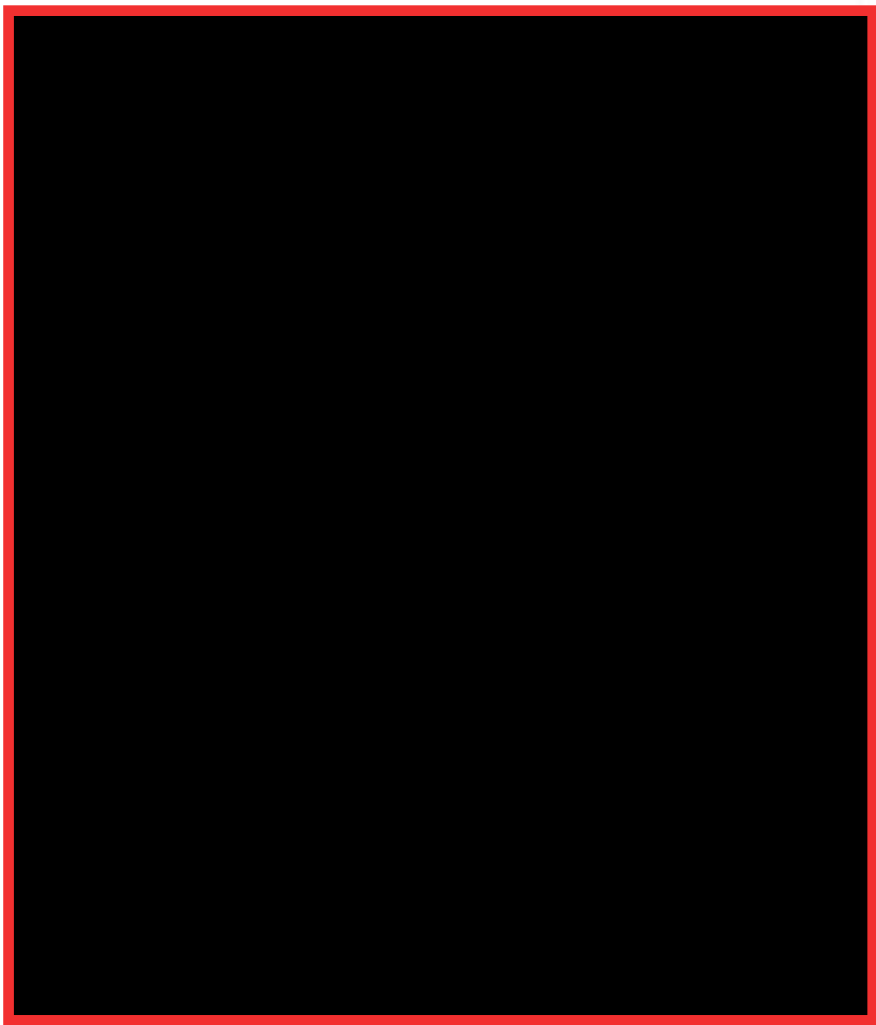


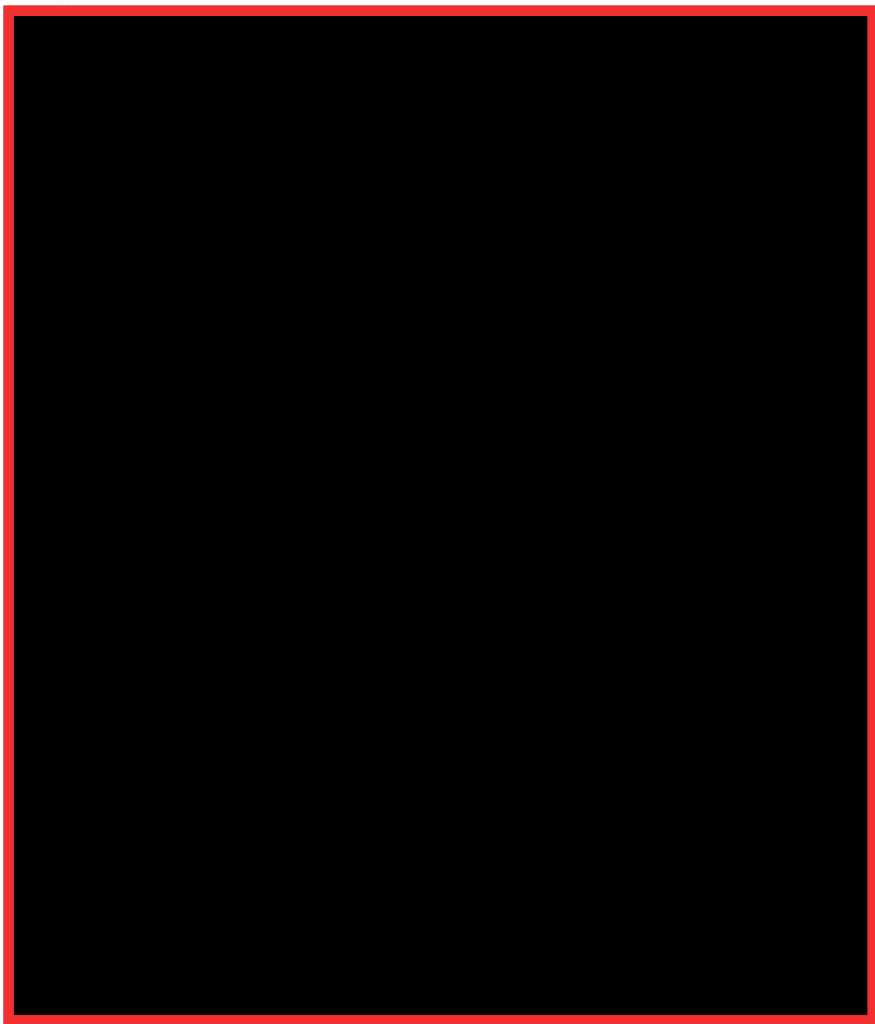


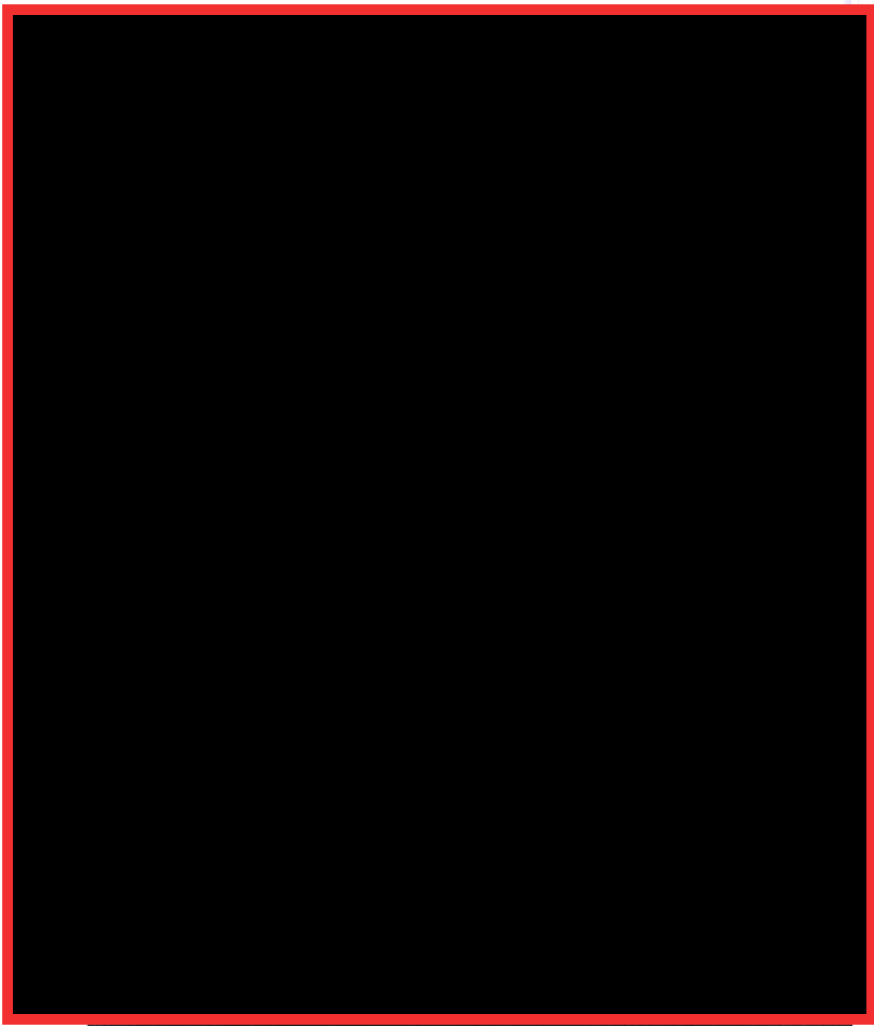




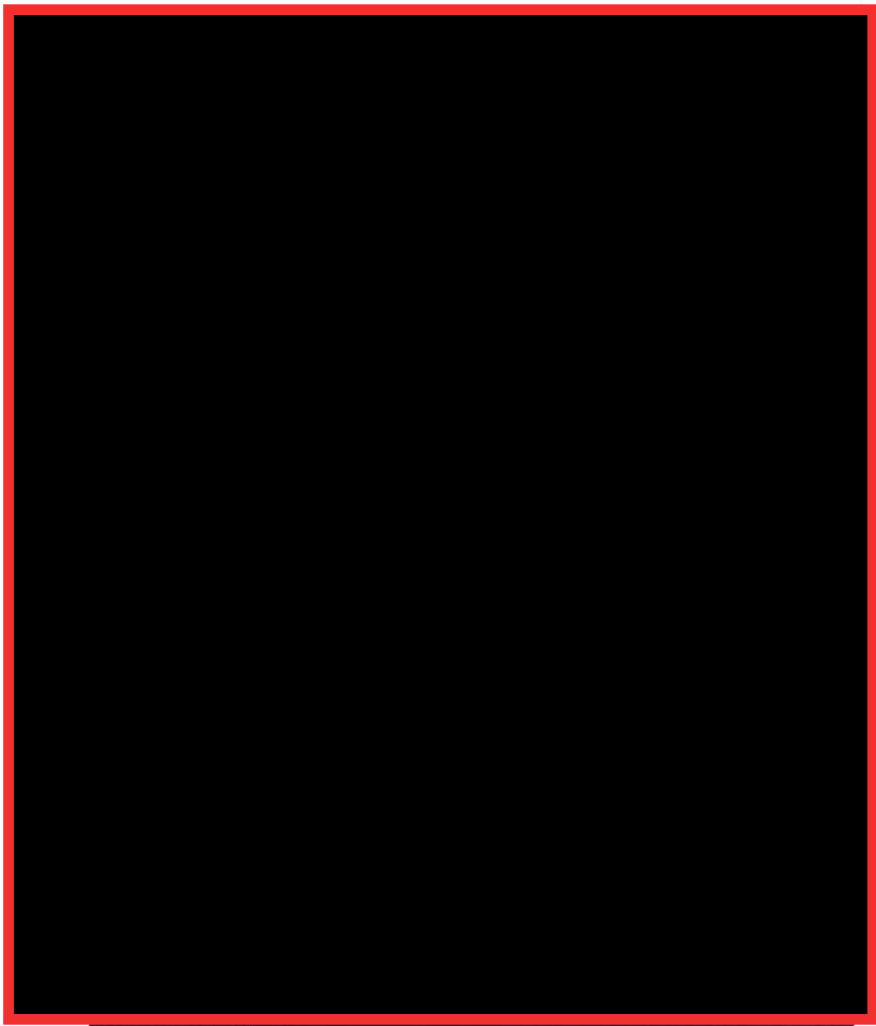


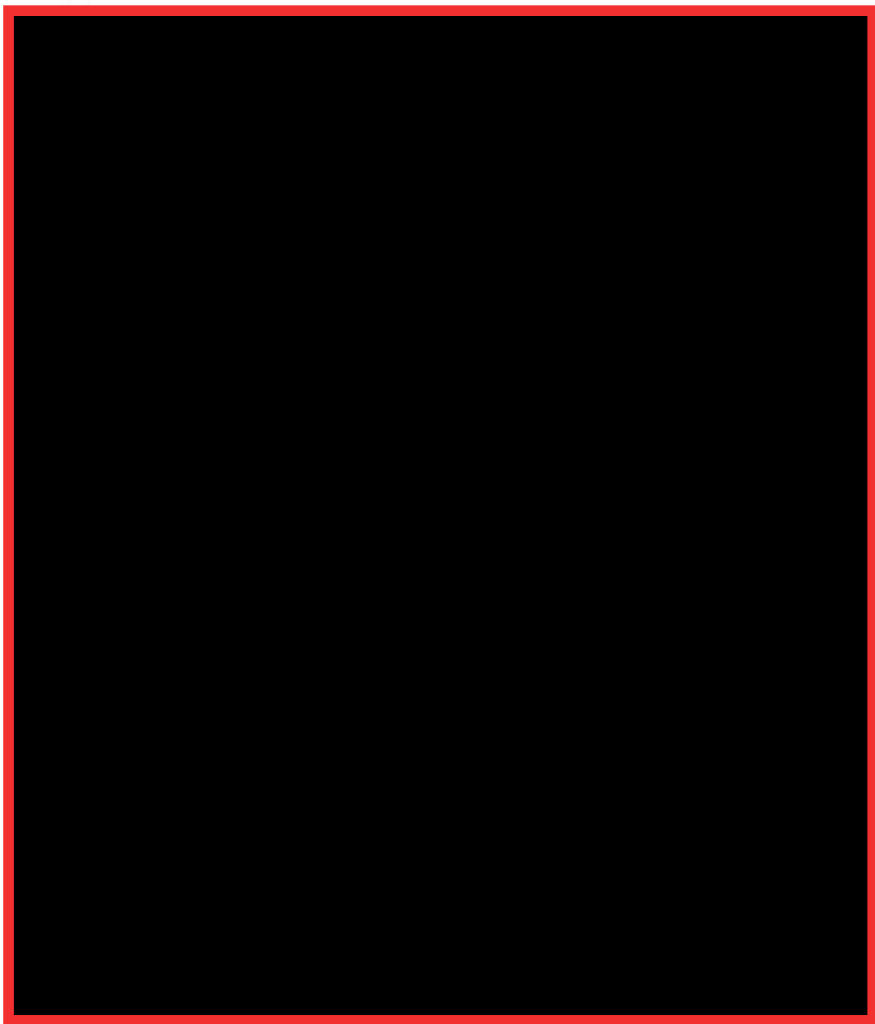


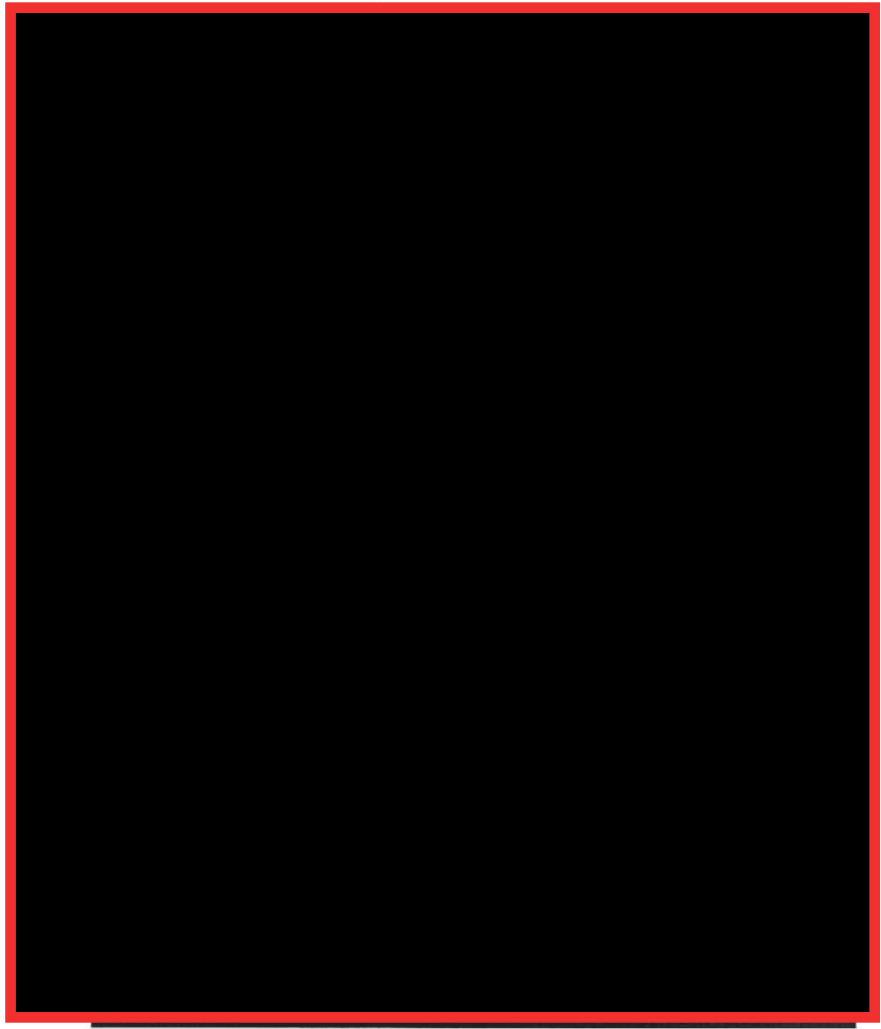


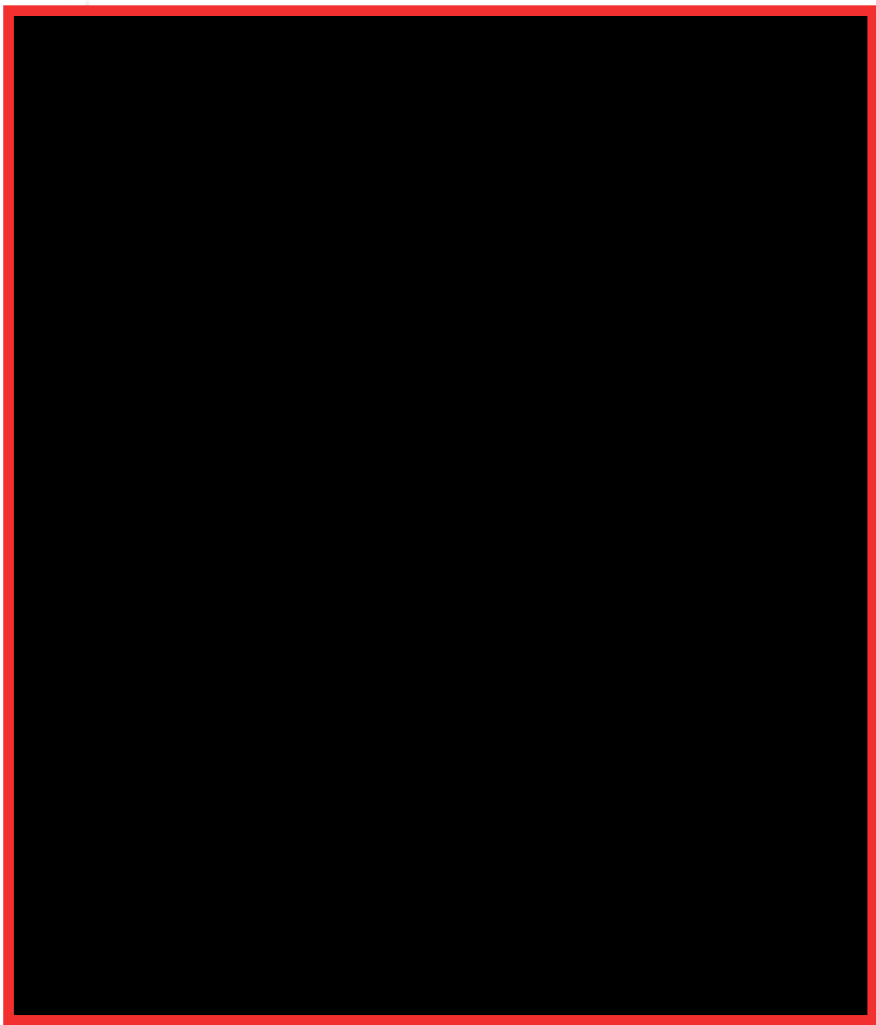


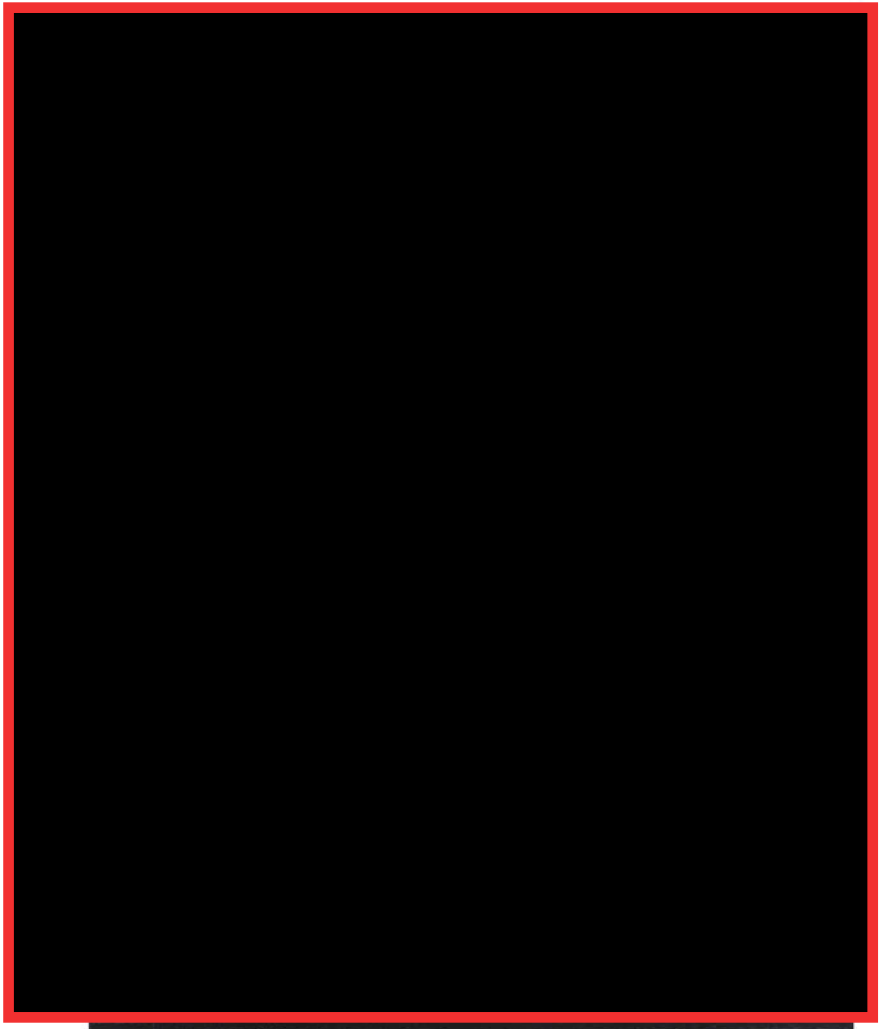


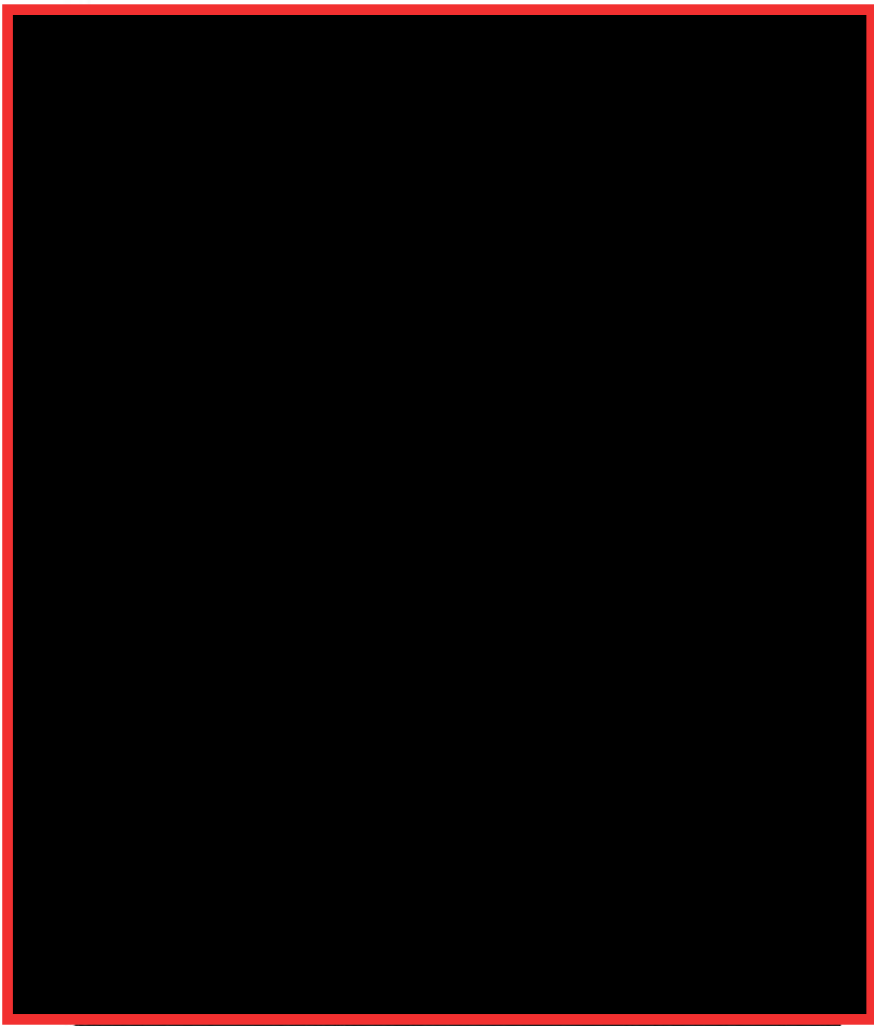


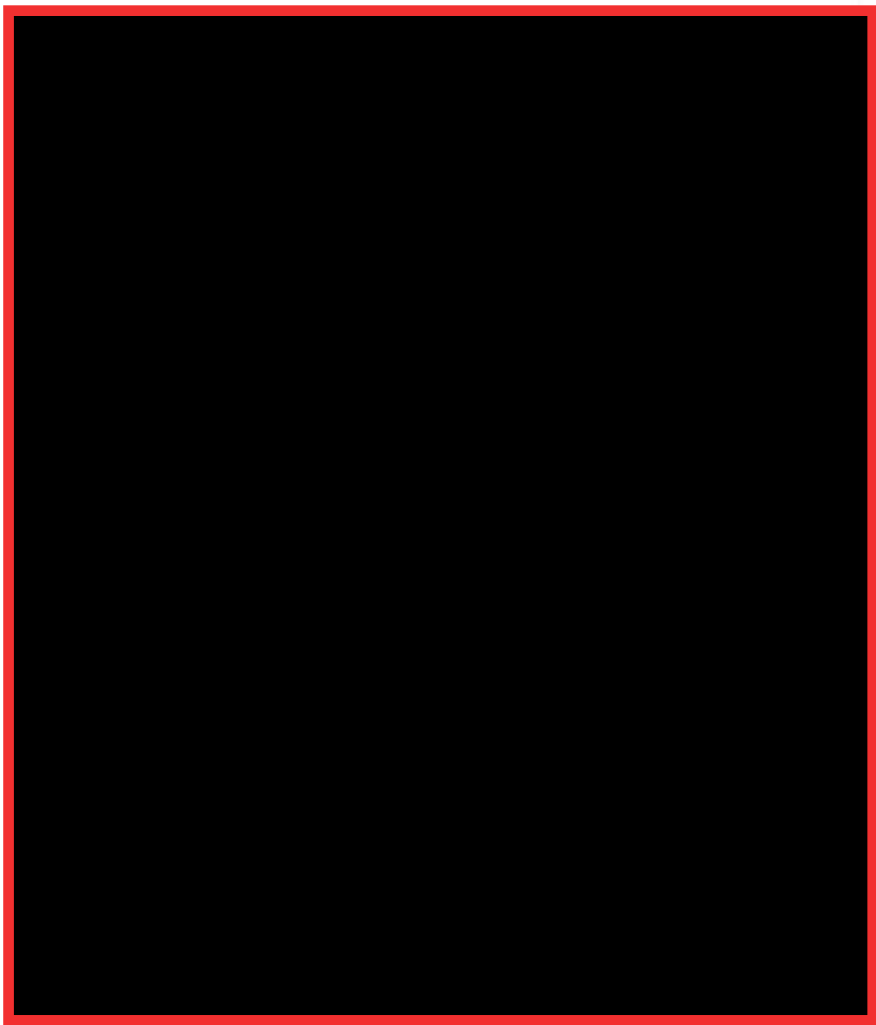


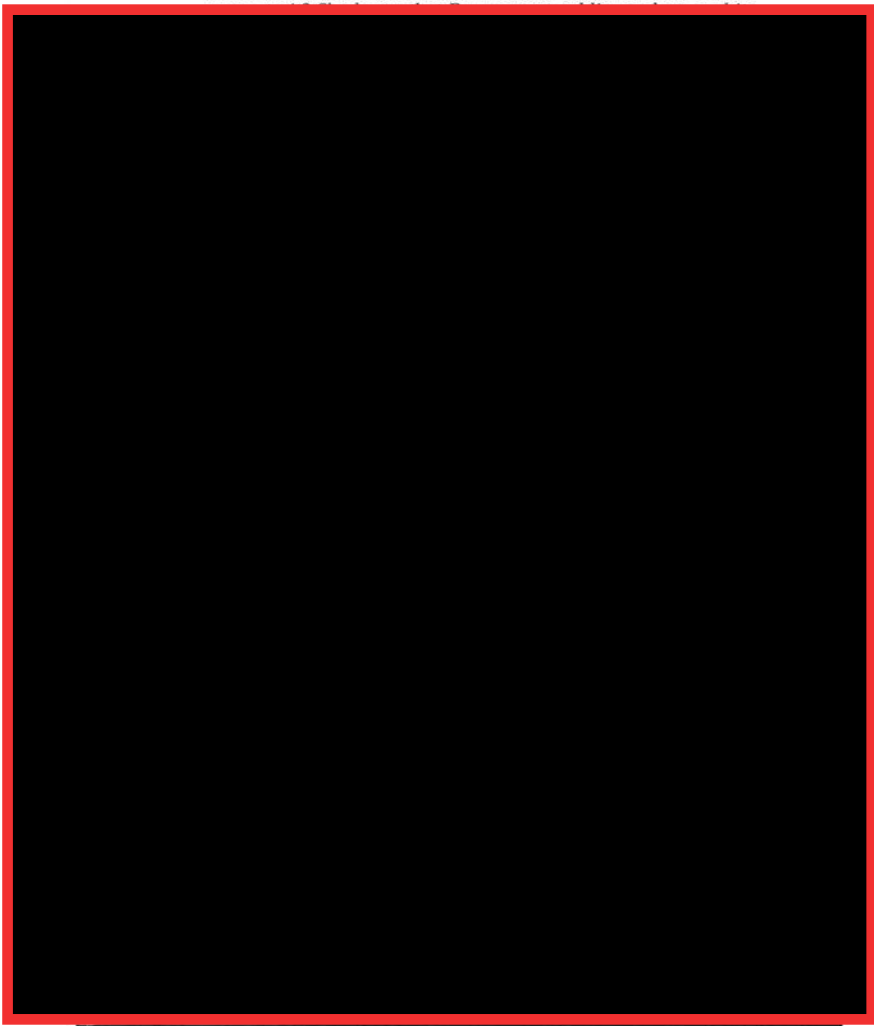


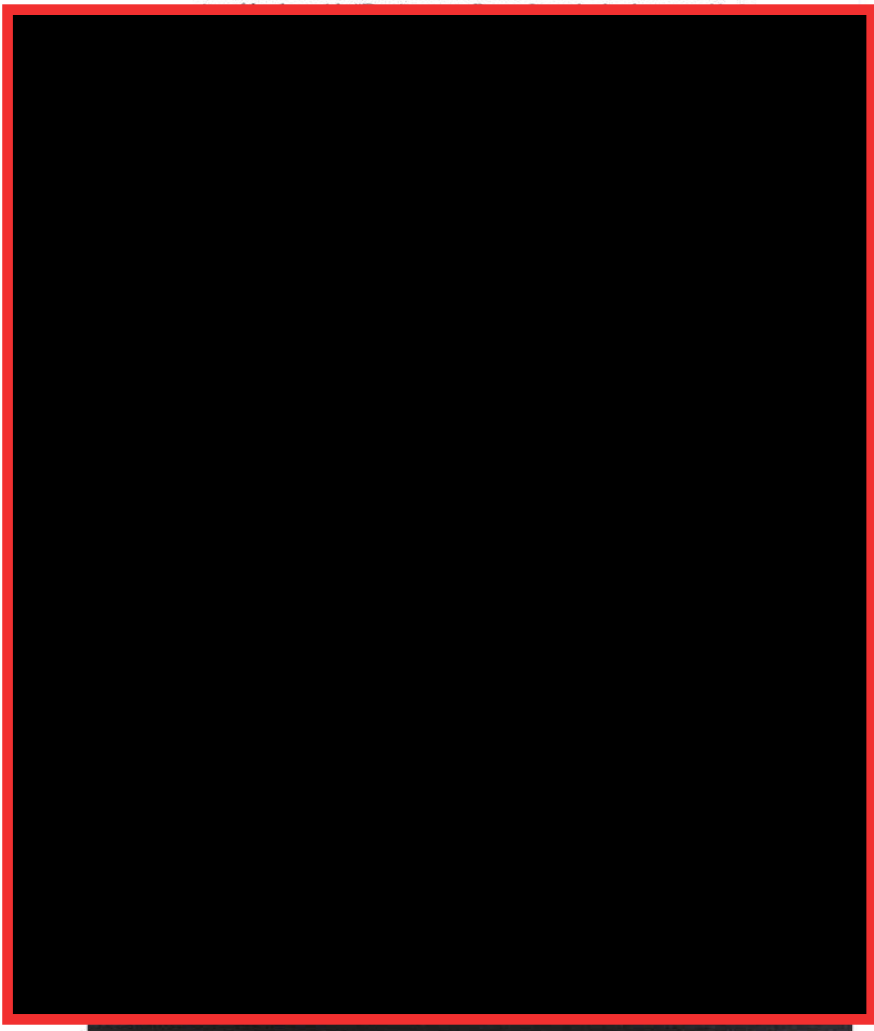












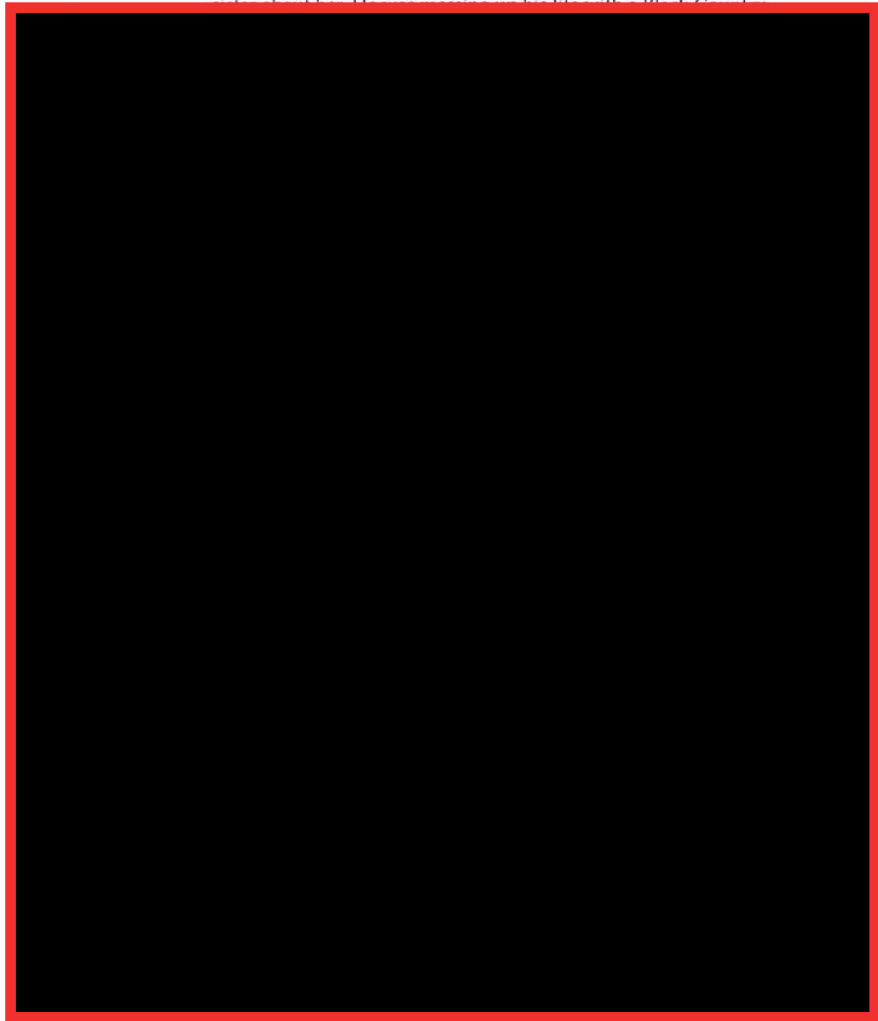


Figure 1. Mean scores on the 10-item subscale of the Revised Conflict Tactics Scales (CTS2) for men and women who were in a dating relationship at the time of the incident (N = 100) and those who were not (N = 100).

Note. Error bars represent 1 standard error. *p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

†p < .05. ††p < .01. †††p < .001. ††††p < .0001.

†††††p < .00001. ††††††p < .000001.

†††††††p < .0000001. ††††††††p < .00000001.

†††††††††p < .000000001. ††††††††††p < .0000000001.

††††††††††p < .00000000001. †††††††††††p < .000000000001.

†††††††††††p < .0000000000001. ††††††††††††p < .00000000000001.

††††††††††††p < .000000000000001. †††††††††††††p < .0000000000000001.

†††††††††††††p < .00000000000000001. ††††††††††††††p < .000000000000000001.

††††††††††††††p < .0000000000000000001. †††††††††††††††p < .00000000000000000001.

†††††††††††††††p < .000000000000000000001. ††††††††††††††††p < .0000000000000000000001.

††††††††††††††††p < .00000000000000000000001. †††††††††††††††††p < .000000000000000000000001.

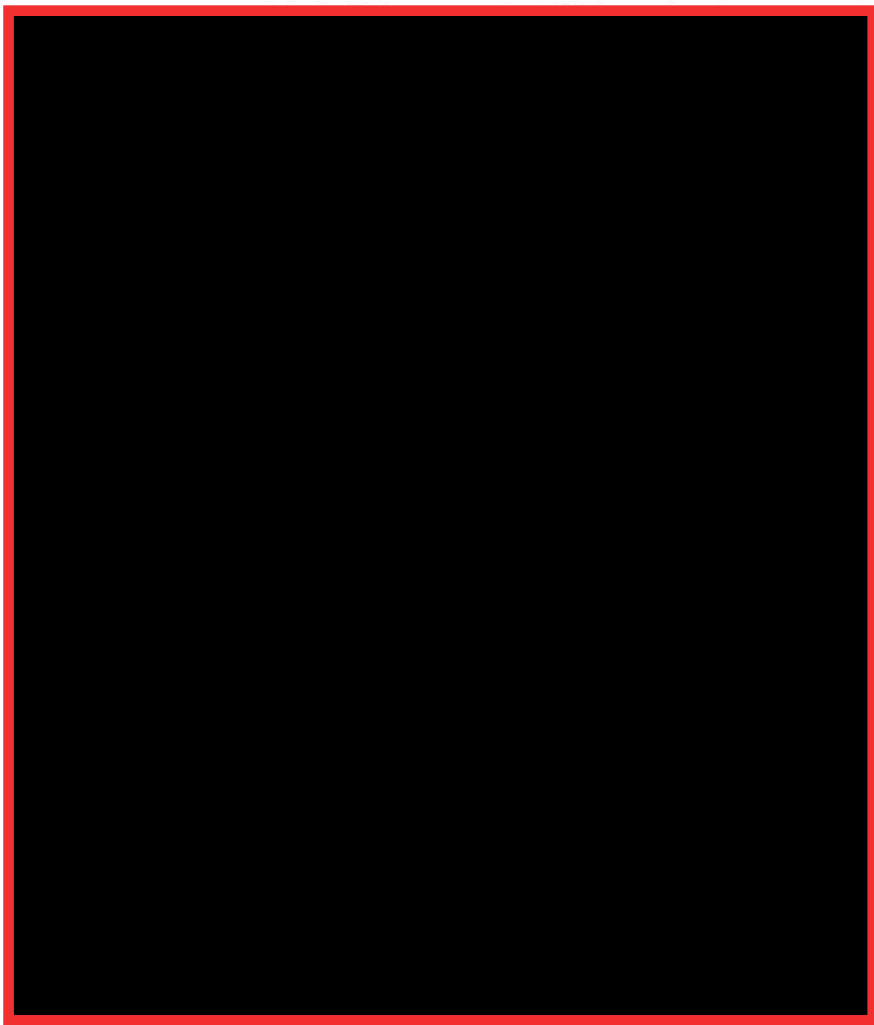
†††††††††††††††††p < .0000000000000000000000001. ††††††††††††††††††p < .00000000000000000000000001.

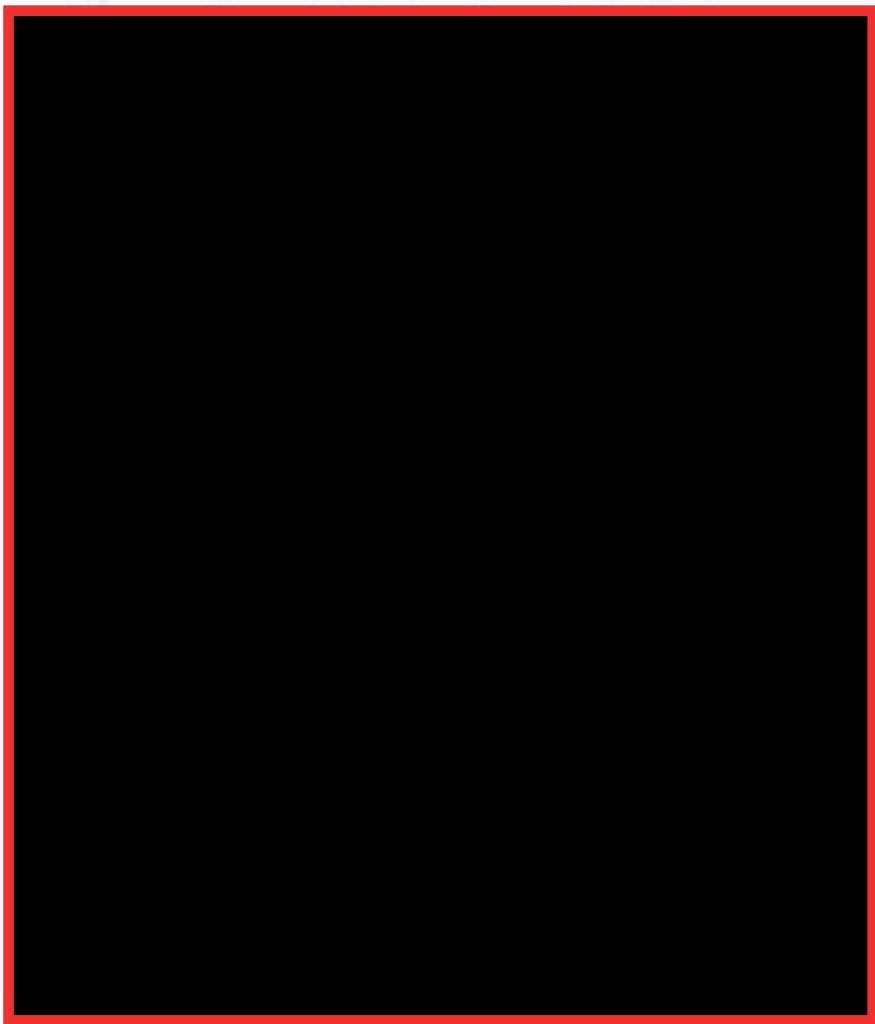
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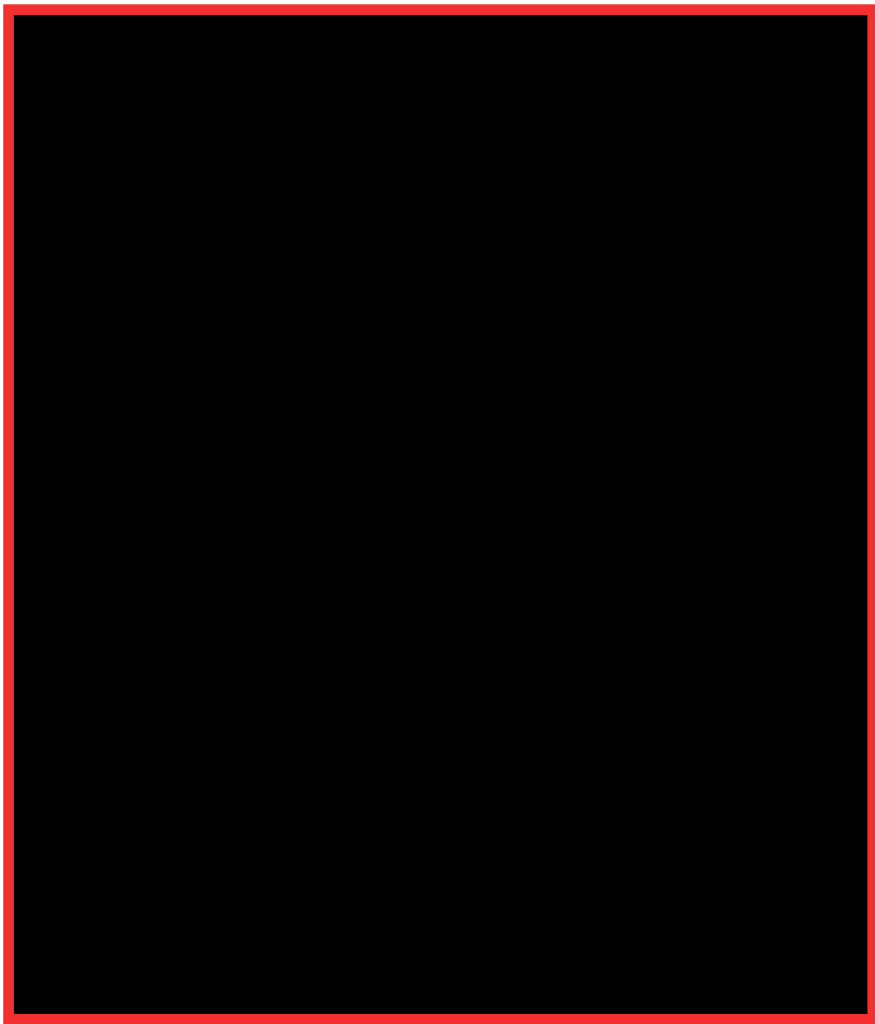
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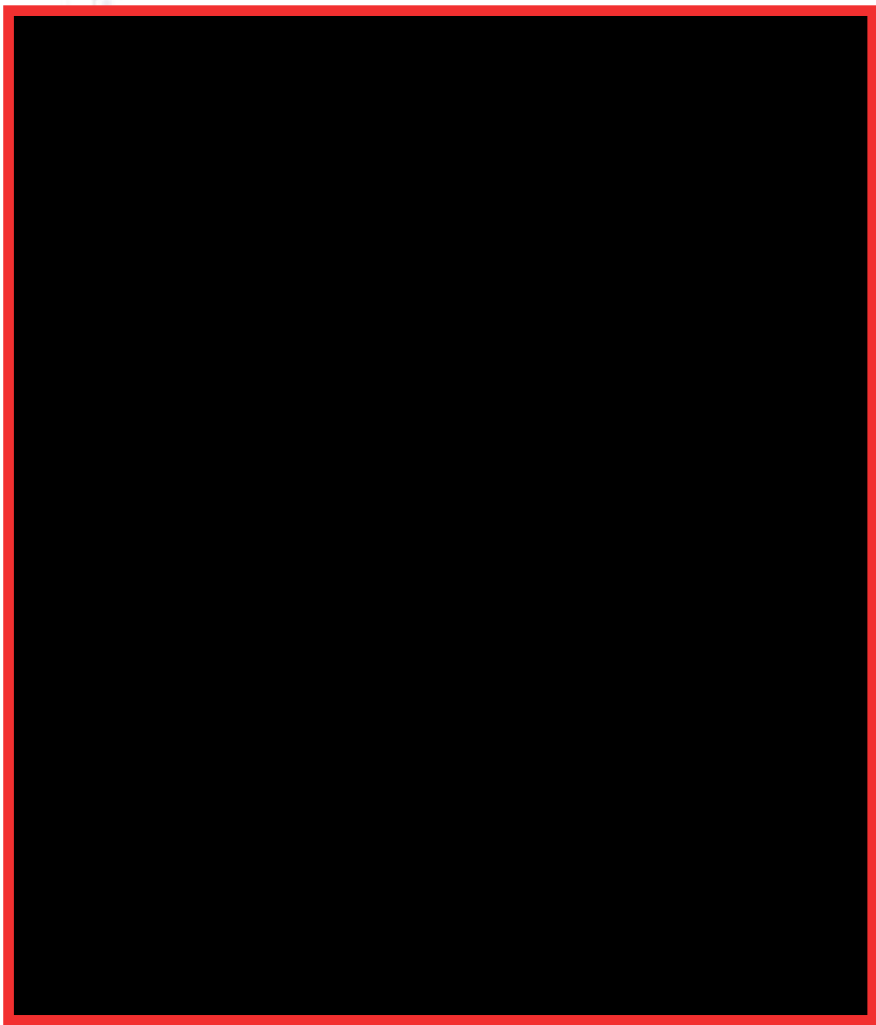
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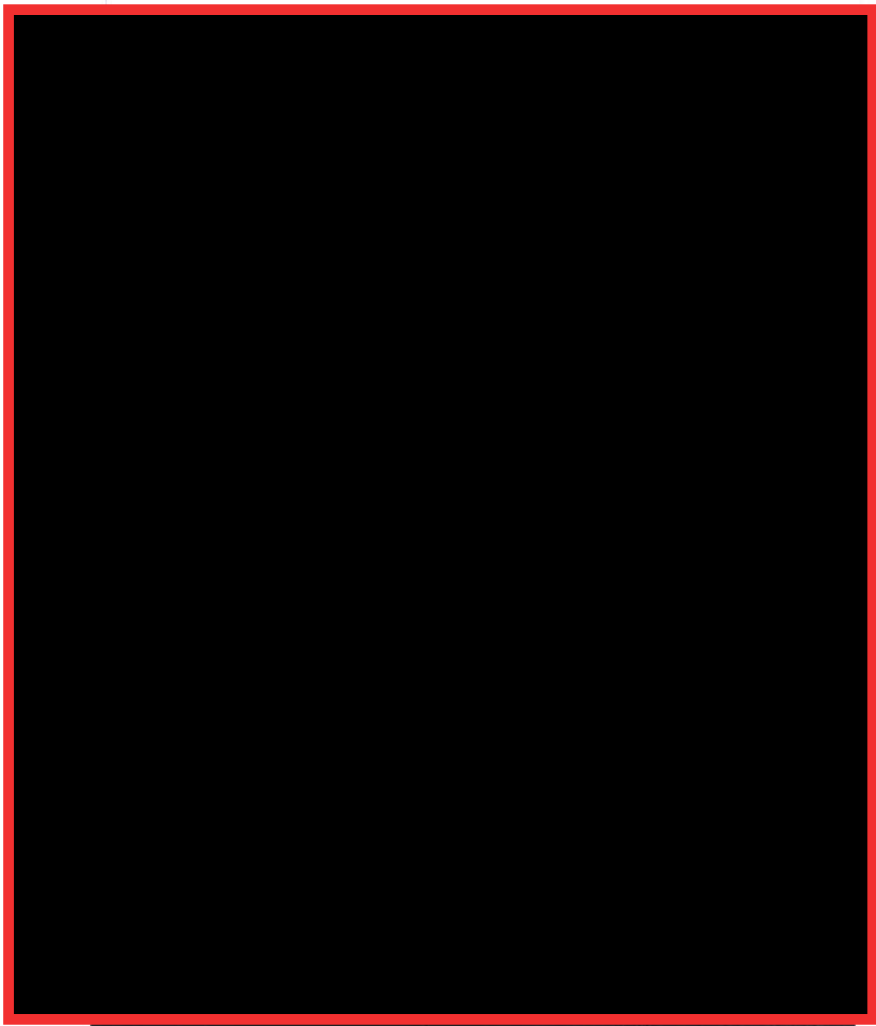
†††††††††††††††††††††p < .000000000000000000000000000000001. ††††††††††††††††††††††p < .0000000000000000000000000000000001.

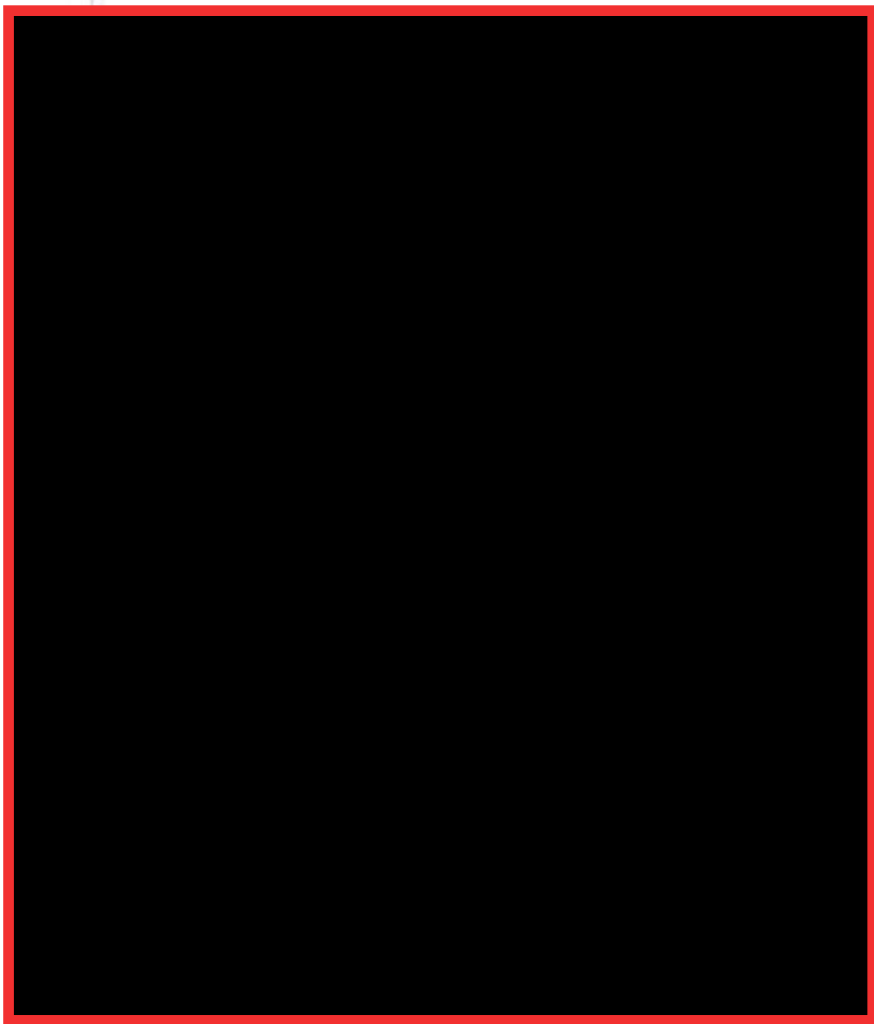


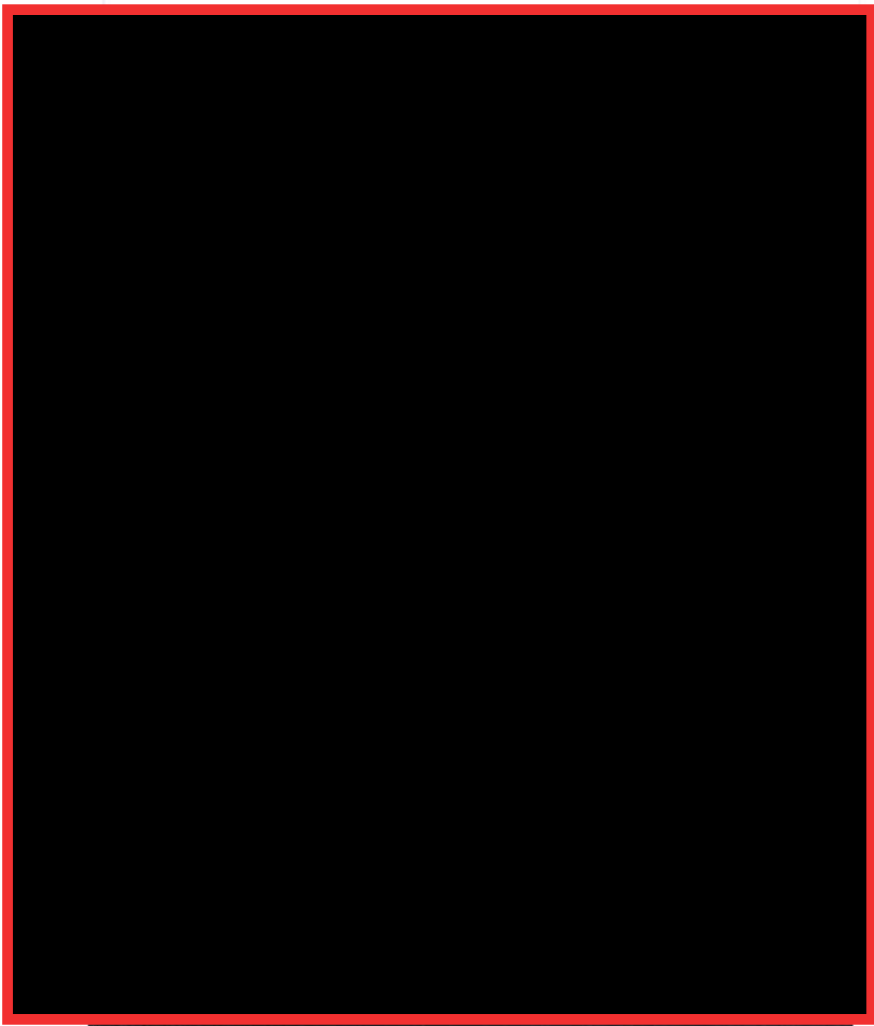


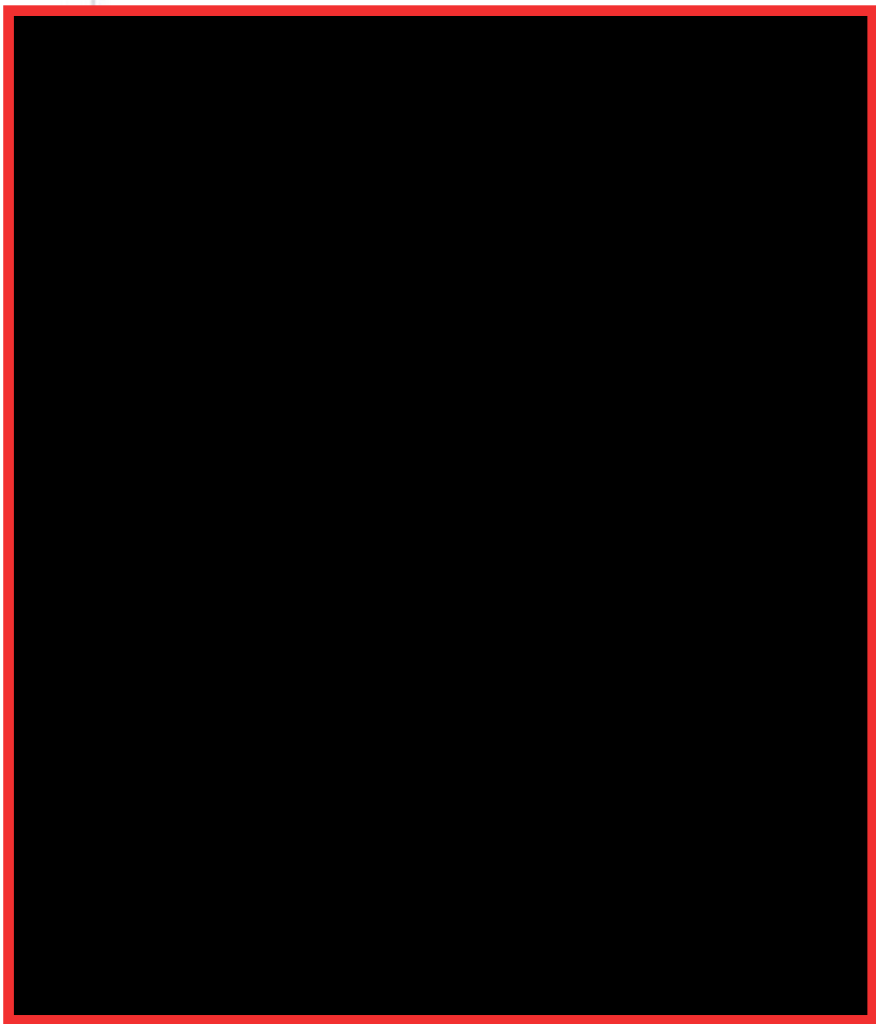


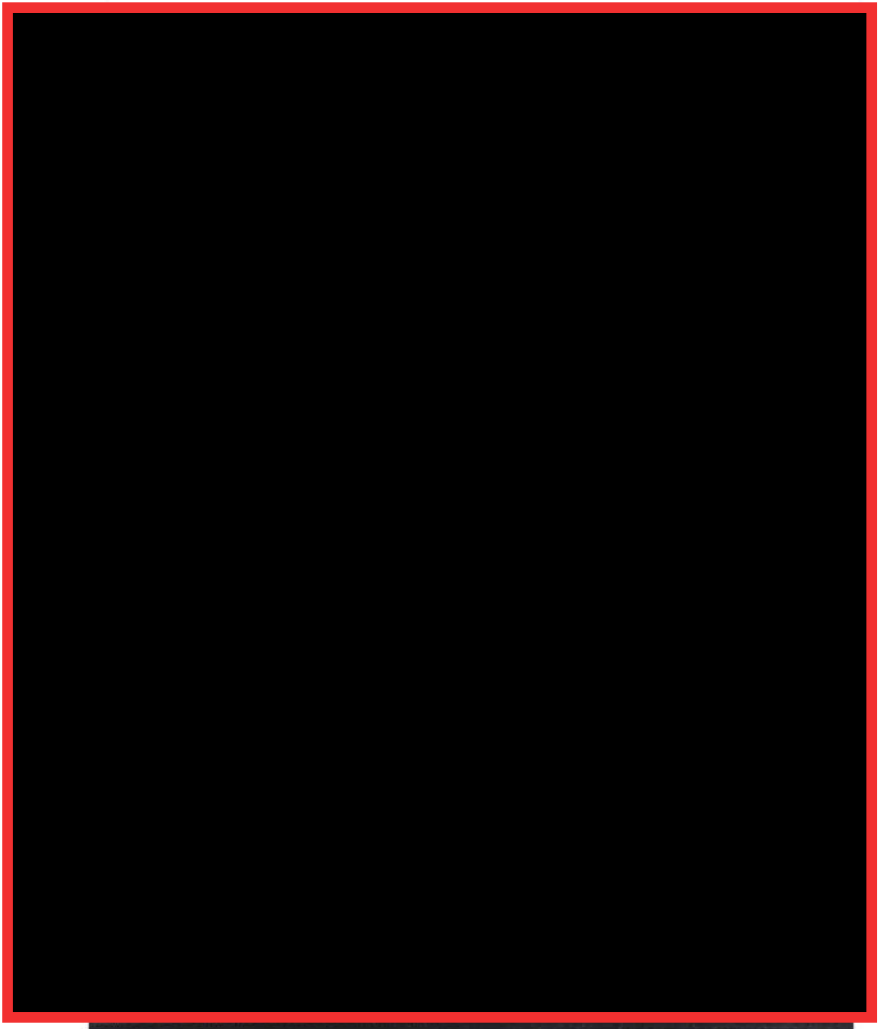


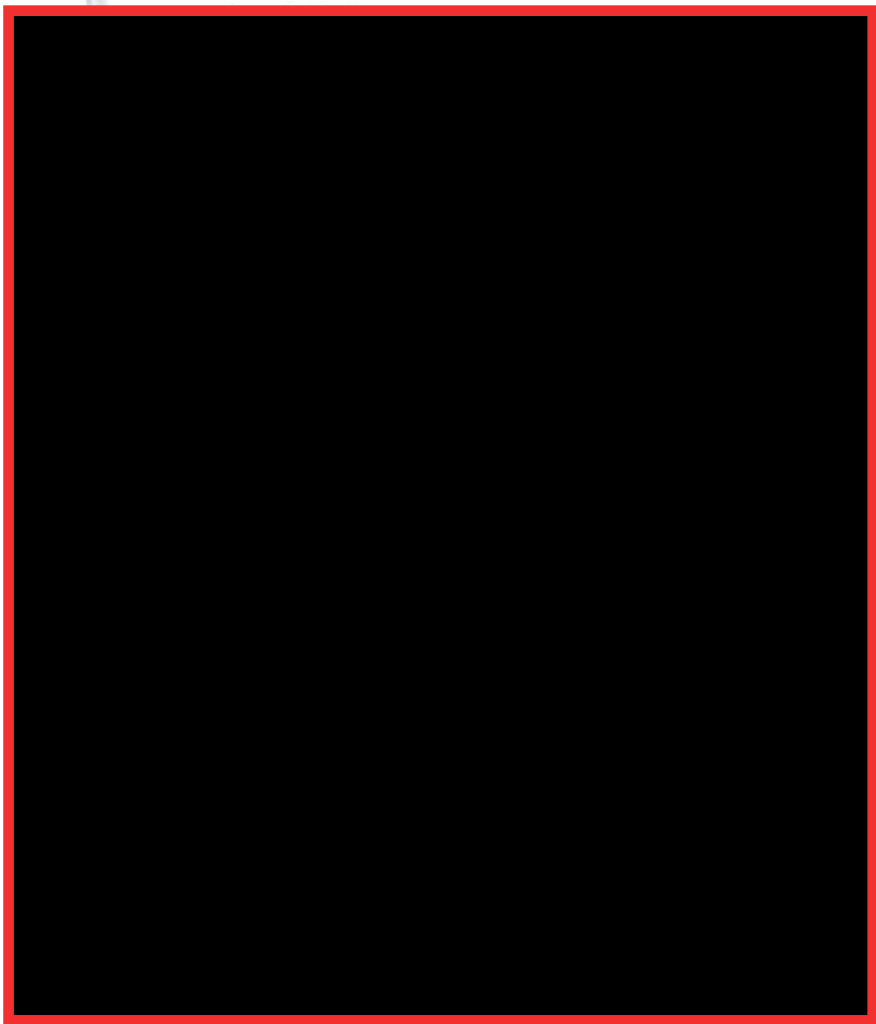


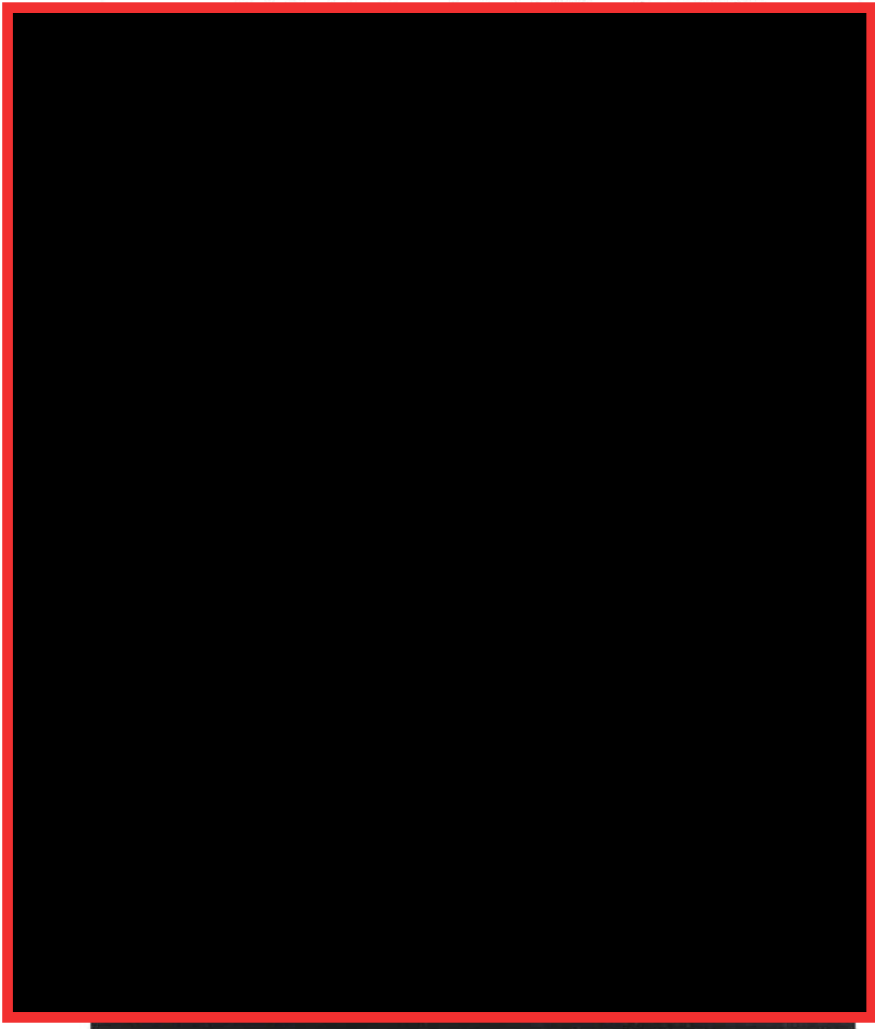


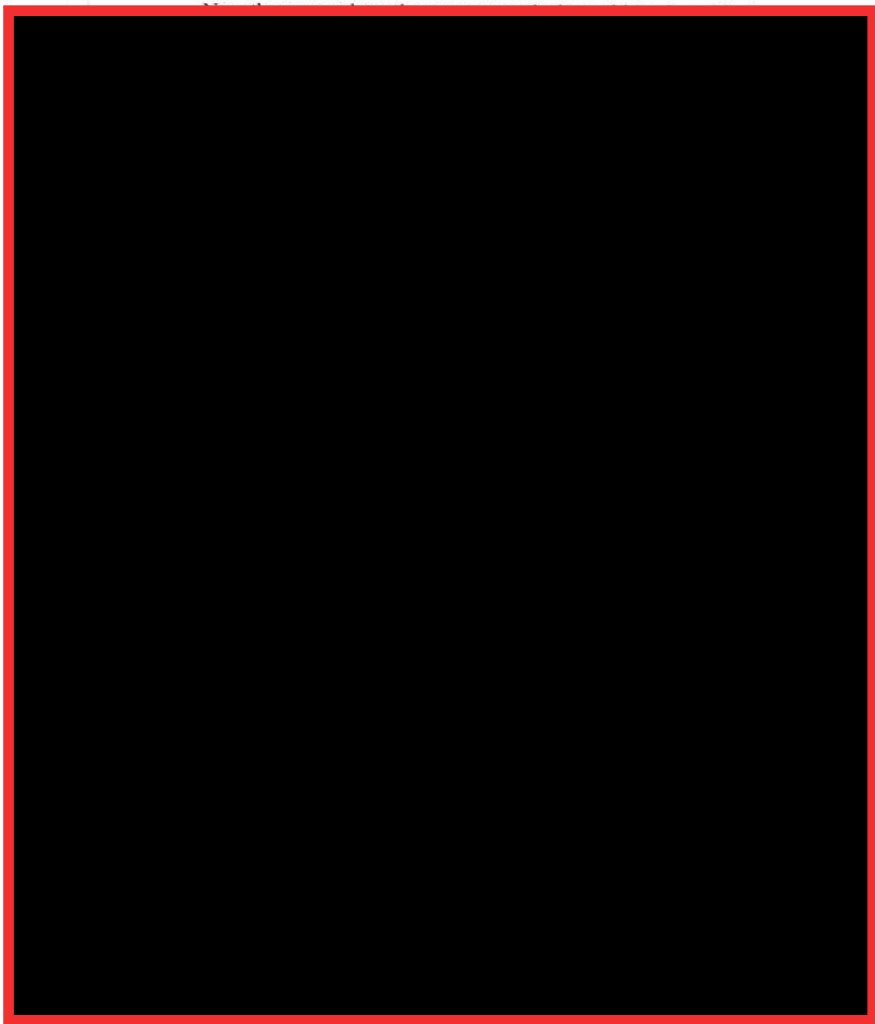


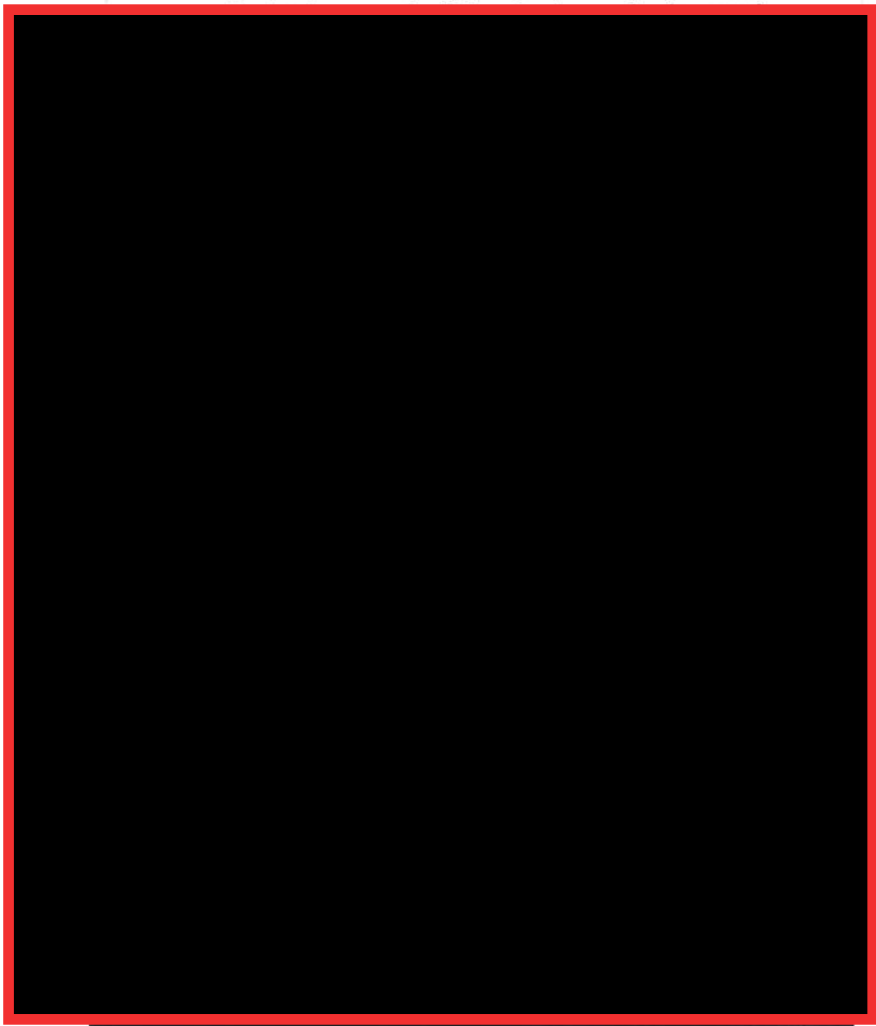


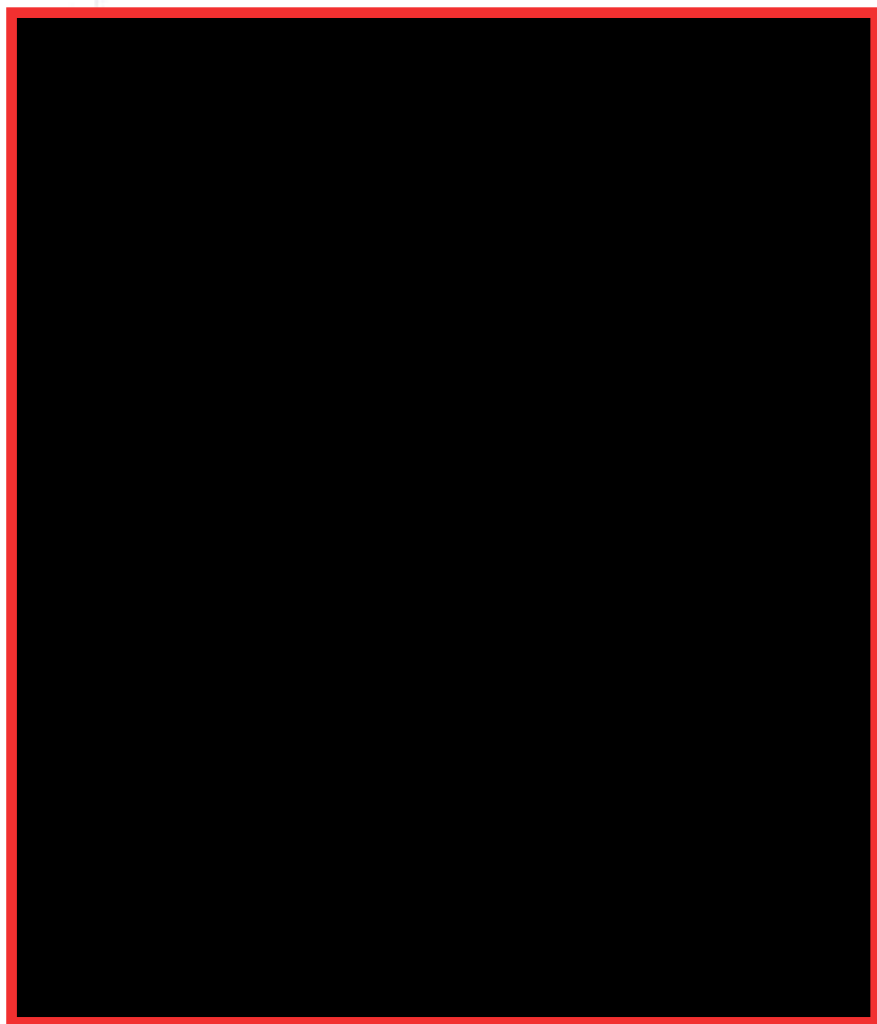


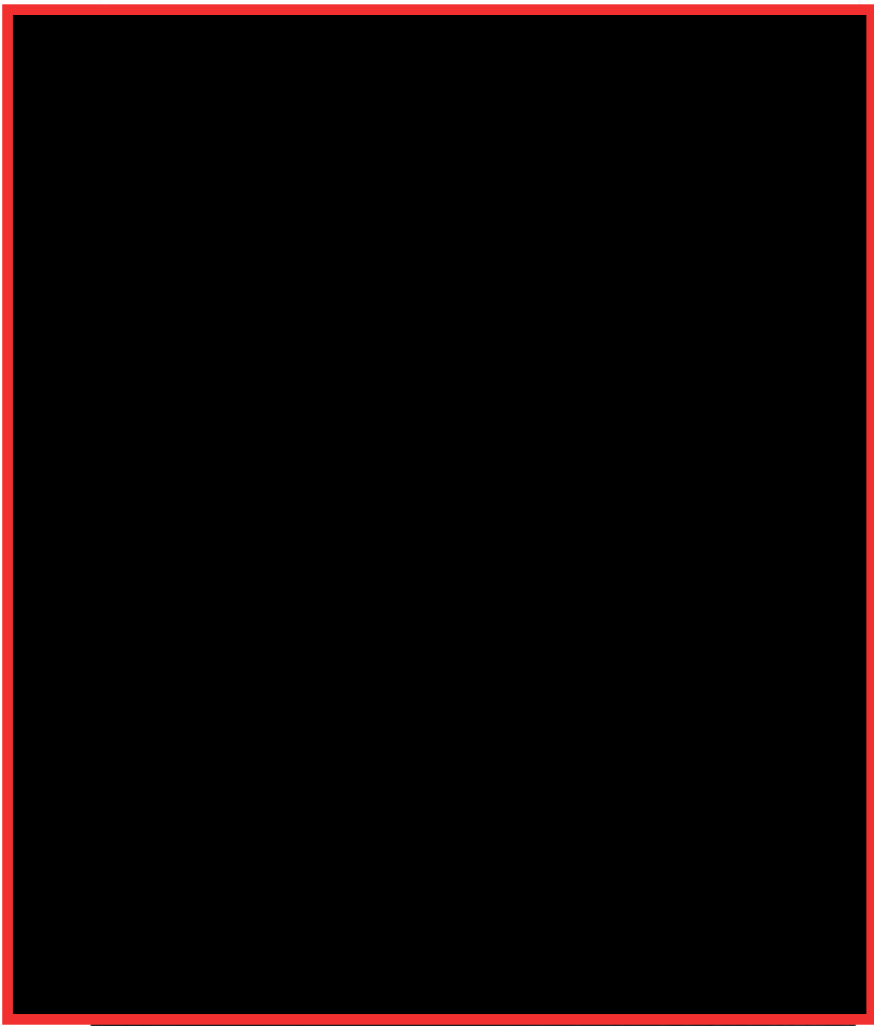


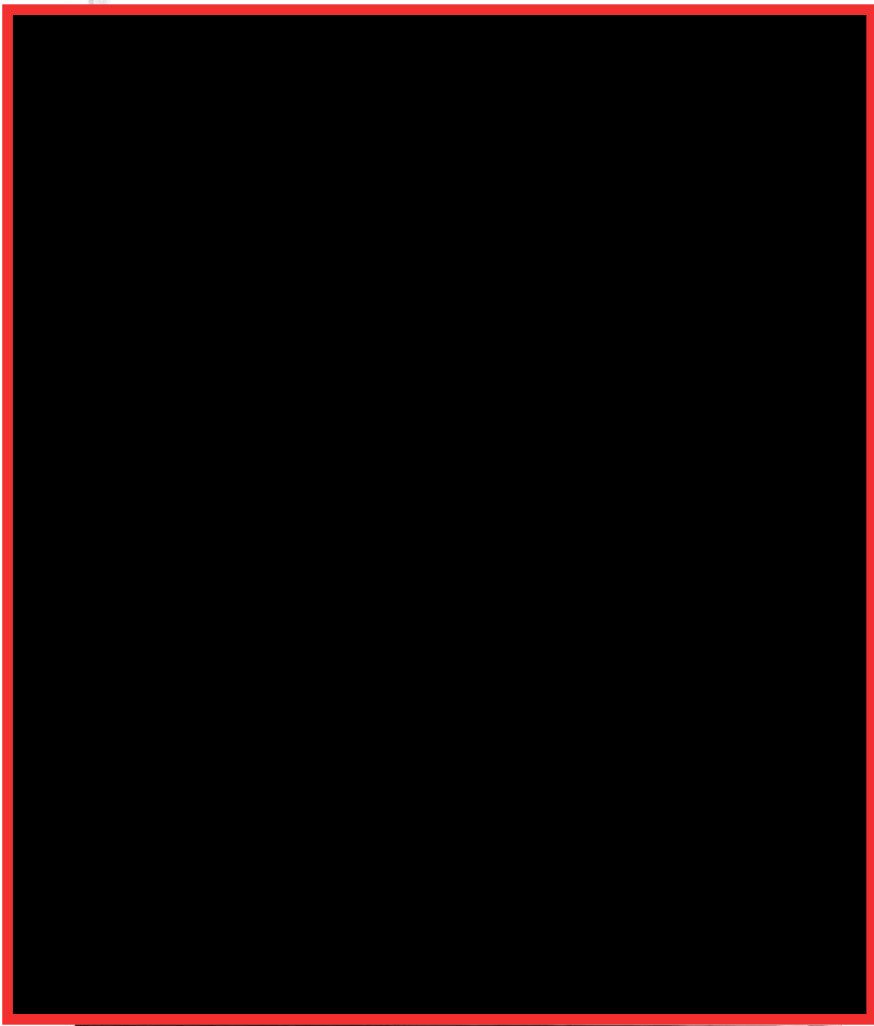


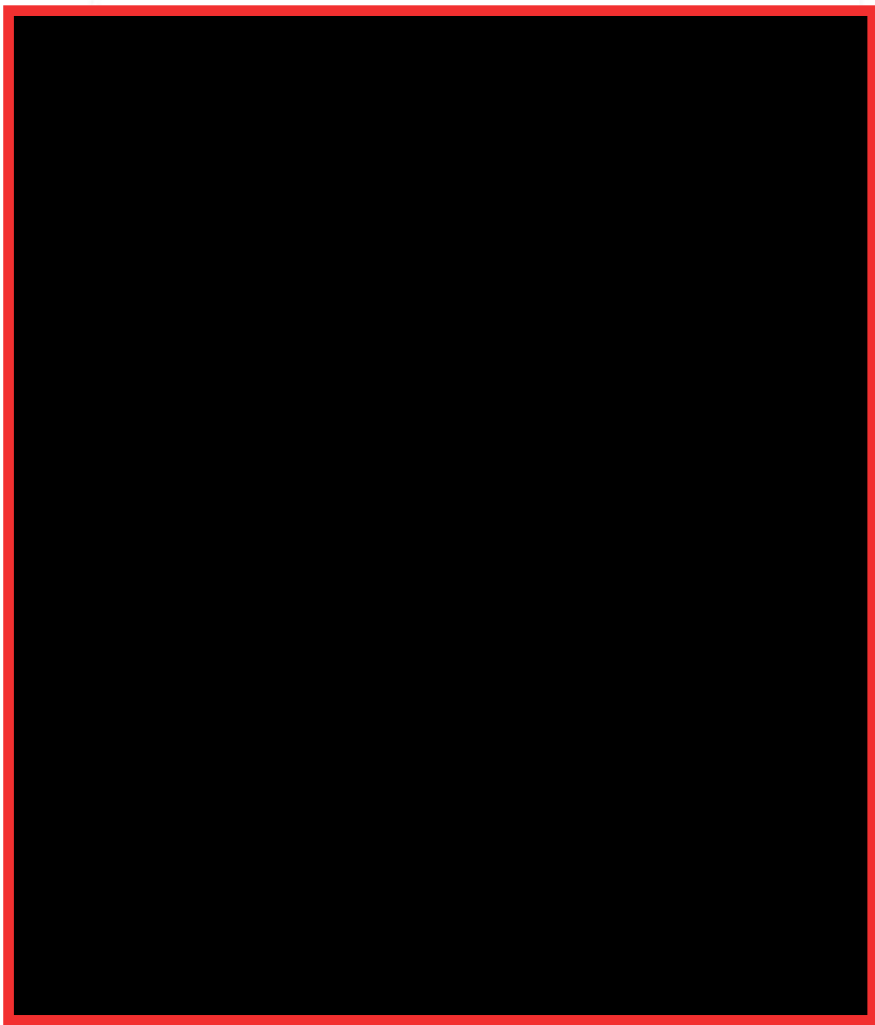


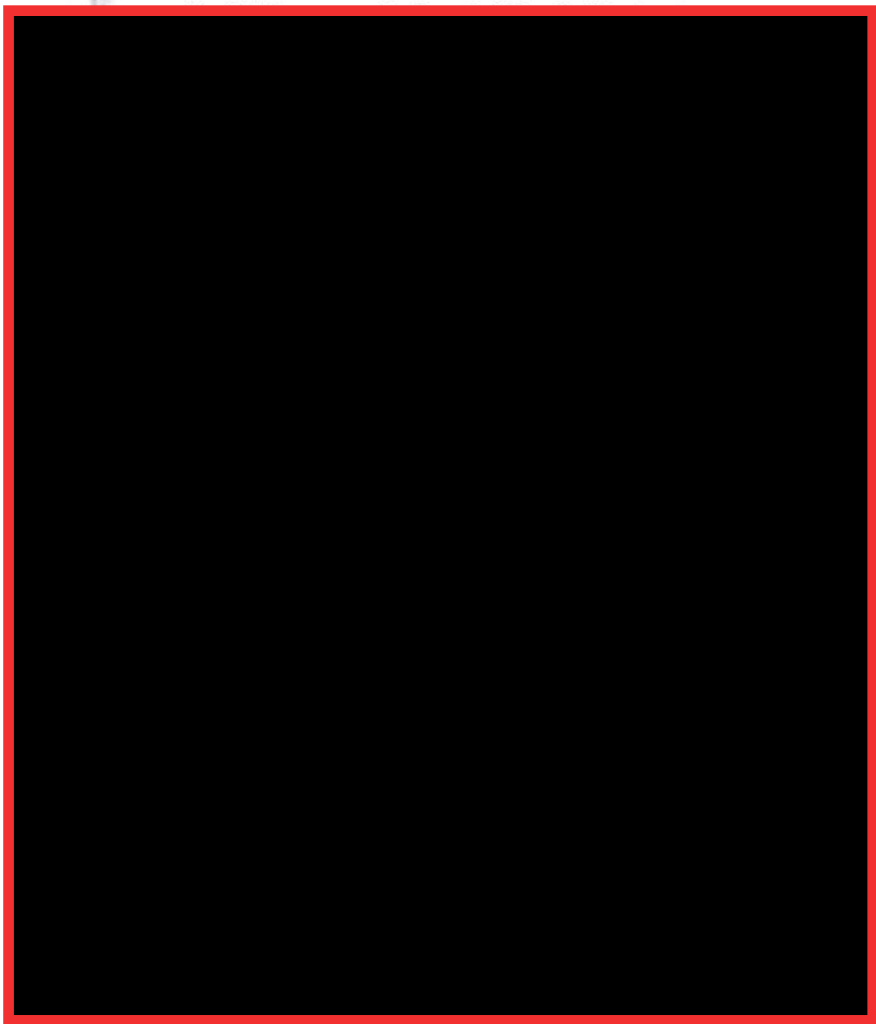


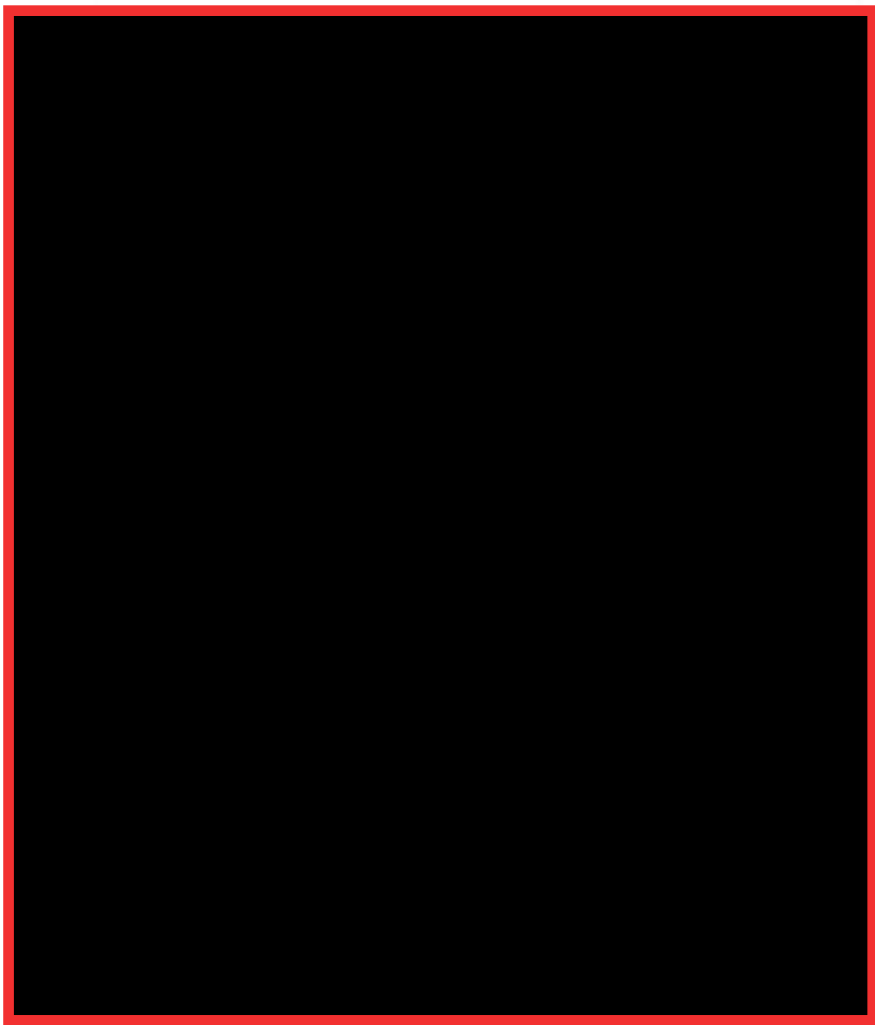


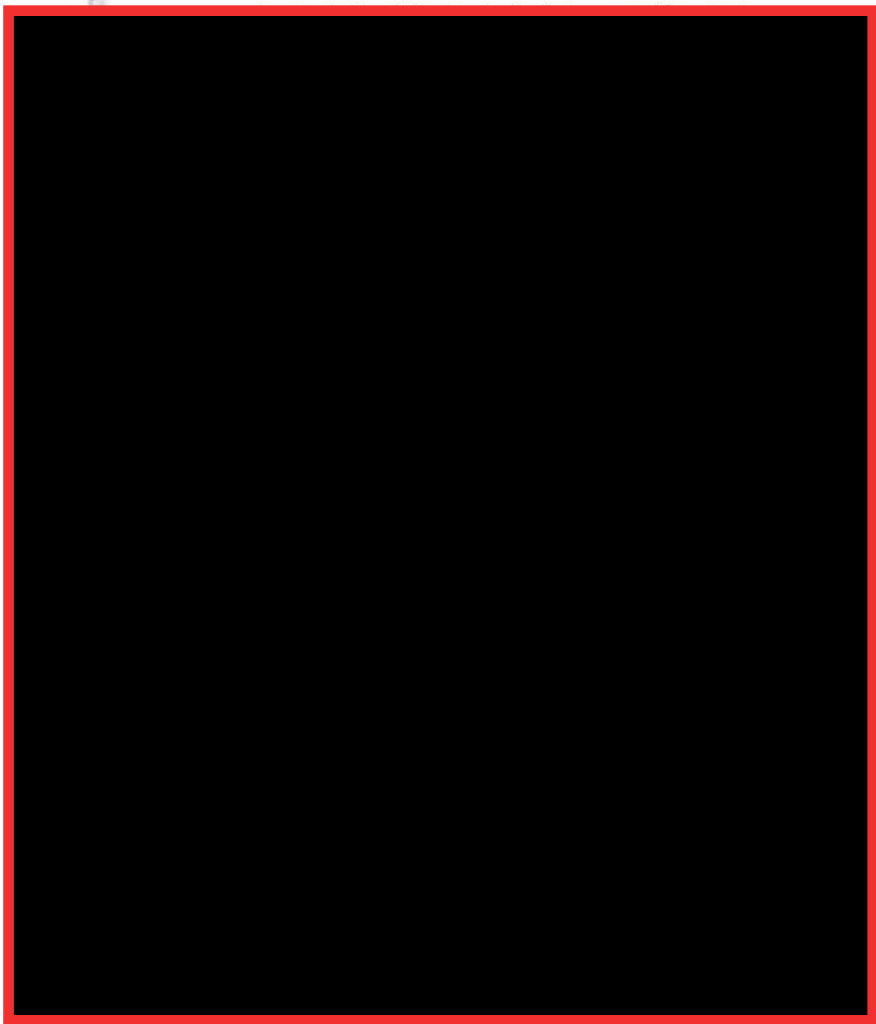


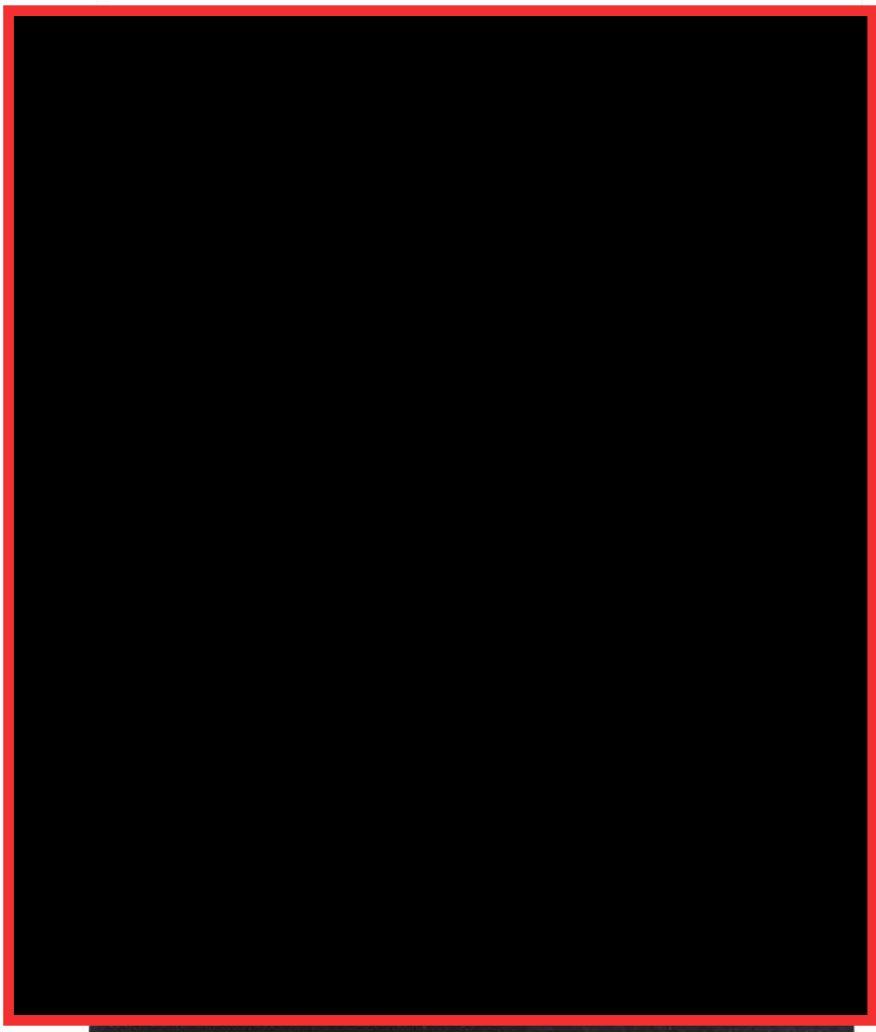


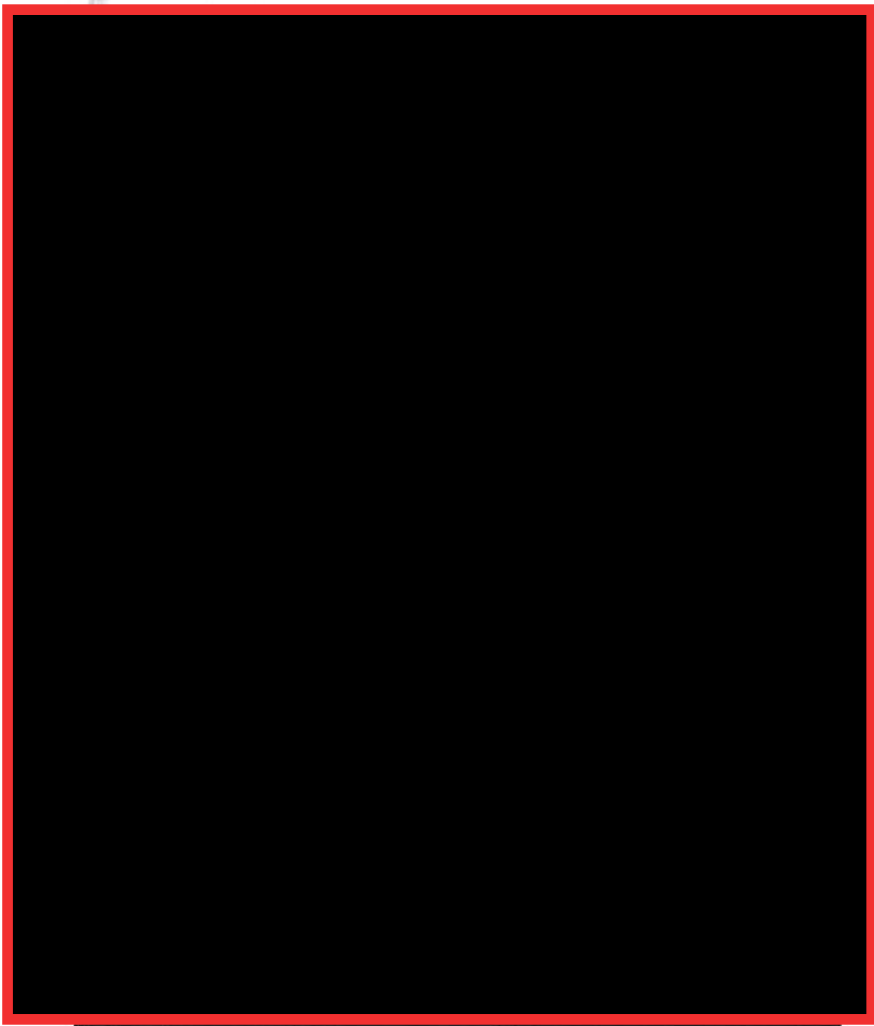


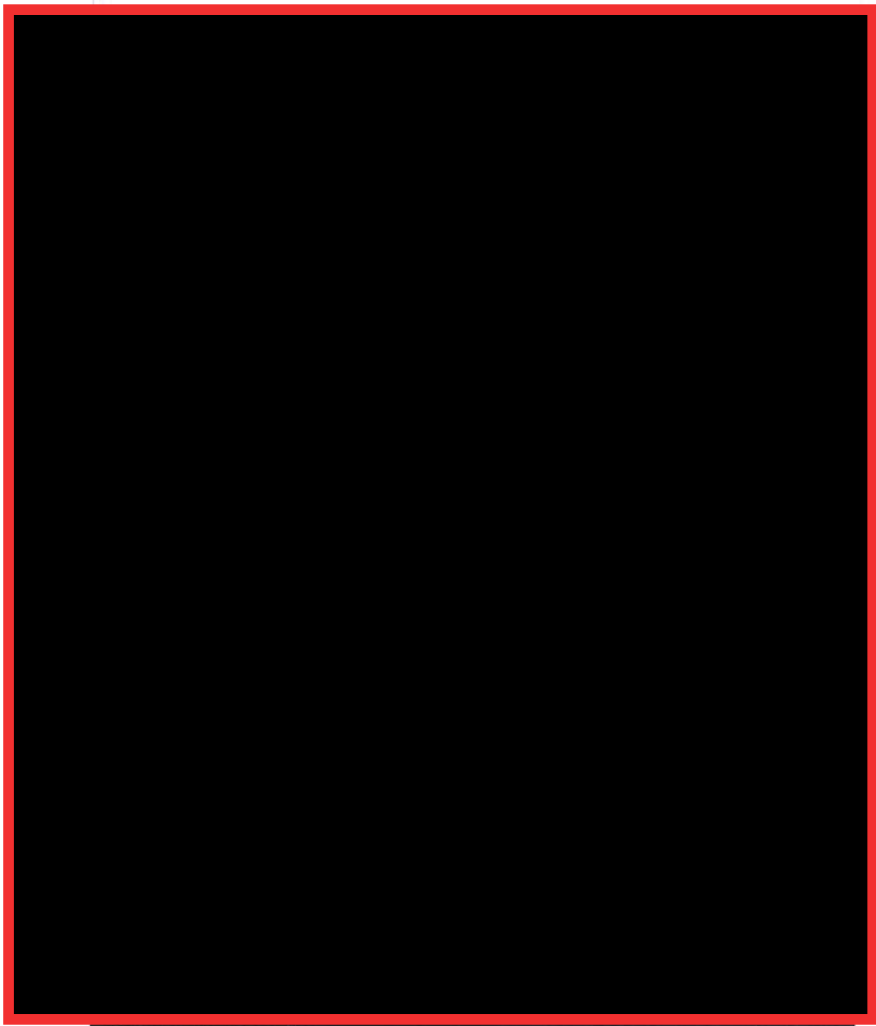


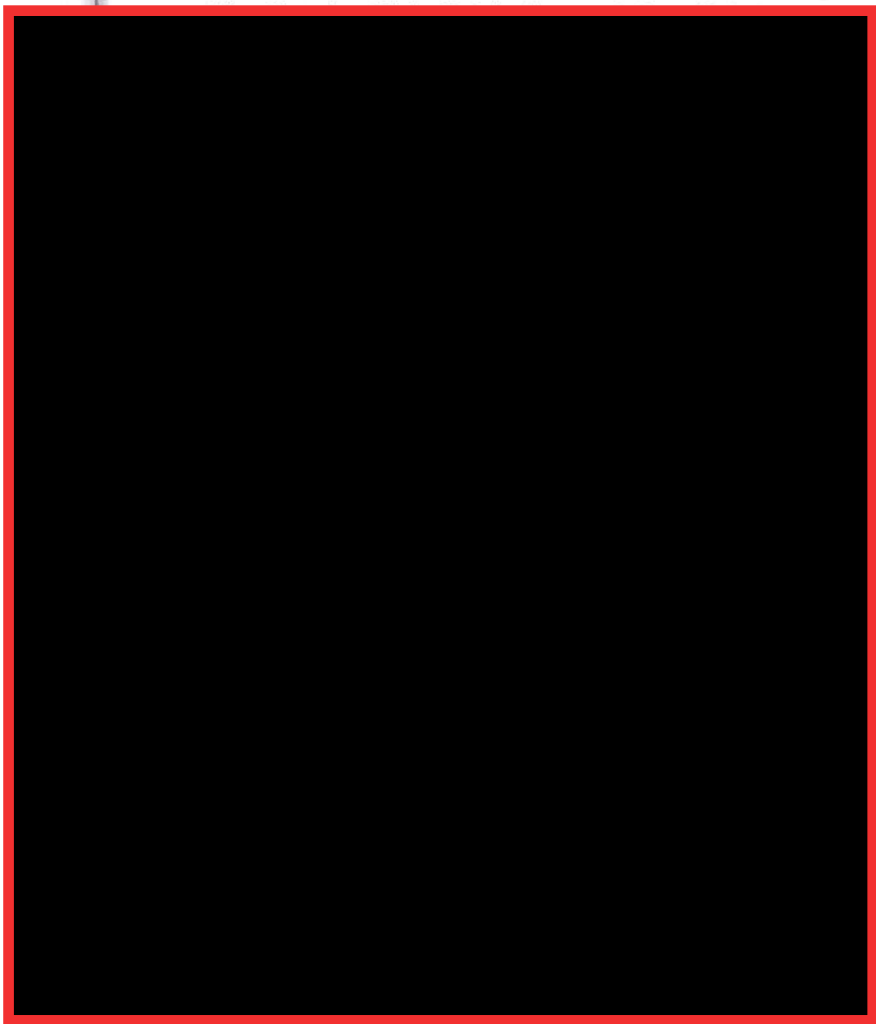


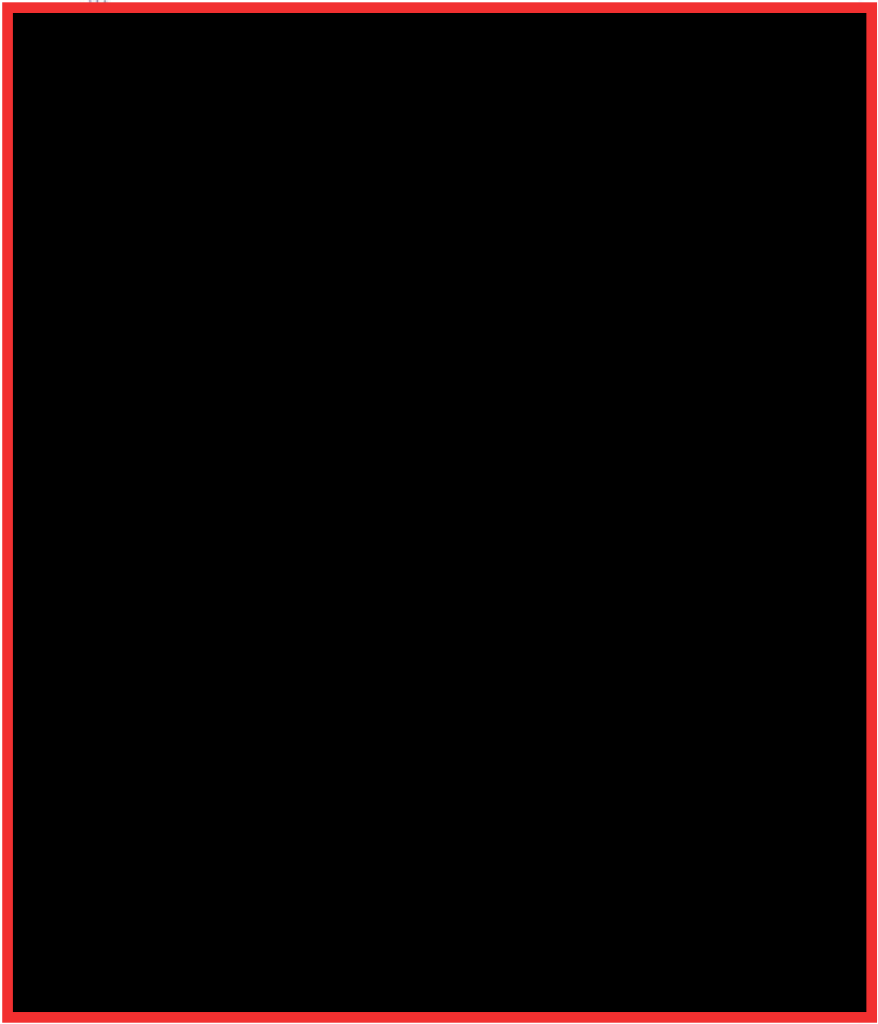


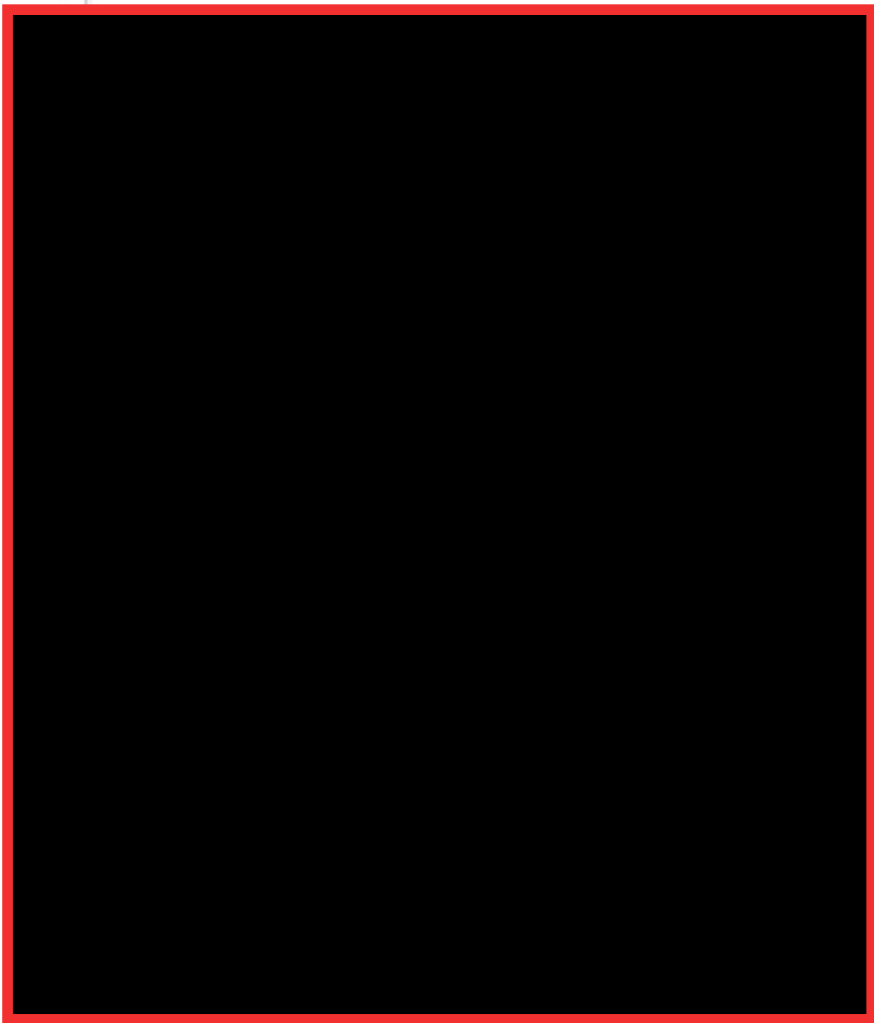


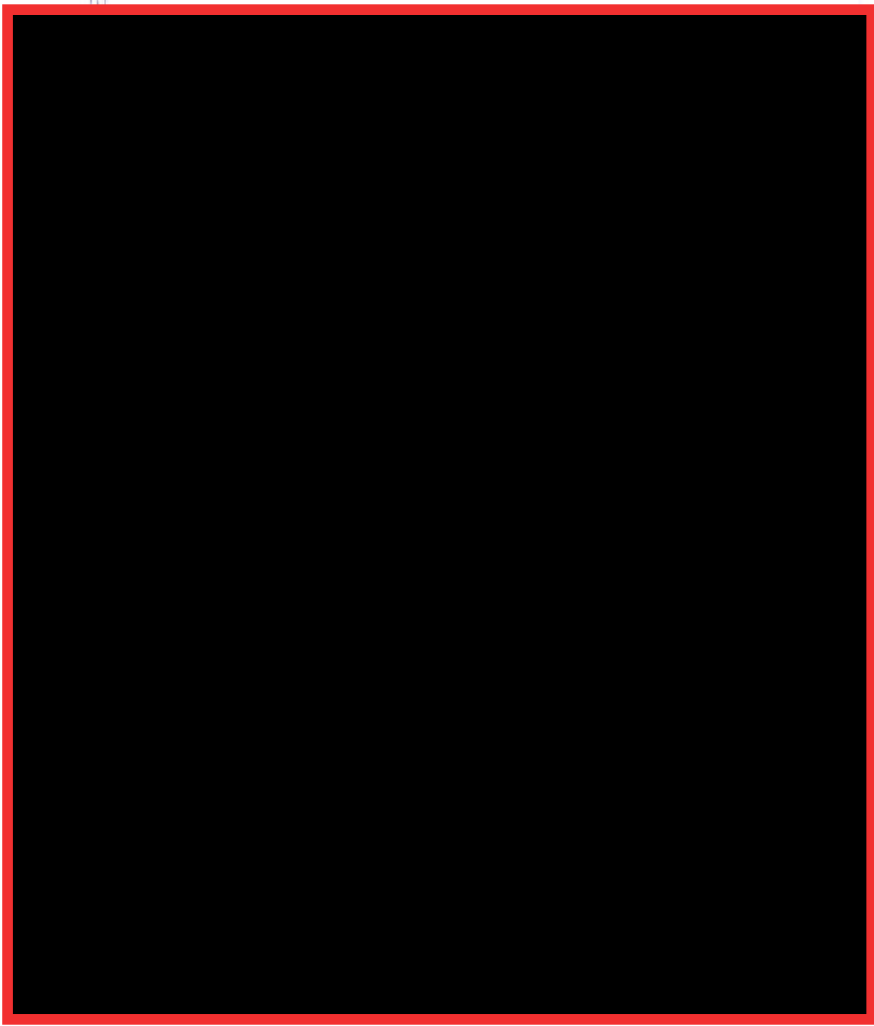


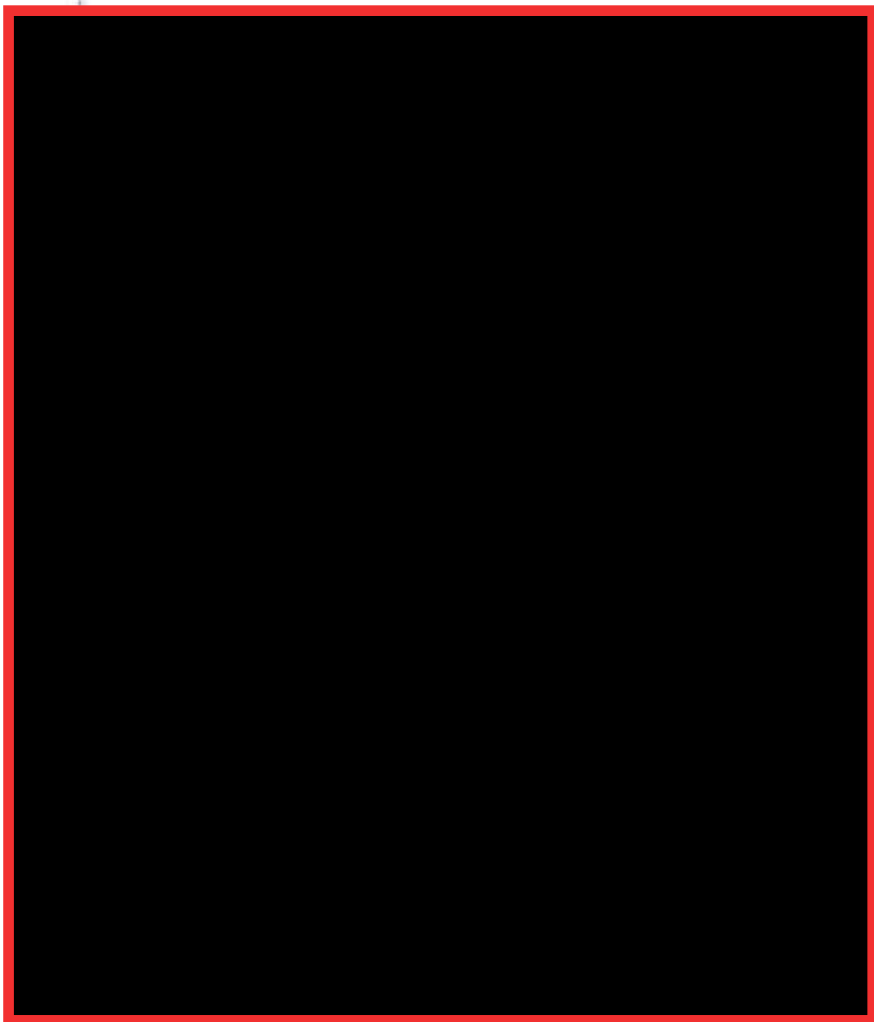


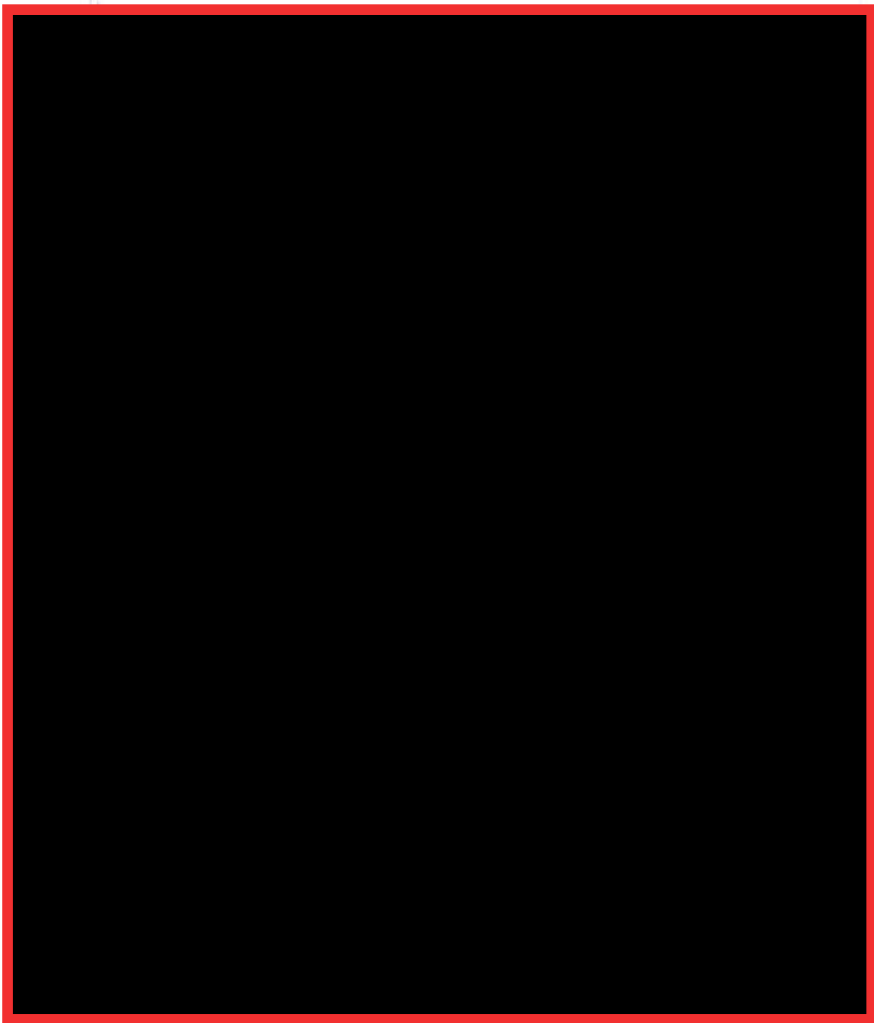




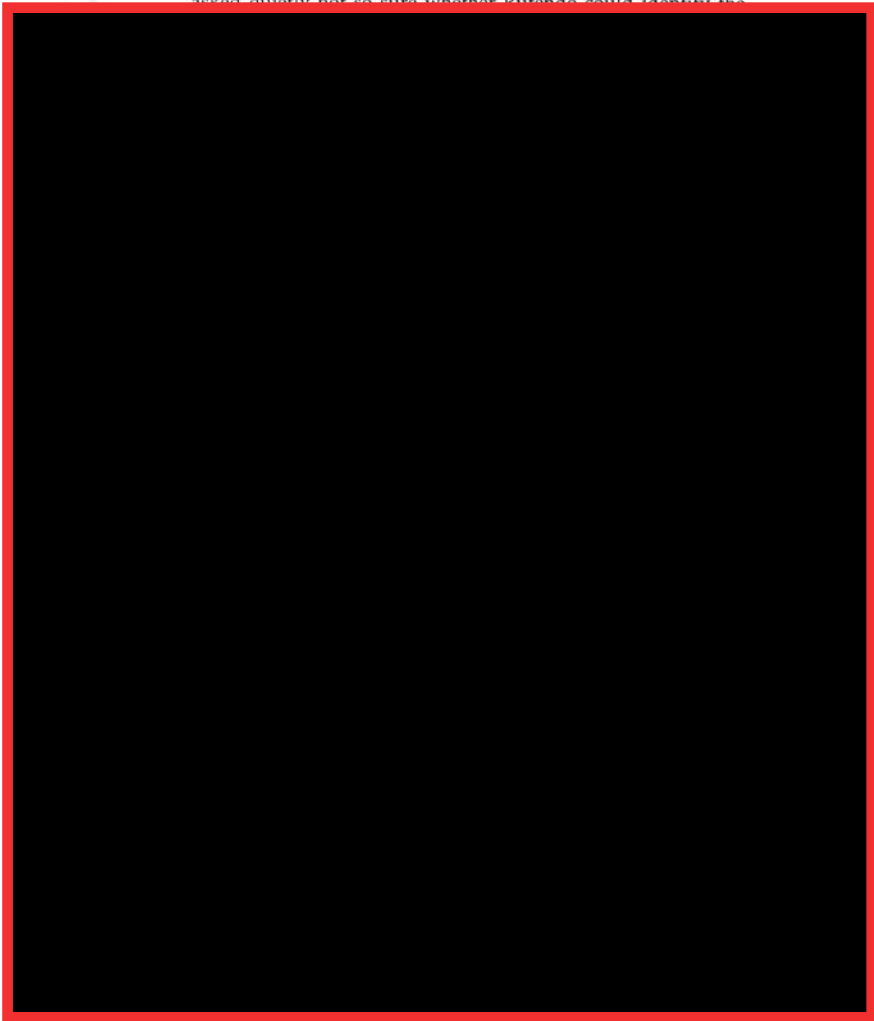


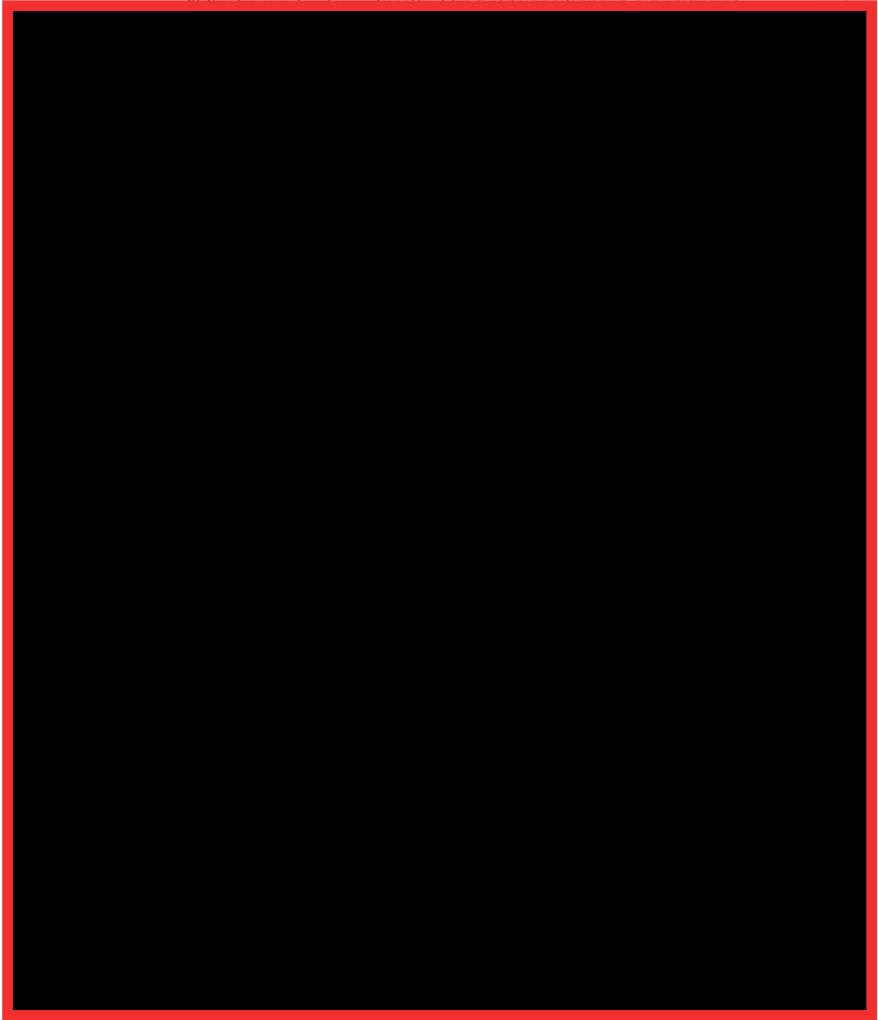




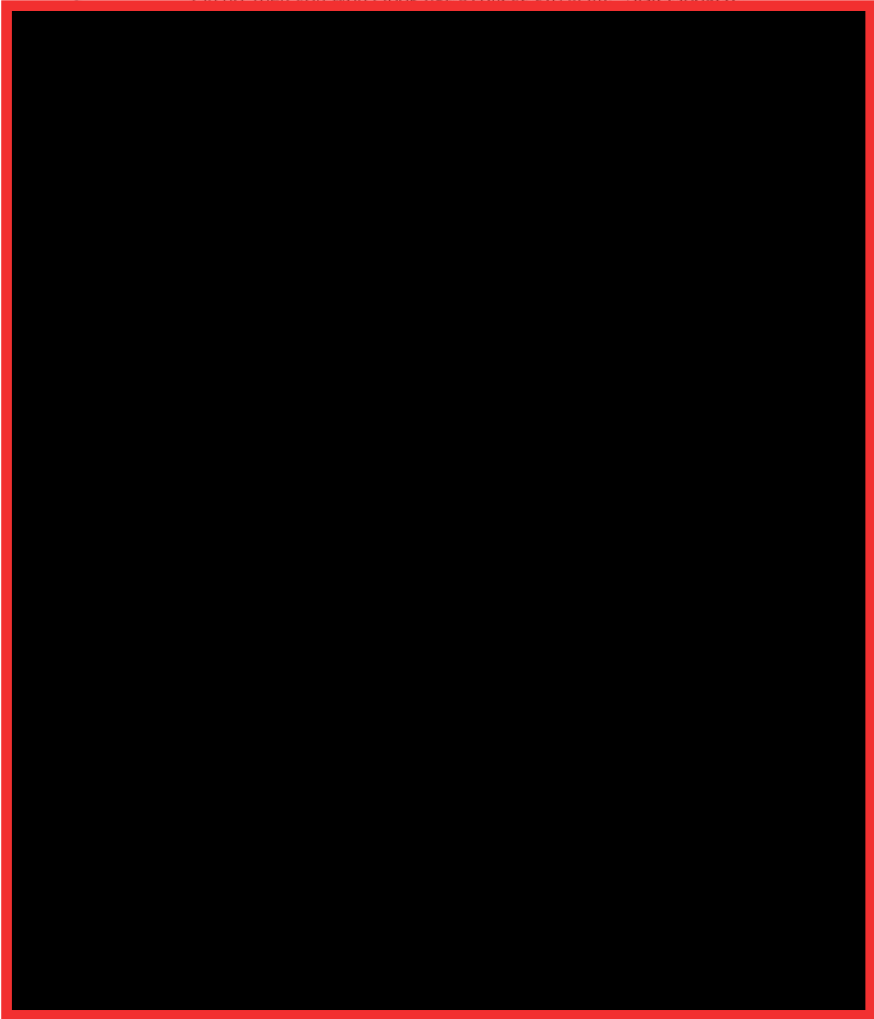


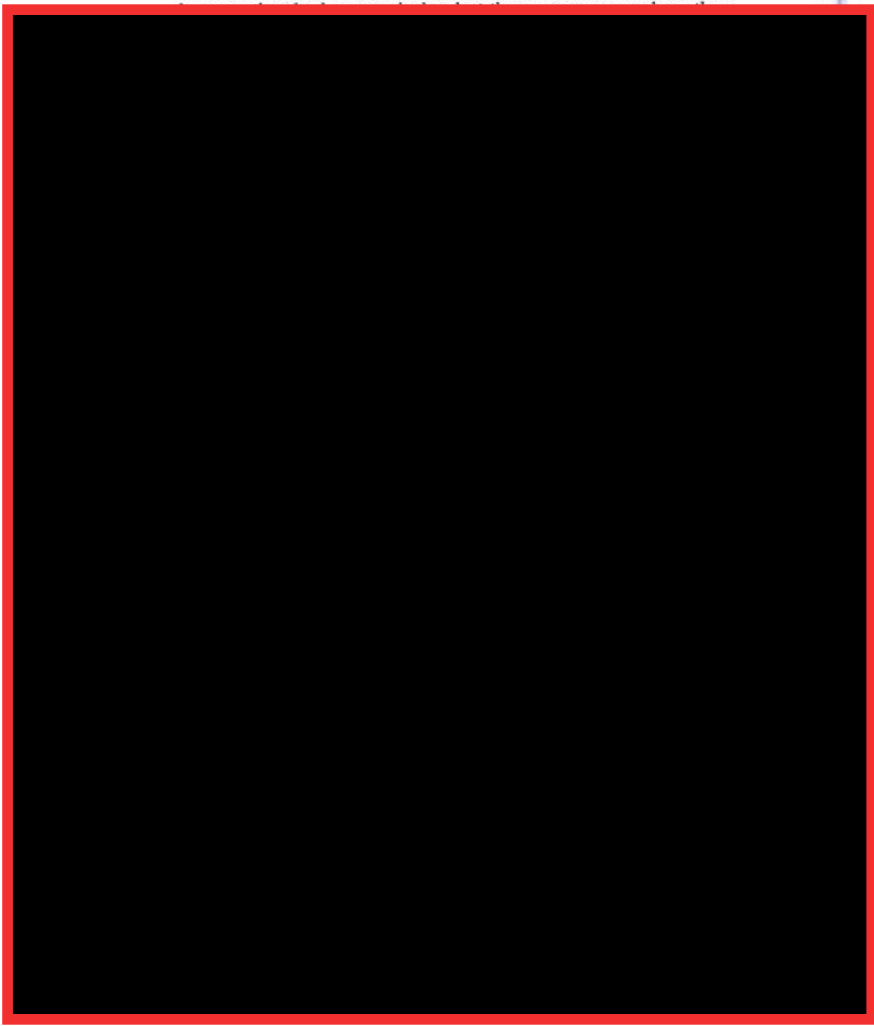
asked, quietly not so sure whether Putendo could identify the

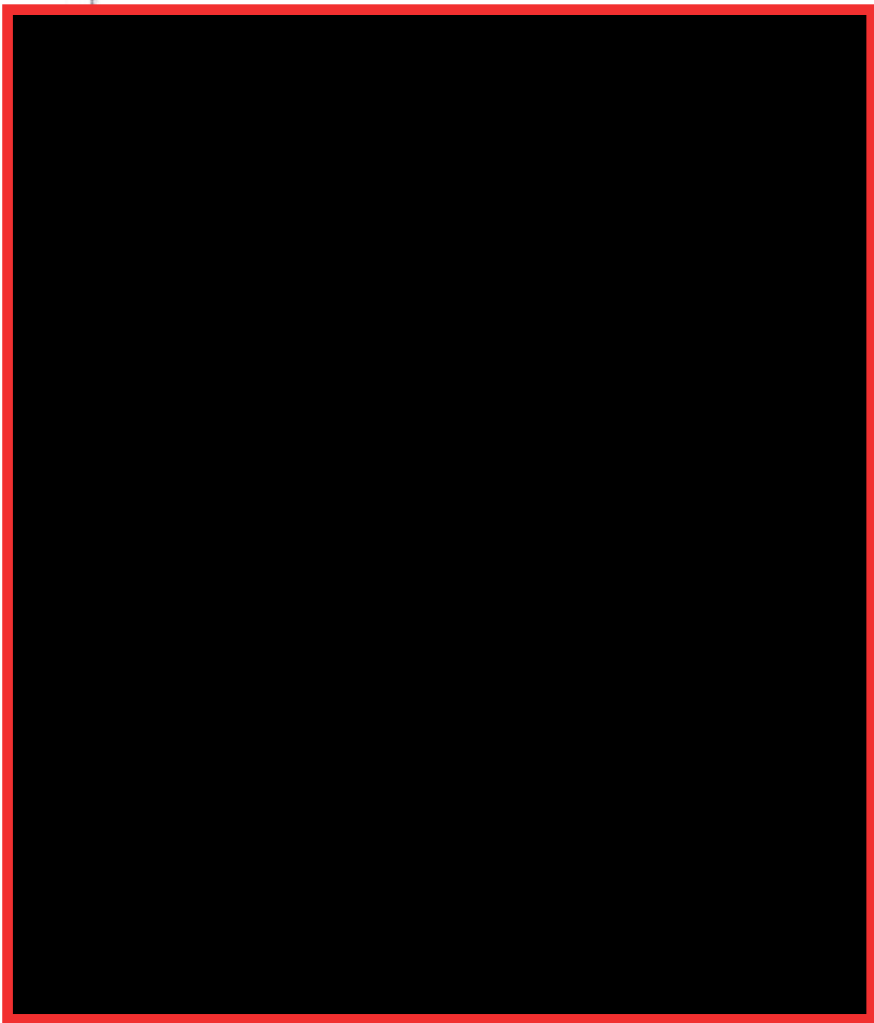


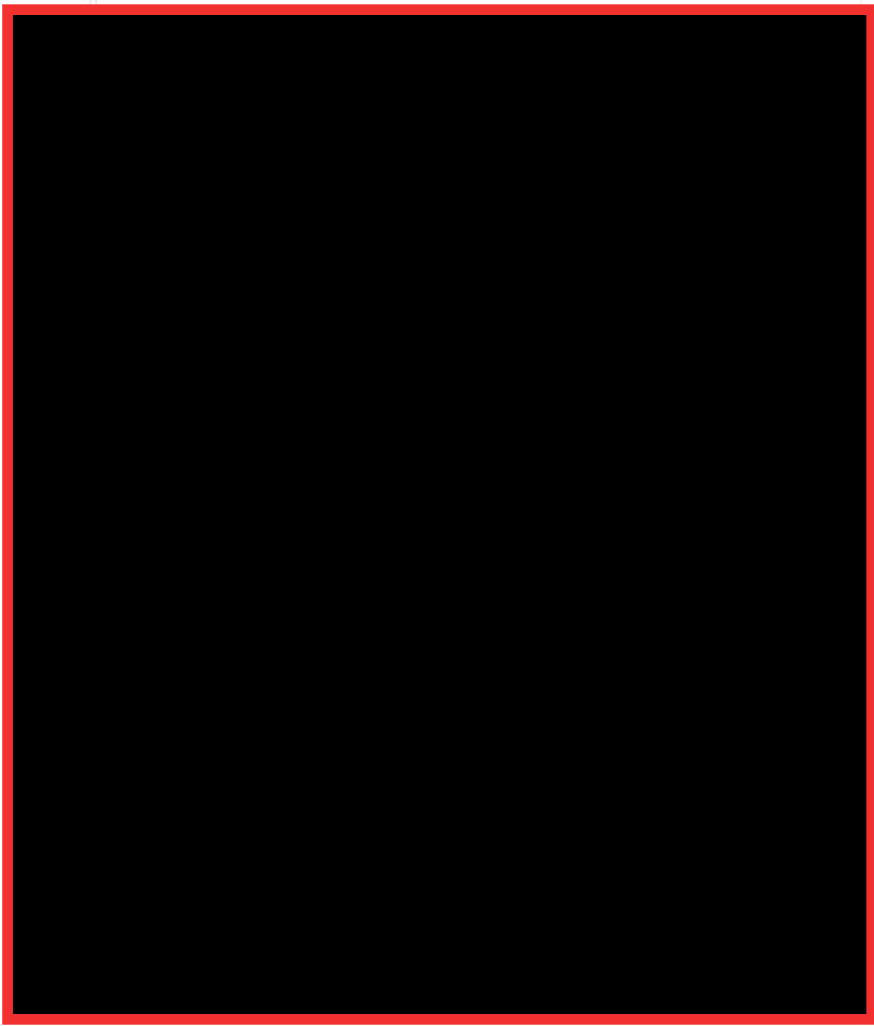


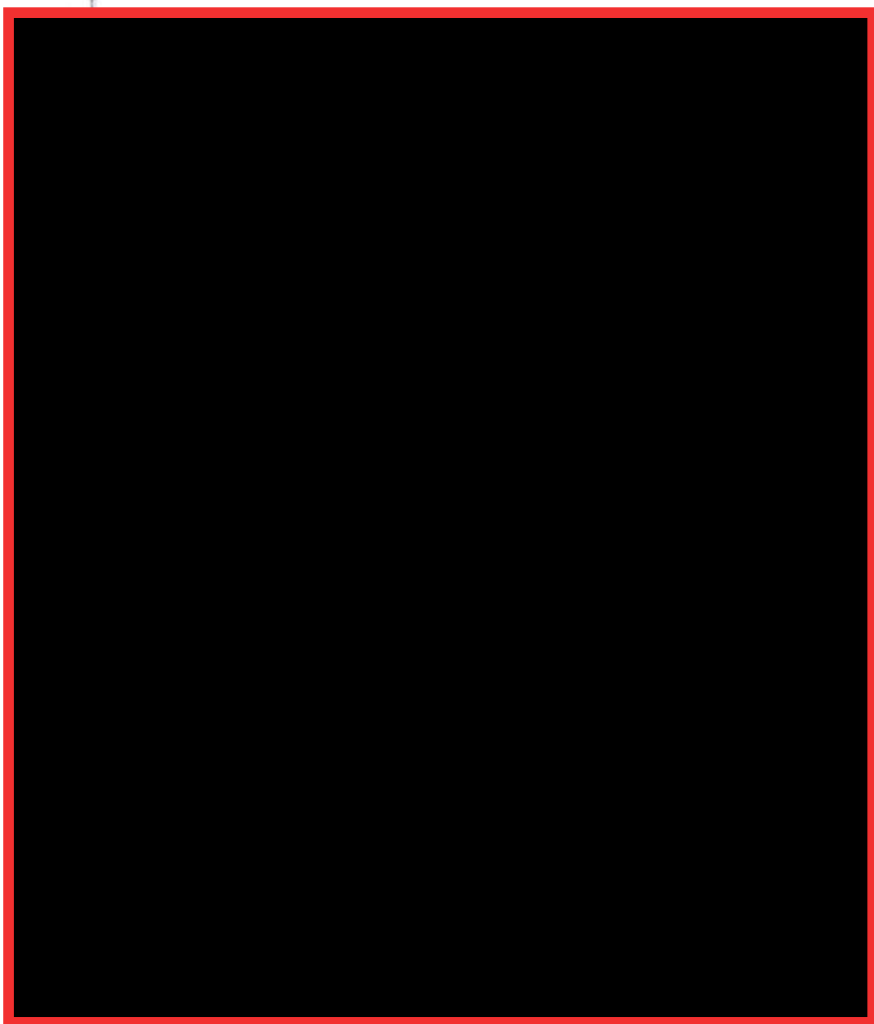
"Oh no, then you won't look like a college girl at all." Sister looked

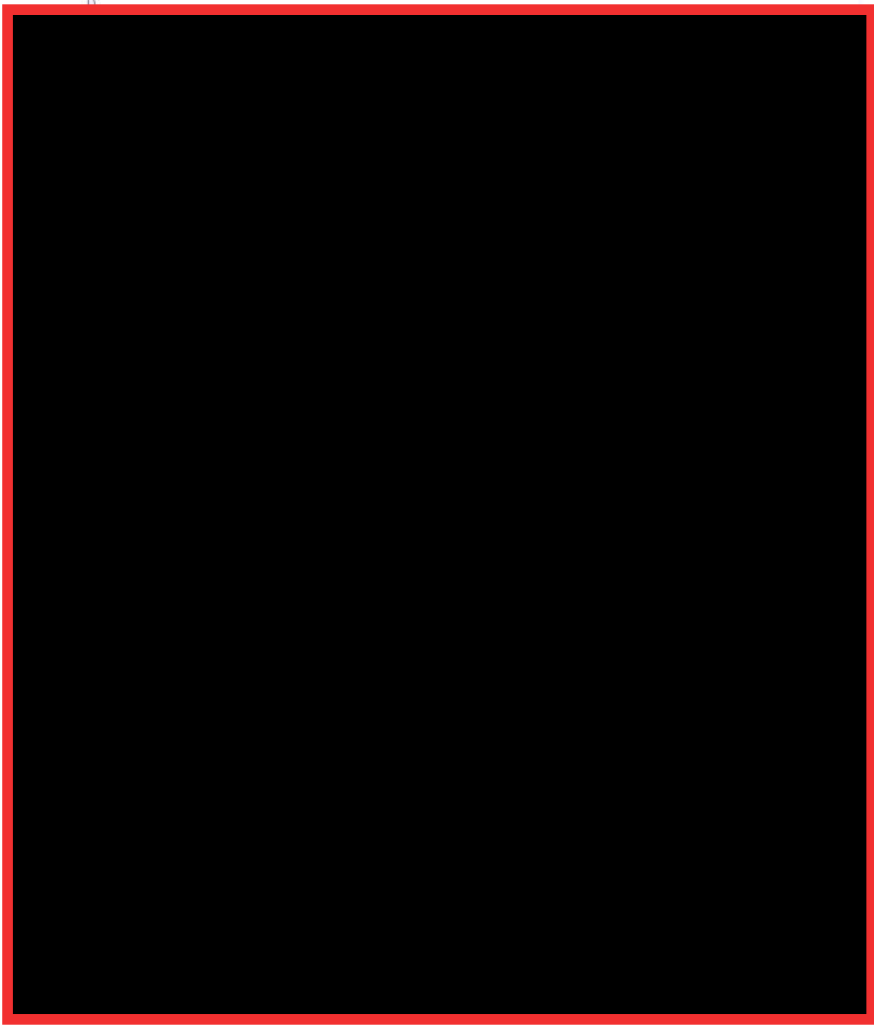


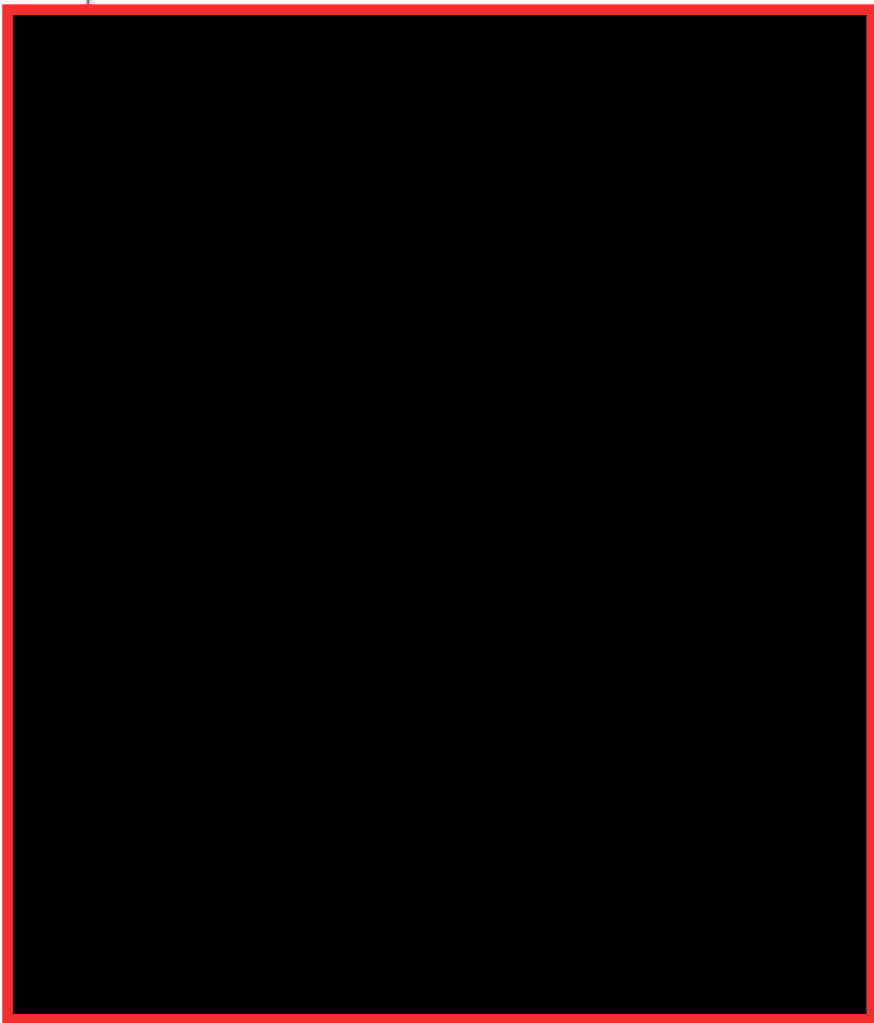


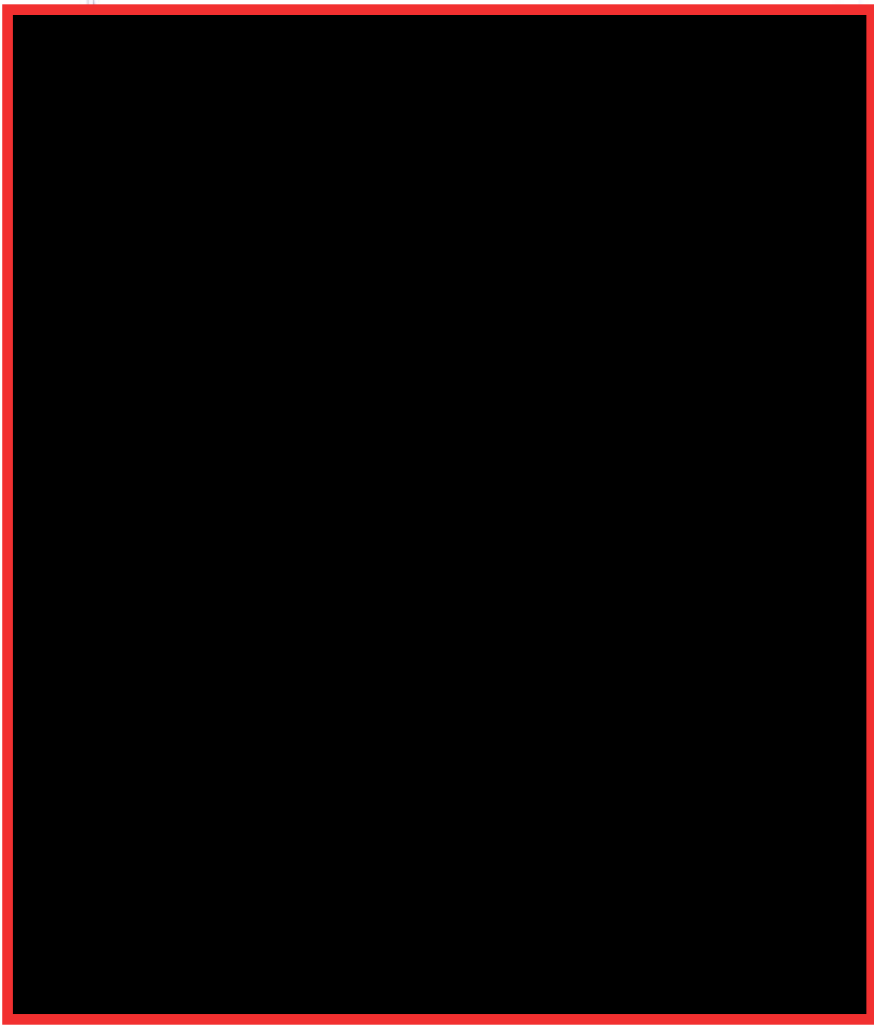


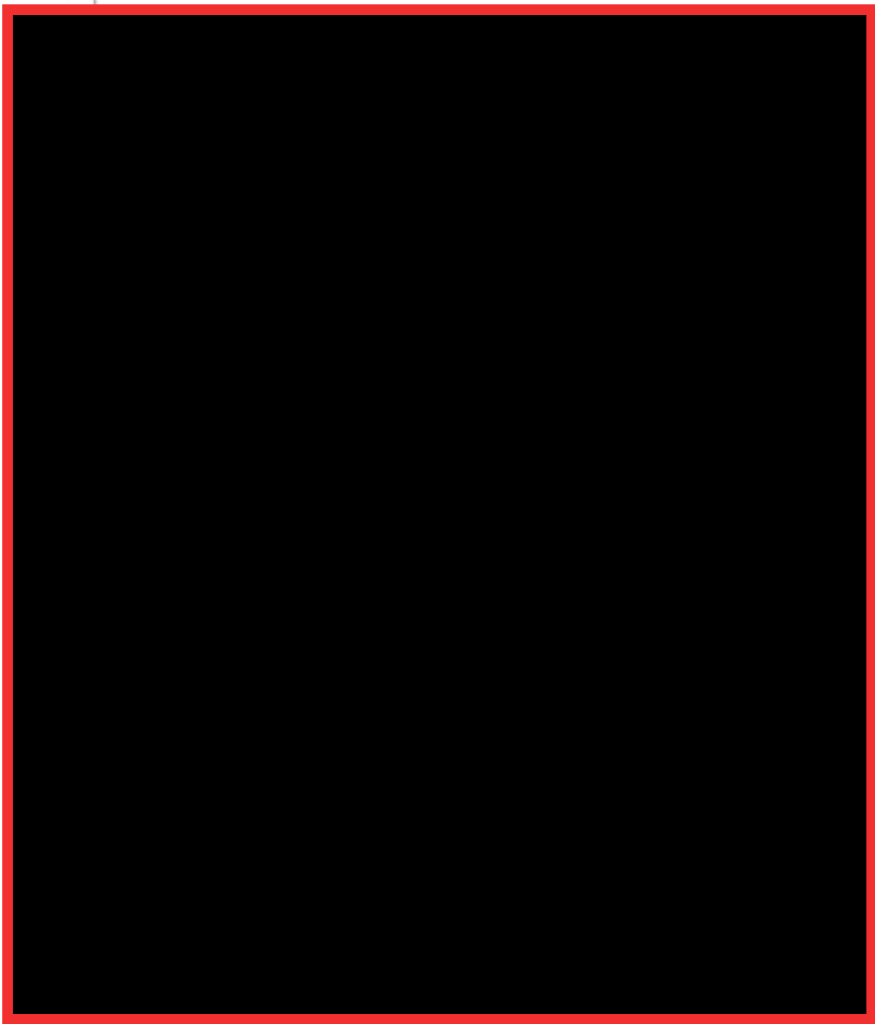


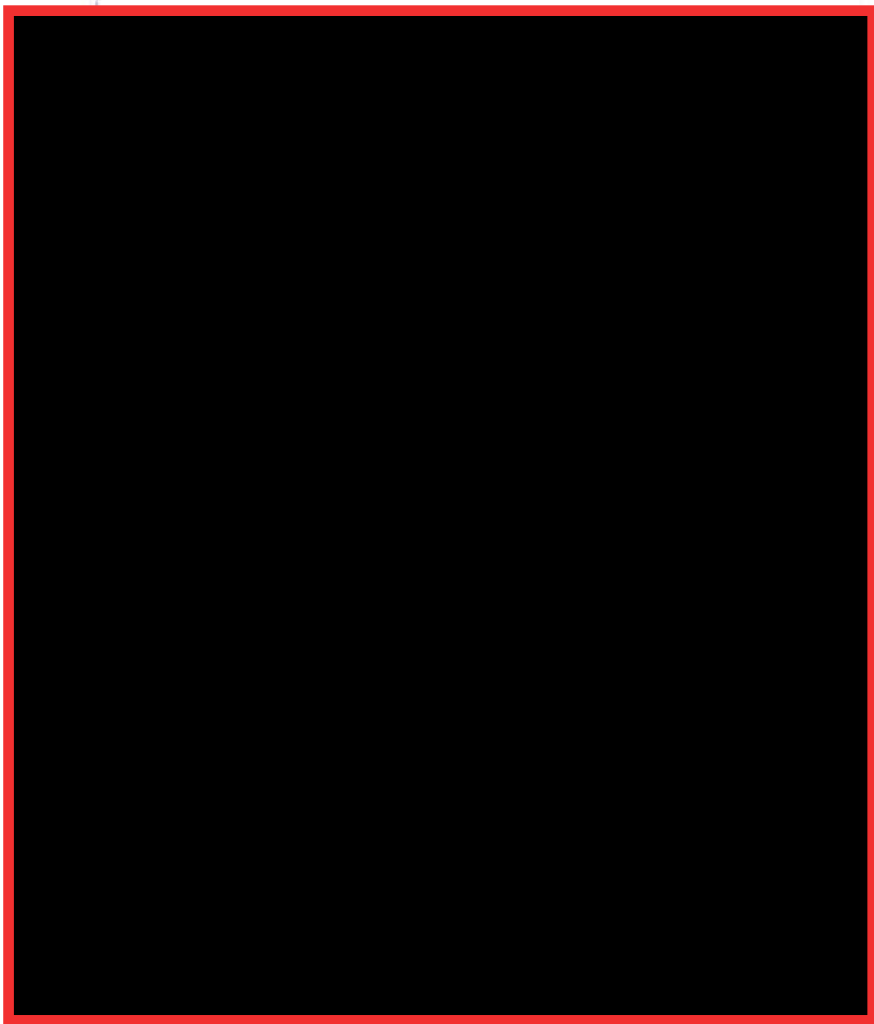


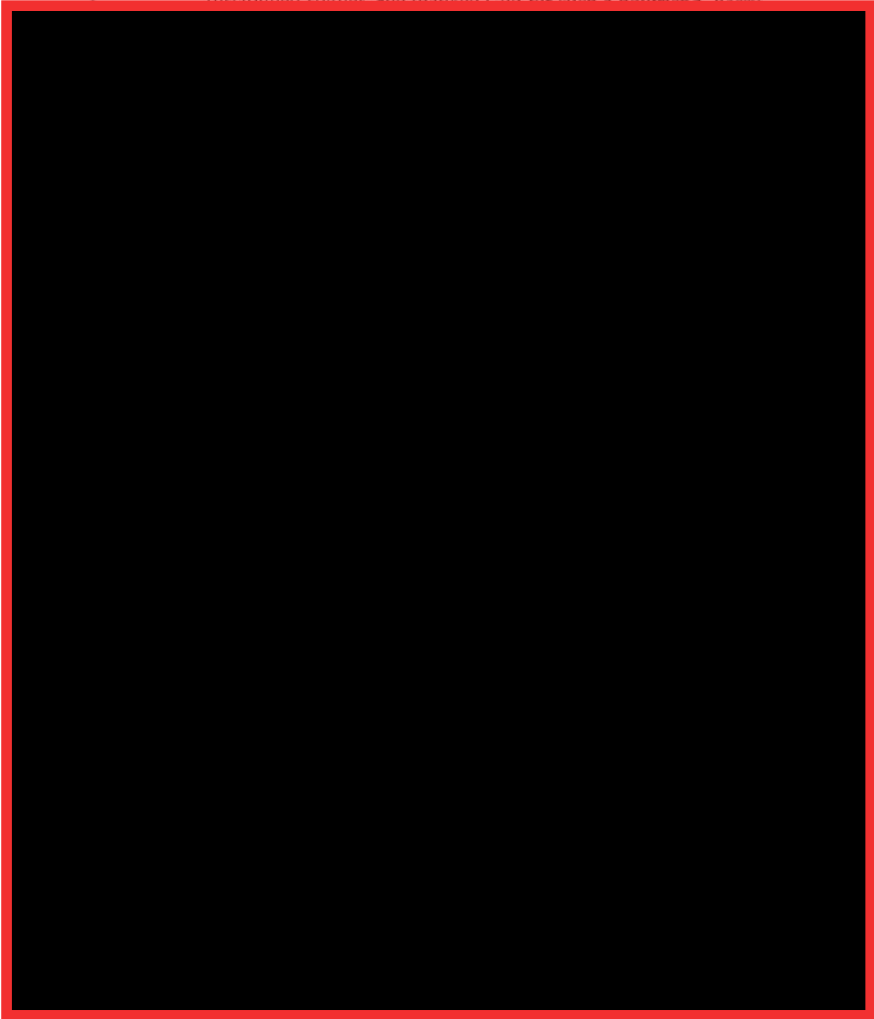


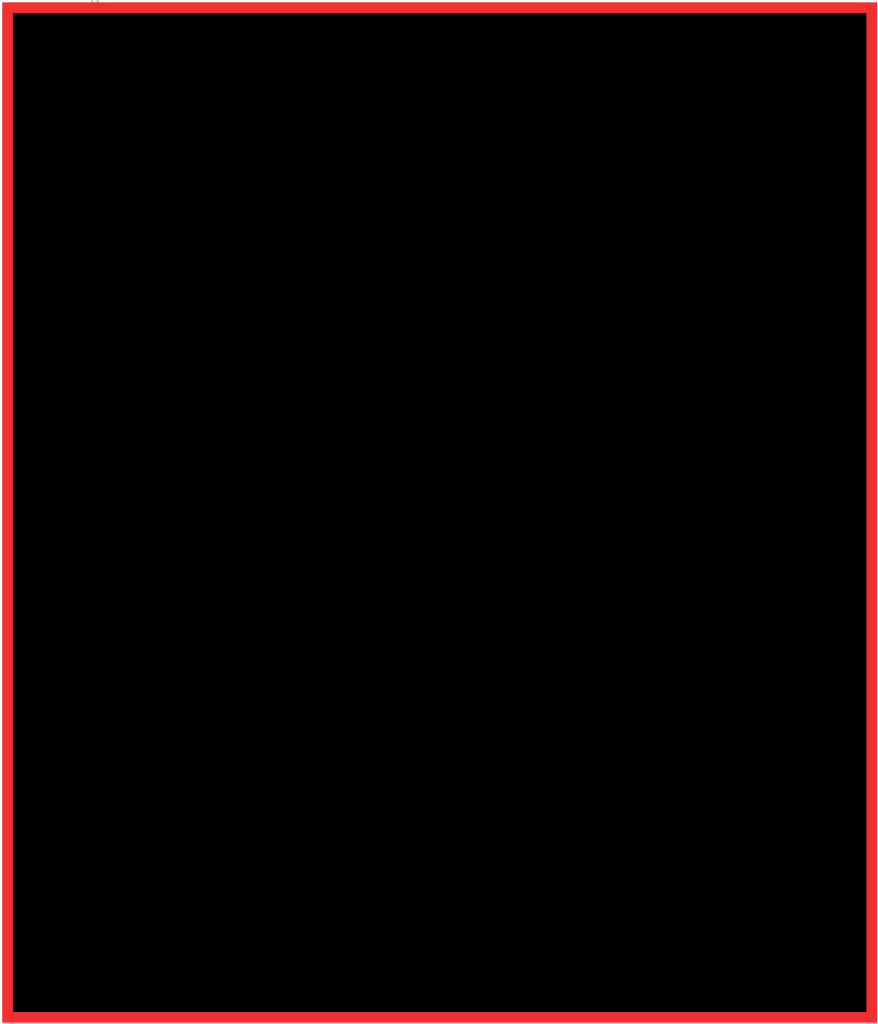












Barry opened the door for her and helped her with the suitcase.

