

# Celebrating Writers and Writing in our Communities

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## Celebrating Writers and Writing in our Communities

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# Celebrating Writers and Writing in Our Communities



## An Anthology of the Winning Entries of the Redwood Writing Contest 2019

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## About this Anthology

*Celebrating Writers and Writing in Our Communities* is an anthology that includes the award winning works of students grades 3rd through 12th in Humboldt County and the surrounding area. The journal is available in digital format at [digitalcommons.humboldt.edu/](http://digitalcommons.humboldt.edu/) and as a printed, bound copy through Amazon.com.

The annual writing contest is co-sponsored by the Redwood Council of Teachers of English, an affiliate of the California Association of Teachers of English, and the Redwood Writing Project. Student entries are submitted to the Redwood CATE Writing Contest by mid-April in order to be considered.

This anthology is published annually in the late spring at the conclusion of the annual Redwood CATE Writing Contest to showcase its award winning entries. Any student in the local area can submit one piece for each category to be judged.

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# The spring is covered with iris

**By: Marissa Begay**

The spring is covered with iris  
in a canoe flowing down the river  
otters are swimming on their backs  
looking for abalone  
my father hunts for deer  
between the redwood trees  
with ancient arrowheads  
catching salmon in my iris fiber net  
the brush dances start with a headroll



# **Wintertime is here**

**By: Kiana Matilton**

Wintertime is here

come and

drink

herbal

tea

as we sit and

make the

maple

bark

skirts

# If I were a Marshmallow

**By: Naiya Ginsburg**

If I were a marshmallow,

I would bring families together  
while I warm myself up.

I would have a blanket on cold nights,  
made out of chocolate and graham cracker.

Then, I would be put into a heater.  
Soon, I would be sent down to darkness, not able to see.

The only thing I would slightly be able to see  
is myself  
glowing white.

Broken into pieces.

After, they would call me  
*S'mores*  
in honor of my memory.

# **The Theory**

**By: Louie Marak**

As the wave rose the sailor thought about the theory that the water,  
Fear, and the night,  
Are all the same to people. No pursuit, no skill  
Or desire will hurry the daylight.  
No escape from fear of darkness  
Will avoid the night. Although skill will calm him, the sailor  
Knows that like water the night  
Always rises and falls.

# Flying Free

**By: Naomi Harrison**

Oh how majestic,  
Oh how picturesque,  
Oh what wondrous thing is this?  
Dragons of the bygone age are the creatures of unspeakable bliss.

To be able to fly above the clouds,  
Breaking through their endless shrouds.  
Seeing all, proclaiming might,  
Probing, searching, through the night.

Flying, soaring, ascending, higher!  
Over woods and over mires!  
Winging up and up and up!  
Rain wet, snow white, lava corrupt!

Treasure pretty, treasure bright,  
Treasure won through countless fights.  
Glittering, shining malevolently,  
Diamonds, sapphires in an endless melee.

Oh how horrible, Oh how bad.  
If they existed now, their existence would be sad.  
Smoke mix/mingling with upper air,  
These marvelous souls would be torn down from there.

Their treasure would be snatched,  
And put under roofs that were thatched,  
The humans thinking, “What pretty baubles!”  
No knowledge of awesome dragons’ troubles.

Now their bones lay forgotten,  
Alleged knights who for ‘honor’ got them.  
‘Rescuing damsels in distress’  
Killed the dragons that had any finesse.

If only humanity were not so evil,  
Or half so much primeval,  
And dragons could fly the skies once more—  
Free to flame and hiss and roar.

And live forever in the yonder blue,  
Away from me, and away from you.  
Able to live in the glory of time—  
Now that would be a sight quite sublime.

# Knocked Down

**By: Brianna Stiles**

She wanted to be a model  
Then they knocked her down because  
She too white or she too brown  
Too fat or she too skinny  
She too smart she too dumb  
Now she feels gone now she feels numb  
She too this, she too that  
Tell me why they hate it  
when girls love themselves

# Untitled

**By: Wyatt Thurston**

Little black box  
before she could squirm away like a little fish  
he caught her  
little black box, a beautiful little gold sunflower necklace  
all those ditzzy little girls  
special snowflake  
sang his favorite song  
the little ugly duckling  
dirty little brat  
got everything she wanted  
nobody to share it with  
just didn't make her happy  
an old crusty box.  
Forgotten  
old friends  
old pictures  
memories fluttered back into her brain like leaves off a tree,  
whisked back deep into her childhood  
back to  
little black box  
stuffed monkey  
old ballet shoes  
best gift she ever received

# Topics Cause World War Three

**By: Izzy Unsinger**

Unpopular opinions are still opinions.  
Nobody will acknowledge that though.

Bring up a topic.

Come on.

Anything!

Just so long as no one wants to talk about it.

“The environment is dying!”

Now your friends are looking at anything except me.

“Your house is nice!”

It’s obviously not, and you know it.

We all know it.

“There is no such thing as true love in high school.”

Oh, now we get a debate!

Your friends are in an uproar,

Spilling tea on the beige carpet.

You scream at me statistics,

But statistically, I am 66% more likely to enjoy this if you continue to yell.

The world is in an upheaval,

All evil has been unleashed.

I take a seat to watch the fireworks,

“I’m so glad I joined the debate team.”



# Realize

**By: Rheannon Swim**

Last summer my mother drove me to a new idea.  
A new thought,  
A new realization.  
I come from a place where there are more than fifty trees per person  
And the mountains that seem to be reaching for the heavens.  
Creeks roll into rivers that are full of salmon and steelhead.  
A world that seems like a paradise.  
A place that seems to prove against the rumors of climate change.  
Up until a faithful journey to a place of shock and disparity.  
Who knew that a simple trip can shake up the minds of two young kids?  
From a place so plentiful with trees to a land that seemed to have been dead for years.  
Miles upon miles of dead grass, dry land, and telephone poles.  
Hot, dry wind dances like glass shards across my face.  
That's when I realized that this is why people are worried,  
Realized that this is what we are doing to this planet.  
Realized that this is what we need to fix.  
More and more animals are being poached and hunted each day.  
Rivers and lakes are bleeding out with panic to meet our extreme demands.  
And we are more focused on our lives to see it coming.  
Whether it's grades, money, or even spending a bloody good picking out a shirt you'll  
only wear  
once.  
We keep worrying that we are not looking for this world.  
But maybe we should realize that maybe this world isn't long for us.

# Biological Relations

By: Campbell Ashby

I see you stole my socks again...

I never have understood why you take my socks, why not something normal,

Like my shirts, or something. I try to yell at you to take them off,

But the guilty look you have and the fact that you are,

In fact, wearing them inside-out makes me laugh at you.

“Take them off” I say. “But I’m already wearing them,” she says.

“Well sure, but at least turn them right side out...And stop taking my socks.”

I turn to leave, and I tell you how much I love you.

You truly know it all, tell it all,

I mean, after all you’re a so-called genius...It’s quite aggravating actually.

I let it out, my words sting like bees and scare you away from me.

Your facts are wrong, but you can’t seem to accept that.

Up against a wall, your screaming reminds me of my duty to love and protect you.

And then I tell you how much I love you.

Our father comes home. You run to him with a big hug,

Crying about how scary your big sister is.

In this moment, I realize my faults. But, I quickly deny all accusations,

and then tell you how much I love you.

I'm jealous of—scratch that—I envy you.

I envy the way you still can get away with things.

I envy that you're the youngest, I envy your free and young spirit

I envy the attention you get from our parents.

And even as my envy festers, I still tell you how much I love you.

We're young, taking baths together

You try to help wash my hair, but you get it in my eye

I explode with anger and pain. You fall, break your tooth, and cry.

This couldn't be my fault, she was the one who did this to herself

But, as her screams grow louder, I hush her

I want to go to my friend's birthday party, and that won't happen if you keep crying.

Shut up! Shut up! And then I tell you how much I love you.

# Life is a Wonderful Thing

**By: Urja Patel**

Life is a wonderful thing

There are glamorous galaxies

There are shining stars and

There are people!

I mean, where would we be if people didn't exist?

I guess the World would've been a wonderful thing.

More trees, more water,

No fights over the crown.

Everything would be...normal.

People are interesting!

They are different than most mammals on Earth.

There are people and there are human beings.

Humans kill because they care and

People can care and kill at the same time.

The can smile and cry.

They can take your ear and stab it a million times and run away with your blood

on their hands.

People are interesting!

They are divided yet together,

They are weird yet unique,  
They are powerful yet weak,  
People are interesting!  
They can change but don't want to.  
They can act like a snake,  
They can almost act like a human.  
People are interesting!  
People have the power to ruin anything they touch.  
People pay for power.  
People kill animals but consider animals as violent.  
People are intelligent yet stupid.  
Their lives matter more than anything  
Yet they kill their own kind  
And kill anything that threatens their own kind.  
They are extraordinary!  
They pray before they eat their prey  
They make an animal their leader.  
*People make life so much better!*  
*What are people gonna do next?*  
*The suspense almost kills me!*  
Life is a wonderful thing...  
Or is it?

# Words

**By: Emily Hodge**

Words are just words, to some.  
To them words are just a way of communicating,  
They have no real meaning,  
To them they are nothing and they cannot do anything.  
But for others...  
With the right words an entire world can come to life,  
A world of wonder, and friendship.  
Or, a world of pain and forced isolation.  
For these people, it all depends on the person who is speaking.

They can choose their words,  
To be considerate, compassionate, and courteous.  
The words they use can be helpful.  
They can be like a hug,  
Something that wraps around you  
And makes you feel secure.  
On the other hand though,  
Some choose their words  
To be unfeeling, unfriendly, and unkind.  
They use these words to hurt you.  
They wield them like a slap,  
Something sharp, painful, and unexpected.

Words have so many uses.

In books, to create a world for you to escape into.

In conversation, to express your opinions and feelings.

Or, in some sad cases,

To hang empty in the air

With no one to hear them.

Words can mean so many different things,

But it all depends on who wields them—

And who they choose to be in that moment.

# The Colonial Tailor

**By: Laurel Straka**

“Few lived so self-sufficient an existence that they wove cloth, carved buttons, and stitched together fabric in front of the fireplace.” Said Ed Crews, author of *Tailor Made for History*. Instead, most colonial Americans bought their clothes from the tailor. The colonial tailor fit people for clothes, sewed clothes, cut patterns and added small details including lace and trim. As quoted above, very few others had the skills of a tailor to make their own clothes, so a tailor was a necessity for everyone who wanted to look presentable.

The tailor was a requirement for everyone because every person needed clothes. If you wanted to wear more than rags, you had to go to the tailor. Imagine walking into your favorite clothing shop, only to find that it had been transformed into a colonial tailor’s shop. The shop would have wide windows to let the sunlight in, so there was plenty of light to sew with. The tailor would be sitting at a wide table under the window, either stitching together clothes or measuring a customer. This is a typical scene in a tailor shop. According to the article, *Tailor Made for History* by Ed Crews, “Guests find the tailors at their table before a large window where there is light for cutting and sewing.” Some of the daily duties a tailor would perform include measuring customers, sewing the simple frame of clothing, cutting pieces for the clothing, and adding fancy trim



such as buttonholes and lace. There were also many tools a tailor used to help them perform these duties.

A tailor did not need an immense amount of tools to perform their trade. However, fine fabric was a must. A colonial tailor would typically get their fabric from merchants. These fabrics would include wool, silk, and cotton. For example, according to Ed Crews, “They varied in price, style, quality, and material which included silk, cotton, and wool.” A colonial tailor would also need to possess a needle, thread, and scissors. Bits of lace and fabric were also handy to have around for adding fancy bits to plainer clothes.

The tailor sewed clothes for everyone including children and slaves. In colonial times, children wore “stays” to help their posture. Stays also allowed an open rib cage for good breathing. For example, according to the article, *Tailor*, “Stays helped perfect the posture and allowed a broad, open rib cage for proper breathing, thus ensuring good health.” The colonial tailor lived in their shop and the word “tailoring” means the art of cutting. Since tailors do have to do a lot of cutting in their trade, this name makes sense. Everyone benefited when there was a tailor around.

In conclusion, tailoring was a very important trade in colonial times because they would make clothes for the entire village. Today, tailoring is still practiced, though it was drastically changed by the invention of the sewing machine and the ability to print designs on fabric. There are many modern tailor shops in Humboldt County such as Silver Threads Sewing and Alterations, Buttons, Tailor Maid, and Sew What. I would enjoy to perform this trade because I like to sew. It is

important to learn about this information because we can look back in history so we can see what affects our actions will have on daily life, as well as the advances we've made. The tailor was one of the most important trades in colonial times.

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# Egyptian Inventions

**By: Cairo Dedini**

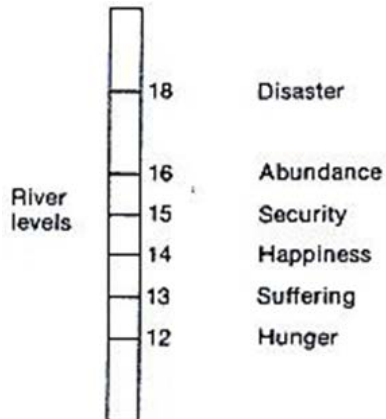
Imagine having to do your homework on a piece of wood. Have you ever wondered when some things, like the paper we use today, were invented? Well, if you can't imagine that than the Ancient Egyptians. The Egyptians made a lot of great inventions such as cosmetic makeup, scrolls, and the nilometer.

Cosmetic Makeup was one invention that Egyptians made. They invented eye makeup in 4000 BCE to give them protection from the sun and to imitate the impressive look of the gods. According to [discoveringegypt.com](http://discoveringegypt.com), "They combined soot with a lead called galena to make the ointment Kohl. Egyptians also made green eye makeup by combining malachite with galena to tint the make up." Galena, an ingredient used in Kohl, is a type of poisonous lead. The Egyptians risked their health to wear the eye makeup. Cosmetic makeup is still worn today to protect our faces from the sun. Even though we don't use galena, we still wear makeup to try to look impressive. While the invention of cosmetic make up altered the Egyptians' appearance, other inventions made their lives more practical.

The invention of scrolls transformed the way the Egyptians communicated. Before scrolls, writing was done on clay palettes and scraps of wood and pottery. These items were difficult to store and transfer. Scrolls are made of the water plant papyrus that they get from by the river. The stem of

papyrus was harvested, turned into sheets, and dried. These scrolls of papyrus were lightweight and small which made it easier to store information and transport to Pharaohs and priests. Getting the papyrus was dangerous because there were ferocious crocodiles and hippos in the river. The Egyptian invention of papyrus scrolls led current people to use other plants to make what we now call paper. Paper is used all over the world as part of daily life. According to [archive.epa.gov](http://archive.epa.gov), “we use about 69 million pounds of paper and paperboard each year.” While scrolls were used to monitor what was going on in their civilizations, other inventions helped monitor their resources.

Water is a really important resource to all civilizations. Water is used to produce food. Without water, animals and crops die, and there would be hunger and suffering. The Egyptians came up with a tool, called the nilometer, to monitor that the water level of the Nile River. The



nilometer was a structure and, according to the book Passport to the Past, “was used to measure how deep the water was and how much it flooded each year.” Markings on the side of the structure predicted how the water level was going to impact the society. For example, 12 and 13 (when the water is low) are hunger and suffering, 16 is abundance, and 18 (when the water is too high) is disaster. Today, we still have people monitoring our water supply. Like the nilometer, we still use a

measuring device to measure the depth of the water and make predictions about how much water we have. This helps us decide how to use our water wisely.

Ideas the Egyptians came up with in ancient times helped them in their daily lives. Cosmetic make up protected their skin from the sun and made them look like gods. Scrolls made life more practical and transformed the way the Egyptians communicated. The Nilometer was the beginning of monitoring water levels. We can still see parts of Egyptians ideas in some things we use today. All the Egyptian inventions are very cool!

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# Why I Like Basketball So Much

**By: Gavin Gellman**

I am going to tell you why I like basketball so much. I mostly enjoy basketball because it is my favorite sport. It is the only sport that I really like to play. Basketball allows you to be exciting, active and play together with other players.

First, basketball is fun. It is fun because you can play no matter how good you are or what mistakes you make. I also like it because you are on a team. I like being on a team because then you can pass to people, and you can meet new people. The skill of passing to other players shows teamwork and teamwork is the key to victory!

Second, I like it because it is competitive game. I like competitive games because they are challenging. I think that it is good to be challenged because then there are more reasons and goals to play and complete. I also like being challenged because it is good for me as it makes me try even harder to WIN!

Lastly, I like playing in tournaments. I like the tournaments because they are fun, competitive, and challenging all at the same time. This year, my team got second place. The last game was really fun because our whole team was tired and the score was 5 to 23 and we were losing and are coach Pete was wanting us to end in a smile and we all took bounce shots, threes, half courts, and backwards half courts. The game ended 11 to 23. We lost, but we all ended with a smile.



I love basketball. It is a fun game/sport that fits me. I like the challenge and hanging out with my friends.

# **Plasmodium: A Persistent Primal Parasite**

**By: Megan Barry**

Background: “What is Malaria?”

Malaria is a dreaded sickness that has been around for thousands of years, but for every illness, there is always a cause, so before we jump right into Malaria’s history and how it has plagued our kind for centuries, let’s become familiar with the culprit that has prevented mankind from eliminating the disease once and for all. Plasmodium is a mosquito-borne parasite that develops inside a mosquito’s digestive system and stomach, and stays hidden inside the mosquito, (Medbroadcast), until it can be transmitted to a more preferred host, such as a homosapien, or human. For the parasite to complete its mission of invasion, it requires the hungry mosquito to find another organisms it can steal blood from. When a female mosquito lands on its target, such as your arm, it pokes around and attempts to find a nutritious, blood-filled vein, and once it senses one, the insect will instinctively release a special saliva onto the surface of your skin to numb the spot, greatly reducing the chance that you’ll notice or squash the sneaky insect. Once it pulls off the first step successfully, it sinks its long, needle-like proboscis into a vein flowing with fresh blood, and feasts. In fear of alerting the host, mosquitoes usually only stay for two minutes or less at a time just to be safe (YouTube). Once it is full and satisfied with its portion of blood, it retreats, and flies off, and will soon search for another victim to mooch off of.

The only visual sign that is left of the mosquito's presence is an irritated itchy bump. While this skin reaction usually is not dangerous itself, unless the host has an extreme reaction, something invisible to the human eye is. What if that mosquito had just unknowingly infected you with devious parasites of its own? Mosquitoes are known for carrying many different viruses, but what makes plasmodium stand out from the rest is that it's actually classified as a parasite, rather than a bacterium or virus, like most illnesses. If a mosquito bears plasmodium organisms in its stomach or digestive system, it can easily transmit those organisms through the saliva it used to numb where it bit you, and the tiny pinprick it gave you was more than large enough for the microscopic plasmodium to enter your body through (Medbroadcast). Only female mosquitoes suck blood, because they need the nutrients in the blood to produce their eggs. Male mosquitoes are practically tiny butterflies, for they prefer nectar from flowers than anything else (YouTube). However, that doesn't prevent the male mosquitoes from being infected with plasmodium, and therefore Malaria continues its rein.

Even though these parasites are so small, that the human eye can't even detect them, these organisms aren't at all unintelligent or inexperienced. Once the plasmodium is injected into the host, they set their sights on the host's blood cells. Our blood cells contain a special type of protein, known as hemoglobin, which allows the blood cells to produce oxygen for the body's tissues (Shah, pp.16-18). The protein seems like a deluxe treat for the hungry parasites. However, the plasmodium cells resist their temptations, and rush down to the

host's liver, where they multiply and divide into a fearsome army to match up against the immune system's antibodies, keen to destroy any invader or threat (Shah, pp.17). The plasmodium parasites are so familiar with the human body, that they use the dead liver cells they killed as a disguise to fool the antibodies. Because of their new appearance, the antibodies see them as friend, instead of deceitful foe, similarly to how villains get scanned by their security system to access their secret lair in superhero movies. After the parasites make their way past the antibodies, they are now fully armed with their overwhelming numbers, speed, and most importantly, strategy, and dash towards the bloodstream. They latch onto the blood cells and feast on the hemoglobin they have longed for so long, eventually killing the blood cell in the process, and makes the invading plasmodium multiply (Shah, pp.16-18). Similar to a game of freeze tag, this continues until all the plasmodium parasites are killed, which is almost impossible for the antibodies to manage when first confronted with this foe. Depending on the strength of the antibodies in a host, this raging battle can last for several days before either side wins (Shah, pp.17). The internal war causes the host to experience, most commonly, flu-like symptoms, random occurrences of chills and fevers that come and go, intense sweating, fatigue, body aches, headaches, an increased heartbeat, and can eventually lead to low blood pressure, weight loss, liver and kidney complications, seizures, lung failure, coma, and even death if either not treated, improperly treated, or treated too late. Unlike the mosquito, it seems that this parasite isn't planning to leave its host anytime soon, (CDC Unwanted Souvenir), and (CDC Symptoms-FAQ).

## **Annotated Bibliography**

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Frequently Asked Questions About Malaria CDC Malaria FAQs, [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov), “Symptoms And Diagnosis” in FAQs section, info provided to CDC by Global Health, Division of Parasitic Diseases and Malaria.

This secondary source provided me with information about Malaria symptoms, similar to their “Unwanted Souvenir” section shown above in primary sources. The reason this CDC source is secondary, is because they received their information from another source, which was Global Health, Division of Parasitic Diseases and Malaria. CDC really helped me with my project, because it was a reliable source that helped me understand the basics of Malaria.

*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*, 21 Sept. 2018, Unwanted Souvenir. [www.cdc.gov/malaria/stories/unwanted\\_souvenir.html](http://www.cdc.gov/malaria/stories/unwanted_souvenir.html).

CDC also provided me with another useful primary source, about a very interesting story of a man and his daughter who went on a nice, thought to be relaxing trip to the Democratic Republic in April. However, once they returned to the U.S, they slowly realized that they had brought a devious parasite along with them. Not only did this source describe the family’s background thoughts, but it also revealed various side effects Julia experienced from Malaria, giving me information about the possible symptoms that could occur after contracting Malaria.

Medbroadcast.com. “Malaria” - “Causes, Symptoms, Treatment, Diagnosis.” *MedBroadcast.com*, [medbroadcast.com/condition/getcondition/malaria](http://medbroadcast.com/condition/getcondition/malaria).  
<http://medbroadcast.com/condition/getcondition/malaria>

This source informed me about the parasite that causes Malaria, known as “Plasmodium,” and how this mosquito-borne disease dwells in the intestines and stomachs of mosquitoes.

Shah, Sonia. “The Fever”: “How Malaria Has Ruled Humankind for More Than 500,000 Years.” Created in 2010.

This outstanding secondary source book was likely the most useful source I have used so far while creating my paper. It informed me about countless Malaria facts and Plasmodium’s history. It taught me about the Sickle Cell gene, the Duffy gene, how Malaria even influenced slave trade, sickened sailors hoping to find a paradise, that India used protective nets to stop a mosquito's entrance to a home, the discoloration of blood cells, the lifecycle of plasmodium, different types of Anopheles mosquitoes, and many other extraordinary occurrences. This is definitely a book worth reading!

YouTube. “Return of the Plagues- Mosquitoes” By “Free Documentary” March 16, 2016.

This primary source told an amazing story of Malaria, mosquitoes, and the many people who struggle with its presence. It provided me with information about the local Kenyan people’s efforts in eradicating local malaria, African beliefs, mosquito survival information, (like how mosquito larvae can’t live in rushing water), the Plasmodium parasite, and various other facts about Malaria, and what has been done to attempt to stop its rapid transmission.

# **Protection of Global Climate for Present and Future Generations of Humankind**

**By: Isaac Johnson**

Scientific evidence shows that Earth's climate is changing rapidly (Rood).

This is a serious problem worldwide because it affects everything from natural disasters and sea level rise to economic growth and agriculture. For example, sea levels are expected to rise between seven and twenty inches by the end of the century (“Global”), and for every degree Celsius that the Earth warms, corn yields will go down an average of 7.4 percent (Hasemyer). Climate change is especially dangerous to countries at high latitudes because of Arctic ice sheets melting. Canada is located at a high latitude, between 42 and 64 degrees north in North America. The population of Canada is 36.6 million people, (“UN”) its Human Development Index (HDI) is 0.926 (“Human”). Over the last 65 years, the average annual temperature in Canada has warmed by 1.6 °C, a higher rate of warming than in most other regions of the world (“Climate Change”). In addition, Canada has eight of its ten provinces bordering oceans, which makes it vulnerable to climate-caused ocean changes. Therefore, Canada has worked hard to become a world leader when it comes to climate change. "We'll demonstrate that we are serious about climate change," stated Prime Minister Justin Trudeau in 2015 (Cullen).

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a set of 17 goals the UN made to end poverty, improve health and education, reduce inequality, and combat

climate change (“Sustainable”). Two of these SDGs are directly related to climate change, SDG 13 and 7. SDG 13 is intended to take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts, and SDG 7 is meant to ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all. International action started in 1988. The UN passed a General Assembly Resolution called Protection of Global Climate for Present and Future Generations of Mankind (“United”). Also in 1988, an IGO called the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) was established, it works to provide governments with accurate information on climate change, its impacts, and future options to lessen risks and impacts (“The Intergovernmental”). The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was established in 1992 as an entity of the UN. The UNFCCC is tasked with responding to the global issue of climate change and is working with countries across the globe with programs like the momentum of change. The Kyoto Protocol was adopted in 1997 as an international treaty aimed to reduce the gases that contribute to climate change (“Britannica”). In December 2015, the Paris Agreement was created by the UNFCCC, with a long-term goal of limiting the global average temperature increase to below 2°C relative to pre-industrial levels. As of 2018, Canada and 195 other countries have signed the Paris Agreement. Global average temperatures have already increased 0.74°C in the last 100 years (“Down”). The primary greenhouse gas (GHG) humans cause contributing to climate change is carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), which has increased in atmospheric concentration from 320 to over 400 parts per million in the last 50 years. Although the global community has accomplished a lot of work toward



increasing awareness of and restricting the effects of climate change, clearly more action is needed.

Over the last three decades, Canada's position on international climate agreements and do domestic policy have varied greatly. During the 1990s, Canada was a big supporter of international treaties on climate change and signed the Kyoto Protocol. Canada committed to a legally binding GHG emissions-reduction of six percent below the 1990 levels to be achieved by 2012. However, in 2006 when Prime Minister Stephen Harper, a conservative, took office, Canada withdrew from the Kyoto Protocol and other active environmental multilateralism. During these years, some NGOs saw Canada as “a spoiler on climate change.” Justin Trudeau, a Liberal Prime Minister, was elected in 2015. Trudeau declared Canada was “back” and “here to help” and in 2016 signed the Paris Agreement, stating, "Today, with my signature, I give you our word that Canada's efforts will not cease". At this date, the Canadian government committed to reducing GHG emissions by 30 percent from 2005 levels by 2030 (Fitz).

On a global scale, Canada believes there needs to be an intergovernmental carbon emission pricing plan. Although the Paris Agreement was a step in the right direction, Canada strongly suggests a more strict program. From Canada's past experience, a carbon tax can be an effective method but must be designed carefully. For example, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau implemented a program that let each province set up its own system, but they had to create a cost for carbon emissions (Austen). He set the initial price at at least 20 Canadian dollars per metric, ton rising to \$50 by 2022. British Columbia was the first

province to use a carbon tax, starting in 2008, and it was well designed and politically successful. Since then, they have seen their provincial GDP grow by more than 17%, while their net GHG emissions declined by 4.7% (“Climate Planning”). What made it a political success was that the profits from the tax credit implementation funded new technologies and programs to curb emissions. Recently however, several provinces are resisting Trudeau’s program because they believe it creates unnecessary expenses for individuals. To address the criticism, the government will collect most of the carbon costs from industry and give back some to individuals (Austen). Based on this experience, Canada would be in favor of a resolution with more specificity than the Paris Agreement. Canada believes the resolution should implement a carbon tax that hits all the points that succeeds politically, reduces emissions, and grows the economy.

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# Sacagawea

**By: Ava Templeaere**

The young Shoshone girl who was essential to the success of the Corps of Discovery, but used for her abilities and not her intrinsic worth

Sacagawea translates to “bird woman” or “to carry a burden” in the Shoshone language. Whoever her parents were, they named her accurately. Sacagawea was 16 or 17 when she embarked on Thomas Jefferson’s Lewis and Clark Expedition, carrying her newborn child on her back the entire way. She was the only woman of 33 men. She was not able to actively make decisions about her life’s direction and she was used for what she could provide to others, rather than respected for her intrinsic worth. Sacagawea is a truly astonishing Shoshone woman and hero, a great role model to all people today.

Sacagawea was born in 1788 or 1789; the exact date is unknown. She was born in the Western Rocky Mountains to Shoshone parents.

At 10 or 11, Sacagawea traveled with her people across the Rockies and to a place known as Three Forks, between the modern towns of Butte and Bozeman. It was called this because of the three rivers that joined together to form the headwaters of the Missouri River.

While the Shoshone people were camping at the Three Forks, they were attacked by Minnetaree warriors carrying guns. Sacagawea later told Clark that the Shoshone braves, outnumbered and gunless, fled on horseback.

The women and children had been berry picking and also ran. Sacagawea was captured by the Minnetaree while fleeing across a river.

It is not known how long Sacagawea was held captive by the Minnetaree, but she was eventually bought or won from the Minnetaree chief by Toussaint Charbonneau, who made her be one of his wives. Charbonneau was a CanadianFrench interpreter and fur trader. He was three times older than Sacagawea.

About the same time that Sacagawea was being held captive at the Minnetaree camp, the Lewis and Clark Expedition, also known as the Corps of Discovery, was being planned by Thomas Jefferson. Before Jefferson was elected, he had made several plans like the Lewis and Clark Expedition, but because he had just been a citizen, nothing came of it. As president, Jefferson could enforce it. He wrote to congress secretly, asking for \$25,000 “for the purpose of extending the external commerce of the United States,” Congress approved and gave him the money to launch the Corps of Discovery.

The value of the Expedition was raised when Jefferson’s negotiations with France for the Louisiana Territory were successful. The Louisiana Territory was then initiated into the United States, for the price of \$16,000,000.

At the time, Meriwether Lewis was the president’s secretary and was appointed to colead the Expedition. He also got to choose the other coleader. He chose General William Clark. The two had become friends while in the army in the 1790s. Lewis believed that Clark had the experience and the wits to help him lead the colonizers. Along with that, Clark could sketch maps for the journals that

Jefferson wanted to record the Expedition in. Lewis contacted Clark, and he agreed to join.

To find others suitable to join, Clark hosted a training camp in the winter of 1803-04. Lewis needed knowledge in zoology, natural history, mineralogy and astronomy to help guide the colonizers. He had minimal knowledge on all of them, so Jefferson hired 3 college professors to educate him for the journey. Lewis was also responsible for purchasing the supplies and handling the money.

On May 14<sup>th</sup>, after much planning and preparation, the Corps of Discovery set off at last, beginning the hard row upstream the Missouri River. There were three boats, two captains, forty-three men, and Lewis' Newfoundland dog, Seaman, who could bring his master wild ducks and squirrels to eat, and whose barks could scare away bears.

Lewis and Clark stopped at a place near what is now Bismark, North Dakota, the land of the Mandans, for the winter. Toussaint Charbonneau had heard of the Expedition and came down from the north with two of his Shoshone wives. One was about 16 and the other 18. The 16 year old wife was Sacagawea. She was close to giving birth to her first child.

On February 11<sup>th</sup>, 1805, Sacagawea went into labor. The baby was slow to come, probably due to the fact that its mother was 16 years old, and Sacagawea was in much pain. Then, the French man Jussome, who was with the Corps, suggested that Sacagawea be given some of a rattlesnake's rattle to ease her pain and have the child delivered quicker. Captain Lewis happened to have a rattle, but he was skeptical of Jussome's plan. Curious to see if it would work or not, Lewis



gave the rattle to Jussome, who broke it into small pieces and gave them to Sacagawea. Ten minutes after, her baby was born. He was named Jean Baptiste Charbonneau. Lewis nicknamed him “Pomp”.

Lewis and Clark needed horses to cross the Rocky Mountains, and soon learned that the natives with horses who lived closest to the Rockies were the Shoshone. To trade horses they would need someone who could speak Shoshone. Sacagawea could. Lewis and Clark needed Sacagawea, so although they neither liked or respected him, Lewis and Clark asked Charbonneau to join the Expedition, making sure that he would bring Sacagawea along. Charbonneau excepted excitedly.

It was about the middle of March when Charbonneau got cold feet. He said that he’d go only if he had special exceptions; two of which being that he didn’t have to follow orders from the captains and that he could return whenever he wanted. The captains declined, appalled. A few days later, Charbonneau apologized and said that he’d do the same things as the rest of the men.

So on April 7<sup>th</sup>, 1805, the Corps of Discovery left the Mandans and paddled up the Missouri River with three additions to their party: Charbonneau, Sacagawea, and little Jean Baptiste, nearly two months old, riding in a cradle board on his mother’s back.

Although it is a common misconception that Sacagawea guided the Expedition, she did not. However, she was helpful in many other ways. She could find food when no one else could. She stayed calm in times when others panicked. The fact that she was simply there was calming to

other tribes along the way, giving them reason to believe that the Expedition was not there to start war. May 14<sup>th</sup> was warm and sunny, so pleasant that Lewis and Clark left the boats and walked along the riverbank, leaving Charbonneau at the rudder. Charbonneau could not swim, was not experienced with sailing, and was “perhaps the most timid waterman in the world.” The boat was carrying medicines, books, and the captains’ journals; all of which were supplies of great value to the colonizers. The boat was also carrying at least two other men besides Charbonneau who couldn’t swim.

A sudden gust of strong wind hit the boat and tipped it nearly over. The boat was quickly filling with water. Charbonneau panicked and let go of the rudder, paying no attention to the shouted commands of the captains from the shore and the instructions of the other men. Finally, one of the men, Cruzat, had had enough. Cruzat threatened to shoot Charbonneau “if he did not take hold of the rudder and do his duty.”

With some difficulty, the men eventually got the boat upright again. The damage had been done, though; and the boat was filled nearly all the way with water. Two of the men begin to bail, and others begin to row the boat towards shore. While this was happening, Sacagawea calmly leaped over the side of the boat and collected nearly everything that had been washed overboard.

On June 10<sup>th</sup>, Sacagawea fell very ill. Lewis left the very next day with four men to scout out the area around the Great Falls of the Missouri River. Clark

attended to Sacagawea and on June 14<sup>th</sup>, he reported that her case was dangerous. He had her eat bark and placed it on her body, believing that it would help to heal her. Despite his attempts, Sacagawea became worse. On June 15<sup>th</sup> she became depressed and refused to take her medicine, and Charbonneau petitioned to return. When Lewis returned, he found Sacagawea extremely ill and immobile. Lewis worried not only about Sacagawea, but about little Jean Baptiste, and the Expedition. If Sacagawea died, who would take care of her child? If Sacagawea died, how would the Expedition communicate and trade with the Shoshone people? If they could not get horses, they would have to cross the Rocky Mountains on foot. A great part of the Expedition laid on her shoulders, along with her child. They needed Sacagawea.

Lewis gave Sacagawea water from a spring he had found. He believed it contained sulfur and iron, much like one he knew of back home in Virginia. Lewis later reported that Sacagawea had “found great relief from the mineral water.” He decided that the Expedition would stay close to the spring so Sacagawea could recover.

With the help of the mineral water, Sacagawea got better and soon begin to eat buffalo meat and soup made from it. Then one day, Charbonneau gave her white apples and dried fish, and the fever and pain returned. But on June 24<sup>th</sup>, Lewis reported that Sacagawea had recovered from the fever. The Corps of Discovery could set off once again.

Once during the Expedition, Clark, Charbonneau and Sacagawea, carrying little Baptiste, were walking through a dry riverbed when Clark spotted a

dark rain cloud moving rapidly towards them. Suddenly, a huge storm struck, and before they had gotten out of the ravine, the water was up to their waists. It was a huge flash flood. Sacagawea had just enough time to grab Jean before the cradle board, carrying his bedding and some of his clothes, was swept away in the rapid current. Clark scrambled up the side of the rocks as the water filled the ravine, pushing Sacagawea and Jean in front of him. Charbonneau tried to help but was paralyzed by fear. Sacagawea and her baby had nearly drowned.

On August 8<sup>th</sup>, Sacagawea gave everyone hope by recognizing a tall rock called Beaverhead Rock. The rock is still called Beaverhead Rock to this day because of its beaver-like appearance.

Lewis wanted to go ahead with a small band of men and meet the Shoshone. He would proceed to do this the very next day, and so, on August 9<sup>th</sup>, Lewis, Drouillard, (who was knowledgeable in sign language) Shields and McNeal started westwards on foot to seek out the Shoshone.

Two days after starting, Lewis saw with great delight a native man riding towards him on horseback. The man stopped. Lewis took his blanket out of his knapsack and made what he believed to be “the universal sign of friendship among the Indians” of the Rockies. He tried this sign three additional times but the man still did not move. When Lewis approached him, the man turned, riding away on his horse.

The next morning, the small group stumbled upon a group of three women, one young, one old, and one girl. The younger woman ran. The girl and the old woman were so afraid that they bowed their heads down, as if waiting to

be killed. But Lewis and Clark did not kill them. They treated them kindly, hoping to be taken to the Shoshone village. They gave them beads and mirrors and painted their cheeks red. The women agreed to take them back to their village and their chief.

Lewis and the chief became friends and Lewis convinced the chief to come with him to meet the rest of the Expedition.

Meanwhile, Clark was leading the others towards the Shoshone. Sacagawea was walking along a river when she saw Shoshone warriors riding towards her. She began dancing with joy and sucking her fingers, which was a sign for “these are my people!”

When the Expedition and Sacagawea were taken back to the Shoshone village, she found her dearest friend from her childhood waiting for her. She had escaped from the Minnetaree. She had not seen Sacagawea for five years.

When the captains met with the chief, Sacagawea was to come along also to translate for both parties. When she met the chief, she recognized him as her long lost brother, Cameahwait.

The captains and Chief Cameahwait bartered and finally a deal was made. The colonizers would give the Shoshone battleaxes, knives and clothing. In exchange, the Shoshone would provide horses and guides the colonizers would need to cross the Rocky Mountains.

With the help of the Shoshone guides and horses, the colonizers made it safely across the Rockies and to the ocean. The colonization had been successful,

and now these native territories have been completely settled in. We would know, as we live in them now.

Sacagawea played the unpaid role of expert to her culture and the environment. She did this all while caring for her child, performing tasks dictated by an uninvited culture, and surviving the colonizing expedition through her own resilience.

Sacagawea's life did not end when The Expedition was over. She returned to her home with Charbonneau and Jean Baptiste, joining Charbonneau's other two wives. Charbonneau was paid \$500.33 and 320 acres of land, but Sacagawea was never paid for her many services.

In 1812, one of Charbonneau's wives died at 25. It is controversial whether or not this was Sacagawea. Then, in 1875, a woman in Wyoming claimed to be Sacagawea. She died on 1884. No one knows for sure if Sacagawea died in 1812 or 1884.

Recognizing the power structure that existed when Sacagawea was alive is important when researching her life story. One must ask questions about who is telling her story, where the information is coming from, and how it benefits the teller. It is still difficult, today, to ensure that accurate information is being passed down, because so many indigenous people of this land have been wiped out. Sacagawea, as a colonizer's legend, may be a quaint and lovely story about a female in a powerful position, however, you cannot ignore the racist mentalities that existed then and persist today in the retelling of her story.

It is unjust and completely nonsensical to believe you can use someone as a tool to meet your own goals. Why then, is the story of Sacagawea still, most often told not by her descendants, but by those who benefited from her exploitation?

The answer is, at its simplest, that inequitable power structures still exist and it is our responsibility to seek truth from those on the side not often told. To remain ignorant of stories told by people who have been intentionally left out of telling their own stories contributes to silencing entire cultures. We only know the story of Sacagawea because of her relationship to the expedition. In highlighting Sacagawea's life through the colonizer's lens, we are forgetting the countless indigenous women who also lived with colonizers on their land. We can pretend the silence of indigenous stories means we are hearing truth, but, embracing this silence contributes to the continued colonization. As Martin Luther King Jr. said, "There is a time when silence becomes betrayal."

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# Where did the time go?

**By: Wanda Little**

*Chronicle of a Death Foretold* is about a man investigating the murder of Santiago Nasar. Gabriel Garcia Marquez creates a narrator whose identity is unknown. He weaves a complicated web of characters that the reason meets throughout the book. Marquez uses repetition to introduce new characters and show their perspectives of what happened on the day of the murder. The new perspectives add to the information that the reader has about the murder, and contributes to the final wrap up at the end of the story. The timeline that Marquez gives is scattered which creates confusion about what happened in what order. The confusion surrounding the order of events makes each plot twist more exaggerated, and the story more interesting. Marquez crafts a unique version of a mystery novel that gets the reader hooked.

Part of the confusion that Marquez creates is with the timeline he gives. Marquez starts the story by talking about the day that Santiago Nasar was murdered. However, after about three sentences he creates a quick transition to twenty-seven years later, and then back to a week before the murder.

On the day they were going to kill him, Santiago Nasar got up at five-thirty in the morning to wait for the boat the bishop was coming on. He'd dreamed he was going through a grove of timber trees where a gentle drizzle was falling, and for an instant he was happy in his dream, but when he awoke he felt completely spattered with bird shit. "He was always dreaming about trees," Placida Liner, his mother told me twenty-seven years later, recalling the details of that distressing Monday.

“The week before, he’d dreamed that he was alone in a tinfoil airplane and flying through the almond trees without bumping into anything,” she said to me, (4).

The first move that Marquez makes and how he begins the book, introduces the reader to time shifts and proves to be very important throughout the book. Marquez uses Santiago’s dream to transition between three different time periods. However, he does not introduce the details from the past first and go to the present, he gives the details of events in a non-linear fashion. By doing this Marquez gives the reader some information about the narrator. He shows that the narrator isn’t a detective who is trying to investigate the murder in a logical way. Instead, the narrator is wandering around giving the reader details of what he sees. The quote, even though this is one of the more drastic jumps in time, continues to change every so often to throw off the reader. By jumping around the narrator causes a lot of confusion. The confusion he creates causes the reader to lose some small details which lead them from one event to another. Overall the confusion that Marquez spins gets the reader hooked on the story, and to pay attention to even the smallest details.

The confusion in the book also causes shocking moments to become more drastic. One of the major plot twists in the story is when the reader finds out when the Vicario twins want to murder Santiago Nasar. Without the confusing timeline this event might have been less dramatic, however, the readers’ confusion causes it to be a much more shattering moment.

She only took the time necessary to say the name. She looked for it in the shadows, she found it at first sight among the many, many easily confused names from this world and the other, and she nailed it to the wall with her well-aimed dart, like

a butterfly with no will whose sentence has always been written.  
“Santiago Nasar,” she said, (47).

This drastic discovery that the reader figures out represents a shattering moment in the book. It’s like the reader has been riding a roller coaster to get to this moment, with this scenario as the top of the mountain. Then this moment brings the reader crashing down to the grave reality of why the murder happened. This is caused by the reader not completely understanding what is going on in the book. Their misinterpretation of events, based on the scattered timeline, makes it so they don’t fully understand how one event led to another, causing a major plot twist when Angela Vicario tells her brothers it was Santiago Nasar. The plot twist is caused by the lack of logic in her saying the name. When her brothers ask her who did it they are asking her who hurt her, and the reader knows it was Angela’s mom. When she says it was Santiago Nasar the reader is confused and shocked because there is no connection between her and Santiago so far. The shock from the lack of logic is created by Marquez through the way he provides the details of the murder. The confusion he creates, which makes events hard to keep track of, causes suspense, getting the reader hooked.

Another thing that Marquez does that adds to the confusion of the story is repeat the scenario where it is announced that Santiago Nasar has been killed. Chapter one ends with Santiago Nasar’s death being announced as someone runs down the street. “Don’t bother yourself, Luisa Santiaga,” he shouted as he went by. “They’ve already killed him,” (24). Chapter three ends with the narrator’s sister, Margot, finding out that he died and announcing it to her household. The

final place his death is announced is in the end of the book where, “he went in to his house through the back door that had been open since six and fell on his face in the kitchen,” (120). These instances are important because it shows the cycles of the story. Marquez goes back in time after each repeat to explain events that happened before Santiago Nasar’s death. However, each cycle shows events from a different character’s perspective. In this way, Marquez adds more detail to the story but also causes more confusion.

Marquez also creates repetitions in the middle of chapters. These shifts are harder for the reader to catch and sometimes the reader may not even see them coming. In the beginning of the last chapter Marquez explains what happened to the characters after Santiago Nasar died, and what the investigator on the case found out in the past. However in the middle of the chapter he transitions back to before Santiago Nasar is murdered.

Besides, when he finally learned at the last moment that the Vicario brothers were awaiting to kill him, his reaction was not one of panic, as has so often been said, but rather the bewilderment of innocence.

My personal impression is that he died without understanding his death. After he’d promised my sister Margo that he would come and have breakfast at our house...” (101)

This abrupt transition is in the middle of the chapter and difficult for the reader to catch. When reading it over again the reader can tell he is making a transition from after his death to the before. However, when reading it for the first time it is hard to completely understand the time shift. The way that Marquez writes his story the transitions he makes are harder to catch, even if they are more

abrupt than the others. He creates complications that confuses the reader and cause them to lose track of certain aspects of the story, making the novel more interesting. The story becomes more interesting because when losing certain aspects of the story, specific details become more drastic than they really are.

The lack of logic and organization in the book requires the reader to pay attention to what is going on in the story. However, because of all the scattered details it makes it hard for the reader to catch every detail. This causes some confusion surrounding how one event led to the next, making that small plot twist then become exaggerated. Marquez uses repeats of the murder to add more details to the story. Each repeat shows how the murder happened based on a different character's perspective. The repeats and turns in time that Marquez creates in his story make the story more interesting. Subtle transitions throughout the book add to the mystery in the story. Marquez creates an interesting story with his spin on a mystery novel.

# Giving into Darkness

**By: McKenna Smack**

It is often said that, we are all born innocent and moral at heart. Contrary to that belief, others feel we are born immoral and impure. Everyone in the world has a different opinion about this topic. Maybe there is no real answer, or maybe both sides are right in some way. In William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*, there is a group of civilized school boys who get stranded on an island. Eventually, without civilization, rules, and society, the boys all become savage and life turns into chaos. With the symbols of clothing and the conch shell, William Golding shows everyone is evil and immoral inside, and civilization is the only thing keeping us from giving into the darkness of human nature. Early in the novel, Golding suggests the kids are innocent because they are civilized. A are good symbol to show this is their clothing. At the beginning of the book, everyone is clothed and civilized. The narrator says, "Their bodies, from throat to ankle, were hidden by black cloaks, which bore a long silver badge on the left breast, and each neck was finished off with hambone frill" (19). Jack and these boys, who are as of now civilized, are also fully clothed. When they have all their clothes on, it shows how they are completely civilized. However, when they have rec fewer clothes on, their civilization is also less. The fewer clothes, the less they are civilized and they become more savage.

Whereas, when time goes by near the middle of the book, the clothes that the boys' have on start to become less and less. As there appears to be fewer clothes, there is also less civilization. When the narrator says, "Jack crouched with his face a few inches away from this clue, then started forward into the semi-darkness of the undergrowth. His sandy hair, considerably longer than it had been when they dropped in, was lighter now; and his bare back was a mass of dark freckles and peeling sunburn. A sharpened stick about five feet long trailed from his right hand, and except for a pair of tattered shorts held up by his knife-belt, he was naked" (48). This shows how as the time has gone by, less and less clothes are on particular characters. His hair is longer than it was when they first got there, that means the boys have been in the island for a while now. He having this sharpened stick shows that he is possibly going to hunt. Jack is now one of the few people to have barely any clothes on. This means, now that Jack has little clothes on, he has little civilization. Another example of this idea comes up a little later in the book, when Jack yells at Ralph because he wants to hunt for meat, because Jack now has a persistent feeling to kill, When Jack says, "We want meat." "Well, we haven't got any yet. And we want shelters. Besides, the rest of your hunters came back hours ago. They've been swimming." "I went on," said Jack. "I let them go. I had to go on. I--" He tried to convey the compulsion to track down and kill that was swallowing him up" (51). Ralph is concerned about not having shelter, whilst Jack wants to kill and get meat. Jack is trying to control himself from the feeling of wanting to kill, but as he has fewer civilization, it becomes harder to control his impulses. As the other

example shows how Jack is almost naked, this shows Jack is now having an urge to kill, he didn't have before. Due to having little clothing on, Jack has little civilization left.

Close to the end of *Lord of the Flies*, nearly all the boys are naked, thus meaning they have little, to no civilization left. When Golding writes, "But really, thought Ralph, this was not Bill. This was a savage whose image refused to blend with that ancient picture of a boy in shorts was as and shirt" (183). Ralph is saying that Bill, this boy, was not him at all, because without civilization he has turned into a savage. Bill has now given into the darkness inside of him and the image of the old him cannot blend with the person he has become. The old him was clothed, which meant he was civilized and innocent. Now he is naked with only war paint on his body, with the mindset of a savage.

Another symbol, that shows how at the beginning of the novel the boys were innocent, and at the end they were completely uncivilized is the conch. Piggy says, "S'right. It's a shell! I seen one like that before. On someone's back wall. A conch he called it. He used to blow it and then his mum would come. It's ever so valuable-" (15). In the beginning of *Lord of the Flies*, two boys find a conch shell, later it is used to call assembly meetings. At these meetings, whoever is holding the conch has the right to speak. It symbolizes, civilization, rules, and order. Without the conch, the boys wouldn't have any form of government. The conch, keeps them from talking over each other in the meetings, and helps turn the discussions they have into actions, so they can survive. Another example of the conch and the power it has, is when the boys are starting to split into two groups



and Ralph doesn't know if he should blow the conch, because he is scared the other boys won't come back and listen during the meeting. When Ralph says, "If I blow the conch and they don't come back; then we've had it. We shan't keep the fire going. We'll be like animals. We'll never be rescued" (92). This shows, that the rules people make up for other people, only work when everyone agrees. If no one agrees with the rules made up, then nobody will follow them and the society won't work properly. With the conch, brings law and order, if Ralph doesn't blow it then he still has the power over what happens.

At the end of the novel, the boys have all split into two different groups, one mostly civilized, with Ralph as leader, with about six other people. The other is completely without civilization, with Jack as leader. Everyone else who is not with Ralph, have all given into the darkness inside and are all with Jack. The two groups of boys end up getting into a fight and the most civilized person on the island, Piggy, is dead. When Piggy dies, the conch breaks. When the narrator says, "The rock struck Piggy a glancing blow from chin to knee; the conch exploded into a thousand white fragments and ceased to exist" (181). This shows when piggy dies, the conch breaks. When the conch breaks, all of the rules made, the order, and all civilization are gone. Piggy was killed by a huge rock, one let loose by one of the other boys, Roger. Roger killed Piggy, which means he is the one who took the law and order away from the island and all of the boys. The moment Roger lets the rock go, it kills Piggy, meaning the laws made, were forever gone.

In the end, William Golding clearly proves we are all born evil inside and society, laws, and rules are the only thing keeping us civilized, by using the two

symbols of clothing and the conch. Some people say, we are born innocent and pure. Others, including William Golding, believe we are born evil and barbaric. The world is a different place than when Golding wrote this novel because, there is no big war going on. He wrote this book during the time of the cold war; however, Golding's message still applies, because what he is saying is, if there was no society and all that was left was these kids who know the rules and know how to be civilized, they would still eventually become uncivilized, through the darkness of human nature. I agree with Gloding to some extent. On one hand yes, people may possibly be born evil, but alternatively, maybe its society and rules that lead people to act certain ways as they grow up with civilization. As people grow up they learn how to be civilized and follow the rules, for most of people's childhoods, most of the time they follow the rules. As time goes on, and people keep following the outline society has set for them, it may lead some people down a different path of life and civilization; possibly one that does not fit the mold of how the average person should act throughout their life. With civilization, comes order. With no rules or laws, people give into the darkness inside.

# **Personal Problems = Great Literature: Shelley's Motherhood Issues Reflected in Frankenstein**

**By: Campbell Ashby**

We are designed by nature to feel love and adoration towards creatures who drool, cry, throw up, and poop all the time. We all love them; they're babies. But what would happen if those natural instincts weren't there? What if you're just used to abandonment with all things parental in life? This type of abandonment happened during Mary Shelley's lifetime, her mother dying from giving birth, and also suffering many of her own miscarriages. In her novel, *Frankenstein*, which she wrote while experiencing the aftermath of this harsh reality, Victor Frankenstein creates a monster, going against the natural cycle of life, which turns into a true monster after receiving no love from his own father. The connection typically made from experiencing childbirth is absent, and that is what creates their horrifying relationship. All the women portrayed in her novel experience hardships, which ultimately lead to death. These difficulties reflect certain experiences from Mary Shelley's own life. Mary Shelley's personal problems with motherhood are mirrored through relationships of parents and children in her novel, *Frankenstein*. Her personal experience caused irreparable damage to her maternal instincts, and this can be viewed through the women portrayed in her novel as well as the relationship between Victor and the Monster.

During her life, Mary Shelley experienced many hardships relating to motherhood, which influenced how she portrayed motherhood in her novels she wrote later in life, including *Frankenstein*. In her first few months of life, “Her mother, the feminist Mary Wollstonecraft, had died from complications arising from her birth” (Gunderman). This created the lack of a mother figure in her life, only being left with her father and some older siblings. Having no mother figure while growing up, besides a stepmother who she didn't get along with, she fell victim to an imbalanced home. By having this absence of a mother or mother figures, she grew up not experiencing the special love that only a mother can really provide. Later on in her life, “Shelley's own attempts at motherhood would result in multiple miscarriages and the deaths of three children,” (Gunderman). This experience was the cause of her postpartum depression, as she most likely felt as though the miscarriages were all her fault. Feeling as though she was a killer, she fell into a pit of guilt and anger directed towards herself.

In *Frankenstein*, Mary Shelley creates a failing father and son relationship between Victor and the monster in order to express her depression in real life. Mary Shelley essentially writes herself into the novel as Frankenstein, with each encounter in each of their lives eerily similar to each other's. They create a monster to perhaps settle the need for a child for Shelley, and the need for a child of science for Frankenstein. Because Shelley had not much experience with her own children, she is able to create a distant and dissonant relationship between Frankenstein and the monster. A cold detachment from what it means to be a parent resides in Mary Shelley, and she expresses this by portraying Victor as

unable to provide the love necessary for the monster to become not so much a monster. When Victor first creates the monster, the monster wakes up and Victor describes his actions as, "one hand was stretched out, seemingly to detain me, but I escaped and rushed downstairs" (Shelley 56). Victor's initial reaction towards the monster is to run and hide, seemingly to defend himself, but truthfully the monster is just like a newborn baby. The monster has never seen the world before, he doesn't speak a language, doesn't really know anything, and as he reaches out towards his father, Victor runs away in fear. This reaction causes the monster to feel rejected and unwanted. To have the most important person in his life, a parent, shun him, damages the monster's understanding of love and compassion. This damage will later generate further problems. Victor's reaction mirrors Shelley's experiences with children; because of her lack of maternal instincts, she is able to express her confusion and fear of having a child to actually take care of through this relationship between Victor and the monster. With the inference that Shelley is Frankenstein, she portrays herself as not being able to give love to her child. This demonstrates how confused and fearful she is of motherhood. Later in the novel, after the monster has learned things about the world, and learns of hostility expressed towards him even from his father, he exclaims "you are my creator, but I am your master; obey!" (Shelley 181). The monster is resentful towards Victor, expressing his anger by killing everyone he loves before and after he exclaims this. He wants to make Victor's life as miserable as his own, and when Victor doesn't comply with his wants, the monster decides that he is his creator's master. This transition of power is important in order to portray how the lack of someone's

love can create a monstrous being. Shelley is most likely trying to convey how afraid she is of motherhood, asking herself the question, what if my child hates me? Frankenstein's and Shelley's fear of their own children proves how personal horrors can lead to permanent damage.

In *Frankenstein*, Mary Shelley portrays Elizabeth as submissive and passive in order to express her personal struggles with motherhood. Throughout *Frankenstein*, Elizabeth is portrayed as a caregiver, comforting Victor through letters sent back and forth. She succumbs to his secrecy and aggression caused by the creation of the monster, expressing passive emotions by being unable to argue or pressure him to tell her the secret. Later in the novel, “[Elizabeth] was there, lifeless and inanimate, thrown across the bed,” after being killed by Victor's monster (Shelley 212). Elizabeth's death is just a result of Victor's own mistakes and stupid decisions. Because he showed his creation no love, it turned to killing everyone that he did love in order to make it so that no one would love either of them. Because it is understood that Shelley mirrors herself in Victor Frankenstein, it can be implied that she too feels as though she killed Elizabeth, Shelley feels as though she made herself depressed, and that it is all her fault she's experienced so many hardships. This is suggested because it's Victor's fault that the monster killed Elizabeth due to the lack of compassion and love in their relationship, hence Shelley's inclination to take the blame.

Mary Shelley portrays Justine as submissive and timid in *Frankenstein*, in order to project her anger into a positive outlet. Justine is Frankenstein's family's servant who gets tried for the murder of William, Victor's youngest brother. They

find a photograph of William in her pocket, planted there by the monster, and that is enough to land her in jail until more evidence is discovered. When in jail, Victor comes to visit her and she claims, "My confessor has besieged me; he threatened and menaced, until I almost began to think that I was the monster that he said I was. He threatened excommunication and hell fire in my last moments," (Frankenstein 73). The priest threatened her in order to make her confess to the crime she did not commit, telling her that she would go to jail if she did not confess. She confesses, and by doing so, she expresses the natural submissiveness she has from being a woman. Succumbing to the priest's threats portrays women's passiveness towards men, which is important because it suggests that Shelley felt as though she hurt people around her during her miscarriages, with the implication that the women in Frankenstein mirror Shelley's own children. As the priest forces Justine to confess, it indicates that Shelley felt angry towards her babies that died, conveying anger towards them. Although, it can also be perceived that anger stems out of confusion, so this would also suggest that Shelley felt confused as to why her babies would die; why would it happen to her?

Ultimately, Mary Shelley wrote Frankenstein as a way of putting her depression into coherent thoughts and ideas. Her miscarriages and the death of her mother was the cause of her postpartum depression, which she utilizes to write one of the greatest pieces of literature in the 20th century. By mirroring her own experiences and thoughts through Victor Frankenstein, she is able to convey to the readers the struggle she went through. She portrays the women in the novel as submissive in order to discuss how she feels about her own children, that she feels

responsible for their deaths. By discussing her personal struggles in her novel, Shelley suggests to the readers that she felt there was no outlet for her depression and feelings towards the miscarriages at the time. Women in today's society are often encouraged to seek therapy, and there are also many support groups that can be accessed at the touch of a button. It was more of a difficult matter before the suffrage movement though, as women were taught that it was improper etiquette to discuss things such as one's postpartum depression; so, Shelley's struggles with motherhood encourage readers today to be appreciative of the sources available, as they weren't always there. Shelley clearly describes the emotions going through a woman's mind when going through such hardships through the characters and relationships in *Frankenstein*.



## Annotated Bibliography

Gibbens, Sarah. "Is maternal instincts only for moms? Here's the science." National Geographic.

9 May 2018. Web. 09 January 2019.

In this source, Gibbens explores how our biology and oxytocin affect parental instincts in life. She explains the levels of oxytocin raising a significant amount after a mother held her child for the first time. Being from National Geographic, we expect this source to be trustworthy and able to provide important facts. This article helped me understand the scientific background of maybe why Mary Shelley portrayed her characters the way she did. The article also helped present logical and tangible reasons for Shelley having irreparable damage to her maternal instincts.

Gunderman, Richard. "What Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* teaches us about the need for mothers."

The Conversation. 8 May 2018. Web. 09 January 2019.

In this source, Gunderman, a professor of medicine, explains how Shelley's *Frankenstein* helps express the need for mothers. He does this by talking about Shelley's life experiences and then the book, discussing what happened in a chronological order of her life. This article helped form a basis of how I wanted to format my own essay, as I also decided to write my essay in a somewhat chronological order. This article also helped provide a trustworthy source about what exactly happened with her children and her mother.

Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein*. Lackington, Hughes, Harding, Mavor, & Jones. 1818.

# Women: Powerfully Submissive

By: Urja Patel

Imagine being a girl in the 1900s with dreams and a desire for independence. Many people assume that being a girl has many advantages and benefits, however, in the 1900s, many young women were mistreated especially when they had a poor background. Although Jamaica women were Kincaid in her short story “Girl,” does not say so directly, she assumes that girls are treated like prisoners by the society, especially by men who would often view them as objects. In the story, Kincaid writes specific details that are necessary for a girl to follow in a society. She clarifies how to do the jobs that are assigned to them and how to behave around men. Kincaid shows how the society controls a woman and how they are psychologically impacted because of the dominance. She does this by using a single tone throughout the story until the end, by slut-shaming, and by constantly reminding the young girl that she is not a boy to symbolize how women are not treated with the same respect as men.

Kincaid starts her story using a single tone which symbolizes the mother's lack of emotions. Throughout the story, the mother recited commands for her daughter to follow without showing sympathy. It seems like she memorized the instructions in her head which shows that she is completely brainwashed. In the middle of the story, she says, “this is how to make a good medicine to throw away a child before it even becomes a child” (321). The mother just gave her daughter

the potion to abort her child without showing emotions. In general, a mother would have a strong feeling against abortion, especially in the 1900s, when abortion was very controversial and had just started to happen. However, the mother is represented completely opposite of what most women would've been in the 1900s. She seems to be pressured into a society where the rules are tied around a girl's neck. Her use of monotone demonstrates her giving up on the rules and the society. Her being frustrated of her existence and people in it, eventually, that feeling will overcome her daughter too. Toward the end of the story, the mother says, "if they [methods to love a man] don't work don't feel too bad about giving up" (321). This was the first time the mother gave an order with feelings involved. She gave the daughter a little freedom especially when it comes to men. She expressed that it was okay to give up which could be the reflection of her own life. She gives more freedom to her daughter by stating, "this is how to spit up in the air if you feel like it" (321). Spitting is the act that is often performed by men and when the mother gave her daughter that right, she automatically gave her a little freedom to express her feelings. This is the first time she acts like a true mother instead of an instructional manual. She grants her daughter the right to express her feelings and along with it, she showed some care for her daughter.

Even though the mother gives a little freedom to her daughter, she also slut-shames her very often in the story to make her emotionally strong. She constantly criticizes her daughter of being a slut for doing things that a regular teenager would do. She says, "o

n Sundays try to walk like a lady and not like the slut you are so bent on becoming” (320). This shows how the mother really feels about her daughter, especially because she calls her own daughter a slut. Even the mother does not respect the daughter. Generally, a mother would view her child with the greatest concern and respect, but the mother in the story is abusing her daughter by using such vulgar language. She is mentally traumatizing her daughter, but at the same time getting her ready to face the society. She is personally damaging her daughter's confidence so no one else could hurt her more than the damage that she is creating. She wants her daughter to be strong, both physically and mentally and hopes that her daughter does not turn out the way she has. She does not want her daughter to be damaged by the society like she is. She is trying to make sure that her daughter is not traumatized by the dominant males in the society. To help her, the mother instructs, "this is how you bully a man” (321). The mother is giving some techniques to her daughter to use in case she wants to defend herself or to prove that she still has power. However, right after that statement, the mother adds, “this is how a man bullies you,” to hand more power to men again (321). She is also telling her daughter that it is okay to be dominated by men. That it is normal to be submissive to men and to be under their control. The daughter has reached an age in her life where she will be inferior by men. Men are going to take advantage of her especially because of her youth, and that is what the mother wants her daughter to be ready for; which is why she keeps calling her own daughter a slut because that is what the society is going to call her.

Along with slut shaming, the mother also keeps reminding her daughter that she is not a boy to show that boys are treated differently than girls in a society. She mentions, “don't squat to play marbles —you are not a boy, you know” (321). This shows how young, innocent girls are not even allowed to play games that are common between children. They are expected to be more mature and to behave ladylike. They are not allowed to do things that boys are free to do even if it is as simple as squatting. They are often pushed down just because they are girls. Boys have more freedom than girls and they will continue having it until the thinking of the whole society is changed, which is next to impossible. The mother's constant reminder helps her daughter get ready for what the society is going to say to her when she gets too close to getting her freedom and independence. Often times, the society is afraid of women being more powerful than men, therefore, it makes women feel like they do not have as much freedom as men. The as society needs the comfort of feeling like men still have more power over women. The mother has felt this power, therefore she is preparing her daughter for the same trauma. She wants her daughter to be ready and be less emotionally traumatized than herself.

Throughout the whole story, the use of monotone along with slut shaming and the constant reminder that girls are not boys, helps the mother assemble her daughter's mind to help her face the society. Kincaid uses these techniques to show the dominance of men and society on women. Many of the things that are mentioned in the story are still controversial today such as an abortion, society's expectations from women, and slut shaming. The word “slut” is used to describe a

female and never a male. There are other words that are used to describe a female such as “whore,” “hoe,” and many others; however, there are only one or two words that are used to describe a man who has “slut” like personality. Many people would automatically assume that a girl is being called a slut because it's a crime for women to do exactly what men do, sleep around.

# The Audition

By: Ruby Smith

“Ruby Smith.”

I stood up and slowly walked to the table, she was already standing, waiting for me. *Why was I so nervous? Just remember what Laural told you. It's a small audition, and you're almost certain to get it.* I tried to calm myself, without success.

Earlier that day, when I arrived at North Coast Dance, I had felt as small and nervous as a mouse in a room full of hungry cats. I was there to audition for a musical theatre group called YPC (Young Performers Company). There were a bunch of girls of different ages, but only one that I knew. Della, she was probably about three years older than me, and was already engrossed in a conversation with her friends. I didn't know her that well, I'd only talked to her a few times and I sure didn't know her well enough to feel comfortable interrupting her.

“Hey,” my dad asked, “doesn't she go to your school?”

I nodded.

“That's Della,” I replied.

“Hi Della.” Like I said, I was too nervous to say anything. My dad however, was not. She turned around.

“Oh, hi.”

“Are you nervous?” my dad inquired.

“No, not really,” Della told him,

Clearly she had done this type of thing before. I, on the other hand, had absolutely no experience. After they had talked for a little while my dad turned back to me.

“Would you be okay if I left for a little bit?” he asked. “I could get a couple of things done and then come back to get you.”

“Sure,” I said with a weak smile.

“You’ll do fine,” he reassured me.

“Okay,” I said, although I didn’t really believe it myself. “Bye, Dad. See you soon.”

He gingerly walked out of the building. I just sat there for a while, waiting. What else could I do? I just sat there listening to people talking and laughing all around me. *Was I the only one here who felt nervous?* Throughout the while time, I only saw one other person who seemed nervous. She was a girl about one or two years younger than me and was crying to her mom. I felt bad for her, even I wasn’t that scared. The only people who paid much attention to me were two girls, about seven years old based on their height. They wanted me to play with them, but I wasn’t really in the mood.

“Hi, my name is Madison,” one of the girls told me.

“Nice to meet you,” I replied, “I’m Ruby.”

“Do you want to play with us?” Madison asked.

I wasn’t really in the mood, but how could I say that without sound rude?

“Not right now, maybe later,” I responded.



They then scampered off talking and laughing. I just sat there in that hot stuffy room, waiting, watching, and listening for my name. It seemed like everybody knew everybody else, except me. I didn't know anyone, and nobody knew me. As I sat there, I noticed small, unimportant details like how there was only one boy, or how there was this one girl who went around trying to annoy other people she knew.

“Ruby Smith.”

Time seemed to slow as I stood up and walked toward the table, and it nearly stopped as she began to lead me down the hall. She was tall, about eighteen years old with blond hair, a little past her shoulders. I never did learn her name.

As we walked down the long hallway she turned to me, “How are you feeling? Are you nervous?”

“I'm pretty nervous,” I replied.

Then suddenly, I found myself blabbing everything to her, I guess that's just what happens when you get too nervous.

“This is my first audition. I'm really scared and I feel like I 'm going to forget the words to my song...,” I trailed off, embarrassed.

We passed many doors. Each time I thought, *this is it!* But, we kept walking until we reached a door near the end of the hall. She opened the door to a big, nearly empty room there was a piano in one corner with the accompanist sitting on the piano bench. One wall was almost entirely made up of a huge mirror, and in it I could see myself, standing in the doorway looking as feeble as a kitten face to face with a large dog.

Near the mirror sat three women in wooden chairs. I recognized one of them as Daphne. I had met her once a long time ago. The other two I had never seen before. The one in the middle (who I would later recognize as Jessie), had blond hair about the shoulders, and she was shorter than Daphne with kind eyes and a nice smile. The last judge was tall with brown hair, she looked more stern than the other two, but not mean.

My throat suddenly felt dry, and my heart was beating so loud I was sure they all could hear it.

“Good luck,” the woman who had led me down the hall said with a smile.

A million thoughts flashed through my head. *What if I couldn't remember the words to my song? What if I messed up so bad that they wouldn't let me in?*

With that, she closed the door. This was it, I couldn't turn back now, and even if I could I would never forgive myself.

“Are you nervous?” Daphne asked kindly.

I responded with a slight nod, a weak smile and a shrug. I seemed to slow with every step as I walked over to the accompanist. She had short dark brown hair and she smiled at me as I handed her the music. Then I showed her where I wanted to start and stop and what tempo I wanted the music to be. Almost unwillingly, my legs carried me to the center of the room.

“My name is Ruby Smith. I am ten years old and I will be singing, *How Does a Moment Last Forever.*”

The judges smile encouragingly to me. I was about to look back and give

the accompanist a nod to tell her I was ready, when almost as if she had read my mind, she started playing. I had to calm down, “*You can do this!*” I told myself. Finally, I took a deep breath and began to sing. I started quietly at first, but got gradually louder as I gained confidence.

Later that day, as I sat in the sun on my porch, I thought about how the audition had been a good experience whether I got in, or not. I have been more confident and sure of myself ever since that day. Sure it was scary, but it helped shape me into who I am now. Not only that, but I did get in, and that was the best part. I made new friends, and improved my musical theatre skills. The fall class ended, but I am looking forward to doing the next class when it starts.

# The Fire and the Bird

**By: Odelle Erickson**

The small blue and black winged bird flew lazily around looking for food. Its grey head was fluffy with feathers next too its black feathered mask and blue beak. She had a soft white belly that faded into blue. She got her name, Bristle, because of the way her feathers stood straight up when she was scared or mad.

Bristle saw a few wasps buzzing around a ponderosa pine. Its pinecones, a light brown, dry from the long summer days. She followed the wasps as they flew away flapping her little wings with all her might until she came to a strange scene.

A featherless, big eared, tall and flattish faced thing with no beak, was in sight. She had seen them before. They had come into the forest and put up little dens, lit a fire, put it out, and then left. It seemed like these ones were already leaving, but there was something wrong. They hadn't put out the fire.

Bristle watched the fire all night long as it slowly grew from a small light to a fiery monster reaching out its burning arms towards the trees. The smoke filled the air, and she could barely breathe. It devoured everything that got in its way, not caring if its victims made it out alive.

Bristle fled, her delicate wings flapping as hard as possible. She let out a series of high-pitched calls, a warning for others to run from the vicious monster that was coming. Another bird replied with a short high-pitched panicked sound.

Bristle finally got out of the burning forest into a bustling, smoky, stone forest. It had tall stone trees that would eat the flat-faced things and then spit them out later. There were big shiny animals with flat faced things inside them whizzing around on stone paths. They growled and honked at each other making the forest very loud. It reminded her of a wasp's nest filled with activity and nowhere to rest.

Bristle was getting hungry, so she flew up to look for food like she did normally, even though she could tell this was not like any place she had ever visited before. She flew around for hours, until her wings grew heavy and her throat grew dry. She had to land in a small grove of oak trees that was crisscrossed with stone paths. Dogs walked beside the flat-faced creatures in silent companionship. She spotted two branches in a large tree that looked perfect for a nest. She had just settled down in her scrappy nest when she saw a wrinkly, old flat-faced thing feeding the pigeons. Her rumbling belly made the decision for her, and she flew over to eat a few of the seeds.

Once she had filled her belly, she started walking lazily over to her tree. Before she could get there, a flat-faced thing flew past on a big piece of metal with big round wheels. His feet pedaling furiously, and his face wrinkled in concentration. It rode over her wing, and she let out a squawk of pain.

Bristle looked at her poor wing. It was at a weird angle and made her feel sick. In a flash, the wrinkly flat-face had picked her up, he put her in a brown box, and closed the lid. Bristle started to panic, flapping her wings wildly as he put her in the shiny animal and they started moving.

Eventually, the shiny animal stopped, and the flat-faced thing brought her into a white room. At the end of the room, looking at a piece of metal that seemed to move, was a female flat-face. She had brown hair and kind features, even if they were flat. When she saw Bristle, she walked over, picked her up, and examined her wing. Bristle did not want to be examined. She didn't want to be in this white room. She just wanted to be in a forest eating normal food.

The flat-face thing brought her a little pellet. Bristle, being as hungry as she was, ate it quickly. After she ate it, her mind began to realize how tired she was. All she wanted to do was sleep and sleep and sleep.

She woke up to excruciating pain and remembered where she was. Bristle chanced a quick glance at her wing, fearing what she would see. It was straight, perfect and usable. The pain had had died down pushed aside by happiness. She was so busy dreaming about flying again that she hadn't realized they were moving. She peeked out of the box they had put her in to see she was back in the shiny animal.

After what seemed like hours, the shiny thing stopped, and they pulled up into a beautiful pine forest. Bristle felt like she would burst with joy when they opened her box, and she flew away. It wasn't home, but it was close enough.

# One in 2.25 Billion

**By: Naeva Wilke**

The sunshine pours through my dirty window and blinds me through my closed eyes. I lumber out of bed and hit the cold floor. I get dressed and go downstairs. Mom is making bacon and eggs. Nothing special. I open the door and a frothy breeze comes in. I step outside on to the cold grass. I step through the grass and my feet feel a tingling sensation with every new step. I feed the pigs and greet the horses. Yes, I live on the farm, and we don't have much money. Our animals are slowly being sold for money. The chickens peck at my feet and the cows snore. I hear the door open behind me and my sister, Riley, walks out. Her blond curls blow in the wind and her blue eyes sparkle. She's only six years old, but she's already prettier than me.

“Hailey,” she says, hand on her hip. “Breakfast is ready.”

I walk back inside and Riley is greeted with a cup of hot cocoa. I eat my food and just as I am finishing up I hear a faint rumbling noise in the distance.

“Bus is here!” I yell, and run outside.

“Have a good day!” my mom calls after me.

“I’ll try.” I say. I hop on the bus to be greeted with a bunch of “compliments.” Your soooo smart! Freak! Loser! Farm Girl! Pig breath! Chicken manure! It was amazing how many insulting names one could come up with.

“Cut it out!” yells the bus driver, Linda. Linda was my only friend at

school. Sure, she was in her 50's, but she was all I got, right beside Mom, Riley, and sadly, my animals. My dad was already dead. He died of a stroke when I was 6, and Riley wasn't born yet.

"Thanks." I whispered to Linda as I took my seat right behind her. She nodded in return. I could still hear people behind me, whispering insults. Ever since 2nd grade, I'd been the loser, I'm in high school now and nothing has changed.

I get off the bus and go to all my classes. Everyone calls me names, nothing new. In the last class of the day, I sit and ignore the papers being thrown at the back of my head. I listen to Mr. Kloster go on and on about The Revolutionary War. I start to drift off and then I hear the best thing in the world, the bell. Everyone rushes out of the classroom and run onto the bus. I hop on and take my seat behind Linda.

After a while, we arrive at my farm. Before I get off the bus I hear someone whisper, "Farm girl." I run to my house and I am greeted by Riley halfway to house. She tightly grips me. She looks scared.

"What is it, Riley?" I asked, worried.

"M-m-m-m-m-m-m-m," she stammers. "My teddy bear is missing! I think he's dead!"

"Well, let's get inside and look for it because it's windy out here," I say.

Mom runs in from outside and says, "Girls, get to the cellar. NOW!" She looks frantic and she is grabbing food and water from the fridge and stuffing it into a bag.



“Hailey, get a flashlight and extra batteries,” she says. “Riley, get blankets and the cat!”

We ran off in different directions. When I get back, Mom is stuffing things into the cellar. Riley returns with the cat, Ollie, and blankets. Mom throws the blankets and Ollie down into the cellar. I throw down the flashlight and batteries. I still don’t know what is going on. Mom helps Riley down the ladder mom gestures for me to follow. I climb down and land on a heap of blankets. Mom is right behind me. She locks the cellar door and climbs down. I turn on a flashlight and look out the window that is halfway underground. Ollie purrs and comforts Riley.

“What’s going on?” I ask.

“Look,” Mom says, and points toward the window.

I look again and this time, I see a very faint twister in the distance. It is slowly inching towards us and I realize the animals are still out there.

“MOM!” I say, “The animals! They’re still out there.” I lunge for the ladder, but Mom grabs me by my arm and sits me back down.

“I know they’re still out there, but where are we going to put them?” she says.

I guess she is right. We listen to the wind and hope that it does not reach our beloved farm. I look back out the window again and scream in horror. I see the horses getting swept up by the tornado and the chickens floating up. The pigs dive into the mud, but they too, get sucked up. Riley clutches me as the tornado sweeps over our house, sucking up all of our memories. The cat screeches and the wind shakes the ground.

“It’s going to be okay,” I say to myself, “everything is going to be fine.”

I wait for a moment, and then there was silence, complete silence. We wait in the cellar for a few minutes to make sure it is really gone. Then, mom climbs up the ladder and open the cellar door. Whooooohhhhh! A huge gust of wind comes in and I close my eyes. When I open them, mom is gone, and the cellar door is open and swinging. I look outside the window and see that there was another tornado that was sneaking up on us, and when mom opened the door, it pounced.

“Mom!” I screech in horror. I climb up the ladder, grip the steps tight, see the second twister, and realize, that mom is in that somewhere. I lock the cellar door and climb down the ladder.

“Where’s Mom?” Riley asks.

I didn’t know how to answer, so I ignored her. It was cold in the cellar, so I grabbed a blanket and wrapped it around me. I also put one on Riley.

“Hailey?” asked Riley. “Is Mom in... that?” she pointed at the twister.

I gulped. “We can’t know for sure.” I answered, still not knowing what to say.

“Is she dead?”

“I don’t know.”

I look out the window again and see and hear nothing. Literally nothing. It came, it left, then came again, then left. Who knew what could happen next. I decide to stay down here a little longer. Besides, where would we go anyway?

After a while the flashlight starts to flicker. I replace the old batteries with

new ones. The change almost blinds me. It's dark now, and Riley is already asleep. Since she is using three blankets, I just use the one that I already have. I go to sleep after praying for mom.

I wake up to Ollie licking my toes. Sunlight is halfway streaming through the window. I hear a faint wind. Just a small breeze. I sit up and my back pops. Riley is still sleeping, so I decide to climb the ladder and look outside. What I see is like a nightmare. The trees are either ripped from the ground and just holes remain or the trees are just lying there. There are bits of remaining wood from our house. Some of the ground has been dug up. My home was now nothing but chunks of wood and dirt. My mom was gone. My life was going to be changed forever.

“Oh my god.” says Riley from behind me.

I turn around and hug her. A tear rolls down my cheek and lands on Riley's shoulder. Ollie rubs up against my leg and comforts me. Millions of thoughts were racing through my head. Where were we going to live? What are we going to eat? We would probably live in the cellar and savor our food, but what about after that? I don't know. We walk around and find remnants of memories. I pick up a photo with shreds of glass on it. It was a picture of me when I was 11 and Riley when she was a baby. Another salty tear rolls down my cheek and splashes on the photo. We find some of the old books Dad used to read to me. Something catches my eye. It was underneath a piece of wood. I pick up the piece of wood and find Riley's teddy bear. Riley comes over and grabs her teddy bear. I

sit down and Riley joins me. We sit there in the sun. Riley hugs her teddy bear and me.

“Hailey?” says a voice from behind me. I turn around and see, no, it can't be, Mom. She was dirty, her shirt had rips and there were twigs and leaves in her knotted hair. Riley runs up to Mom and hugs her. They are both crying, and I don't realize it, but I am too. I get up and hug Mom. We don't talk, we just hug. Ollie comes over and joins the embrace. I missed Mom so much, and I thought I had lost her forever. I thought I had lost everything today. That's when I realized it, family is the most important thing in the world. Even though we had lost all of our possessions, we had each other. When I asked for a family, I got one. I got this one. Out of 2.25 billion families, I got this one. And that makes me the luckiest kid in the world. Standing there in the wreckage of our house I knew that we would be okay because we had each other and the strength of love and family is everything.

# **The Bubble**

**By: Kyla Berman**

I am sitting here, December 2, 2100 on one of the many scorching metal bleacher steps, looking out at the empty track. Its artificial red rubber worn away from many years. The arrows and lines all faded to a dole sort of dreary color. The tulle fog sitting perfectly over the turf field, like the leftover milk from your cereal at the bottom of your bowl. I turn the air conditioning up and feel the cold air wash over my face. I breathe a sigh of satisfaction.

The stadium is dead silently and dead empty. I hear my own heartbeat and feel the blood pumping through my veins. The only sound, the clack clack clack of my fingers on the keyboard slowly typing, echoing. The sounds so faint and if it wasn't for the fact I didn't have enough money to buy a new computer so I had my mom's old one I don't think you would have been able to hear it, the keys were so old.

It's a shame, the hundred thousands of dollars spent on the nice field all a waste. People would much rather play the virtual reality version or sports, or watch the latest shows while scrolling through their phone. No one ever runs. It's illegal. "Do not leave your hovercraft in any circumstance" was the number one rule. Why would you? The only time I have ever gotten off was when they had to update it. Outside of the protective bubble of the hovercraft the air was scorching hot and is increasingly getting hotter. I had thought a lot about it. Overall I came to

the conclusion that humans were just too lazy to deal with global warming. So instead we just kept making inventions to make life easier and ignoring the fact that we are killing the earth. Oh well, no one really cares no one wants to go through all the effort of trying to fix the problems we caused.

People you used to walk, even run. I've seen old pictures of races, a lot of people running to a certain line. It seemed pointless, but the track looked inviting in a way. A pathway leading nowhere. An endless loop. I need to think less, that's what my teachers always told me. "Stop questioning everything it's annoying" is what my mom told me. I stopped talking when I was seven, no one even listens anyways. I am always labeled as the odd child. The teachers told my mother I was too quiet and needed more friends. She was always disappointed, she wanted me to fit in. I think it was because she never did and she was reminded of it every day by the long thin scars running down her face. She never talks about them but I overheard her say something about them once.

I slowly stood and rolled down to the track. I bent down almost as if I could touch the track but of course, the extra protective hard glass-plastic bubble protecting me from the world stopped me. The bubble was so clear that sometimes you almost forgot about it. I tried to wedge my pale skinny fingers through the filter that took the pollution out of the air. Crack. The filter pushed out of place. Panic filled my body. The hot air filled the bubble beads of sweat dripped down my face and neck. The alarm was blaring. I couldn't think.

I climbed out the small hole of my now disabled hovercraft. All I wanted to do is escape the loud piercing alarm. My head was throbbing. I was standing on

the track. I looked down the white painted line. I wanted to walk it, I needed to. I knew how to walk of course from the training everyone took when they were one. My stick like pale legs wobbled and I held my arms out for balance. I picked up my head and came to my senses. The air burned in my lungs the fog was more of smog than fog. I looked down the white line, guiding me. I started to run.

My heart pounded through my whole body. My eyes stung from the toxic air. I lost my balance. My knee shredded against the polyurethane track. The pain was something I had never experienced before. No words could describe it. I couldn't give in. Only did it really sting once I had started running again. The blood dripped down my shin making lines across my leg as I ran. I wiped the tears in my eyes away. I heard the siren of the police coming, the alarm of the hovercraft most have notified them. The siren got louder.

The white line was a blur. My lungs burned. I gasped for air but couldn't suck in enough. I choked. I was drowning. My head kept throbbing. I shake unstable, drenched in sweat. I fell past the line marking my one lap. The world spun, faces looked down at me, the sirens blared, and everything went quiet.

My eyes fluttered open. The instant smell of hand sanitizer and bleach filled my nose. I was in a big bubble room, the hospital. Everything rushed back to me in an instant. It still felt as though needles were piercing through my head. I heard a familiar voice. My mother rolled through the door on her hovercraft. The airtight door made a loud whoosh as it sealed again.

“Annabelle! What the hell!?!” my mom screeches a look of distaste on her face.

“I m...I’m sorry,” I whisper my voice shaky.

“You have a rock for a brain. You have always been odd but. But THIS?!” the disappointment and rage clear in her voice.

“I didn’t mean...” I start but Mother cuts me off.

“Stop. Don’t waste your breath,” she snaps at me.

She turns, glances at the nurse and nods. I blink the nurse is standing over me the needle glimmering in the light.

\* \* \*

Bright. So bright. I squint against the sun. I am laying in a meadow. My mom leans over me.

“Ah, honey you’re awake, come join the picnic.”

I sit up. There bees and butterflies all around the vibrant flowers. People are scattered across the meadow sitting on patched blankets eating. A small river flows through the meadow and kids are splashing in the water. The sound of laughter fills my ears. The sky is blue speckled with white cumulus clouds. The air smells of sweet perfume. A slight wind blows rustling the grass. My mom offers me her hand.

“Come.”

I take it.

\* \* \*

“I think the virtual reality is really helping her,” the nurse says glancing down at Annabelle’s flushed face.

“..Yeah, I just hope it keeps her alive.”



# **The Downfall**

**By: Skye Mars**

I always knew I wasn't my parents' idea of "normal". I was born Paige Nelson on November 20, 2000 at 12am in Portland Oregon. On my 12<sup>th</sup> birthday my mom finally let me cut my hair short; she always told me that if I cut my hair I would look like a boy. She was right, but what she didn't know is that's what I wanted. We walked into the salon and my mom told the lady what I wanted. The lady took me to a sink rinsed my hair, at me down in a chair then started cutting. An hour later she was finally done. I got up and looked in the mirror and all of a sudden I felt all the weight lifted off my shoulders, and I felt like I could finally breathe. We went home and I couldn't stop smiling. I felt so happy. For the first time I felt like me. I started wearing boys clothes and my mom started noticing. She sat me down one day and she looked into my eyes and started off by saying:

"It's not normal for a girl to wear boys clothes...I'm worried about you."

"I feel comfortable when I wear boy clothes," I replied.

"Are you okay?" she said.

"I don't know," I said.

I got up and left. I didn't go home that night. I just wanted to be alone...The next morning my back hurt from sleeping on the park bench. I got up slowly and started to walk home. I finally got there after an hour of walking. I walked into my mom's room and looked at her.

“I’m sorry for leaving.”

She said nothing, so I went to my room and fell asleep right away. When I got up my mom was sitting in my room waiting for me to wake up to talk to me. I sat up in my bed and looked at her.

“Mom...”

“You shouldn’t have left like that,” she replied.

“I know I’m sorry, but I have to tell you something...”

“What is it?”

“I think that I was born in the wrong body...” I told her

“What do you mean?” she replied

“I was meant to be a boy not a girl...”

“You can’t just say you’re a boy and that’s that; you were born a girl and you have to stay a girl. It’s wrong to change your gender. You should love yourself the way you are.”

“That’s the problem, Mom, how am I supposed to love myself when I feel like I’m trapped in my own body?”

“Fine, do what you want, but you’re not doing it in this house. If you’re gonna be an idiot and pretend to be something you’re not I will not support you and you may not live under my roof.”

“Fine then I guess I’m leaving”

I got up and went to my room and started packing my clothes and the things I cared about. I couldn’t believe that my own mother would kick me out of the house just because I wanted to be myself. I felt betrayed and hurt, and I just

wanted to curl up in a ball and forget this ever happened but I couldn't just forget how she treated me. She is supposed to take care of me and make sure I'm okay, but she did the opposite. She threw me out and forgot about me just because I wanted to be myself. I had nowhere to go and no one to turn to.

I left the house as soon as I finished packing my clothes. I walked for what felt like hours. I didn't know where to go or what to do, I couldn't stop crying. It started to get dark and I knew I had to find somewhere to rest. My back hurt so much from carrying my stuff that I could feel it in my feet. I sat down on the ground, looked up at the sky and I could feel myself letting go of the little bit of my sanity that I was hanging on to, all I could think about was my mom and how much I missed her and wished she would accept me but I knew it would never happen, all I could do is hope. I got up and started walking to my best friend Jordan's house. I planned on telling her that I was a boy but I didn't know how she would react so I was scared. As I got closer I couldn't stop thinking about all of the things she would or could say. I got there after a long time of walking and thinking, as I walked up to the door I felt sick to my stomach. I walked up to the door and banged on the door, I heard small footsteps walking up to the door. The door flung open and I looked down to see her 6-year-old little sister Maya. She looked up at me with her big blue eyes and invited me in. I walked in the house and sat in the living room and waiting for Maya to get Jordan from upstairs. As I waited I felt my stomach churn. I heard footsteps walk down the stairs and I got up, ran to the bathroom and threw up. Jordan walked up behind me and asked if I was okay. I got up from the ground looked at her in the eyes and said:

“I’m a boy”

“I know, I always have.”

She gave me a big hug and I felt so much relief and for once in my life I really felt safe. I didn’t want to ask her if I could stay with her but I had nowhere else to go.

“I told my mom and she told me that I was being an idiot and kicked me out”

“I’m so sorry. Do you have anywhere to go?” she replied

“That’s what I wanted to ask you....” I told her

“You can stay here for a while as long as it’s okay with my mom” she said.

She walked into her mom’s room and talked for what seemed like hours. Finally I heard her walk into the room. She looked at me and said:

“You can’t stay here”

“Why?” I said

“My mom says that she agrees with your mom and that you are a girl and will always be one. She won’t let you stay here. I’m sorry.” She said.

I looked at her and started crying. I felt like I couldn’t breathe. I didn’t feel safe anymore. I got up off the couch and ran out the door. I walked around town feeling hopeless. I walked by a gas station and on one of the posters on the window was talking about bus tickets and I got an idea. I ran to the nearest bus station and bought a ticket to Santa Cruz. I slept at the bus station and the next morning I woke up and got on the bus. I felt horrible from sleeping on the ground

and I hadn't eaten anything for 2 days. I sat down in the very back of the bus and fell asleep. When I woke up the bus had stopped. I sat up in my seat and looked out the window to see a beach and people everywhere. I got off the bus and started walking, I didn't know where I was going but I just kept walking. I didn't know what to do with my life. I couldn't stop thinking about my mom and Jordan, but I had to put them out of my mind, I had to start a new life. I was 13 and living on the streets of Santa Cruz. I didn't know what to do. I had no one. Nothing but my clothes. I was alone.

*This story is based on the reality that a lot of transgender youths go through. I personally identify as non-binary but I am lucky enough to have a family that supports me.*

# Escape From Pluto

By: Maggie O'Dell

A loud, urgent alarm went off in the sleeping room, and I was jolted awake. My best friend, W91, who had been sleeping in the cot next to me, sat up only to bump her head on the person laying in the hammock above her, “What’s going on, V45?” she groaned. I replied, a bit distracted, “I don’t know.” We quickly changed into our dull green uniforms and rushed out the opening door along with the other space agents. As we ran down the hallway, I looked out the thick paned windows of the spacecraft and didn’t see anything wrong with the starry world around us so I assumed there was something wrong with the engine. A deafening tweet of a whistle caused us to hurry into our positions.

“Our journey to planet X was cut short due to engine failure.” Announced Captain Tanhal in his usual strict tone, “We will need to emergency crash land on Pluto, enemy territory. If you survive, look for and find their space crafts then get back to Mars. Make sure to stay out of sight. You know what will happen if they catch you.” For the first time I saw emotion in his eyes as he looked over the green sea of frightened agents for the last time, “Letters A through J go to the south exit, the rest of you head to the north.”

I listened to the breathing of W91 huddled next to me and the breathing of the other fifty agents bracing for impact. *Just get out of the door before the spacecraft explodes*, I thought. The ship was now jolting violently so I looked out

of the window and saw the gigantic buildings on Pluto getting closer and closer. About thirty seconds later I heard the sound of metal on concrete. Then everything went black.

My eyes slowly started to open and I saw something that looked like a blurry W91 pulling me up on my feet. I shook myself awake and helped her gather up a few more people before sprinting out the door. We didn't stop running until we were at the very end of the mostly empty parking lot. Our small group agents leapt behind a cluster of decorative boulders and laid on the floor with our hands over our heads. A second later the spacecraft exploded sending chunks of metal over our heads along with fire hot air blowing at our ears. There was silence. It had to be more than two whole minutes before the ringing ceased in my ears and I heard the other survivors stand up. Immediately I noticed a man lying on the ground that I recognized as T12. There was blood leaking from his head and a shiny, bloody piece of metal was lying nearby. I checked his pulse.

Nothing.

We turned around to see what's left of the spacecraft. We were the only five survivors. An angry shout echoed through the parking lot. I turned around to see a pair of Plutions, their yellow-brown mutated oversized heads gave me chills. A sizzling sound caught my attention and the smell of burning flesh made me gag. The two agents next to me were on fire, M60 and Q89. I had forgotten Plutions can catch things on fire with only their sharp glare! The remaining three of us ran as fast as we could to a nearby alley, the horrid creatures after us. They are very slow runners so we made it to the alley but I could see the busy streets of the city

at the end of the alley. The Plutions would soon be here. I stepped on something that made a loud CLANG! Below me was what seemed to be a sewage manhole. “Come on, this is our only way out.” I whispered as I began to open the round trapdoor. W91 and T62 nodded and climbed down after me. The putrid smell was unbearable so I covered my mouth with a handkerchief, but it *still* smelled terrible. The Plutions must have seen us go underground because one of them said, “Never mind. The rats will get them anyway.”

The tunnel seemed endless; twisting and turning and leading nowhere until we found another manhole that seemed quiet above. I pushed it open with a stick and W91 helped me climb out into blinding daylight. Peering into the darkness of the hole, I pulled W91 out next and the only one left was L34, the third survivor. As I reached down we heard a threatening sound of thunder, it was footsteps of something large down in the sewage. Then there was a flash of gray fur and gleaming white teeth as L34 was ripped from my grasp! A scream of agony echoed in the tunnel with only the sound of the creature scurrying away. Standing up, shocked, I looked around to see a sign. “The spacecrafts!” I exclaimed, extremely relieved, “We made it!”

Twenty minutes later, in a stolen Plution spaceship we were nearing the edge of Pluto’s atmosphere nearing the speed of light. Never again would I go on another mission; my time here has ended as an agent. Both W91 and I were glad to soon be home.



# To Bee or Not to Bee?

**By: Mathias Severn**

I first realized my talent when I was only eight years old. I was always a bookworm when I was younger. I would spend most of my time poring over books, reading and rereading novels that adults said I couldn't understand.

“You are too young...” they would say, but never in a hurtful way, always kindly trying to ‘help’ me. My parents never saw me as the prodigy that I was; I was always their beautiful, baby boy. They learned how wrong they were to not see the reason behind my seclusion when I found out what a spelling bee was. I was only eight, but I was able to impress my teachers enough with my knowledge that they let me enter the spelling bee a year before I should have. As a third grader against students two, three, and even four years older than me, I wiped the competition, finishing the last round with the word ‘vaccine.’ I don’t know why, but spelling came as easily to me as talking. Maybe it was from my incredible vocabulary that I attained from reading so many novels, or possibly I just got the luck of the draw and just had a natural ability.

When I ended up losing (because yes, I did lose *that* year), the blow crushed me. When I remember it, the memory is crystal clear, and my failure would be the fuel for my train of success later on. I made it all the way to regionals, passing the district and the county levels. The competition was held in Sacramento, and there were 116 different competitors, two per county. Coming from Eureka, California to

Sacramento was quite a shock for me. Sacramento had a population twenty times larger, and I had never been to a big city. I pulled up to the colossal auditorium. It was an architectural masterpiece that was made entirely of metal and tinted glass, and to me, it looked twice the size that it probably was. One of the doors was open to the back end of the stage. I don't remember the preparation very well; it all seemed to pass in a blur. The next thing I knew, my name was called and I was walking across the stage to my chair. I was a small kid, with scraggly blond hair and crooked glasses, and the audience looked like an army to me, ready to shoot me down with heckling at my first mistake. (They were surely all very kind people, but keep in mind I was only eight years of age, and that is what I saw.)

There had to be hundreds of people staring at me, but with the blinding light glaring into my face from above, all that I saw were silhouettes. There was a podium sitting on the platform, front and center, and I didn't see it as it actually was for a few seconds. It was up to my shoulders! The lines of chairs were in perfect, even rows, and there were a lot of them, too. There were 106 contestants, two from each county in California. So many competitors. The words would progressively get more difficult as the competition went on, but not difficult like your normal spelling bee. These words were words that most people had never heard. It started out easy for me; I got the word archetype. "Archetype." I squeaked. "A...R...C...H...E...T...Y...PE! Archetype." I sped up a little at the end. My heart was pounding and I was sweating waterfalls. The old, balding judge peered down his wire-rimmed glasses from the side of the stage at his rule book, then averted his gaze back to me and croaked out...

“**CORRECT**”. I stumbled back to my seat and slumped down in my chair. The rounds progressed, and the words got more difficult. I got the word camouflage, then isthmus, then kaleidoscope. The fifth time that I came up, I got the word reconnaissance. I started out strong with the first four letters, but this was a word I had seen very few times before. I made a simple mistake that would haunt me for years. I spelled reconnaissance with only one N. This was not the last time that I would hear the ding of the bell. The judge droned off in a monotone, “Incorrect. Thank you for participating in the Scripps Regional Spelling Bee.” I got 71st, that first year. Not even the top 50.

It took me three more years to reach the national spelling bee, and two years after that to get back to it. I heard that ding so many times that I grew to hate it. My grades, which used to be straight A's, dropped down to Bs and Cs. Studying consumed all of my time. I didn't just want to make it to nationals anymore, I wanted to win. I wanted to be the best speller in the United States. There were many obstacles along the way: people who doubted that I would have any success, people who tried to blackmail me with money, and people who called me a loser, a nerd, a failure. I persevered time after time again. I ignored the public.

There was a \$40,000 prize pool for the winner from Scripps, with an added \$2,500 from Merriam-Webster. Nowadays, all anyone thinks about is money. If someone is motivated towards something, then all the public wonders is how much money do they get for it? Money was never too much of a concern for me. My parents were not poor, and they were not spendy people either. No, I

wanted the glory of being able to know that I was the best at something. I yearned for that glory, was hungry for it.

When I was 14, I had been studying for six years... without success. I made it to the grand championships in DC for the third time of my life. The first time I got 63rd, the second I made it all the way to 18th. This was the second year in a row that I had made it this far, and I was prepared. By this time, I was accustomed to the brilliant, blaring, bright lights that shone down from the ceiling. I was accustomed to the crowd of hundreds. I was accustomed to the pressure and the nerves. I sat down in my seat, and waited... and waited... and waited. After an eternity of patience, the first round began. I got word after word, from *metastasize* to *weimaraner*. I made it to the final 10, then 5, then 3. The first person walked up to the podium.

“*Scherenschnitte*” The judge boomed out. I saw the contestant take a sharp intake of breath. I had no idea what the word was, and it seemed that neither did she. She got every single letter perfectly, up until the final ones.

“...I...T...E” She said with uncertainty, looking as if she would rather be anywhere else.

The ding of the bell must have been so painful, but she wasn't out yet. If both me and the other contestant got our words incorrect, she would still be in. I was up.

“*Marocain*” This time I knew it for sure! I spelled the word perfectly, and only felt bad for a split second as I saw the first contestant let her breath out as she

realized she had lost, saw her lower lip tremble a little as she held back tears. The next contestant went up to the podium.

“Feuilleton” ...his demeanor went grim. “F...E...U...I...L...L...I...T...O...N.”

I only remember a few moments from the minutes that followed. The ding of the bell. The roar of the crowd. Then there was applause, the lights came on, the judge walked up to me with a trophy. “Congratulations!” the man said, his old, weather beaten hands held the trophy that was now mine. “You are the 2018 national spelling bee champion!” I couldn’t believe it. All of my hard work had actually payed off! I had done it! I had won! I could feel this ridiculous grin coming onto my face as the trophy was thrust into my hands. My parents came onto the stage and wrapped me in a bear hug that smothered me and completely embarrassed me.

That drive back was the best one of my life, and as I was in the car I realized how lucky I was to have had that opportunity. I had always loved writing, and the title of spelling bee champion would help me achieve my future as a writer. I got lucky for that competition; it was the situation that I had always dreamed of where I knew every single word that I got. One thing that I learned was that if I worked supremely hard for a long period of time, then I could achieve nearly anything that I wanted to. This was, and currently is, something that I will keep in mind for the rest of my life. That is how I became the best speller in the United States of America.

# Meatacado Eater

**By: Campbell Ashby**

I am Carrot Man. I'm currently waiting in the front seat of a nice white van I hopped into. Shouldn't the driver be back by now? Suddenly, there is a loud scream, almost blood curdling. *Oooh this car has a good radio* I think as I reach forward and crank it up as loud as possible. It immediately blasts the words "It's getting hot in here, so take off all your clothes." Naturally I move my head to the beat and start playing air guitar.

\*wibble wobble wibble wobble\*

I look up at the big white and blue sign, noting how big this place is. I walk up to the large automatic doors and walk into the gross smelling lobby. Looking around, I see some empty black chairs and a really nice looking woman behind a counter. Hopefully she can help me find my soulmate, maybe a zucchini... or a dog! Oh my gosh how do I even approach her? She's just staring at me with her beautiful... red... eyes? Okay, maybe I should go find the wiz palace. Walking down the undecorated white hallways, I realize how much of a maze this place really is. I don't have any idea how to find the wiz palace, if only I could read these signs...Great, thinking of all these zucchinis is making me really need to pee. I stop and rotate a 371-degree circle and notice a very large dog staring at me. I slowly creep towards him, shuffling my feet to the beat of hot cross buns. Reaching my hand out, I carefully stroke his head... wow he's so

soft. Okay, maybe I should stop before I steal him. I turn around and start walking towards the direction in which I hope is the wiz palace. I continue walking for a few minutes before finally, the wiz palace. I open the right door and start to walk in but my head hits the door frame. Gahh, that really hurts. I reach up and feel my upper face in case any carrot juice has started leaking. Luckily there isn't any leaks but my upper face is now a bit indented. I put my round orange hand upon my nose and plug it, blowing out as much air as I can, my forehead popping back into place.

I turn back towards the wiz palace and bend down to enter, closing and locking the door behind me. I enter the handicapped stall and sit down on the toilet, opening my poop flap. I allow myself to be rid of whatever I consumed off the road today. I hear something creeeeek... Are there kittens in the pipes? Suddenly, I'm on the floor with water splashing my head from behind. I quickly jump up in surprise and start hopping from one foot to the other. What do I do? What do I do? I stand there staring at the toilet that is now detached from the wall, and then it came to me! I needed a plunger, and fast.

I dash out of the wiz palace and run around frantically opening random doors until I find a human lifeform. Finally I open a door that leads to a white room with two humans, one being a tall sexy male and the other being a young pretty girl. They look like they were in the middle of something, but I can assure them that my problem is far more important. They look up at me expecting me to say something. Well that's awkward. I really wish I knew how to talk right now, but instead of even trying, I motion my vegetable arms in the action of a plunger.

The girl looks like she understands and says “a plunger?” Yes! I nod my head furiously as the doctor gets up and retrieves it for me. I smile as big as I can and take the plunger and leave the room. Oh man, I can't remember where the wiz palace is. As I turn the corner I see large puddle of water surrounding a door. Wow this place is so messy I think as I carefully walk past it. Continuing my search, I toss the plunger back and forth between my hands. What was I doing again? Oops... I shrug my shoulders and put the plunger on the top of my carrot head so I won't have to hold it anymore.

I look around at my surroundings and realize I'm back in the lobby. I should leave before I get lost again I tell myself. Walking out of the familiar automatic doors, I realize I don't have a family or anywhere to go. Instead of thinking about that, I sit down on the red curb and start singing the friendship song. “Make new friends but keep the old. One is silver and the other's gold.” I hear someone clear their throat next to me and I jump up and ready myself in what I hope is a karate position. She sits down next to where I'm standing and asks, “What are you doing? Is anyone coming to pick you up?” I didn't know what to say or how to do it so I just stick my thumb out. I'm hoping she will get the idea that I'm bored and want to thumb wrestle. She stands up and motions for me to come with her. Well, I guess she didn't like to play in public, so I skip after her as she starts walking away.

We continue walking as I keep holding my thumb out, hoping she will eventually get the message. She doesn't seem to pay me any attention though, maybe she doesn't like me. Deep in thoughts of thumb wrestling and her not liking



me, I look up to realize that the pretty girl is no longer in sight. How do I always manage to lose things? I look to my left and see a white van with a very large dog in the driver's seat. Hey, I know that dog! The dog motions for me to get in so I open the passenger's door and sit down upon the nice black leather seats. I look up and stare at the dog and wait for him to start driving wherever he was going, but he just sits there looking outside, possibly at the other dog across the street. After a while of staring at whatever he is staring at, he opens the door and leaves me all alone. Uhh okay. Not knowing what to do, I sit there thumb wrestling myself, the score becoming 21-22.

I notice that some time has passed and I rest my hands in my lap so that my thumbs can rest. Suddenly there is a loud feminine scream outside. That's weird. I look around the car and my eyes are drawn to the massive, button covered radio. I reach forward and turn it on, cranking it up to maximum volume. The familiar words "It's getting hot in here, so take off all your clothes" floats through the air. My signature head bob and air guitar take control of my body. As the song ends, I snap out of my reverie and decide it's time for a nap. I slowly pick myself up from the comfy chair and head to the chair less backseat. I grab one of the blotched red towels from the corner and curl up in a ball and fall asleep.

I wake up dazed and confused as to where I am, it definitely looks darker than when I fell asleep. I open the back doors and jump out onto the warm sand. Toasty... I look around and immediately notice the ocean with a beautiful mango colored sunset above it. I move towards the sunset as if it is calling to me and not until my toes are touching the water did I notice the dog and doctor from earlier.

They both look quite upset, almost as if they feel guilty for eating a carrot. I slowly walk over in hopes of not scaring them and sit down next to the doctor. I look up and notice a tear fall down his beautiful face and right into my eye. Oh no, does this mean I'm crying now? I reach my carrot hand up to the doctor and grab a hold of his flesh colored hand. I put my head down, realizing I never found my soulmate, and the last thing I hear as a real carrot juice tear falls from my face is a loud animalistic howl and a small voice in my head saying *you suck*.

# Reasons

**By: Jewel Blanchard**

I sat in the window of the coffee shop as if it were a normal day. I stared blankly at my reflection, focused on everything but the thing I could not think about. The shop was empty, save the man who sat alone—like usual. But today the scent of coffee tugged on a half-remembered memory. I recalled the scene vividly. I was young. My mother braided my hair at the kitchen table

*“When you were little, what did you wanna be when you grew up? I kicked my legs under the table, bumping her steaming mug on the tabletop sideways.*

*“A doctor,” she replied, yanking at my hair. I winced, but didn’t protest.*

*“And you did become a doctor,” I pronounced, tracing the mug with a finger.*

*“Nurse,” she corrected, tying off the ends of the plait.*

*“What’s the difference?”*

*“Doctors were men. Nurses were women. And it took a hell of a lot of fuss to change it.”*

*“But why—“*

*My mother interrupted me as she held the mug in knotted hands. “I wanted to be a doctor, but it couldn’t happen.” Her eyes bored into me. “That’s important, Clarisse. You can’t have everything. Accept it and move on.”*

A loud scraping noise broke the recollection. The man who sat alone stood up and looked across at me. I broke eye contact hastily, but he was already walking over.

“I see you at this seat every day,” He grinned, “and we’ve never talked.”

“Oh,” I said, fumbling for words. “Yeah, I’ve seen you too...”

“Look, I’m not very good at this,” the man overcompensated, “but I was wondering if you’d like to go out with me sometime.”

I toyed with the sleeve of my cardigan. “I’m flattered,” I said without faltering, “But I’m not interested in dating right now...” When I glanced back, his eyes were fixed on my arm. Without looking, I yanked my sleeve past my wrist, hiding the angry marks I’d uncovered.

“I’m sorry,” he shrugged. “I just see you at this seat every day. Forget it.” He stayed beside me as I finished my tea, smiling amicably. “It was nice to finally talk. I’m Henry by the way.” We stood up to leave.

“Clarisse,” I smiled. “I guess I’ll see you here tomorrow.” I walked down the street, suddenly uncomfortable in my daily routine. I glimpsed Henry trudge off in the opposite direction. I almost called after him, invited him to walk with me. Almost. My attention was caught by a flyer advertising the Farmer’s Market in the park. Seeing it, I strode with purpose.

I spent my walk concentrating on the sound of my heels against the pavement. The sun was low as I heard the first strains of music. I hummed a few bars of the familiar song under my breath. As I rounded a corner, the park was

before me, strung with soft lights, crammed with carts and people, and full of tantalizing scents.

“Twice in a day!” I jumped, recognizing the voice of the man who sat alone. He was also approaching the park entrance, from the opposite end of the block.

“I guess so,” I answered warily. “How did you know I’d be here?”

“I didn’t. I come every Friday,” he paused, then “Care to walk with me?”

I followed him into the buzzing crowd. It wasn’t much of a Farmer’s Market, really. Mostly food vendors serving steaming tamales and spicy noodles. Parents chased after their children, pleased with their contributions to the world. A band played, surrounded by dancers. People sat all around—on benches, fountains, and grass. They ate, sang, and enjoyed each other’s company. It was the kind of scenery that makes you sad for little reason. For once, I had a reason.

“Pad Thai!” I pointed, but Henry didn’t hear my hopeful observation.

“Curry?” he suggested. I nodded and we stopped at the line. “Is that alright?”

“Yeah,” Curry was alright. AS we received our fragrant orders, my stomach lurched.

It was hard to pick Henry out of the crowd in his dark coat as we searched for a seat. Strangers swirled: grandmothers, mothers, and their daughters who would become mothers. Sons of mothers, sitting with the mothers of their children. Suddenly, I was alone and holding a hot tray of curry. I spun around, calling out for my companion. The speakers were deafening, and on top of that,

everyone was shouting. The familiar, numbing panic began to spread through me. *What are you doing, Why are you doing this, You shouldn't be running, Remember last time you ran?* Empty faces, immune to my frenzy, jostled past me. I ran into a woman, spilling my meal all over her shirt. She looked at me out of my mother's eyes. I jumped back, reassuring myself it wasn't her. I muttered apologies as my head screamed at me, *Run, now, run, RUN!*

"Clarisse!" I darted to the voice, smacking into Henry. Seeing the panic in my eyes, he lifted his curry out of the way and wrapped his other arm around me. I hid my face in his shirt, sobs wracking my body. We stood like that for a few minutes, until I collected myself.

"Your curry's getting cold," I said at last, voice muffled.

We split the rice ravenously, watching as people danced a few feet away.

"Want me to call you a cab?" he asked. "My brother got panic attacks all the time."

"I'm fine," I lied.

"So," he said, "how's your first Farmer's Market? Aside from, you know..."

"Way better than the Hospital," I ignored the impulse to avoid his questioning look. I couldn't keep distracting myself. "It was my Mom. She, uh, had a stroke this morning."

"Oh, my God!" His face contorted into a clichéd look of sympathy.

"I think she's fine," I interjected quickly. "The doctors said she was in stable condition."

“You think?”

“We didn’t talk much. I got the call during work, and I ran down to the hospital, of course.” I remembered the eerie fluorescent lights, the sinister beeping. The pit of dread in my gut at the thought that I wouldn’t get the chance to make things right. “My mom and I never quite got along,” I explained. “Last time I’d seen her was six years ago.” I took a breath. “But she didn’t even know they called me. I ran into her room and there’s no ‘Thank God you’re here’ or ‘Claire, I missed you. I love you.’” I winced at the sting in my throat. “Six years and this woman says ‘Get her out of here.’ So I got out.” I sighed. “Shouldn’t have, but I did.”

“Why didn’t you stay, then?” Henry picked at the grass.

“It was so hard to walk in there,” I couldn’t stop my words. “all she ever did was use me...” I realized I was tracing the old scars on my forearm with a thumb, “I just was hoping we’d end up fixing things, you know?”

“My mom’s pretty controlling,” Henry said, “all in the name of looking out for me. But she did show me how to stick up for myself.” He looked at me. “Go. Stick up for yourself.”

“But she told me to leave.” I thought of my mother’s now-internalized lessons of defeat as I made the excuse.

“Don’t do it for her.” Henry’s words hung between us. I looked at the musicians. At little girls dancing. I recalled a second memory, happier this time. It must have been Kindergarten: Mom and I danced together. I forgot the tight braids and scars. I ignored the bitterness and manipulation. She was my mother. I loved her. She had taught me something after all-how to be a better woman than her.

“Where are you going?” asked Henry as I stood up with resolve.

“I’m going back to the hospital,” I replied, “but first I’m going to dance.”

The ground was bathed in amber light, and it vibrated with the bass.

There were more people packed together than on the green, but the atmosphere was freer. I began to move my hops, letting myself get lost in the melody. When I felt a hand on my back, I knew it was Henry, and I melted into him. Neither of us were great, but together, we were slightly less terrible. We shouted with the songs we knew and swayed to the songs we didn’t. I tied my cardigan around my waist, letting my hair brush against the scars that I was so ashamed of.

I don’t know how much time we spent like that, the stranger and I, before my phone rang.

I fished it out. An unknown number. Feeling a familiar dread, I fled the dance floor, dragging Henry by the hand. I waited to answer until I could hear, tearing towards the street.

“HELLO?”

“Miss Adams?” asked a chillingly calm woman.

“Th-this is she.”

“Miss Adams, I am sorry to inform you that you mother is dead.”

“What do—the doctors said she was in stable condition!”

“She was, but there were complications.”

“I was on my way there,” I faltered, “I wanted to tell her how sorry I am.”

“She said the same thing.”