



2021

**YOUNG
AUTHORS
AWARDS**

**PRIX JEUNES
ÉCRIVAINS**

ONTARIO ENGLISH
**Catholic
Teachers**
ASSOCIATION



Young Authors Awards

2021

PREFACE

Congratulations, Young Authors!

This collection is a celebration of the literary talents and accomplishments of the provincial winners of the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association's 2021 Young Authors Awards/Prix des Jeunes Écrivains.

We applaud all of our winners as well as the thousands of students across the province who participated in the classroom, school and unit levels of the awards program. The insightful works crafted by these young authors remind us that the great Canadian writers of the future are presently in our classrooms.

The enthusiasm and dedication of every student and supporter ensures that the Young Authors Awards/Prix Jeunes Écrivains program continues to grow and improve with each year. We deeply appreciate the commitment of our wonderful teachers, whose inspiration and encouragement provide students with the opportunity to empower themselves through this competition experience.

The Young Authors Awards/Prix Jeunes Écrivains program would not be possible without the hard work of many OECTA members across the province. Teachers, OECTA School Association Representatives, Unit Presidents and Unit Executive members all play critical roles in directing the program in their respective classrooms, schools and units. Members contribute their talent, time and effort to preserve the spirit and continued success of the awards. Together, we honour the outstanding work of our teachers and students.

We cannot overstate the value of the contributions of all the dedicated members of the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association, who ensure that this program flourishes each year for the benefit of our students.

Thank you, and keep on writing!

Susan Perry
Professional Development Department
Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association

Félicitations aux Jeunes écrivains!

Ce recueil a pour but de célébrer les talents littéraires et les accomplissements des gagnants à l'échelle provinciale de Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association's 2021 Young Authors Awards/Prix des Jeunes écrivains de l'édition 2021.

Nous félicitons tous nos gagnants mais aussi tous ces milliers d'élèves de la province qui ont participé en classe, à l'école et au niveau des unités du programme des Prix. Le travail remarquable de ces jeunes auteurs nous rappelle que les futurs grands écrivains Canadiens sont actuellement dans nos classes.

L'enthousiasme et la détermination de chaque élève et leur soutien garantissent la poursuite du développement et de l'amélioration chaque année, du Programme Young Authors Awards/Prix des Jeunes Écrivains. Nous apprécions énormément l'engagement de nos enseignants remarquables, dont l'inspiration et l'encouragement donnent aux élèves, l'opportunité de s'engager dans l'expérience de cette compétition.

Le programme Young Authors Awards/Prix des Jeunes Écrivains n'aurait été possible sans le dur labeur des nombreux membres de l'OECTA de toute la province. Les enseignants, les représentants de l'Association OECTA dans les écoles, les présidents des unités et les membres exécutifs de ces unités, jouent un rôle critique en menant le programme dans leur classe respective, dans les écoles et dans les unités. Les membres mettent à profit leur compétence, leur temps et leur effort afin de préserver l'esprit et la réussite continue de ces Prix. Ensemble, nous honorons l'excellent travail de nos enseignants et de nos élèves.

Nous n'exagérons en rien la valeur des contributions des membres dévoués de l'Association des Enseignants Catholiques Anglophones de l'Ontario, qui veillent chaque année à l'épanouissement de ce programme au bénéfice de nos élèves.

Merci, et continuez d'écrire!

Susan Perry
Professional Development Department
Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association

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Elephant Looks for a Home



SCHOOL: St. Anne
TEACHER: Amy Tuka
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Mary Diemert
UNIT: Waterloo
UNIT PRESIDENT: Patrick Etmanski

JUNIOR AND SENIOR KINDERGARTEN / SHORT STORY
by John Joseph Soikie

Elephant sees a nest.
This is not my home.

Elephant sees a mailbox.
This is not my home either.

Nearby there was a doghouse.
This is not my home.

Elephant looks at the ant hill.
This is not my home either.

Look! There is my home.

I am home.
I am happy.

The end.



Guess How Much I Love You



SCHOOL: St. Jude
TEACHER: Angela DeSario
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Angela DeSario
UNIT: Dufferin–Peel Elementary
UNIT PRESIDENT: Sandra Vukosich

JUNIOR AND SENIOR KINDERGARTEN / POEM
by Emma Chiu

I love mommy and daddy for who they are.

I love mommy the way she is.
I love daddy the way he is.

I love daddy the way he tickles me.
I love mommy the way she kisses me.

I love daddy because I ride on his back.
I love mommy because she plays with me.

I love daddy the way he holds me.
I love mommy for hugging me all the time.

I love mommy the size of a polar bear.
I love daddy the size of a bear.
Because they are both big.



I Love My Family



SCHOOL: St. Jude
TEACHER: Luiza Dowling
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Angela DeSario
UNIT: Dufferin–Peel Elementary
UNIT PRESIDENT: Sandra Vukosich

JUNIOR AND SENIOR KINDERGARTEN / NONFICTION
by Francis Alexander Paat

I love my mommy because she gives me gummies after I eat, and she kisses me.
I love my mommy because she plays with me when she is done work.
I love my mommy because she makes breakfast for me.

I love my daddy because he makes pickable eggs for me.
I love my daddy because he hugs me and kisses me when he gets home.
I love my daddy because even when it's too late, he brings me and Anie upstairs to play!

I love my sister because she plays with me.
I love my sister because she hugs me when I cry and asks if I'm OK.

I love Nono and Nona because they take care of me when mommy and daddy are not home.

I love my whole family!



The Beach Cats' Adventures



SCHOOL: St. Anne Catholic Academy
TEACHER: Ana Vaccaro
UNIT: Toronto Elementary
UNIT PRESIDENT: Julie Altomare-DiNunzio

GRADES 1-2 / SHORT STORY
by Pippa Beth Mitchison

On a hot sunny day, Pretty and her pals laid out on the porch. The warm breeze gently blew their whiskers, tickling their furry cheeks. This was a usual start to the day for the Beach Cats. Pretty and her pals, Stripes, Tails and Cotton love living in Hawaii with their human. Pretty has white fur, kinda large and super fluffy. Stripes has bright orange fur, with stripes of course, and green eyes. Tails is brown and tan colour, with a long tail. Cotton looks like a cotton ball. She is puffy, grey, and has a beautiful smile.

On this day, Pretty said, “Hey cats, let’s have a beach day!!!” Cotton sat up quickly and said, “I LOVE BEACH DAYS!!!” But Tails and Stripes wanted to go for a walk on the boardwalk. Stripes said, “I don’t want to get my paws dirty in the sand today, I got my nails done last week, see?” So Pretty and Cotton headed to the beach, and Tails and Stripes headed to the boardwalk in the other direction. On their way to the boardwalk, Tails smelled his favourite snack, Super Hawaiian Treats, sticky buns with pineapple glaze. He could not resist the sweet smell and he ran quickly towards it. Stripes yelled, “WAIT FOR ME!!!”

The two cats ran for a long time and found themselves behind a large, colourful building. After an hour Tails and Stripes realized that they were lost. Tails said, “It looks like my nose got us in trouble again, sorry Stripes.” Stripes said, “No time for apologies, we need to figure out where we are.” The two cats made their way around to the front of the building. There were so many noisy cars and lots of people moving about. The cats were a little scared until Tails looked up and saw a sign for the Pretty Pets Parlour. “Oh look Stripes, that’s where Groomer works!” Tails said. “Thanks Meow,” said Stripes. They made their way to the Pretty Pets Parlour. To their surprise, when they opened the door, two familiar cats were sitting in the salon getting their fur done. It was Cotton and Pretty!

“Hey, you made it!” said Cotton. Stripes and Tails looked at each other confused. “We got lost, it was the Sweet Treats’ fault!” said Tails. “Good thing we found you at Groomer’s place,” said Stripes. Pretty and Cotton started to laugh. Then Pretty said, “Didn’t read the note Human left for us this morning?” They both said, “NO!” “It is our weekly SPA DAY TODAY!” laughed Pretty. The four cats enjoyed their day at the spa.



Meet the Author:

Pippa Beth Mitchison writes about the animals and places she loves to visit. Hawaii was the inspiration for the setting of her latest book. Hope you enjoy the adventures of Pretty, Stripes, Tails, and Cotton, the Beach Cats.



Winter Haiku



SCHOOL: St. Mary
TEACHER: Vasso Legassic
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Julie Whitney
UNIT: Algonquin-Lakeshore
UNIT PRESIDENT: Sheena Cassidy

GRADES 1-2 / POEM
by Sophia Price

Icicles hanging
They form on walls and glitter
They are sharp and cold



Proud To Be Bilingual



SCHOOL: St. Anne Catholic Academy
TEACHER: Lia Soares Costa
UNIT: Toronto Elementary
UNIT PRESIDENT: Julie Altomare-DiNunzio

GRADES 1-2 / NONFICTION
by Julian Lux Gonzalez

I enjoyed reading the story about being bilingual because there are so many different languages in the world. For example, in Canada most people speak English and French and in the United States of America most people speak English and Spanish.

I also learned that in the United States there are people who speak their Native American language, for example in the book *Being Bilingual* Waya speaks Cherokee and English. Waya is from Oklahoma and she is a girl. Waya means “wolf” in Cherokee. Cherokee is spoken in two states of America which are Oklahoma and North Carolina. I researched the Cherokee native language and I found out that there are only 22,000 people that speak that language. I also learned that back in the 1800s they were not allowed to speak their Cherokee native language, because of government policy. I think it is very sad to learn that the government didn’t allow Cherokee people to speak their own Native American language, because Cherokee people were treated unfairly, they were not allowed to speak their own language in their own country. I think it is bad for the Cherokee people because in the future their Native American language might disappear, that is why governments should do something about it, so their language will not be lost.

Also in the book *Being Bilingual*, Doli is a girl who lives in Arizona and speaks English and Navajo. Navajo is a Native American language spoken in the states of Arizona and New Mexico. I researched that 150,000 people speak Navajo, I also learned that only 5% of kids speak Navajo. I was so surprised to learn that the Navajo language was used during World War II, it was used as a code talker for secret communication, they sent messages by telephone and radio and this code was unbreakable. Doli’s grandfather was one of the soldiers who used the Navajo language to keep U.S secrets during World War II. I am so amazed to learn that Navajo language was used to help during War World II.

In the story *Being Bilingual* I learned that many kids are bilingual, and that means that they speak two languages. At my school St. Anne Catholic Academic School of Virtual Learning I have a lot of friends that are bilingual, for example: Ryan speaks English, Bulgarian and German, Enoch speaks English and Igbo, Keyley speaks English and Tagalog and Thadshya speaks English and Tamil. I also notice that most of my classmates are bilingual.

Something I find interesting about Spanish is the pronunciation of the words. For example, when I pronounce “car” in Spanish it is with a double R, and in English it is with one R. The alphabet in Spanish is similar to the English alphabet, but the Spanish alphabet has 28 letters and the English has 26, the



difference is that the Spanish alphabet has 2 more letters than the English alphabet. The two extra letters are ñ and LL. Another thing that I like about Spanish is that when we greet an elderly person you say it in a more polite way than if you were to greet a person who was not an elderly so that is why I think Spanish is a more polite language to speak.

In the book *Being Bilingual* I feel that I fit in that story because I am bilingual too. My parents are also bilingual. They speak Spanish and English. Both my parents are from Guatemala, located in the region of Central America. My grandparents, uncles, aunts and some cousins are from Guatemala too. And the rest of my cousins are Canadian. I really liked reading the story *Being Bilingual* because I can relate myself to the story. I also speak two languages which are English and Spanish. I learned Spanish when I was a baby, my parents speak to me in Spanish at home and they also taught me how to sing in Spanish. I am a member of the choir of St. James Catholic Church and I sing in Spanish. My favorite song that I sing in the Spanish choir is “Glory to God.” Something that I love about Spanish is that when I go to church I can communicate to the people in the church more easily in Spanish.

I think being bilingual is important because I am able to communicate with my grandparents who live in Guatemala and cousins who only speak Spanish. I feel it makes my life easier to be able to communicate with them, like in the book it says being bilingual makes me closer to two worlds. I also think being bilingual is important because I can get to learn other cultures and get to know more people and be able to travel in Spanish speaking countries without having a problem communicating.

I think speaking two languages has advantages because it can make travel a lot easier and more enjoyable and help being able to make friends. If I was not bilingual my life would be different because if I go to a Spanish speaking country I would not be able to communicate with people and I would be sad because I would not be able to communicate with my grandparents and cousins. And I would not be able to have a lot of opportunities in my life like making new friends, singing in the choir and getting to know people.

I think people should learn another language because it will give them a lot of opportunities like meeting new people, learning new cultures, being able to think a lot faster and to travel the world. I really enjoyed writing this nonfiction reflection, because I learned a lot about other languages that I didn't know. This makes me feel very special that I am bilingual and I hope to learn a third language which will be French. I thank my parents for teaching me how to speak Spanish and I am so grateful to live in Canada. I thank God for all these blessings.

After writing this nonfiction reflection story I hope I will encourage others to be bilingual.



The Four Fairies



SCHOOL: St. Patrick
TEACHER: Lauren Silvestro
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Lisa Ansems
UNIT: London District
UNIT PRESIDENT: Charlotte Wells

GRADES 3–4 / SHORT STORY
by Casey Hunter

In the beginning there was light, happiness, joy, peace and magic in the fairy world. And then, it happened. An evil jester from the human world released a witch named Cordelia to take all the magic away from the fairies. When she came, everything good left. The magic the fairies used to renew from sickness, help and give to the poor and unwell, that magic left. All that remained was darkness, fortresses, wars, and ungratefulness. All the fairies in the fairy world became sad, depressed, ungrateful and some even became evil!

One day four fairy friends, Luna, Lauren, Lily, and Layla decided to save their fairy world. They were the best of friends. If you're reading this story you probably want to know more about the characters. Luna loves reading. Her joy is humor, she keeps her secret, that she is sensitive, and her joy is music. Lily is very shy, she loves to bake and she has a great eye for suspicion. Her secret is she is lazy. Her joy is painting. Layla is very happy-go-lucky. She loves spending time with her twin sister Luna. She is very excessive and her secret is she adores fashion. Lastly, Lauren loves writing. Her secret is if you give her a pencil, she can write like a bullet. Lauren's joy is nature.

These four fairies were friends since they were little babies. They grew up in Flowerville all together... But now Flowerville is called Warville. Ever since the evil witch came, and all the good left, the town was called Warville.

In Warville, no one was kind, and everyone was greedy. The evil witch Cordelia lived in the scariest fortress on top of the highest peak in the Dark Mountains. If you did something that she did not like, Cordelia would turn you into a rat. Sometimes she would turn people into a rat for no reason, only to step on them! She was really, really, really, really, really mean.

The friends had packed water bottles, food, books, tents, and some headphones along with their phones the night before. Lily, Luna, Lauren, and Layla set off the next morning to save their world. The mountains were so far from their home. It was almost five miles away. This trip would take them a whole day.

So, during the first four hours of the trip, Lily confessed, "Everyone I have a secret. I am tired, I have a headache and my secret is that I am really lazy!" Since Lily confessed her secret, the other friends did too.



After twelve hours, Luna had gotten bored when Lauren spotted the fortress in the distance. “Hey,” said Lauren, “I see the fortress!” By then they were already at the third quarter of the mountain that Cordelia’s fortress was perched on.

“Okay,” Luna said. “We’ve all been walking for at least twelve hours and I think we all deserve to have a break!”

Lauren piped in: “Yeah,” she agreed, “I am really tired.” Lily and Lauren agreed as well.

They all set up a place to camp they were already about three quarters up the mountain! The next morning, they set off to walk the last two miles up the mountain. Once they were at the top of the rickety mountain Lily burst out in tears. “I can’t do this,” she whined. “I’m scared!” Everyone was scared too but instead of showing it they encouraged each other.

“We all are,” said Luna. “But once we do this, we will have done a good thing. We are saving our world!”

Lauren agreed, “Yes, exactly!” Lily felt better.

They all walked up to the door and surprisingly it opened with a BANG! Everyone exchanged worried looks. They were all very scared! With sudden fright they heard a faint scream coming from a room in the fortress! “Please,” said a voice like a troll, “Nooooooooooooo!” A mean vampire accent answered back, “Until vee meet again!

“Whoa, I’m not so sure about this,” said Lily.

When they got to the second door, a slot opened and out came a small, black envelope. In it there looked to be a code. It said:

! @m 100k!ng f0rw@rd t0 \$33!ng y0U
If you can read this you are worthy enough to be our guest!

“Wow,” said Lauren surprised. “I did not know witches did codes.”

Lily then screamed excitedly, “Hey, I know what this is! I did an escape room at my friend Cynthia Rose’s birthday party! It is a code! It says, ‘I am looking forward to seeing you’ and at the bottom says, ‘If you can read this you are worthy enough to be our guest.’ And... We read it, YAY!”

At the time they were all thinking the same thing, so Layla burst out rudely, “So what happens next?” With angry eyes squinting and staring, and with her hands on her hips. Everyone looked at her frowning.

“Hey,” Luna said, starting a stare down. “You think you can look at all of us so mean and get...”



“Uh huh you think...” Layla interrupted. Layla and Luna both started pointing fingers and scowling at each other. Lily and Lauren exchanged worried looks. From the top window of the fortress, Cordelia smirked.

Cordelia was tall and skinny. She had long black hair and wore burgundy, long dresses. “Just how evil codes work,” she said in her deep accent. “The mouthy one unwittingly vuins everything, ta-da!”

“Wait a minute,” said Luna.

“What?!” Answered Layla rudely.

“Look in that top window! Cordelia is smiling suspiciously like she planned all of this to happen!” Luna wondered.

“What if she did?” asked Layla, calmer this time but suffering from loss of breath!

“The challenge is only to be a team,” said Luna and all of the girls agreed.

The door opened as Cordelia’s smirk drifted into a scowl. “No!” Cordelia yelled. Cordelia looked at her servant, Dorsali, who was always beside her. “How? Dorsali, I thought vee agreed that you would make sure no-one could manage to get in!”

Dorsali answered nervously, “I swear! I did I made the trespassers do teamwork. Your takeover made teamwork impossible to do so!”

“I see,” the torturing witch answered. “Vut how? My spell made it impossible, you’re vright. It should not have been done!”

The girls were now at the second obstacle. “Okay,” said Luna. “Oh, I see what we must do next. Over there! Look! There are some words!”

COUNT YOUR STEPS ‘TIL THE TENTH, SKIP THE ELEVENTH AND RESTART

“Ah, I see!” shouted Luna. “Look those must be the steps to count!”

They all counted their steps.

“One, two, three.....”

“Whoa!” said Luna. Clickety-clackety-click went their feet in the puddles.

“Yellllpp!” screamed Layla.



“What?” asked Luna.

Layla. She always stuck up for Luna! She was very kind and helpful too!

About fifteen minutes later, Layla moved and blinked. She wasn't herself yet she was alive! She finally woke up but when she talked, she would mumble a little bit. They could finally get back to their mission!

Cordelia was watching them from the top of her fortress. When the girls got past the second trap, they managed to get in the fortress. They had to be sneaky, at least they assumed they did. To their surprise, Cordelia did not seem to be the smartest witch. There was not a single guard!

The girls then managed to get in the first room. There were literally arrows for intruders to show the way to Cordelia's power! Cordelia did not even know that they had gotten in because she still had her powers!

Then when they followed the arrows to the room with Cordelia's power, they got in! Her wand, holding her power, was floating above a wooden stand, with an aqua glow surrounding it. The wand itself was baby blue, with a black handle. There was an emerald in the handle.

Suddenly, they could see Cordelia stomping through the hallway.

“Quick, I see her coming!” Layla said.

Luna and Lily managed to pull the surrounded wand out of the glowing atmosphere. Lily held on to the wand tightly.

Suddenly Cordelia barged into the room.

“I knew it,” she said. “All from the beginning I knew you would be so foolish to try to take over this unhappy world!”

Cordelia didn't realize that her barging into the room had knocked Lily down. “All from the beginning I knew you would be so foolish...”

Lily, holding the wand, stood up and interrupted. “Really? Because if we were foolish I wouldn't be holding this wand and you wouldn't be standing over there.” Cordelia gasped in fright.

Lily turned Cordelia into a fish and murdered her by keeping her out of water! They then used the wand to save their kingdom and **EVERYONE LIVED HAPPILY EVER AFTER!**



Saving the Environment



SCHOOL: Notre Dame, Cobourg
TEACHER: Maureen Kawzenuk
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Tracey Taylor
UNIT: Peterborough, VNC
UNIT PRESIDENT: Kelly McNeely

GRADES 3-4 / POEM
by Nicholas Riccio

Every time I go to the store
it's a drag
because I have no bag.
I no longer use plastic
that is very fantastic.
My new bag is material
now I can carry my cereal.
If you do your part like me
you'll be better environmentally.



The Brighter Side of COVID



SCHOOL: St. Hilary
TEACHER: Lori Dias
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Luiza Dowling
UNIT: Dufferin–Peel Elementary
UNIT PRESIDENT: Sandra Vukosich

GRADES 3–4/ NONFICTION
by Kirsten Fernandes

Everyone knows about the disease that is killing many people, and that is forcing us to go into lockdown, but have you ever looked at the brighter side of COVID?

One of the most positive effects of being in lockdown is the amount of time you get to spend with your family. For example, in my family we have been experimenting in the kitchen by trying out some new recipes. We discovered some new board games like *Codenames* and *Catan*. In the summer we spent time together exploring the outdoors by going on long drives and hikes.

Being at home so much I got to sharpen up my art skills. For Christmas I got a watercolour set and it's SUPER fun! The most recent painting I did was a Superman cake for my cousin's birthday. He really liked it. When you are home you can do so many things like catch up on chores or learn something new, like a new instrument.

Another positive effect of COVID was that it allowed many people the flexibility to work from home. So instead of commuting to work this allows parents to spend time with their children by helping them with schoolwork or logging onto online class.

This brings up a point about technology. More than ever these days people are using technology to stay connected to one another by using apps such as *Zoom*, *FaceTime*, and *Google Meet*. Due to COVID, libraries are temporarily shut down so these apps or websites are helping people get resources like *Raz-Kids*, *Epic*, *Libby*, and our own school library website.

Another MAJOR reason that COVID is important is global warming. Global warming has reduced 17-25% since the start of 2020. This is because there have been fewer cars on the road, fewer local buses, reduced airplanes in the sky and factories having to shut down temporarily due to the government restrictions.

As a result, every night my sister and I noticed that the sky is full of twinkling stars which used to not be the case before COVID. People around the world are noticing that the air seems cleaner and fresher and they say if some of the restrictions continue, global warming can reduce another 7-13%.

In conclusion, we have learned a lot because of COVID and the most important thing we have learned is to be grateful for what we have, to count our blessings, because some people have so many



fewer blessings than we do. A lot of people got unlucky and caught or died from COVID, but God was with them and helped them through it. I am not saying COVID was a good thing, but by looking at its brighter side, it gives us comfort and hope for a better future.



SCHOOL: Algonquin–Lakeshore ERLS
TEACHER: Peter Bullock
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Danny Pokotylo
UNIT: Algonquin–Lakeshore
UNIT PRESIDENT: Sheena Cassidy

GRADES 5–6 / SHORT STORY
by Chiara Giuliana Cutrona

I, Shelfie, woke up on the last day of November to a beautiful, sunny day. And my sister Holly’s music, but I woke up to that every day.

“Yo, sis! It’s the day before we have to visit our kids, I need to sleep!” I said, knowing the answer even before she replied.

I loved the Cutrona kids, but they could be loud sometimes (all the time). I wanted some peace and quiet before I went there!

“Nope, I need my music to get me into the Christmas spirit!” Holly answered, and turned her music up even louder.

Yep. I knew that was what she was going to say. Anyway, I need to get going! I have a meeting with Santa Claus at... What time was it again? Never mind. I’ll figure it out later. I hopped out of bed, slipped on my elf uniform and marched out the door!

“Hi mom, hi dad,” I said to my parents.

“Hello, Shel!” Mom and Dad said.

Yep, that’s right. I still live with my parents. It’s because I’m only 800 years old, so technically, I’m not even an adult elf yet. I have to wait 200 years (*200 years!* Geez!) until I’m 1000 years old which is when I’m officially an adult. Until then, I can’t live on my own or fly without a special, magical, permission from Santa. That’s what my meeting with Santa today is about, giving me my flight permission letter! I’m only allowed to fly for 25 days, though. It’s so that I can get to the Cutronas’ house. Every scout elf has to get that permission letter, otherwise they can’t go to their kids’ house to see if they’re good! Unfortunately, my sister is also a scout elf, so she gets to fly for 25 days too. My parents, Noël and Chippy, are also scout elves, but they’re waaaay older than 1000, so they get to fly all year (It’s not faaaaiir!!). Anyway, what am I doing still hanging around? I need to go eat some breakfast! I walked down the hallway into the kitchen and grabbed my favourite morning snack, a bowl-full of magic. You’re probably thinking that it’s not real magic, it just tastes good. Well, if you *did* think that, then you’re sadly mistaken. It’s real magic. Not 100% pure magic, of course, but 1.2% magic. After eating it, you feel, well, magical! I pour myself a bowl and eat it up. Hmm, I should probably find out when my



meeting with Santa is...

“Hey, mom? Do you know when my meeting with Santa is?” I asked.

“Come on, Shel, you’ve got to start writing these things down! But, I’m pretty sure you told me it was at pre-magic hour,” my mom said, being awesome as usual.

“Oh, right. Thanks mom!” I said.

Man, I’m glad she remembered that! Oh, and if you’re human then you’re probably wondering what (and when) magic hour is. Well, magic hour is the same time as humans’ 12 o’clock, so pre-magic hour is humans’ 11 o’clock. So, I guess that means I’m not in much of a rush. I have hours until pre-magic hour. I guess I’ll just do the stuff I do on a usual I’m-so-bored-I-don’t-know-what-to-do kind of day. And I did. I went to Elf Square, had a snowball fight, played a few rounds of who can drink the most hot cocoa and I was just about to head to The Hill to go sledding when I heard the sound of bells ringing.

Oh, *fudge-cakes*, I thought, *that better not mean I missed my meeting with Santa...*

I raced closer to the clock so that I could see what time it was and was relieved to see it was exactly pre-magic hour. I then started towards Santa’s office and I walked through the door.

“Hello, Santa!” I said.

“Hello there, Shelfie. Here’s your flight magic letter. Remember, same as it always has been, don’t open the letter until you’re ready to take flight to the Cutronas’ house,” Santa reminded me.

“Yep, right, of course,” I answered him.

“All right then. I’ll see you tomorrow for your daily December reports on the Cutronas. Merry Christmas!” Santa said.

“Okay, merry Christmas, Santa!” I said and walked back out the door.

After that, I went home. I was feeling tired, and I usually left for the Cutronas at around night magic hour, or after-magic hour. I climbed into bed for a nap, not even bothering to set an alarm, knowing Holly would wake up early tonight (she has a new family, and wants to make a good first impression by actually being there), and so she’ll most likely wake me up. Just a minute or two after I had laid in bed, I fell asleep.

Much later that night, I woke up, as expected, to the sound of my sister running around, getting ready to fly to her new family. I got out of bed and said a quick goodbye to my sister and parents, and opened my magic flight letter. My body instantly felt lighter and slightly tingly. I loved the feeling. Then, I went up the stairs to the roof of my house and took off into the sky. I flew for a few hours. I had already memorized the way to the Cutronas’ house, so I didn’t pay much attention to where I was flying. And



sure enough, not much later I was above the Cutronas' house. I took out my letter again. There was the magic flight letter, but there was another piece of paper in there. It was the way to get into the Cutronas' house. I took out the paper and whispered: *Mumblemiblemumbulamulie*, and a small hole opened right in the Cutronas' roof. I flew down into it. I loved doing that. Santa gives every scout elf a special word that'll activate the magic, one that and no elf could ever guess. Each year the words get crazier, and crazier. Speaking of crazy, I just spotted some construction paper and some scissors sitting on the Cutronas' art table... I pick up the scissors and the construction paper and start cutting a complicated snowflake design. Once I'm done, I pick up the snowflakes (I don't even clean up the mess I made making the snowflakes!) and stick them onto a nearby shelf and I find a comfortable spot for me to sit just above it. I also write a quick letter to them saying hello. I open up my letter for a third time that night, and take out a third piece of paper. This one allows me to stay completely still (and look like a doll) for long periods of time. I say the magic words (literally magic!): *Tuckintupintullerteeny*, and I freeze. I'll admit, the feeling isn't my favourite, but it's not bad. Holly likes it much less than I do. I don't think I've ever seen her sit completely still before. I wait a few hours for the Cutronas to wake up. Finally, at around 7 o'clock in human time I hear them starting to wake up. Well, I hear the three youngest Cutrona kids waking up and running around upstairs. I hear them talking, too. Probably arguing. But technically, I can't actually hear what they're saying so I don't have to report it to Santa, right? I think so. I sit by myself in the dark for another hour or so and then I hear the Cutronas walking down the stairs.

Show time, I think to myself.

I love it when the Cutronas run around trying to find me. Today, it's the second youngest Cutrona that finds me. I like it when he does, because no one expects him to. Then, they go into the other room to play and eat breakfast. I hear some of them having cealery (cereal?). I never understood that. I mean, who likes eating a big, soggy mess of milk and grains (or whatever that other stuff is)? Certainly not me. Anyway, I see the Cutronas have moved on and are now playing a nice game of tag. Awesome, that's something good I can report to Santa.

Later that day, I watch as the Cutronas all sit on their couches to watch a movie. I can't read what it's called, the writing's too small, but I can tell it's a Christmas movie. I like watching human Christmas movies. What they think of the Santa's North Pole is usually hilarious. This movie that the Cutronas are watching is so funny that I would be crying with laughter by now if I wasn't frozen in place. Not long after the movie finishes, the Cutrona kids all go to bed. Then, a few hours after that the Cutrona kids' parents go to bed. Once I hear them snoring, I whisper *tuckintupintullerteeny* again and I'm unfrozen and I look like my normal self again. I fly up close to the ceiling and whisper *mumblemiblemumbulamulie* also again and I fly through the hole and into the beautiful night sky. This is something I wouldn't trade for anything.

The End



The River's Stone



SCHOOL: St. James
TEACHER: Deborah Lewis
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Kim McColgan
UNIT: Ottawa
UNIT PRESIDENT: Michele Pierce

GRADES 5-6 / POEM
by Mika Rae

Thousands of years,
Under the river's rushing water,
Only foolish stones,
Were the ones who fought her.

Thousands of years,
Now the opal gleams,
Adorning the riverbed,
And her necklace of dreams.

Thousands of years,
A hand slips into the river,
And takes the opal from her,
With another rock to give her.

Thousands of years,
Now the opal, on a chain,
In a market stall,
Unsheltered from the rain.

Thousands of years.
The river's rain, reaching down,
Gathers up the opal
And places it on her crown.

Thousands of years,
Under the river's rushing water,
Only foolish stones,
Were the ones who fought her.



SCHOOL: St. Michael's
TEACHER: Theresa Molnar
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Bekki Vallee
UNIT: Brant Haldimand Norfolk
UNIT PRESIDENT: Tom Laracy

GRADES 5-6 / NONFICTION

by Madison Wilkes-Wilkins and Mckinley Bishop

WARING STREET HOUSE NUMBER 13

Mckinley walks into the kitchen to grab a glass of water. In her hand she holds a book called Telsastrang. She finishes her water and walks to the door. She walks outside to the mailbox. She grabs the mail and goes inside. A letter for her sister, and for her. She goes to her room.

- ELLIE What you got there?
- MCKINLEY A letter.
- ELLIE Do you have any mail for me?
- MCKINLEY Oh yeah here.

She hands her the letter. Ellie takes the letter and goes to her room. Mckinley looks at the letter. It's neon purple with gold writing. She opens her letter.

OCOLUM AVENUE HOUSE NUMBER 217

Maddy was in her room doing gymnastics on her sister's bed. Her sister walked into their room.

- LEXIE Get off my bed.
- MADDY Make me.
- LEXIE I'm serious.
- Maddy sits down. Lexie hits her with a stuffed animal.*
- MADDY Ow! Can't you take a joke?

Maddy hops off of Lexie's bed and goes downstairs.

- MS. WILKINS Maddy can you grab the mail?
- MADDY Sure.

She heads to the mailbox. There's a letter for Josie, and a letter for her.



MADDY JOSIE!

Her younger sister came downstairs. Maddy handed her the letter. They each headed to their rooms.

LEXIE What is that? Is it a letter from your boyfriend?

She starts to make kissy lips.

MADDY Put a cork in it.

She climbs the ladder up to her bed and opens the envelope.

GORINAL DRIVE HOUSE NUMBER 4936

Morgan was lying on her bed doing absolutely nothing.

MRS. LENICK Jacob, go get the mail.

She could hear her brother head downstairs. She was the youngest of five. The oldest, Nathan, second oldest, Nora (they're twins), middle, Jacob, second youngest, Ally, and youngest, Morgan. She heads downstairs. She looks at her brother. He has an envelope. He almost opens it.

MORGAN FREEZE!

JACOB Where'd you come from?

MORGAN Don't matter just drop my letter.

JACOB How would you know this was your letter?

MORGAN After all of your years of bragging how would I not know?

JACOB What if—

MORGAN Your letter only comes once.

JACOB Dirty know it all.

He mutters something under his breath as he walks upstairs and drops the letter on the floor. Morgan goes to get the letter and opens it. Each letter is the same.

Dear Ms. Bishop,

St. Elastrang would appreciate if you would attend our school this year. Below we have put a list of books you will need if you attend. Please write a letter back to us if you will attend.

Sincerely, Mrs. Deles

-Math Made Fun
-Healthy Living
-The Bible



-How to Draw
-Across Canada

Maddy's letter was almost identical except said Ms. Wilkes-Wilkins, and Morgan's said Ms. Lenick.

MRS. BISHOP'S CAR

MRS. BISHOP Well, here's your stop.

Mckinley hops out of the car. She goes into Insta Shop. She finds all her books. She collides into Maddy.

MADDY Oh sorry.

MCKINLEY No it's my fault, my head was elsewhere. I—

MADDY Just got accepted into a new school? Was it called St. Elastrang?

MCKINLEY Ya! How'd you know?

MADDY Our books! They are the same.

MCKINLEY You got in? Well, I guess I will see you there.

MADDY I guess I will see you there.

Maddy walks out of the store. She hops on her bike and heads home. On her way back she happens to see Morgan and her family.

MADDY That's gotta be the world's biggest family.

Morgan heads up the street with her mom, her dad, Nathan, Nora and Ally.

MORGAN Where's Jacob?

MRS. LENICK Doing something stupid.

MORGAN Should have guessed.

They arrived at Insta Shop.

MRS. LENICK Nathan, go with Ally.

NATHAN Do I have to?

She stares at him.

NATHAN Fine.

Nathan and Ally go into the store.

MRS. LENICK Now you two stay together and don't do anything dumb.



Morgan and Nora walked into the store.

NORA When you plan on doing something dumb tell me.

MORGAN Why should I?

NORA I know every shortcut in school.

MORGAN OK but on one condition.

NORA What is that?

MORGAN You tell me what is so special about this school.

NORA Mom is going to kill me. This school—

Morgan stops Nora. In front of them we see Nathan and Ally at the checkout with their books and some gum.

NORA What are you doing?

NATHAN Buying gum.

NORA Mom will find out.

NATHAN I'll pay her.

NORA No.

NATHAN How would you know?

NORA You know how.

Nora and Morgan walk away from them.

NORA St. Elastrang's—

MONDAY SEPTEMBER 8: CORNER OF OCOLUM AND ARIS

MRS. LENICK Clothes?

KIDS Check.

MRS. LENICK Books?

KIDS Check.

BUS STOP CORNER OF OCOLUM AND ARIS, FIVE MINUTES EARLIER

MR. BISHOP Write to us.



MCKINLEY I will.

She sees Maddy and Maddy sees her.

MCKINLEY I'm gonna miss the bus.

The bus starts going, she runs to catch up.

CORNER OF OCOLUM AND ARIS, FIVE MINUTES EARLIER

MS. WILKINS Make sure you don't get into trouble... OK maybe some trouble... Just don't get yourself expelled.

MADDY I promise I won't.

She steps on the bus, as it leaves she yells, "MADDY MY FINGERS WERE CROSSED."

She goes to find Mckinley. She checks a lot of carts. She looks out the window. The bus is moving and Mckinley is running to catch up. Maddy runs to the back of the bus. She reaches her hand for Mckinley to grab. The bus starts going too fast. She misses.

Mckinley sees Maddy and then she's gone! And then she's beside her! And then they're on the bus!

MCKINLEY *(Tone slowly rises)* OK. You were on the bus you were beside me then we were on this dang bus! WHAT THE HECK JUST HAPPENED??!!

MADDY OK well...

MCKINLEY EXPLAIN FAST BEFORE I STRANGLE YOU!

MADDY I'M TRYING—

Morgan comes in the cart.

MORGAN What's happening?

Maddy and Mckinley stare at her.

MCKINLEY SHE JUST POPPED BESIDE ME AND BROUGHT US ON THE BUS!!!

MADDY I guess this means we aren't friends?

MCKINLEY OBVIOUSLY!

MORGAN Would you shut it? This school is for magic! My sister told me!! My power is imagination!

MADDY *(Through minds)* I have any mind power you could think of.

MORGAN You need to discover your power! They will ask you to show them your power and if you don't have one they will wipe your memory of any paranormal ability



you might have ever seen! Do something dumb and then well if you can't save yourself she will.

MCKINLEY What the heck do I do on a moving bus? Oh wait. Where is the—

MADDY That is the most idiotic thing you could ever do.

MCKINLEY Well then I will die of stupidity.

MADDY 1.5 km.

She teleports them to the roof. The lake is visible. Mckinley jumps into the lake. Maddy realizes no one is going to save her. She jumps after her. She teleports them back to the bus.

MADDY Out of all the stupid things you could have done why did I let you do that? Who are they? *(She points at three girls standing in the doorway.)*

GIRL 1 I'm Elizabeth, this is Carrie, and that's Zoey. She doesn't even have powers. She looks at Mckinley. Maddy goes to attack her but Morgan stops her.

MADDY You have some pretty big secrets in that big empty space inside your skull.

She makes a book fly and it just misses Elizabeth's head. Morgan realizes she can't do anything and lets go. Maddy gives Elizabeth her death stare. Elizabeth and her friends leave.

MORGAN You realize those girls are the biggest bullies in the school?

MADDY Then it's about time someone stands up to them.

MORGAN You're not gonna make it to sixth grade at this rate.

Mckinley needed to do something to break this up.

MCKINLEY Look the school!

The girls look out the window. It's huge! It's gotta be at least 100 and something feet each way! The train comes to a halt.

CONDUCTOR ALL OFF!

Every person walks off the train.

TEACHER If your name is from A-G go with him.

She points at a short old man.

TEACHER If your name is from H-P come with me.

We see a middle-aged tall woman with a few grey hairs here and there.



TEACHER If your name is from Q-Z go with her.

She points to a girl who might have just graduated last year. Everyone goes to their spots. They walk inside, parting as they go. About 15 kids go into a room before Maddy. Five minutes later she comes out looking madder than ever. Mckinley goes in next. The room is around the size of a closet. There are three chairs. One is occupied, one is empty, and one is broken.

MCKINLEY Did the person before me break that?

???

Yes. My name is Cole. You will call me Mr. C. Now let's get down to business. Do you have any powers?

MCKINLEY Not that I'm aware of.

MR. C Well I'm sorry about this but I have to... He stares at her, she closes her eyes.

MR. C Smart girl, aren't you?

MCKINLEY You realize you don't have to do this you just get paid to? *(She disappears but is still there.)* Why'd you stop?

MR. C Because I don't need to.

She walks out the door.

MORGAN Are ghosts real?

MCKINLEY Shush.

Morgan looks her way.

MADDY Come with me.

Mckinley follows Maddy to a mirror.

MCKINLEY What is it?

MADDY Do you not see it? You're invisible!

MCKINLEY Woah. I'm invisible? No wonder I got out.

She turns visible. The girls walk to the dining hall.

HEADMISTRESS Good evening students! The boys *(She looks at the left half of the room.)* will follow Nathan.

There is a loud cheer from the left half of the room.

HEADMISTRESS And the girls *(She looks at the right half of the room.)* will follow Nora.

There is a quieter cheer from the right half of the room.



HEADMISTRESS Now please head to your rooms. There will be snacks waiting there.

They all head up to their rooms. They are split based off of grades and gender.

MADDY Don't say it.

She goes to bed.

MORGAN What's that about?

MCKINLEY A chair.

They both lay down and go to bed. The next day they have music.

MUSIC TEACHER Hello class, my name is Mrs. Cornec.

She was a short lady, maybe 25. She had a blue dress and blonde hair.

MRS. C We are going to practice self control over our powers. You can sing or dance.

She plays a song. Lots of kids dance and there are lots of different voices singing.

MRS. C STOP!!! If you want to dance, go on the floor and if you want to sing, wait until it plays again. About half the class goes onto the floor and the rest sit down.

She restarts the song. Fire and water were flying and mixing. Objects were flying and stars were coming.

About three minutes later it was time for the singers. Elizabeth was trying to out-sing the others but Patrick Orne's power was his voice so he out-sang her by a mile. Mckinley and Morgan were trying to sing but couldn't stop laughing at Elizabeth's face.

After their classes were over for the day they went to the dining hall to do their homework.

MADDY Don't.

MCKINLEY But—

MADDY I'm not talking to you.

MORGAN Would you just—

MADDY Don't ask me again!

MCKINLEY If you would only—

MADDY I'M NOT TALKING TO YOU!

All eyes turn to her. She continues to do her work.

MORGAN Maddy would you just talk to us? It would be better if you just told us.



MADDY LEAVE ME ALONE!

She grabs her books and leaves. Mckinley and Morgan go after her. They come back because they forgot their stuff. About ten minutes later they meet up in their room.

MORGAN No luck in the washroom.

MCKINLEY I checked here.

Maddy walks through the door.

MORGAN WHERE THE HECK WERE YOU!??

MADDY Washroom.

MORGAN I didn't see you...

MADDY Follow me.

She takes them to a washroom on the sixth floor. They walk to the stall furthest from the door.

MCKINLEY The stall is closed off.

MADDY That's why I went in.

They crawl under the door. Maddy walks right through the toilet and into the wall.

MORGAN She is insane.

Mckinley walks through then Morgan. It is an empty room then it starts to fill up with stuff.

MADDY This room is a lot like your power Morgan, it can fill with anything you imagine. Why don't we try dueling using our powers? Who wants to go first?

Mckinley and Morgan both step forward. A mat appears on the floor. Mckinley turns invisible and strikes Morgan. Morgan gets a bucket of paint. Mckinley comes to strike Morgan again and succeeds but Morgan throws the paint on her. Morgan goes up to her and pins her to the ground. Morgan won that round.

MORGAN Do you wanna fight me Maddy?

Maddy steps onto the mat while Mckinley dries herself off. Maddy hurls a book that hits Morgan in the face so hard that she flies backwards.

MORGAN I'm gonna have to go to the nurse after this and so will you.

She hurls a chair at Maddy which sends her into the bookshelf behind her.

MADDY I never thought books would be my enemies. You have a secret, last week when we were—



MORGAN Don't say another w—

Maddy trips Morgan sending her backwards into the mat. She holds her down until she gives up.

MCKINLEY What were you about to say?

MADDY I was hoping she would stop me. I didn't have anything to say. I don't like to read your minds so I just read the freshest thought in your head.

MCKINLEY Well thanks for not reading mine.

MADDY I could if you wanted me to.

MCKINLEY I don't want you to.

JUNE 23 SIXTH FLOOR WASHROOM

The girls walked to the closed off stall and went behind the wall. They weren't the only ones there this time. They stepped behind some boxes.

NATHAN What happened to yours?

NORA I don't know it just disappeared.

Nathan reaches for her bag.

NATHAN Did you check in here?

NORA Obviously.

NATHAN Do you know where you last had it?

NORA Around my neck.

Nathan reaches for her pocket.

NORA You can't touch me.

Morgan's hand slips and she drops a book.

NATHAN What the heck was that?

NORA Someone's here, duh. Get over here right now.

The three girls walk over to the twins.

NATHAN Of course it's you three why would it be anyone else?

Nathan wiped their memories of that.

MCKINLEY Oh hey Nathan, Nora—what are you doing here?



MADDY Why'd you do that?

NORA Do what?

MADDY Wipe their memories.

NATHAN How'd you know that happened?

MADDY People who have mind powers can block themselves from other peoples' mind powers.

NATHAN Dang it.

MADDY Let's go.

NORA No wait!

Nathan grabs her hand to stop her. A big black cloud goes around them and a monster appears where they were.

MCKINLEY WHAT IS THAT?

MADDY ITS A MONSTER CREATED BY A CURSE CAST UPON TWINS IN YOUR FAMILY! I READ ABOUT IT.

MORGAN WE HAVE TO GET OUT OF HERE!

MADDY THEY CLOSED OFF THE DOOR.

MORGAN WE'RE TRAPPED!

MADDY WHAT IS IT THAT SHE LOST?

MORGAN A NECKLACE!

Maddy grabs a necklace from her bag.

MADDY DID IT LOOK LIKE THIS?

MORGAN YEAH! WE HAVE TO GET IT TO THEM AS WELL AS NATHAN'S. SOMEONE HAS TO GO INTO THE BEAST AND GET IT ON THEIR NECKS.

MADDY I'LL GET NORA'S ON.

She walks up to the monster and it swallows her whole. Mckinley lets out a small scream.

MORGAN THAT WAS DUMB! SHE COULD HAVE TAKEN THEM BOTH! GO AND GET NATHAN'S!

Mckinley turns invisible and grabs Nathan's necklace. She becomes visible and the monster swallows her. About five minutes later there's a buzzing sound and the smoke disappears revealing Nathan and Nora lying on the ground and Maddy and Mckinley kneeling beside them.



MORGAN You guys are okay!

They have a group hug.

MADDY The monster is still there. It can only be defeated by DNA of the person who created it.

Only you can stop it. It's not linked to anyone which means it's vulnerable, a single touch could destroy it. Morgan walks over to it, hand out. She slowly pushes her hand into it and the monster turns to ash. The headmistress can finally come in.

HEADMISTRESS Are you all okay? The nurse is coming here. She'll grab Nathan and Nora. You guys better go get checked out.

The nurse comes in and takes Nathan and Nora. The three girls follow her.

It's the last day of school and the headmistress is giving a speech.

HEADMISTRESS --And lastly I would like to thank three girls for saving our school.

There is a huge round of applause.

HEADMISTRESS And now for our fifth graders I would like to introduce you to... Telsastrang.



Moral of My Mahjong Memory



SCHOOL: St. Justin Martyr
TEACHER: Marcel Leone
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Vito Totino
UNIT: York
UNIT PRESIDENT: Michael Totten

GRADES 5–6 / NONFICTION
by Sabrina Tan

Anger and embarrassment surged through me. Laughter, jokes, and teasing surrounded the table. The voices of my fellow competitors, along with the clashing of the shuffled game pieces created an obnoxious and annoying blend of noises. I strained my ears, listening for an opportunity to join the conversation so I didn't seem like a sore loser. But a particular comment that stood out among the bantering hit too close to home, adding to my sour mood.

Mahjong, a Chinese tile game, requires a mixture of luck and strategy. My family and I play occasionally and alter the rules to reward the losers' money to the winners. There are many ways of winning the game, but for a greater chance at victory, I need to obtain a specific combination of pieces, usually found in four suits, a suit being three consecutive tiles, and a pair, which is two of the same tile. I already had a winning streak, with a few games under my belt. As I was heading into the next round, I was comforted with the feeling that luck was definitely on my side. I could already imagine what I would do with my money. I was torn between buying junk food and candy, recent bestselling books, or brand-new shoes. Thanks to my luck, I had so many ways to spend my victory money.

However, after a couple of minutes into the next game, I was beginning to feel hopeless. By this point in the previous rounds, I had already won and collected my winnings. I didn't feel as confident as I had before. I continued the games, trying to keep my head up, but my tiles were not lining up with the ones I already had. Game after game, I saw my money gradually disappear and somehow reappear in my opponents' hands. I was beginning to grow frustrated and my family's gleeful gloats about their redemptions were getting on my nerves. "Where did all your money go?" my dad teased, referring to the current round I had just lost. He, along with the rest of my family, didn't realize how that one little joke was the final straw. Between my luck's downfall and the innocent comment, I felt a tear escape my eye.

One tear turned into dozens more. I was sobbing, overwhelmed with anger, frustration, and humiliation. My sister asked what was wrong, but I struggled to form clear sentences. My parents were anticipating an answer, breathing down my neck, and I gave my best shot at explaining the root of my mess. "I was winning, and now I'm losing!" I managed to stutter. Suddenly, their expressions turned from concern to disappointment.



My parents saw the situation as a learning experience and lectured me about the importance of losing. I now understand that losing gives me the chance to analyze what I did wrong. Losing also offers me the opportunity to build character, such as how I chose to respond and plan to do better next time. In the end, I realized there was nothing worth crying over. Although I was winning in the beginning, I should not have thought about what my rewards could get me before finishing Mahjong. I grew overconfident because I was so sure that I was going to win. I lost sight of what Mahjong stood for, a way for my family to spend time with each other. Instead of focusing on the rewards, next time, I could appreciate my parents and their efforts to accommodate my sister and me into their busy schedules.



SCHOOL: Virtual Learn @ Home
TEACHER: Kayla Franzese
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Paul Mackett
UNIT: Thunder Bay Elementary
UNIT PRESIDENT: Aldo Grillo

GRADES 7–8 / SHORT STORY
by Tamima Rashid

Rathi’s favourite season had always been winter—even though from the outside, she looked like a knobby summer tree with her lanky arms and green clothes. She was more subdued in summer. Rathi liked to attribute it to the season, rather than diagnosing the sadness as a consequence of being home more often than not. It would lead to the frightening realization of what the root of the problem was: the deterioration of her relationship with her mother.

Instead of investigating any further, Rathi was sitting on the floor with her snowglobe in her brown hands. Slipped inside was a photograph of Ammu and her some years ago in the snow, a scarf wound tightly around them. Rathi missed the innocence of her scowl in the photograph. She wished she could grab the girl in the photo by her mint-green jacket and whisper, *“You’re not going to have her forever. She’s not going to support you being gay, you know.”* She wondered if an older Rathi was leaning down at her and saying the same thing.

A hot tear trickled down her already flushed face.

“Rathi!” Her mom called shrilly from the kitchen.

Swiping her cheek with her sleeve, she quickly slid into the hall. “Yes, Ammu?”

“I made you tea—it’s on the kitchen table,” her mother told her happily, stirring a pot of vegetable curry with her spatula. Her hair was tied back into a bun, revealing the peach-coloured salwar kameez she was wearing, with its twirling silver details strewn all over it. Her eyebrows were furrowed in concentration as she poured the spices into the pot.

Rathi took a calming breath. She didn’t want to waste this moment. One day she would run out of moments with her mother. “Are you going to put this in?”

“Three of them.”

Rathi focused on the harsh chopping sounds and the small rectangular beam of light on her zucchini that cast a light glow on the pine-green as she cut them, willing herself to stay focused on the even slicing noises. Wishing they could stay in this moment of them making dinner together in synchronization. Cooking was her favourite thing in the world. It was what kept their family together,



nights spent together at the dinner table. She liked studying in the kitchen while her mom cooked, she liked cooking for her mother on the nights when she worked late. She liked the independence of being able to cook for yourself.

It was the only shard left of the relationship she and her mother once had, the one that had been immortalized in her snowglobe. Rathi hadn't told her mother about her being gay yet but it felt as though a bomb had gone off and her mother had been looking away when it happened. It just wasn't the same as it once was. It hurt too much to spend time with her homophobic mother. Rathi had a plan—she wouldn't come out until she was an adult who could fend for herself if her parents didn't accept her.

She laid her hand in a bridge on the zucchini, using the other to cut it into slices. Click-click. She concentrated on not letting her tears fall. Click-click. She concentrated on her breathing, her mother's breathing beside her on the stove. *I'm not going to cry, I'm not going to cry.*

Rathi laid the knife back on the cream-coloured cutting board, dropping her gaze to the ground. She could imagine the glass shards starting to crystalize around them. They clasped together like magnets in a clear dome, the white walls slowly sinking into the floor tile. Something wet landed on her cheek. *A tear?* She pressed her finger to her cheek to inspect it, but when she peered down at the pad of her finger, it was a shining white particle. Another droplet fell into her palm, then another, and another. *Snow.*

Rathi pressed a hand to the glass curiously. If she squinted, little splashes of colour were visible behind the snowglobe's cage. She pressed her face against it, her breath fogging up the glass. Rathi gasped. It was a scene, outside the snowglobe. A group of people, it seemed, about their age. Dragging behind was a person on their phone, who seemed to be texting someone. *"I'll be at Sarah's house :)."* Quickly, the girl tucked her phone into her pocket and broke into a light jog. She quickly wrapped an arm around one of the people in the group, grinning as they walked into a rainbow parade.

The scene slowly morphed into a different image beyond the glass. Outside was a blurry headshot of someone with curly black hair that was pressed into their knobbly knees. They seemed to be a little older than her, perhaps eighteen or nineteen, leaning against a mint green wall, shaking. A muffled, hysterically yelling voice was ringing through the sphere, at the person in the mirage. She recognized it immediately as her mom's voice. Rathi wanted to reach out and comfort them, to ask them what was wrong, but as quickly as the image had appeared, it washed away like a car's wind-wipers on a rainy day. She could see the fog settling on the glass as if they were back in winter. The condensation quickly spread from where her hand was, branching out until it covered the entirety of the glass.

She glanced back at her mom, who was skeptically peering at the glass. It seemed that she'd understood the muffled yells where Rathi couldn't - her hands were shaking, and her eyebrows were furrowed in confusion and anger. There were several twin creases on her forehead. Rathi thought she looked like she was in shock.



Rathi felt as though someone was squeezing her lungs. Reluctantly she refocused on the glass, letting her fingertips graze the now-freezing surface. The four stripes she'd coloured into the snowglobe quickly grew outwards in a circular motion, revealing yet another scene behind their globe. At first, all Rathi could detect was a blinding yellow light that left little rainbow reflections all around the snow-covered kitchen. With a resounding *swoop* a door closed in front of the light, into a worn-in room with the look of a university dorm, with its two identical rooms and blank walls. The woman from the first clip dropped a bag on the ground. *Oh my god, she realized. That's me.*

The same friend from the first clip was back, looking older—her face was slimmer and she seemed to be only inches away from her head touching the ceiling of the low dorm. She waved, looking up from her textbook. The more mature Rathi immediately swooped down to her own desk, putting her remaining backpack underneath it. "Business," the textbook cover read. *Business? Why am I taking business?*

As if the snowglobe could hear her thoughts, the scenes suddenly propelled farther into the future. Rathi was wearing a sleek, white blouse. Sliding a pen from its pocket, she began to sign a stack of papers. A woman was sitting beside her in the matching velvet chairs of this unfamiliar yellow room. They were whispering quietly together, looking equal parts excited and calculating. A lease for her new restaurant.

Is this where my life leads? Rathi wondered. Somehow, knowing this made her feel a little bit better. Her future was something she could work towards, something that she could make better than the present. The squeezing in her ribs felt less overwhelming now. She took a step back from the snowglobe, and immediately the force field shattered into a thousand small pieces in a small white ring around the kitchen.

Suddenly she found herself back at the chopping block, the glass residue gone, feeling much surer than she did before.



The Poppy and What it Means to Me



SCHOOL: St. Joseph
TEACHER: Susanne McKerral
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVES: James Durkin
UNIT: Algonquin–Lakeshore
UNIT PRESIDENT: Sheena Cassidy

GRADES 7–8 / POEM
by Rachel Heffernan

At times I wonder if it was really true, so many died where poppies grew.

The soldiers fell as bullets flew, fighting for freedom was all we knew.

My mind still wonders about that day, while lives were lost and families pray,

For the safe return of a family or friend, in the Flanders fields where poppies bend.

To sacrifice all for the country we love, and while losing so many of those now above.

It's hard as a child to make sense of it all and understand why we all must stand tall.

Showing respect to our country and the soldiers who died, the poppies remind us of those that had tried.

A poppy is bright and is the colour of red, it reminds us of the day that the tears were all shed.

Tears of sadness and relief that the war we did win and the peace we have found since the war did begin.

When I think of the poppy I take a sigh of relief, because I was not there to feel any grief.

I will wear a poppy today but not because I'm sad, it's to remember those soldiers and the war that was had.

The poppy is a sign that we know we are free but helps us remember that we must let it be.



Christmas Concert Script 2020/21



SCHOOL: Madonna Della Libera
TEACHER: Emma Grande
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE:
Liane Lalonde
UNIT: Brant Haldimand Norfolk
UNIT PRESIDENT: Tom Laracy

GRADES 7-8 / PLAY

by Folakunmi Victor Osunfisan, Cuba Pucci, Emma Smith, Lily Wickson, Addison Wilkes, Mya Figueroa, Akiva Omari, and Julia Wood

SCENE ONE

All the characters are running from the prison. Screen stops.

Santa: I bet you're all wondering how we got here. Well, let's go back to early Christmas Eve.

The screen resumes and rewinds to the beginning.

Santa: Is the sleigh ready with the sack? Are the reindeers fed? All the toys are ready?

Bells: Yeppers Santa! Everything's all ready.

Santa: Are you positive?

Peppermint: Very.

Santa: You're sure?

Everyone: YES!

Bells: Haha nooooooo!

Santa: Okay, okay! I'll see you elves when I get back. Brilliant job this year everyone! Go treat yourselves to some cookies!

Keeks: *(Sarcastically)* Oh goody.

Santa gets into her sleigh and leaves. Noël notices Santa's mask on the floor.



- Noël: Mais regarde! Santa a oublié son masque!
- Bells: Forget whatever you said Noël! Santa forgot her mask, look!
- Keeks: This is not the time for her to forget her mask, what're we going to do?
- Noël: On peut utiliser les petits rennes pour aller auprès de Santa et lui donner son masque!
- Nutcracker: Shh Noël! WHAT YOU RANTING ABOUT NOW? We're trying to think and it would be very helpful if you would too...we should...we should..?
- Peppermint: I know! We can use the baby reindeers to fly and find Santa so we can give her her mask.
- Noël: C'est ce que j'ai dit!
- Bells: Nobody cares buddy! Oh never mind that, that's a great plan, Peppermint.
- Peppermint: Why, thank you Bells!
- Cookie: Guys, the more we talk, the less time we have to go find Santa! Heaven knows where she is by now!
- Keeks: Come on, let's go get the baby reindeers!
- Nutcracker: I CALL THE ONE WITH THE MOST EXPERIENCE!
- Peppermint: None of them have experience yet, you should know that. You're the one who trains them.
- Bells: Alright, alright, moving forward, let's go, let's go.

The elves leave.

SCENE TWO

As Santa lands on a house, the elves find her. She grabs the sack of toys and makes for the chimney.

- Noël: Ici! Santa est ici!
- Bells: Shh Noël! Look! Santa's there on top of that house!
- Noël: JE LE SAIS!
- Cookie: You what?
- Peppermint: SHHHHHH! YOU'RE GOING TO CAUSE ATTENTION TOWARDS US. *(Be dramatic here, you're great at that.)*
- Nutcracker: Chillax bro they're gonna hear her anyway! *(Points at his stomach.)*
- Peppermint: *(Just glares.)*



Santa goes into the home and it switches to her perspective. Santa begins to reach into her sack and pulls out a present. Picarrd enters the room rubbing his eyes, then looks terrified when he notices Santa.

Picarrd: Qui es-tu?

Santa: *(Acting subtly panicked.)* Hold on? You don't recognize me? I recognize you! You're little old Picarrd! Well obviously, I'm Santa Claus! But at the North Pole they call me BIGS! (Or Sandy.)

Picarrd: *(Does not look impressed.)* Tu n'es pas le Père Noël!

Santa: What do you mean? I AM Santa! I mean, I guess I'm not fat, or necessarily a HE, but I am still Santa!

Picarrd: MAMAN PAPA IL Y A UNE FEMME QUI SE FAIT PASSER POUR SANTA DANS NOTRE MAISON.

Santa: No, no! I'm Santa Claus! Shh, shh! No need to wake your Parents, I'll be going now!

Picarrd's mom walks in.

Mom: Picard? Pourquoi tu n'es pas dans ton lit? *(She notices Santa.)*

Mom: QUI ES-TU? PICARRD VA CHEZ PAPA! DAVID! TÉLÉPHONEZ À LA POLICE!

Santa: Oh no, oh no, oh no.

Santa panics and runs around, but trips and falls and passes out. Police arrive and it's back to the elves' perspective. Peppermint and Nutcracker are arguing over whether or not Peppermint's actually dramatic.

Keeks: Will you two be quiet for one minute? Look over at the house!

Bells: Are those...are they the—

Bells AND
Keeks: POLICE?

Peppermint turns away from her argument.

Peppermint: The police? Are you two delusional? There's no— *(Peppermint's eyes go wide as she sees Santa being taken away by an officer.)* HOLY CANDY CANE! WHY IS SANTA BEING ARRESTED?

Nutcracker: You've got to be kidding me.

Noël: Qu'est-ce que nous allons faire?



SCENE THREE

Santa is placed in a cell with a guard. The guard looks at Santa confused and yet interested.

Guard: What are you in for? Staging to be Santa as an excuse to do something ridiculous?
(Laughs.)

Santa: Uhm, yes, actually.

Guard: *(Stops laughing.)* ...Oh.

Santa: Well, except for the whole staged part. And the doing something ridiculous part. I'm ACTUALLY Santa Claus. Believe it or not, it's really hard for people to actually believe that.

Guard scoots away from Santa a little.

Guard: Yeah, I wonder why.

Back to the elves stressing and panicking (while they look for the police station).

Peppermint: ALRIGHT. I need a VALID reason as to why this is somebody's fault, I feel like SOMEONE has to be blamed.

Nutcracker: No, nobody needs to be blamed. You just enjoy it when somebody does something wrong because you're Little Miss Perfecto.

Peppermint: *(Gasps.)* Well—well...I mean...You're not wrong, I guess....

Bells: If we're looking to blame someone, I think it should actually be Peppermint.

Peppermint: ME!?

Keeks: Why Peppermint?

Bells: Because SHE was supposed to run over everything and make sure everything was perfect. SHE was supposed to make sure Santa had her mask.

Cookie: Bells isn't wrong.

Peppermint: IN MY DEFENCE, Santa is a grown woman who should be able to make sure she has ONE THING!

Bells: YOU'RE THE ONE WHO WAS LOOKING TO BLAME SOMEONE!

Peppermint: I OBVIOUSLY DIDN'T MEAN ME!

Cookie: GUYS, GUYS! STOP ARGUING! Peppermint AND Bells are both right. Peppermint was supposed to make sure everything was perfect and in order, but at the same time Santa should've just been able to make sure she had one thing.

Keeks: How about we just stop blaming people?



Nutcracker: Awww, but I like watching drama being evolved!

Noël: ARRÊTE! Est-ce que c'est le poste de police?

Bells: Never mind that Noël, the drama's over. Isn't that the Police Station?

Noël is just downright furious now.

Noël: C'EST CE QUE J'AI DIT!

Keeks: Woah calm down Noël, we get it. You're enraged that Santa was taken, but excited that we've found her.

Cookie: We all are, Noël.

Noël: NON, NON—

Bells: Shhh! Let's go!

Nutcracker: Perfect! Time for me to put my karate lessons to good use.

Peppermint: This isn't going to end well.

Bells: No, it's really not.

SCENE FOUR

The elves sneak inside and find Santa's cell.

Cookie: Look! Santa!

Keeks: Are you okay?

Peppermint: What happened?

Bells: Did you rob them of their cookies?

Cookie: And milk?

Nutcracker: Are my karate skills needed?

Peppermint: Are you hurt?

Keeks: Who's that?

Nutcracker: I realllyyy want to use my karate skills—

Santa: ENOUGH, ENOUGH!

Guard: Tho—those are actual elves. Like—real elves.



Santa: I told you I was Santa! And these here are my trusty elves.

Noël: Bonjour Madame!

Guard: Bon what?

Bells: He's from a different toy making factory.

Cookie: We have no clue what he's saying.

Keeks: Maybe after all of this, we should invest in English lessons for him.

Nutcracker: We only know his name.

Santa: ALRIGHT! Now, I need you all to break me out.

Peppermint: Ah yes of course.

Everyone stops for a minute and looks around at one another.

Bells: And...how exactly do we do that?

Keeks: Well...maybe we can pick the lock on the cell?

Cookie: Use magic?

Peppermint: We can—

Nutcracker: KICK THE CELL DOOR DOWN.

Noël: Non! Si nous faisons ça, il y aura un grand bruit!

Nutcracker: So, yes?

Peppermint: Sooo, no.

Nutcracker: Please?

Santa: No, I have a feeling whatever Noël said was smart, and all I could comprehend was 'non' so let's go with no.

Keeks: I agree with Santa.

Guard: If you don't mind me chiming in, but I think that some sort of distraction would be perfect. Not only to give you all more time to figure out what to do, but you won't have to worry about the guards also.

Santa: THAT'S A WONDERFUL IDEA! AND A GENIUS ONE TOO!

Bells: Perfect! All we need now is, well, a distraction.



Cookie: I KNOW!

A class sings a song for distraction. The cell door opens.

Peppermint: Ah! It worked! It really worked!

Nutcracker: I told you kicking the door with a lot of force and power would work.

Keeks: It was also really cool.

Nutcracker: Yeah I know, no need to flatter me.

Keeks: I wasn't flattering you—

Santa: *(Santa exits cell with guard while saying)* Enough, enough. I've never heard any of you bicker so much in my whole life!

Noël: Ils font ça tout le temps.

Santa: Uh, yeah, sure Noël. Anyway, moving forward.

Cookie: OH NO, OH NO!

Santa: What is it?

Officer: HEY! HOW'D YOU TWO GET OUT OF YOUR CELL?

Nutcracker: NOW CAN I USE MY KARATE?

Peppermint: NO, YOU CAN'T USE YOUR KARATE.

Bells: YOU NEED TO USE YOUR LEGS AND RUN!

Everyone starts running while two officers chase them. They run to the stairs and run down.

Peppermint: MAY I ASK HOW YOU GOT ARRESTED SANTA?

Santa: RIGHT NOW? REALLY?

Bells: WRAP UP THE CHIT CHAT.

Cookie: POLICE ARE LITERALLY CHASING US—

Keeks: AS WE BREAK SANTA OUT OF A PRISON—

Bells: AFTER SHE WAS ARRESTED.

Peppermint: YEAH, BUT WHY WAS SHE ARRESTED?

Everyone: AND WHERE'S NUTCRACKER?



Nutcracker is at the top of the stairs. He picks up a prop and throws it at the police.

Nutcracker: FEEL THE WRATH OF THE NUTCRACKER!

Peppermint: WHAT'D WE SAY ABOUT KARATE?

Nutcracker: THAT WASN'T KARATE, THAT WAS THE ART OF THROWING AN OBJECT AT A TARGET TO ESCAPE THEIR CLUTCHES. LEARN THE DIFFERENCE.

Bells: YOU ONLY HIT ONE OF THEM! HERE. *(Bells picks up another prop and throws it at the other policeman.)*

Keeks: I mean...that works.

Guard: Nice throw.

Cookie: Okay, yes, nice throw, but at the same time, they're only going to stay down for a few minutes so we better escape while we can!

They all begin to run again, they're coming close to the exit.

Peppermint: OH MY GOSH—WE'RE ACTUALLY GOING TO MAKE IT. WE'RE ACTUALLY GOING TO ESCAPE.

Bells: Well, no duh!

Noël: MAIS REGARDE! LES GARDES!

Cookie: Les what?

Noël: LES POLICIERS!

Keeks: What does that mean?

Guard: POLICE!

Santa: WHAT? MORE OF THEM?

Guard: NO! THE SAME ONES!

Nutcracker: HOW? WE COMPLETELY DESTROYED THEM!

Santa: THEY'RE INDESTRUCTIBLE!

Peppermint: HOLD ON!

Peppermint grabs a candy cane.

Bells: A candy cane? What's a candy cane going to do?

Santa: THIS IS NO TIME FOR A SNACK BREAK!



Peppermint: NO! It's not just any candy cane! Catch, Bells! *(Peppermint tosses the candy cane to Bells.)*

Keeks: OH! I know what it is! Bells, don't push the button until Peppermint gives you the—

Bells: PUSH THE BUTTON? GOT IT!

Bells pushes the button and throws it.

Peppermint: EVERYONE CLEAR OUT!

Everyone makes it outside and lands in the snow as an explosion goes off behind them.

Nutcracker: I think we made it.

Noël: Oui, nous sommes en sécurité.

Guard: SECURITY?

Santa: WHERE?

Bells: I don't think he meant ACTUAL security.

Keeks: Maybe that means...“safe” in his language?

Noël: OUI! SÉCURITÉ!

Peppermint: We really need to get him an English tutor.

Santa: Well, I need to get going quickly. *(Checks her watch.)* It's nearly eleven o'clock and I've only made it to one house!

Guard: I can come with you! I'll help you deliver the presents extra speedy!

Santa: You'd help me with delivering the presents?

Guard: Of course! It's Christmas after all, and you did just save my butt. All of you!

Nutcracker: Anytime.

Cookie: Good luck Santa!

Bells: We know you can do it!

Keeks: Keep the magic spirit in you!

Nutcracker: And if you need some karate skills, gimme a call.

Peppermint: OH! *(Peppermint reaches in her pocket and grabs a mask. She hands it to Santa.)* Don't forget this Santa! We're in a pandemic after all!

Santa: Why thank you, Peppermint!



Santa and the guard get into a “sleigh.”

Guard: Merry Christmas elves!

Santa: Yes! Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good night! HO! HO! HO! (*Santa and the guard leave.*)

Everyone
Except Noël: MERRY CHRISTMAS SANTA!

Noël: JOYEUX NOËL!

Bells: WAIT A MINUTE!

Keeks: I THINK I KNOW WHAT NOËL SAID!

Nutcracker: You do?

Cookie: YES!

Everyone
Except
Nutcracker: MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Noël: OUI! JOYEUX NOËL!

Nutcracker: Oh, yeah, merry Christmas. Mhm, I thought that too.

Bells: I think all this chaos makes everyone deserve a candy cane.

Keeks: And not an explosive one.

Bells: PASS ME A CANDY CANE, NOËL!

Noël hands Bells a larger candy cane that’s glittering and sparkly.

Noël: Ici!

Bells: Thank you Noël!

Cookie: Wait a minute—

Keeks: NO BELLS, DON’T!

Bells takes a bite of the candy cane.

Peppermint: THAT WAS THE CANDY CANE OF CHRISTMAS MAGIC AND CHEER! It holds—well, HELD, all the magic and cheer of Christmas!

Nutcracker: (*Sits back and relaxes.*) This’ll be interesting.



Everyone glares at Nutcracker.

Nutcracker: *(Shrugs.)* What?!

Bells: Oh no...

Bells gets very hyper.

Peppermint: Well isn't this one FUN Christmas.

Keeks: I wouldn't ask for a better one if I'm being honest.

Cookie: Although it was scary, chaotic, and a mess, it was fun and a HUGE learning experience.

Keeks: The only bad thing is that Bells is very hyper now...and Christmas cheer may be gone.

Nutcracker: THE ONLY BAD THING? I never got to use my karate skills! *(Demonstrates his karate skills in the air.)*

Cookie: On the bright side, we learned one thing in Noël's language.

Noël: JOYEUX NOËL!

Peppermint: Yes! Joyeux Noël, which means—

EVERYONE: MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Nutcracker: AND TO ALL A GOOD NIGHT! Sorry, I just had to add that too.

THE END!!



Should WNBA players be paid the same as NBA players?



SCHOOL: St. Joan of Arc
TEACHER: Nicole Commisso
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Mark Francisco
UNIT: Halton Elementary
UNIT PRESIDENT: Tara Hambly

GRADES 7–8 / NONFICTION
by Isabella Suarez

Imagine the world-renowned, NBA All-Star LeBron James being paid only \$100,000 for his annual salary, one of the biggest names in NBA history only being paid a minuscule fraction of the average salary for a professional male basketball player. Well, Candace Parker, LeBron James's WNBA equivalent, gets paid just over \$100,000 yearly. Now, LeBron James easily makes almost 40 million a year. How is it fair when two equally elite players, who are both All-Stars, get paid such drastically different amounts because of their genders? We live in a world that is constantly diminishing women and their skills, a society that values men more than the opposite gender who are just as good. How is this fair? How in 2021 are we still facing gender inequality? The bottom line is that WNBA players must be paid equally to their NBA counterparts.

One reason why WNBA players must be paid the same as NBA players is because both the men and women have the same abilities and skills and their pay must reflect that. For example, if you compare WNBA player Candace Parker with NBA player JaVale McGee, who were both drafted in 2008, you will see obvious inequalities when it comes to rewarding players for their skills. According to Basketball Reference, Candace Parker averages 17 points and 4 assists per game, and she makes about \$100,000 a year. On the other hand, JaVale McGee averages 7 points and 1 assist per game, but he makes about \$4 million a year. Clearly, their annual salaries do not reflect their skills and abilities. JaVale McGee gets paid an enormous amount of money while Candace Parker does not even make as much as an NBA referee, which highlights how low WNBA players' pay is. As with any job, their pay must reflect their performance and capabilities, and not their gender. Although the WNBA does not have as much revenue as the NBA to provide for as much pay, they must find a way to pay their players the same as their NBA counterparts to reflect their abilities and skills.

Another reason why WNBA players must be paid equally to the NBA players is because they should get what they deserve for the amount of effort and commitment they put into their careers. It is extremely challenging to become a professional basketball player, let alone a female professional basketball player. According to an article by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), the chance of an NCAA senior female basketball player to be drafted by a WNBA team is about one in



100 or 1.0 percent; whereas the chance of an NCAA senior male basketball player to be drafted by an NBA team is about one in 75 or 1.3 percent. This statistic indicates that the chances of getting into the WNBA are even lower than getting into the NBA. The women experience even more competition and have to work even harder, so why should they have to work so hard for so little pay? The women who make it to the WNBA are the best of the best, and the men who make it to the NBA are the best of the best. Since both who make it to play professionally are at the top of their athletic competitions, they must be paid equally regardless of their gender. Although some may think that the difference between 1.3% and 1.0% is not that significant, it shows that women have to work even harder to attempt to achieve the same level as men. Therefore, women in the WNBA must be paid the same as NBA players to match their levels of effort and the commitment they put into their careers.

Finally, WNBA players must be paid the same as NBA players because they are an example for young girls to aspire to. Young girls should be able to dream and have role models that they can look up to. With female basketball players being diminished through their low salaries and being less valued than their male counterparts, what message does this send to the future generation of aspiring female athletes? In an article by Investopedia, the minimum salary for a WNBA player is \$42,728 annually whereas the minimum salary for an NBA player is \$1.4 million a year. Therefore, women earn only 3% of what men earn. This WNBA salary is nothing compared to all the hard work that goes into becoming a WNBA player. Young girls will look at this and reconsider their future dreams and life-long goals. After all, why should they have to sacrifice so much to settle for so little? We need a future generation with strong and confident women but if everywhere they look they see devalued women, they will feel weak and insecure. Although the WNBA is fairly new, which means that paying an exorbitant amount of money to start is risky, the WNBA must set an example for young girls to see what they can accomplish. With this being said, they must pay their female basketball players the same as the NBA's male basketball players.

It is crucial that the WNBA players get paid the same salaries as the NBA players. Right now, we are experiencing gender inequality between our WNBA players and our NBA players. We must ensure that our professional basketball players are paid equally, no matter their gender. There are numerous reasons as to why WNBA players should be paid the same as NBA players: their pay must reflect their skills and abilities, they should get what they deserve for the amount of effort and commitment they put into their careers, and they are an example for young girls. With all these reasons, it is unquestionable that WNBA players should be paid fairly. Women work just as hard as men and



therefore should not be paid only a fraction of a man’s salary. After all, it is beyond overdue that we implement gender equality into our lives, our society, and of course our professional sports leagues. As Michelle Obama once said, “No country can truly flourish if it stifles the potential of its women and deprives itself of the contribution of half of its citizens.”

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Blood, Spoons, and Tears



SCHOOL: St. Thomas of Villanova
TEACHER: Darren Gravalese
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Bryan Dufour
UNIT: Windsor–Essex Secondary
UNIT PRESIDENT: Joe Brannagan

GRADES 9–10 / SHORT STORY
by Lauren Robinson

I am sick.

Since I'm sick, people generally expect that I suddenly have this bright, positive outlook on life because "it's short and fleeting", or whatever. They claim to understand my lack of a sunny disposition, but they don't. Not really, anyway.

I *really* wish people would stop pitying me.

People quickly become disappointed in me after learning that I can't be happy all the time. I don't know why they expect such things. This isn't *Me and Earl and the Dying Girl*. Or it might be. I wouldn't know; I haven't watched the film.

I stare at the painfully white tiles on the floor of my doctor's office, underneath the harsh fluorescent lighting.

"April?" Dr. Feldman asks. I flick my gaze upwards. "Come on in."

I've been coming to see Dr. Feldman since I was three years old. I'm fifteen now. My doctor is a very short man, and kind of looks like he would play shuffleboard with my grandmother. However, I assure you that he's a very talented hematologist and an honest man, as far as adults go.

My mom and I take a seat in his office. Dr. Feldman speaks.

"So, I've got the blood tests from the lab. I've got some news."

"And?" I say eagerly.

"And, the increased dosage of iron supplements aren't working effectively." Feldman says.

"What do you mean they aren't working?" I inquire.

"April!" My mother urgently hushes me.

"The folic acid and iron supplementation we were using to increase April's red blood cell production did not yield any results," he informs my mother and me.



My condition is called Paroxysmal Nocturnal Hemoglobinuria, otherwise known as PNH. Essentially, my bone marrow, the soft spongy tissue that manufactures blood for my entire body, produces defective red blood cells. My body's natural defence system destroys these defective red blood cells, and the subsequent result varies.

Patients with PNH form anemia, abnormal clotting and impaired bone marrow function. Not even my luck could be this bad.

“Unfortunately, April here has formed leukemia, due to her lack of red blood cells,” Dr. Feldman informs us, in a more solemn tone.

My mother quietly began to cry, her tears gently rolling down her grief-ridden face. As I digest this news, I feel my stomach drop and a lump rise in my throat. I should feel sad. Or even happy, now that I know what's wrong with me. I feel different, I wish it was in a way that made sense. I remain motionless in my seat and stare at a poster of cancer-ridden lungs on the wall.

There's only a 3 to 5 percent chance of developing leukemia. Apparently, my luck *could* get a lot worse.

Dr. Feldman continues: “Now, I know it's a long shot, however, she is on the donor list. And it is possible, however unlikely, that she'll receive a bone marrow transplant.”

There goes any hope of this being over.

The ride home from the clinic is terrible. It's wet and cold. I watch the raindrops race each other down the window, to avoid fixating on my current situation.

My mother's quiet composure from earlier crumbles when we get home, she now gasps for air as large sobs escape her mouth. I feel like she is already mourning my death. She flings herself into my father's arms and they both wrap me in a warm hug. We all stand in the entryway to my home, for what feels like a long time.

As I reflect on my perilous situation in my bed at night, I think of my mother and father's predicament. I watch the ceiling fan go in circles, and I wonder how I would feel if my child were to die.

Now, I'm attending a support group for people with leukemia, every Friday. More specifically, teenagers with leukemia, in a small church basement, downtown. I'll admit, opening up about how I felt about my impending doom was not ideal, especially since it was a group of strangers in a circle of flimsy folding



chairs, but I did it anyway.

They always had a nice assortment of doughnuts, pastries, and fruit at each meeting. The Greeks once said, “There is no such thing as a free lunch.” They also thought light came from the eyes. It’s safe to say they’ve got some things wrong.

I remember my first meeting with teenagers with leukemia. I was nervous about introducing myself, so I studied the mural of The Last Supper, as interpreted by the church’s youth group, until it was my turn to speak.

The boy to my right spoke.

“It’s your turn.”

“Hi, I’m April, and I’m an alcoholic.”

A collective snicker passed around the circle of chairs.

“Why don’t you tell us the real reason you’re here?” asked the instructor.

“I was recently diagnosed with leukemia and I want to learn how to cope. You know, with the whole death thing.”

“Interesting. Could you talk to the group about how you feel, about the possibility of death?” suggested the instructor. “I’m sure it would help the others to hear about it from one of their peers.”

“Yes, of course. Erm...” I felt the intense glare of judgemental adolescents upon me. I avoided their gazes and readjusted my posture in the folding metal chair.

“Well, I’ve never really had to think about death, in the way leukemia forces you to think about death. I don’t know of anyone that can entirely grasp that big of a concept.”

Despite feeling slightly embarrassed, I rambled on.

“Look, we’re all told that we’re gonna die eventually, and all we can do is hope it happens at a convenient time. And if being diagnosed with leukemia has taught me anything, a convenient time does not exist.”

The room went silent for a moment, as those who were listening processed what I said.

“Thank you for sharing April. That was very brave. Would anyone else like to go next?” the instructor asked.



We went around the room, for another half hour or so, until the session was over. But while sitting in my chair, staring at roman numerals on the clock, I continued to ponder the instructor’s question. How do I feel about the possibility of death?

Since then, I’ve learned more about the people there. For example, the instructor’s name is Asia, she has two kids and had a brother, who passed away from leukemia. The boy to my right’s name is John Barnes. John, like me, had recently been diagnosed with leukemia. He, and a girl named Isla Abar, who had been going to these meetings for some time, became my new friends. They get me. John and Isla know exactly what I’m going through because they’re experiencing the same thing.

The best part? They don’t give me “that look.”

“That look” is the one people give me after finding out I have a blood disease. John and Isla don’t pity me like my school friends do, as if I’m a sick puppy or something. In return, I don’t give my new friends “that look” either. Being with Isla and John is refreshing. Our friendship, as Isla likes to say, is like celebrating life. Rather than reflecting on how quickly it comes to an end, John noted.

I hope that one day, I won’t receive “that look.”

On most days, I can deal with the fatigue, the bruising, the shortness of breath, the infections, and the constant headaches, but today is not one of them.

This morning, I felt nauseous and stood up, so I could go to the washroom. Simple enough, until you take into account the fact that I practically collapsed on my way there. My mom must have heard a commotion when I fell onto the hardwood floors of the hallway because she soon cried out.

“April? Are—are you alright?”

When I didn’t respond, she ran up the stairs and must’ve assessed that the situation was pretty serious, because it was now my father she yelled at.

“Bill! Call an ambulance!”

While being carried, I noted the stripes on the ambulance matched the blue and red bruises growing on my arms.

I’m in a hospital now, no need to worry. I’ve been in an ambulance more times than most people my



age, so it wasn't very scary. A lot of people ask me that question when they find out I have PNH. Howard-Bennet hospital is quite possibly the most boring hospital I have ever been to. The floors are alternating cream and light olive tiles. Yuck. Hung on the canary-coloured walls are a few questionable art prints. My room didn't have so much as a window. These factors made me feel more ill than I was already. But my will to survive will conquer any hardships I may face. By hardships I mean leukemia. I doubt I will recover from eating hospital food. The hospital staff has me drink vanilla protein smoothies, which may sound appetizing, but the taste closely resembles sawdust.

"April, finish your drink," my mother commands.

To which I reply, "No."

"There are children in Africa who are starving."

"Well, I'll just ship it to them then," I retort.

"You can't do that," Jolene says.

Sometimes I call my mom "Jolene," the name reserved only for when I get frustrated and call her that.

"What I meant to say was you should be grateful for your meal. I'm sure they would be in your shoes if they could," Jolene clarifies.

"In this scenario, they would choose to die of leukemia?" I counter.

She ignored me after that.

All I know is if I ever have kids, I won't guilt them into being more appreciative. I mean that's so invalidating. Now they feel sad because people are dying. And they're still upset about whatever problem they were having before. Even if somebody else has it much worse, that doesn't really change the fact that you have what you have.

It's been a slow few days at the hospital, waiting for a donor match. My energy levels have reached an all-time low. Before I undergo surgery, I have to go through radiation, as a part of my conditioning treatment.

I've never found a way to explain the extent of my symptoms. Things like hair loss and vomiting are visual, but others aren't. When my mother, father, doctor or my friends ask how I feel, "tired" doesn't seem to cover it.

John was the one who came up with the spoon theory, to describe how people dealing with illnesses like leukemia feel. When I heard it, I felt so understood. It's simple. Spoons represent finite units of energy. Energy, for many of us with leukemia, depends on many factors including stress levels, how



we're sleeping, pain, stuff like that. Something as simple as brushing your teeth may only take you one spoon, but for me, it's more like three. During a normal day, simple tasks take up a lot of spoons. For people dealing with any type of disease, we don't have the luxury to spend many spoons.

It's pretty revolutionary stuff. Isla even created a word for the people who relate. "Spoonie." We're hoping it'll catch on.

I am starting to miss school. I never thought I would say those words, but here I am. We were reading *1984*, which was written by George whatever-his-last-name-is. Basically, it's about this place where the government has cameras everywhere, to monitor the civilians, and that's kind of how I feel right now. Every inch of my body is being monitored by some screen. It's totally dehumanizing! Plus, the doctors always talk in this super condescending tone and only address my parents when they speak. They treat me like I'm some dumb and naive child. I'm fifteen, not five.

I just wish I could *do* something. I feel almost paralyzed laying in my hospital bed. My legs and hips hurt the most because that's where most of my bone marrow is, so I'm told. All I can do now is wait for someone who shares my specific protein markers, so my doctors can perform the transplant.

Suddenly, an alarming thought strikes me. What happens if I *don't* get the transplant?

I mean, I think I've had PNH for so long, that I haven't had to confront dying. I know it could happen, but this time might be it. There's a high probability I might be dead.

Finished. Gone. Finito.

There are so many things left to do! I haven't even been alive for two whole decades. I haven't paid 25 cents for a gumball in one of those unsanitary machines! I haven't bumped into someone going the opposite way in the hallway and do that thing where you go from one side to another, trying to decide what way to walk, and you both end up chuckling at your own absurdity. I haven't even ridden a roller coaster! Not that I have any desire to, but I haven't done it. I don't even know what my dad's job is. Does anyone really? I think he's an accountant. Maybe.

I want, no, *need* to go places, do things! But I can't. I feel pathetic. I get why people pity me.

I have to live every day, with the knowledge that I might be gone the next. That's enough to put anyone in a bad mood. At the very least, I am not alone. John and Isla are not alone.

Suddenly, my doctor comes into the room, to share what I hope is some good news.



“I see we have Mom, Dad and April here. Good, good. We have successfully found someone willing to donate! We’ll begin surgery tomorrow, at noon,” the doctor announces.

I can almost feel the relief oozing out of my parents.

“In twenty -four hours, we’ll prep April, and have you guys sign a release form, acknowledging the risks of surgery,” he added.

A telephone begins to hum from the depths of one of my mom’s purse pockets.

“I am so sorry doctor. I’ll just be a minute.” She hurries out the door, and into the hallway.

“Of course. I understand. Yes. I’ll tell her now.” My mother hangs up the phone.

She walks in slowly like she’s afraid to tell me something. But it’s much more fraught than the look I give her when I spill nail polish on the floor.

“April?” my mother asks.

“Yes, mom?” I reply.

She inhales deeply. “It’s Isla. She’s been bad for a long time and she was admitted to the hospital yesterday. Before the doctors could help her, she passed.”

I feel my heart plummet. I now know what riding a rollercoaster feels like.

“I’m really sorry sweetie. I know how devastated you must feel,” my mom expresses.

I didn’t know that she was that sick. Through all the jokes and smiles, she knew she was dying.

Now, it’s my turn to be vulnerable. I’ve really tried my best to not think about death. But I’ve decided I have to. So, I do the only rational thing humans do when we’re tired, angry, and sad at once, I cry.

“Hey honey, are you okay?” my mother asks from her chair, concerned.

“No I -I-I’m not okay. I am *not* okay,” I wail, as sobs pour out of my mouth.

My father stands up and takes a seat on the hospital bed beside me.

“Ya know kiddo, we are who we are. I know you didn’t choose any of this,” he gestured at the tubes sticking out of my arms. “You didn’t choose to be here, and you can’t change where you’ve been. But, you can choose where you’re headed. And you can try to make the most out of it.”



I'm impatient, at times blunt and stubborn, just like my father. I think part of growing up is realizing that your father is flawed, and realizing you're flawed too.

"Promise you'll never leave me?" I ask him.

"Not as long as I'm alive," he sincerely replies.

My mother smiles from across the room.

Everyone's a little bit sad. Like, all the time. We live and we die. Life is short. It's what we choose to do with that knowledge, like realizing how we should cherish life, that gives it meaning.

Take Isla as an example. She spent her life trying to make other people laugh. I think the world needs more Islas. So, I'm going to try to be a kind person.

I expect things in return when I really shouldn't. That's not kindness. I understand now, why others don't understand. I'd be disappointed too if I saw someone who wasn't living up to their potential. But it's not my place to do what I think is best for other people. I can only control how I act.

I'm upset with the way things are sometimes, like being sick constantly, but that doesn't mean I should take it out on my parents or strangers. So, I will treat other people with respect, even if they don't do the same for me. I will tell my parents how much I appreciate them. They deserve to feel loved. Everyone does.

I will find the good in things, I will.



When Darkness Falls



SCHOOL: St. Michael's Choir School
TEACHER: Sarah Gallah
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Rouba Abou Merhi
UNIT: Toronto Secondary
UNIT PRESIDENT: Pete McKay

GRADES 9–10 / POEM
by Robert Farley

When darkness falls upon our witless land
We scurry into hollows for to hide
The night that stretches out its blacken'd hand
May well conceal our deepest fears inside

But what of light that ever burns with gladness?
That dries the land when it masses strength to rise?
Why do we fear imagined realms of madness
When horror stands before our very eyes?

We are nothing in the absence of the dark
For it calls our slumb'ring intellect awake
And while in light the land is grim and stark
It houses awe before the day can break

Too long we've thought the dark a thing of fear
For now I know there's only wonder here



Strangers



SCHOOL: Cardinal Carter Academy for the Arts
TEACHER: Sheila O'Brien
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Isabel Molino
UNIT: Toronto Secondary
UNIT PRESIDENT: Pete McKay

GRADES 9–10 / PLAY
by Abigail M. M. Thomson

Characters (in order of appearance):

Mr. Chandler: A man in his late 30's. He is very professional and wears a suit. He has a British accent. He is on his way to a business conference.

Sandra: A single mom with two kids. She is clearly very exhausted and overwhelmed. She wears sweats.

Lucy: 17 year-old girl. She is very energetic and positive. She wears a yellow dress.

Justin: 17 year-old boy. He is kind of quiet and reserved. He wears a leather jacket, chain necklace, and jeans.

Charlie: A young man. He is very cautious and superstitious. He is very friendly, and tends to overshare.

Setting: Airport lounge. There are four chairs with a coffee table in between them. There are magazines and newspapers on the table. It is dimly lit. When Mr. Chandler enters, the lights fade up. There are the sounds of an airport: announcements, quiet chatter, etc.

Start

Mr. Chandler is sitting in a chair, reading a newspaper. Sandra comes in with her two children, and sits down next to Mr. Chandler. Her kids are playing on the floor in front of them. She sets her coffee down on the ground and one of her kids knocks it and spills it on Mr. Chandler's shoes.

Sandra: Oh! I'm so sorry! *(To her kids)* Timmy! Alex! Say sorry to the nice man! *(Her kids ignore her.)* I'm so sorry, mister...

Mr. Chandler: Chandler. And it's quite alright.

Sandra: No, it isn't, I've gone and wrecked your shoes. Here, I think I have some wet wipes in her somewhere... *(Rummages through her purse.)* Here! *(Offers him a pack of Wet Wipes.)*

Mr. Chandler: Oh, thank you... *(Bends down and wipes his shoes.)*

Sandra: Really sorry again, but you know kids, never ending energy. *(At this, her kids get up and begin chasing each other around the room.)* We're on our way to California. I'm dropping them off with their father. That man doesn't so much as call for a year and suddenly wants to have the kids for Christmas. I swear that man will be the end of me...



So, where are you off to?

Mr. Chandler: New York... Listen, I'd really like to get back to my paper.

Sandra: Oh! Yes! Of course. Go right ahead. Don't let me bother you. I have some reading to catch up on anyways.

Sandra takes out a book titled How to Handle Your Disobedient Children. They both read. Enter Lucy from SR and Justin from SL. Lucy is looking through a stack of paper frantically. Justin is on his phone. They continue walking straight, not noticing each other. They bump into each other center stage. Lucy's papers fall everywhere.

Lucy: Oh! I'm so sorry! I wasn't watching where I was going! *(Begins frantically picking up her papers.)* I was trying to find my boarding pass. I thought it was in my bag, but I couldn't find it, so I took everything out of my bag and—

Justin: Is this it here? *(Picks up a piece of paper by his foot. Lucy stands up.)*

Lucy: Yes! It is! Thank you.

Justin: No problem... So, where are you headed?

Lucy: My flight to Cali boards here. Not for another couple hours, though. I just like to be prepared.

Justin: Clearly.

Lucy: So, are you coming or going?

Justin: What do ya mean?

Lucy: Did you just land here or are you waiting for a flight?

Justin: Oh, going. Heading to New York for Christmas. That's where my sister lives.

Lucy: Wow! New York! The Big Apple! I've always wanted to go there.

Justin: No one really calls it that anymore...

Lucy: What, New York?

Justin: No, the Big Apple.

Lucy: Oh, well my flight boards here, and I see that yours does too, so you wanna sit together while we wait?

Justin: Uh...



Lucy: Oh come on! It'll be fun! I've got all sorts of food stashed in my bag, if you want some.

Justin: Sure, I guess. *(They sit next to each other, across from Mr. Chandler and Sandra.)*

Enter Charlie. He has a huge backpack on his back, a first aid kit around his waist, a machete in his belt loop, and a large winter coat on. He sits down next to Mr. Chandler, with his bag still on. Mr. Chandler is clearly feeling crowded and uncomfortable.

Mr. Chandler: Um, excuse me, sir, but could you move over a seat?

Charlie: Oh, of course, sorry. *(Moves over one seat, and puts his bag on the floor.)*

Mr. Chandler: Thank you. *(Goes back to reading his newspaper.)*

Sandra: *(She looks over and notices Charlie's huge bag. She leans forward past Mr. Chandler. They talk across him.)* Wow! That's quite the bag you've got there. Where you headed?

Charlie: Ohio.

Sandra: Why do you need all that for Ohio?

Charlie: In case we crash land in the wilderness, I have all the basic survival essentials. You know, tent, sleeping bag, flashlight, enough freeze-dried food to last me three months.

Sandra: And the machete?

Charlie: To ward off any predators who might try to attack me. And to cut down tree limbs to make a hut if my tent breaks. I also have a first aid kit and flares.

Sandra: Well, you certainly seem...well prepared. Although I doubt you'll be crash landing.

Charlie: You can never be too careful... My Great Aunt Ally hit some turbulence once when on a plane and got a concussion. She was never the same since. Can't remember a thing.

Sandra: I'm sure you'll be fine.

Mr. Chandler: If you don't mind, I'm trying to read.

Sandra +
Charlie: Sorry. *(They sit back in their chairs.)*

Lucy: *(She looks over at Charlie.)* Um, sir, that kid is trying to take your machete. *(One of Sandra's children is carefully sliding the weapon out of Charlie's belt loop. Once he is seen, he runs to his mom and hides under her chair.)*

Sandra: Sorry, but you know kids. Endless energy.



- Lucy: I like your machete! I have one on my wall at home. Not like that, though. Yours seems nicer.
- Charlie: Why, thank you! My Great Aunt Ally gave it to me before her accident. Now she thinks I'm her sister Helena.
- Lucy: Oh, that's sad.
- Justin: You got any more food, Lucy?
- Lucy: No, I'm out.
- Charlie: Oh, I've got plenty to spare! Not my freeze dried food though, I need that for when we crash. I've got some candy bars though. You guys want some?
- Justin: Sure.
- Charlie: *(Hands them both a candy bar. He then turns to Sandra and Mr. Chandler.)* You guys want one?
- Mr. Chandler: No, I'm quite alright, thank you.
- Sandra: I'm okay, too.
- Charlie: Any for the young'uns?
- Sandra: That's sweet of you, but no. If they have any sugar they won't sleep on the plane, which I desperately need them to do so that I can sleep. They've kept me up all night for the past month.
- Charlie: Suit yourself.
- Charlie, Lucy, and Justin eat their candy bars. Mr. Chandler reads his paper. Sandra reads her book. Sandra's children crawl around underneath the seats. Suddenly, an announcement comes on.*
- Announcer: Attention all airline flyers, due to heavy snow, all flights have been delayed until further notice. Thank you for your patience.
- Justin: *(Sarcastically)* Well, that's great.
- Mr. Chandler: Damn. Now I'm going to be late for my conference.
- Sandra: I won't hear the end of it from their father if I drop them off late...
- Charlie: *(To himself)* Don't panic don't panic don't panic don't panic...
- Lucy: Come on guys, look on the bright side! Now we have more time to get to know each other!



Justin: I guess.

Lucy: *(Stands up.)* Oh, come on! Where's your enthusiasm? This could be fun! We can get food from the vending machine and I have a deck of cards in my bag. My mom always said to make the best of a bad situation!

Charlie: My Aunt Ally used to say that, too! Before the accident, I mean. Now all she says is, "Bring me some soup." Even when there's already a bowl of soup in front of her.

Sandra: That's sad...

Lucy: Justin, can you go get some snacks from that vending machine over there?

Justin: Sure, I guess. *(He leaves.)*

Lucy: Mr. Chandler, you look like the kinda guy who knows poker. You wanna play black jack?

Mr. Chandler: Oh, I'm quite alright with my paper. Perhaps Sandra here would join you.

Sandra: Oh, I'd love to, but I've never played. Not much time for card games with two kids in the house. You know, never ending energy.

Mr. Chandler: You've mentioned that, yes.

Lucy: Come on, Mr. Chandler, play. You can help me teach Sandra.

Mr. Chandler: *(Thinks for a moment.)* Oh, alright. Nothing better to do until this infernal blizzard stops.

Lucy: Great! Charlie? Wanna join us?

Charlie: No, I'm okay. My Uncle Al had a gambling addiction and I don't want to fall into his path.

Lucy: I'm sure you'd be alright. It's just one game, and we're not betting anything.

Charlie: It's okay. Better to be safe than sorry you know? I'll gladly just watch.

Lucy: Suit yourself. *(To Mr. Chandler and Sandra)* I'll deal. You two ready?

Sandra: I'm ready! Mr. Chandler will have to show me the ropes though.

Justin enters with his arms full of snacks.

Justin: Got the stuff. *(Notices the cards.)* You playing blackjack? Mind if I join?

Sandra: Sure! This is nice. Snacks, new friends, and I'm learning to play cards! I never get any time to enjoy myself because of the kids, but they're being so nice and quiet right now... *(She looks around.)* Wait... Where are they? They were just here! Weren't they?

Mr Chandler: I'm not sure... When did any of you last notice them?



Sandra: I don't know! I haven't been paying attention! *(Stands up)* Timmy! Alex! Come back here right now! This airport is huge! They could be anywhere.... Oh my God! What if they got onto a flight? They could be on their way to Europe right now!

Charlie: I don't think you have to worry about that. There's a blizzard, remember? All flights are delayed.

What I would worry about if I were you is kidnappers, shooters, terrorists, and expired airport food. Those are the only things that can really get you at an airport.

Lucy: Charlie! Don't scare her! *(To Sandra)* I'm sure they're fine. They probably just wandered off somewhere. They probably just went to the gift shop. Justin, could you go check there?

Justin: Sure. *(Leaves.)*

Lucy: Great. Mr. Chandler, could you go check the other lounges?

Mr. Chandler: If I must. *(Leaves.)*

Lucy: Great. And Charlie, could you go check at security?

Charlie: Um, could I do something else? I don't like the security guards. They have guns. They could mistake me for some criminal and have me wrongfully arrested.

Lucy: Okay...um, could you check the bathrooms, then?

Charlie: The bathroom stalls are the perfect place for a killer to hide, but fine. *(He leaves.)*

Sandra: And me? What do I do?

Lucy: You stay here with me in case the boys come back here. Just relax. I'm sure they're fine... Want a Kitkat? *(Offers her a chocolate from the pile of snacks.)*

Sandra: No, I'm okay. I just can't believe I went and lost my children. My children! I had one job! Get them safely to their father. That's it! That's all I had to do! But no! Couldn't even do that. I'm a failure. A failure! I'm not fit to be a mother!

Lucy: No! Sandra, don't say that. They're kids. Kids wander off. That's what they do. I'm sure we'll find them soon.

(Justin comes back, holding a stuffed animal.)

Justin: They weren't in the gift shop. I found this, though. Thought you might like it, Lucy. *(He awkwardly hands the toy to Lucy.)*

Lucy: Oh, thank you... *(She looks up at him, and they stare at each other for a couple of moments, then she clears her throat.)* So...they weren't in the gift shop?



Justin: Nope.

Lucy: Well, hopefully the others have more luck.

Mr. Chandler: *(Enters.)* They were not in the other lounges.

Sandra: Where could they be?!

Lucy: Don't worry, Sandra. Charlie isn't back yet. Maybe he found them. And there's no point in worrying until he gets back. Have a Kitkat. Or something else, if you prefer. There's plenty. You, too, Mr. Chandler. And you, Justin. *(They all begin eating the snacks.)*

Justin: *(With a mouthful of food)* I wonder what's taking Charlie so long?

Mr. Chandler: *(Sipping a coke)* I'm sure he just got frightened and is hiding under a chair somewhere.

Justin: Or that killer he was so worried about finally found him.

Sandra: There really is a killer?!

Lucy: No! Don't worry Sandra. *(To Justin and Mr. Chandler)* And you two! Stop scaring her! I'm sure Charlie will be back any minute. And if not, I'll go look for him myself.

Charlie enters, with the two boys clinging to his feet.

Sandra: *(She runs to him and scoops the boys up in her arms.)* Alex! Timmy! You're safe! Thank God! *(She suddenly becomes very stern.)* How could you just run off like that?! You nearly killed me from worry! Don't you ever do that again!

Lucy: Where were they, Charlie?

Charlie: Well, I checked the bathrooms, but they weren't there, so I started heading back but then I thought I saw two little boys run around a corner. So I followed them, which was probably a bad idea in case it was a killer trying to lure me into his trap, but I did it anyway. I eventually found them, and when I told them that they had to come back and Sandra was really worried, they grabbed onto my legs and wouldn't let go! I eventually just decided that since they weren't going to let go anytime soon, I would have to pull them back on my feet, which was very difficult, and that's why I took so long. Sorry to leave you in suspense.

Sandra: Thank you Charlie! I don't know what I would have done without you!

Charlie: *(Flattered)* Oh, it was nothing.

Mr. Chandler: Well, thank goodness that's cleared up. Now I can get back to my paper.

Suddenly an announcement comes over the PA.



Announcer: Attention all airline flyers, due to the persistent snowfall, all flights have been officially canceled until further notice. Sorry for the inconvenience.

Charlie: Oh, thank God, I can finally get out of this deathtrap! Nice to meet you guys! *(Grabs his bag and machete and runs off.)*

Justin: Well, that's annoying.

Mr. Chandler: There's an hour of my life I will never get back.

Sandra: Their father is going to get so mad if the boys aren't with him for Christmas. Things like this are always my fault in his eyes.

Lucy: *(Stands up, dramatic and emotional)* Come on, guys! You can't seriously tell me this experience has been a complete waste of time. We really got to know each other! I'd say perhaps we made some memories that will last us all our lives. We've only been together for a couple hours, but I'd say we've bonded! We may go on to be lifelong friends! So you can't seriously sit here and tell me that this experience wasn't at least a bit worthwhile?

They all stand in silence for a moment.

Mr. Chandler: Listen... I've got to get going if I hope to have a warm dinner when I get home. Nice to meet you all. *(Leaves.)*

Sandra: I've got to get these boys home before they run off again. You know kids, never ending energy. *(Leaves.)*

Lucy: *(Sadly, to Justin)* I guess you're just gonna leave, too?

Justin: Well... I thought maybe you would wanna go get some food with me? There's a Taco Bell ten minutes from here.

Lucy: *(She looks shocked, and takes a moment to answer.)* Um... Sure!

Justin reaches for her hand, and they exit together, hand in hand, and the lights fade to blackout.

End.



The Use of Disguise in *Twelfth Night*



SCHOOL: St. Martin
TEACHER: Rosemarie Christina
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Barbara Nardo
UNIT: Dufferin–Peel Secondary
UNIT PRESIDENT: Maria De Berardinis

GRADES 9–10 / NONFICTION
by Tiana Severiano

How does one escape from the pressures of power, gender, and social class in a cruelly stereotypical and traditional society? As for the characters in the play *Twelfth Night* by William Shakespeare, disguise is the ultimate form of escapism. Nothing is as it seems in the kingdom of Illyria, and those who find themselves immersed in its most noble courts have an exclusive window into the foolish deception of Elizabethan society. Whether it be through their appearances or actions, characters throughout the play create false identities to leverage themselves to new advantages, or simply to survive in an unwelcoming society. This allows readers to be mindful of the context these characters exist in and gain an awareness of the roles in their own society. Shakespeare uses the theme of disguise to display the manipulation of control, to critique the Elizabethan era class system, and to explore gender and sexuality in the play *Twelfth Night*.

To begin with, Shakespeare uses the theme of disguise to show how characters manipulate control. Humans instinctively suppress parts of themselves to simplify their lives. They manipulate themselves to gain control over their own feelings or the feelings of others. This intuitive behaviour is evidently seen in many characters in the play. For instance, Duke Orsino is a vulnerable character. His love for Olivia taints him with the insecurity of having this love unrequited. To conceal this, he masks this fault as poetic passion. In addition, he sends Cesario to deliver his messages to Olivia, refusing to even face her. When his feelings are threatened by Cesario, Duke Orsino states, “I’ll sacrifice the lamb that I do love/To spite a raven’s heart within a dove” (5.1.126-127). This moment in the play may be regarded as his breaking point, a moment when his insecurity is unleashed and he threatens to kill Cesario for Olivia’s love. His true identity is revealed. Duke Orsino’s reaction to vulnerability is not out of the ordinary. Shakespeare uses this character to demonstrate how emotional identity shifts as a means of self-protection. Another character who disguises himself to manipulate control is Feste. Although he is the wisest and most socially aware character in the play, Feste embraces the character of the fool. This disguise grants him the ability to speak his mind, albeit through witty riddles and rhymes. When in his disguise, he is given the control to say what he pleases and observe the courts to his advantage. He is aware of the role he plays, stating to Olivia: “That’s as much to say as I wear not motley in my brain”



(1.5.53-54). He is mindful of the intelligence that he is privileged with. The costume of the fool imprints a new attitude on Feste in the same way that Malvolio's transformation imprints a new attitude on him. Throughout the play, Malvolio longs to control situations out of his reach, especially his love for Olivia. When staged to wear a foolish costume in a letter written by Maria, his clothes transcend their physical function. Malvolio's disguise implements him with a newfound confidence, knowing that he has manipulated himself into Olivia's favour. His disguise forces a shift of perspective. Thinking he has control through his disguise, Malvolio states, "If it please the eye of one, it is with me as the very true sonnet is, 'Please one, and please all'" (3.4.22-23). He does not mind his ridiculous attitude, as it draws him closer to achieving what he desires. Shakespeare emphasises that Malvolio is willing to put on any role that would benefit him. The disguises that these characters wear prevents the world around them from seeing their true selves. It is a means of survival when income depends on likeability and stupidity. It is an advantage to manipulate a court through a confident false identity or a lack of vulnerability. Undoubtedly, Shakespeare uses the theme of disguise to display the manipulation of control, especially through the characters of Duke Orsino, Feste, and Malvolio.

Secondly, Shakespeare uses the theme of disguise to critique the Elizabethan era class system. In *Twelfth Night*, mistaken identity surpasses the simplicity of insecurity and elaborate costume. Disguise is also used to highlight the contrast between appearance and reality. With this in mind, it is apparent that Shakespeare is alluding to the fact that Elizabethan society is a construct that diminishes individuality. For instance, the characters who serve the nobles in this play are much more logical and authoritative than their masters. Servants are stereotypically looked down upon and are treated as unintelligent and not powerful. In the play, though, characters with a lower social status such as Cesario, Maria, and Malvolio have control over their respective courts, and a strong sense of wit and sharpness. Contrary to many servants at the time, the servants in *Twelfth Night* have authority. This is evident when Malvolio directs this statement towards Sir Toby Belch: "You are idle shallow things; I am not of your element," proclaiming that he is high above his acquaintances (3.4.120-121). Disguised in the stereotype of an Elizabethan servant, the servants in the play challenge the identity of the working class. Similarly, the nobles in *Twelfth Night* are not as they appear either. Under their rich robes and abundance of wealth, these nobles are overly emotional, such as Duke Orsino, and foolish drunks such as Sir Toby and Sir Andrew Aguecheek. They have the tendency to be irresponsible, despite their nobility. Servants, such as Malvolio, are not afraid to hold nobles accountable for their foolishness, seen when he confronts Sir Toby and Sir Andrew: "My masters are you mad? Or what are you? Have you no wit, manners, honesty...? Do ye make an ale-house out of my lady's house?" (2.3.82-85). When analyzing the roles of the servants and nobles in the play, it draws attention to the false sense of hierarchy the characters are disguised in. Olivia's court as a whole is nothing like it appears to be. Disguised behind a large estate, the court is out of order and filled with chaos, pranks, and



drunkenness. When speaking of the state of her court, Olivia proclaims: “Why, this is very midsummer madness” (3.4.54). She is aware of the disorganization and eccentric behaviour, suggesting that it is caused by the midsummer moon. The appearance of a society is far from its reality. It is impossible to define characters simply by observing their status. Without doubt, it is evident that Shakespeare uses the theme of disguise to critique the Elizabethan era class system.

Above all, Shakespeare utilises disguise in *Twelfth Night* as an exploration of gender and sexuality. The world the play exists in is heteronormative and values male characteristics. Historically, it is the job of the man to lead and be supported by his female counterparts. For this exact reason, the character of Olivia stands out as an important heroine and a master of disguise. After the deaths of her father and brother, Olivia is left in charge of her court. She takes on the role of the stern, stubborn woman, whilst still grieving her losses. This is especially seen in the way Olivia veils her face, as if she is disguising herself to fit the role of a male leader. This new identity she takes on ensures that she will be taken seriously as a woman in power. Her disguise is apparent though, as it is discarded when Cesario enters her life. Her veil is removed, as is her defensive facade. Viola claims that Olivia appears to be, “so abandon’d to her sorrow,” indicating that Olivia’s melancholic identity is efficient at warding off potential suitors (1.4.19). When left alone with Cesario, the true Olivia is revealed. She speaks of her true feelings and allows herself to be authentic. Shakespeare highlights the required duality of the working woman through Olivia, and the disguises women must wear to acquire wealth and power. The other heroine in *Twelfth Night* who disguises herself as a means of survival is Viola. The protagonist of the play, Viola, is disguised as the eunuch Cesario to comfortably settle in Illyria after being shipwrecked. Her disguise is not used to manipulate and connive, but rather to thrive in a man’s world. She quickly realizes the role gender identity plays in her society. Men are able to work and go about their daily lives without having to put on an authoritative mask. Viola’s disguise is used to explore how gender roles play into sexuality, as well. Shakespeare challenges his audience to make implications about what it means to feel romantic attraction when trapped in gender binaries. Viola’s disguise forces her into surreal experiences, such as when she becomes aware of Olivia’s love for Cesario: “Disguise, I see, thou art a wickedness,” (2.2.26). Making a direct reference to the role of disguises, Viola is aware of the challenges that come along with her false identity. Although it causes an abundance of confusion, her disguise is absolutely necessary. Viola’s world is not accepting of those who push back against stereotypes. Shakespeare suggests that there are consequences to authentically existing outside of cisgender heteronormativity through Antonio. Whether it be romantic or platonic, Antonio bears no disguises when it comes to his love for Sebastian. In a heteronormative society, people often are required to make unjust sacrifices to love who they please: “But, come what may, I do adore thee so/That danger shall seem sport, and I will go” (2.1.43-44). Despite his loving intentions, Antonio’s fate is tragic. He is a victim of deception and betrayal. Being the only character not to bear a



disguise, Antonio is Shakespeare's cautionary tale. False identities double as an oppressor and liberator in a traditional society. Whether they are necessary or not, Shakespeare uses the theme of disguises to thoroughly explore gender and sexuality.

To conclude, the theme of disguise in *Twelfth Night* is perfectly utilised to display the manipulation of power, to critique the Elizabethan era class system, and to explore gender and sexuality. Throughout the play, confusion surrounding identity adds an important level of complexity to the characters. They instinctively protect their emotions from the cruel society they exist in. The relatability of suppressing one's true self has resonated with audiences for hundreds of years. Humans are constantly performing different versions of themselves, hiding in the shadows of a society that praises conformity under capitalism. Concealing is seen as another attribute of professionalism. Shakespeare alludes to the fact that disguises are necessary for survival. Whether this be true or not, humans are merely the disguised fools who partake in the play of life.

Works Cited

Shakespeare, William. *Twelfth Night*. Harcourt Shakespeare 2nd ed., Nelson, 1601.



Sun and Moon



SCHOOL: Resurrection
TEACHER: Evelyn Dekker
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Barbara Downey
UNIT: Waterloo
UNIT PRESIDENT: Patrick Etmanski

GRADES 11–12 / SHORT STORY
by Chrysoula Stamatelos

They sit along the docks, the midsummer sun sets on them as they intertwine. He traces his fingers over her arm as he watches the water reflect the sky's colours. He feels his heart beat and slowly dives in for a kiss.

The woman blinks, staring into his mind—their lips close and the day almost over. They sit only centimetres apart, but with a swift movement, she pushes him aside. She strokes his cheek, a simple tear on his gold-like flesh.

Her touch is cold, and her fingertips are frail, yet the small graze is filled with comfort as her long dark hair outlines her face. He thinks to himself there is no sight more beautiful. He sways towards her. He craves her kiss but they both know they can't. She looks back to the sky, soon to be filled with an array of stars.

"Sun." She sighs, sitting back up. She curls up into a ball, hugging her knees that are pushing up into her chest. She closes her eyes. Sun kneels behind her, embracing her with his warmth. She places her icy hand onto his grip.

Together they rise to stand and shift closer to the edge of the dock. Sun faces her and their arms stay interlocked. He can feel the burden that once left when he was with her fall back onto him in an overwhelming presence.

"Moon." He whispers, searching her for any hope that she can stay just another minute. Yet Moon doesn't respond. She breaks his gaze, peering at the horizon. The sun nearly gone.

She lets go, wrapping her arms around her thinning body. Moon loved Sun but she knew they could never be together. She was the one who needed to be harsh and cruel and realistic. The water becomes inky and for another day, she must break Sun's heart. Moon doesn't turn her head to see her lover, about to let herself fade away.

"I'll see you at dawn." Moon reminds Sun. Her tone gentle, like the sound of an empty forest in the dead of night, nothing but a single owl cooing from its nest.



He considers chasing after her and tying her down with the heaviest rope he could find but he knows it won't work, that he can't keep her even if it leaves him broken. Closing his eyes, he only wishes that she'd still be there when he opens them again. Although, he knows when he peeks open his eyes and tilts his head up, she'll be illuminating the sky.

Apart now, the sky was different. It changed from its playful colour scheme of lustful reds and fragrant oranges to a murky, melancholic blue. The clouds passed, showing off the bright constellations and Sun sat down. He let his feet fall into the frigid water.

If only, he thought, granting his tears to freely flow now that he was alone. All he wanted was Moon's touch, her lips against his, but he had to let her go.

"Dawn." He repeats to reassure himself that they would get a few minutes once again to feel the other's grasp.



Ballade No. 1 in G



SCHOOL: St. Stephen
TEACHER: David Hendriks
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Nancy Watt
UNIT: Peterborough, VNC
UNIT PRESIDENT: Kelly McNeely

GRADES 11–12 / POEM
by Lily Rose McGivern

It starts with silence.

Senses and awareness of the world around, stagnate,
Disintegrate

Disperse

Dissolve into void.

Calm,

for a few seconds my mind, body, soul stand still.

Then...

A single note drips into my head, sending ripples through the fibers
of my being.

It is intense.

Sudden rush of sound separates me from myself.

And I am no longer me. No longer here

I am alive and I am dead.

Music permeates and fills my head.

Heart. Lungs.

It rushes through me like a river, it is my blood.

No longer am I flesh. All my dust is music.

All of me is emotion carried through an arrangement of notes.



The piano's pulses, my beating heart.

Its porcelain keys my bones.

The violin my breath,

Its waxy strings, my nerves.

floating

I am ^ F
A
L
L
I
N
G

Free.

Carried away by music.

It does not need words to tell a story
or express emotion.

It needs only sound.

Only Sound.

A single note can reduce me to tears,

Make me weep, Make me mad
Make me smile, make me glad.

Such sorrow and such joy that others will never know.

It is music

Music,

The sum of all my being.



A Director and Four Method Actors: A Ten Minute Play



SCHOOL: St. Stephen
TEACHER: David Hendriks
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Nancy Watt
UNIT: Peterborough, VNC
UNIT PRESIDENT: Kelly McNeely

GRADES 11–12 / PLAY
by Mikyla Hope Warner

CAST OF CHARACTERS (Three women and two men)

Director Diane Runner (f).....Character is annoyed, impatient, wants what’s best for the actors as well as the production
Heather Hope (f).....Character is a mime, real name Kailee
Grace Garcia (f).....Character is oblivious to everything, real name Claudia
Matthew Mitchell (m).....Character is depressing, monotone, expressionless, real name Ben
Joshua Jenkis (m).....Character breaks stuff, is happy, real name Nicholas

SCENE 1

SETTING: A play rehearsal on the sixth floor of a building at 11:30 in the evening.

DIRECTOR DIANE: And that’s a wrap for today! Wonderful job today my wonderful, wonderful actors. I say that but there is still much, much, much room for improvement. Tomorrow is a new day, we’ll go over all the feedback then.

GRACE: You hear that everyone? We’ve improved so much!

DIRECTOR DIANE: No, that’s not what I mea—

MATTHEW: She’s trying to say we suck and she’s disappointed with us. All of us.

DIRECTOR DIANE: That’s neither here nor there. I just think it’s been a long day and we all need a good night’s sleep. Just go home, get out of your character mindset for the night and come back tomorrow refreshed (She reaches for the door, it doesn’t open.) wha... *(Shakes again.)* It’s locked.

MATTHEW: *(Expressionless and monotone)* Locked, like my soul.

JOSHUA: Where is the key?



GRACE: What does it look like?

DIRECTOR DIANE: There is no—

JOSHUA: I think it's black.

MATTHEW: Black, like my soul.

JOSHUA: What?

MATTHEW: Black like my—

JOSHUA: I heard you but what does that mean?

DIRECTOR DIANE: There is no key! It's just a prop for the script. You're supposed to just tum the lock here, but it won 't budge.

GRACE: Did you try turning the knob? (*DIRECTOR DIANE looks at GRACE clearly annoyed with her acting as dull as her character requires.*)

DIRECTOR DIANE: Of course I tried turning the knob, (*sarcastically*) Grace.

JOSHUA: Let me try. (*He attempts turning the knob, but it doesn't budge.*) Guys it really is locked.

GRACE: Maybe you're not using enough force. (*JOSHUA turns the knob forcefully and breaks it, trapping them inside.*)

DIRECTOR DIANE: Nicolas! (*Everyone looks to DIRECTOR DIANE, confused.*)

MATTHEW: Who is Nicolas?

HEATHER: (*Mimes "I don't know" by scrunching her shoulders and tilting her head.*)

GRACE: (*Singing*) Jolly old Saint Nicholas!

HEATHER: (*Puts her hands on her belly and laughs like Santa Claus.*)

DIRECTOR DIANE: For the love of God, rehearsal is over! You are actors playing roles of people who have different names than you do. (*Points to JOSHUA.*) Your name is Nicolas!

JOSHUA: Nicolas was the name of my great great grandfather, who was born in Britain and traveled overseas to become a poet.



MATTHEW: That's beautiful, Joshua. Was he successful?

JOSHUA: Oh yes, he sold a book of his poems. It did very well in Ireland.

GRACE: What's the book about?

HEATHER: *(Mimes a facepalm.)*

DIRECTOR DIANE: That is nowhere in the script, and you told me at auditions that your great great grandfather was Portuguese.

JOSHUA: What are these auditions you keep referring to?

MATTHEW: I always feel like I'm playing a role. Nobody knows how I really feel, deep within.

DIRECTOR DIANE: *(To MATTHEW)* For the love of Lennon your name is Ben! As in Benjamin! As in the dog from your mother's childhood that she named you after!

MATTHEW: I don't have parents.

GRACE: So, you weren't named after a dog?

MATTHEW: What's it to you, shorty?

GRACE: I just think "Matthew" is a good dog name. *(Grace gets distracted by the mirror: She stares at her reflection, oblivious of Matthew's question directed at her.)*

MATTHEW: How come? *(She doesn't hear him.)*

JOSHUA: Grace?

GRACE: *(She turns to face JOSHUA.)* That's me!

MATTHEW: Why?

GRACE: Why what?

DIRECTOR DIANE: *(To herself)* This is absolutely ridiculous.

MATTHEW: You know what I think is ridiculous?

JOSHUA: Jolly old Saint Nicholas? *(He turns to GRACE who lights up at the singing. They sing together.)*



GRACE AND JOSHUA: Turn your ear this way, don't you tell a single soul what I'm going to—

DIRECTOR DIANE: *(She interrupts them.)* –Say, why don't I call someone who can come and help us!
(She reaches into her back pocket and pulls out her phone.)

GRACE: *(She takes the phone out of her hand.)* How come? I rather like spending time with you.

DIRECTOR DIANE: Give me my phone!

JOSHUA: No, give it to me!

GRACE: *(To JOSHUA)* Why should I give it to you?

JOSHUA: I wanna show you a party trick that my Aunt Ruth taught me awhile back.

GRACE: Oh! Well okay! *(DIRECTOR DIANE attempts to snatch her phone from GRACE. She misses and GRACE hands it to JOSHUA who throws it out the window.)*

DIRECTOR DIANE: My phone! *(She runs to the window and sees her phone on the pavement.)* What the heck?!

GRACE: I don't know why she's so upset, she can just go and get it.

JOSHUA: She can't jump out of the window, we're six stories up.

GRACE: What if she flew?

HEATHER: *(Puts her arms out and pretends to glide around the room like an airplane.)*

DIRECTOR DIANE: What the heck kind of a party trick was that?

MATTHEW: A sad one.

JOSHUA: My Aunt Ruth taught me that the only way to have a good time at a party was to get rid of the cell phones and get to know everybody.

DIRECTOR DIANE: This is not a party, this is not a celebration, this is not where I want to be on a Saturday night! Doesn't anyone want to go home and have a glass of wine?

They all look at her confused. HEATHER puts her fingers on her chin and makes a thinking face.



DIRECTOR DIANE: A cup of tea? *(They continue to stare at her confused.)* Am I the only one who misses her TV?

GRACE: The TV is right there, hun. *(She points to the TV prop.)* I can get you a glass wine from the kitchen if you want. Merlot? Cabernet Sauvignon?

DIRECTOR DIANE sits on the chair.

DIRECTOR DIANE: THERE'S NO KITCHEN BEHIND THAT WALL! It just wraps around the stage. You go in there and you'll end up on the other side of the room!

GRACE: Really? I got to try this! *(GRACE runs into the "kitchen.")*

DIRECTOR DIANE: Will someone please tell me what's going on?

JOSHUA: Well...we're already at home, where are you really trying to go?

DIRECTOR DIANE: *(Defeated)* I....

(GRACE returns into the room on the opposite side and walks over to DIRECTOR DIANE.)

GRACE: Leave the poor girl alone. She looks unsettled enough. Matthew, why don't you tell her the story of how your mom named you after her dog?

MATTHEW: I already told you, I wasn't named after a dog, and I don't have parents.

DIRECTOR DIANE: *(Jumps up from the chair.)* Yes you were, and yes you do! You told me this story when you auditioned for the play. You know, the little white dog?

GRACE: I have a little white dog. She meows a lot and hisses at my sister, but I still love her.

DIRECTOR DIANE: *(To GRACE)* Claudia, that is literally a line out of the play.

GRACE: Who is Claudia? She sounds pretty.

DIRECTOR DIANE: It's you! This is a play, you are playing a role.

MATTHEW: Life is just a play. It's all pretend, nothing is real. We are all just playing roles. Didn't you learn about Goffman's theory?

JOSHUA: We are like the actors and the world is our stage. And props are well...props. Take this vase for example. *(He trips over the carpet and stumbles into the table,*



knocking over the vase, which smashes into several pieces and the flowers fall onto the floor.)

DIRECTOR DIANE: Oh my God, Nicolas—

JOSHUA AND GRACE: *(Singing)* Christmas eve is coming soon, now, you dear old man whisper what you'll bring to me if you—

DIRECTOR DIANE: SHUT UP! *(HEATHER puts a finger to her lips.)* I'm sorry. You don't have to purposely break things anymore. Save them for tomorrow's rehearsal, we're running out of props.

HEATHER: *(Mimes fumes coming out of DIRECTOR DIANE's ears.)*

DIRECTOR DIANE: I just miss my bed, my warm and cozy and quiet bed. We've been here for *(Checks her watch.)* nearly six hours!

MATTHEW: What is time if one doesn't know how to stop and live in a precious moment?

HEATHER: *(Picks up the flowers from the floor, smells them and flutters her eyes.)*

DIRECTOR DIANE: *(To HEATHER)* FOR THE LOVE OF GOD WOULD YOU SAY SOMETHING?

HEATHER. It looks like we've made our point. We're even now.

DIRECTOR DIANE: So all of that was to prove a point?

JOSHUA: Yep.

DIRECTOR DIANE: And my phone?

MATTHEW: That was just fun.

DIRECTOR DIANE: You owe me a ride home since I can't call a cab.

GRACE: Done!

They exit.



SCHOOL: Cardinal Carter Academy for the Arts

TEACHER: Isabel Molino

SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Isabel Molino

UNIT: Toronto Secondary

UNIT PRESIDENT: Pete McKay

GRADES 11–12 / NONFICTION

by Isabella Morales Motta

“His name is Igor and he’s very friendly,” said Barbara Daniels as she gave me the detailed speech I’m certain she gives all new volunteers, while simultaneously rushing us down the labyrinth-like hallways of Greenbay Geriatric Hospital.

“He’s the only one on his floor who still uses a walker,” said Barb in between quick, purposeful strides. “It makes him feel more independent,” she added in a hushed tone as if she was sharing some well-kept secret, a hint of pity in her voice.

Our arrival on the east wing of the hospital’s residential living center was met with little more than an uninterested look our way by the residents gathered listening to the morning news in front of the common area’s widescreen TV, most of whom were snoring peacefully. Not far off, seated on a blue Greenbay walker, staring out the only window overlooking a quaint garden below, was Igor; a small man with thinning white hair, and long unkempt eyebrows that adorned a pair of baby blues clouded by the haze of cataracts.

I was in the middle of eagerly introducing myself as his new “friendly visitor” (just as I had practiced in my bathroom mirror the night before) when I was interrupted by Barb’s matter of fact voice.

“Oh, that’s right. Igor only speaks Russian,” she said, realizing that her detailed opening speech was not nearly as detailed as she had thought.

It was in that moment that I felt my palms begin to sweat in contemplation of our next hour together, a rising sense of anxiety that nagged at me as I made the silent journey down towards the geriatric center’s garden with Igor at my side, using his walker to move at a comically slow pace.

It was 11:00 am by the time we sat down on the garden bench he had been staring at so longingly from the fourth-floor window, the sun already shining high above our heads. He, an 85-year-old Russian man, and I, a nervous 14-year-old volunteer, sitting side by side in the midday July sun.

I learned two very important things in those initial moments on the bench with Igor. First and foremost, I learned of his love of sunbathing. This became evident the moment that we sat down and—to the surprise of no one but myself—removed his white cotton shirt, exposing his bare chest for the sun to kiss.

I also learned that despite Barb’s earlier comment, Igor did in fact know a few English words and was quite eager to use them. His English lexicon included words such as “Saint Petersburg”—the



city where he had grown up, “pilot”—his job during the war, and “piano”—the instrument his wife had loved to play before her passing. I watched with patience while the lines on his face wrinkled pensively each time he searched for the right word to continue our conversation; an odd combination of made-up sign language and the Russian Google translate lady on my phone.

However, when responding to my simple questions in English proved too difficult a task, Igor would simply reply in his native tongue. My heart would swell at the pure joy on his face when I understood, only to be replaced by a pang of guilt at the disappointment that would flash across the old man’s face when I didn’t. And so, there were many gaps in what I knew about Igor, like how he had come to Canada, what war he had fought in, or why the glass case outside his room (meant to house pictures of the residents’ families) was so barren.

Just when it seemed like there was nothing more to say and an uncomfortable silence began to pervade the air around us, Igor began to sing. Not in that shy under-your-breath kind of way that most people tend to adopt when in the presence of others, but confidently, passionately, like he was a singer and the garden, his stage. I immediately recognized the song as Andrea Bocelli’s “Besame Mucho.” Perhaps he had chosen this song to serenade me with because of his affinity for the Italian musician, or perhaps because I had only moments earlier mentioned *my* home country, Colombia.

I joined him in his rendition of the classic Spanish tune, noticing the immense glee on his face as we sang together for the entire garden to hear. The soreness I felt in my face afterward revealed that not once had I stopped smiling.

A look down at my phone told me that it was already noon; the hour had come for me to accompany my new Russian friend back to his floor, where we would part ways. He was hesitant to put his shirt back on as if it pained him to leave the warmth of the garden for the air-conditioned rooms of the fourth floor.

The walk up to the “Home for the Aged” was silent and even slower than the last. As I punched in the four-digit passcode that would grant Igor access back into his home—the same one I had used an hour earlier to exit—I thought about the kinds of people that “required” 24-hour surveillance. The kinds of people who are never “at home” in their own homes.

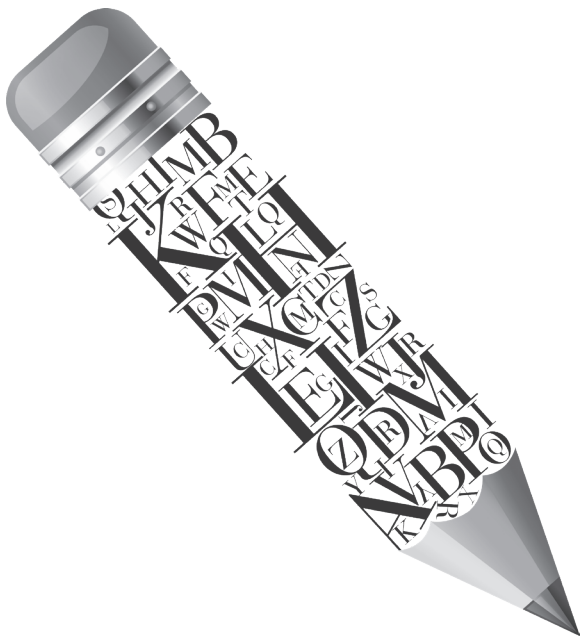
I wondered when someone had last given my new companion their undivided attention for more than ten minutes. My heart sank.

Igor’s feet dragged on the floor as I escorted him past his barren glass case and into room 412, the niceties of our first of many goodbyes promptly ensuing.

I was halfway down the hallway when I heard a hoarse voice calling me back. It was Igor, standing hunched over his walker at the entrance to his room.

“Next week?” he asked in his unmistakably thick Russian accent.

I looked at the empty display case beside him one last time and nodded, thinking back to the lyrics of the song we had sung in harmony just moments before, “*Besame mucho, for I fear losing you, losing you once more.*”



Prix Jeunes Écrivains

2021



La vie secrète des bonhommes de neige



SCHOOL: Madonna Della Libera
TEACHER: Liane Lalonde
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Liane Lalonde
UNIT: Brant Haldimand Norfolk
UNIT PRESIDENT: Tom Laracy

GRADES 1-2 / SHORT STORY
by Summer Grace Shin

En premier, les bonhommes marchent et donnent beaucoup de sourires dans le quartier. Ensuite, les bonhommes mettent leurs patins et font le hockey et un bonhomme a dit « ouch ». Aussi, les bonhommes font les boules de neige et une bataille. Les bonhommes disent : « Je vais gagner ! » En dernier, les bonhommes disent : « Maman, est-ce que tu peux faire du chocolat chaud pour moi ? »



Le père Noël



SCHOOL: Notre Dame, Niagara Falls
TEACHER: Maria De Benedetti
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Sarah Cukierski
UNIT: Niagara Elementary
UNIT PRESIDENT: Marie Balanowski

GRADES 1-2 / POEM
by Liam Lubiano

Le père Noël,
beau et joli
marche, court, vole
Le père Noël court.
Rodolphe



Comment faire un bonhomme de neige ?



SCHOOL: Madonna Della Libera
TEACHER: Liane Lalonde
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Liane Lalonde
UNIT: Brant Haldimand Norfolk
UNIT PRESIDENT: Tom Laracy

GRADES 1-2 / NONFICTION
by Krystopher James

Premièrement, roule trois boules de neige.
Ensuite, mets les boules l'une sur l'autre.
Après ça, prends deux branches pour les bras.
Mets un carotte pour le nez.
Finalement, ajoute des pierres pour les yeux et pour la bouche.
Mets un chapeau sur sa tête.



Le Pommier Rouge



SCHOOL: Blessed Trinity
TEACHER: Teresa Paolino
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Rosa Capizzo
UNIT: York
UNIT PRESIDENT: Mike Totten

GRADES 3-4 / SHORT STORY
by Maria Emma De Napoli

Il était une fois une belle et grande ferme avec des pommiers.
Dans la partie nord-ouest de la ferme, les gens plantaient plus de pommiers.
« Oh plus de compagnie », dit le vieux pommier rouge.
Près de lui, il y a un jeune pommier vert.

Deux mois plus tôt, le soleil du printemps a aidé les petits pommiers à grandir.
Plus tard en été, les pommiers étaient pleins de pommes, surtout le jeune pommier vert.
« Vous êtes vraiment grand », dit le pommier vert au pommier rouge.
« Regarde ces longues branches que tu as, qui se répandent partout, mais je ne vois pas beaucoup de fruits. Tu dois être très vieux. Je suis plus petit que toi et j'ai plus de pommes. »
« Je ne veux pas être dans ton ombre, vieux pommier », cria le pommier vert.

L'hiver est arrivé, avec des vents forts, de la neige et de la glace. Les jeunes arbres frissonnaient. Leurs branches étaient lourdes et tombaient par terre.
Le grand pommier rouge se remplissait de neige. Ses fortes branches s'incurvaient vers le pommier vert et le couvraient. C'était calme pendant longtemps. Comme si tout le monde était endormi.

Un fort bruit les réveilla tous.
C'est le printemps et les gens ont commencé leur travail.
Ils plantent plus d'arbres et enlèvent les pommiers qui n'ont pas survécu l'hiver.
« Nous avons réussi », crie le pommier rouge.
Le pommier vert ne savait pas quoi dire.
Le vent jouait avec les branches et les deux pommiers semblaient danser.
Dans chaque fleur qui fleurit, tu peux voir leur sourire.

La fin !



SCHOOL: Blessed Trinity
TEACHER: Carmela Simone
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Rosa Capizzo
UNIT: York
UNIT PRESIDENT: Mike Totten

GRADES 3-4 / POEM
by Alessandra Lamberti

É - Électronique est la nouvelle façon d'apprendre.
C - Corona est la nouvelle pandémie que le monde entier combat.
O - Occupations se perdent.
L - Livres sont remplacés par des ordinateurs.
E - Enseignants sont irremplaçables !



Cher père Noël



SCHOOL: St. Joseph Catholic French Immersion Centre

TEACHER: Nicole Viren

SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Elizabeth Collins

UNIT: Peterborough, VNC

UNIT PRESIDENT: Kelly McNeely

GRADES 3-4 / NONFICTION

by Maria Andrea Villagante Hernandez

mardi le 10 novembre 2020

Cher père Noël,

J'étais vraiment une bonne fille cette année. J'ai partagé mes jouets avec mon petit frère et j'ai aidé mon père pour faire tous les travaux ménagers. Quand mon frère a besoin de l'aide pour faire ses devoirs, j'aide mon frère avec ces devoirs pour l'école. J'ai aussi fait mes devoirs pour l'école. Je prends soin de mon chien Luna, je joue avec Luna, je marche avec Luna et je lui donne de la nourriture. S'il te plaît ne mets pas de charbon dans mon bas de Noël.

J'ai des questions pour toi. Est-ce que tu aimes le chocolat chaud ? Quel est ton biscuit préféré ? Combien de lutins as-tu ? Est-ce que ton traîneau est grand ? Combien de temps cela te prend-il pour aller autour du monde ? Est-ce que tu as des animaux de compagnie ? Ça c'est toutes mes questions pour toi.

Sincèrement,

Maria



Une semaine dans l'histoire



SCHOOL: St. Joseph the Worker
TEACHER: Catherine Cummings
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Catherine Cummings
UNIT: York
UNIT PRESIDENT: Mike Totten

GRADES 5-6 / SHORT STORY
by Amelia Pham

Bonjour, je m'appelle Émilie. La semaine passée, j'ai voyagé dans un endroit très loin de chez moi... Dans le temps jusqu'à l'année 1840, pour clarifier ça. Vous ne m'avez pas cru ?

Dimanche

J'ai instantanément regretté d'avoir marché à travers la porte étrange. C'est seulement quand j'ai vu des chevaux qui tiraient des carrosses que j'ai compris que je n'étais plus au 21^{ème} siècle. Toutes les personnes dans la rue parlaient le français et, au début, j'ai pensé que j'étais au Québec. Puis, j'ai vu un panneau qui a provoqué le choc dans tout mon corps : peinture à vendre. 18 août 1840. Paris, France.

Attends une minute... Est-ce que j'ai lu correctement ? Non, peut-être que ce n'était pas vrai. J'ai essayé de trouver un endroit pour dormir. Au moins, c'était mieux que d'être dans un autre endroit plus sinistre.

Lundi

En tant qu'enfant sans foyer, du moins en 1840, j'ai décidé d'aller trouver un emploi. Ça m'a mené à la maison d'une famille riche, avec un serviteur qui semblait être un ancien membre du corps militaire. « Je suis l'Officier Jean Poing. » D'accord, il n'y ressemblait pas seulement mais en était vraiment un. « Sers la soupe. » La soupe puait. « Ha ha ha... »

Dans le salon, j'ai dû servir la soupe. Personne n'a jeté un regard à la soupe. Aucun mal à ça pour moi vu que j'ai détesté l'odeur de la soupe. Seulement une personne, le pianiste, a regardé. Mais c'était une expression claire comme la boue, suivie par « Tu n'en a donné à personne, non ? Eh bien, laisse-la comme ça ! Dégoûtant ! »

Quand quelqu'un dit qu'il ne veut pas de soupe, la bonne chose à faire c'est de lancer la soupe hors de l'immeuble. Alors, j'ai trébuché et la soupe a fini sur tous les invités ! Une expression s'est formée sur le visage des invités. Colère ? Mauvaise humeur ? Neutre ? C'était plutôt la colère en fait. Le pianiste a juré fortement dans une langue étrangère, puis un des invités a crié « FRÉDÉRIC ! ON NE JURE PAS ! » Frédéric ? Pianiste ? Langue étrangère ? Mon enseignante de piano a parlé de lui tant de fois, et la dernière chose que j'avais apprise c'est qu'il est mort en 1849. Mais on est en 1840... D'accord. Ce gars, Frédéric Chopin, a voulu m'étrangler ! J'ai eu trois options. La première, c'est de me faire pardonner pour mes erreurs. Comme les invités ont été trop fâchés pour écouter, j'ai décidé que c'était hors de question. Une autre option était de prendre l'épée sur le mur et attaquer les invités. Et si les pianistes polonais et la noblesse française étaient des professionnels au duel d'épées ? En fait, je n'ai même pas voulu savoir la réponse.



J'ai fait la seule chose raisonnable. Je me suis enfuie. Après avoir couru cinq kilomètres dans la maison, j'ai décidé de retourner dans la salle où j'ai renversé la soupe sur 30 comtesses, 10 barons, un roi et un pianiste furieux. La soupe aux navets puait mais ne le dis pas au chef !

Je me suis cachée dans le piano. Ça m'a juste semblé une bonne cachette. Malheureusement, ce n'était pas le cas. Frédéric, le pianiste polonais qui a detesté la soupe aux navets, est allé dans la salle et quand il a vu une fille dans le piano : c'était la première crise cardiovasculaire a cause d'une instrument de musique.

Mardi

Après le désastre d'hier, j'ai pensé que les emplois étaient quelque chose à éviter. Après avoir provoqué une crise cardiovasculaire à quelqu'un, renversé de la soupe de navets puante, et avoir couru cinq kilomètres, qui a pu vraiment me donner la peine ? Bien sûr, si j'avais dit ça comme excuse, personne ne m'aurait cru et j'aurais passé le reste de ma vie à frire des burgers au McDo. Quand j'ai vu quelqu'un dans la rue, j'ai immédiatement couru sur la chaussée. Vers n'importe qui. Même si c'était une dame gentille, ça aurait pu être le pianiste Frédéric en déguisement.

Puis, j'ai entendu une voix qui a dit : « Ne sois pas effrayée face à tes peurs. Puis, tu auras une opportunité pour retourner au présent. » Si faire face à ses peurs voulait dire prendre des leçons avec Frédéric, le pianiste fou et fâché, alors pas question ! Mais je voulais quand même retourner au présent...

Mercredi

Comment attirer l'attention d'un pianiste ? Ce n'est pas une bonne idée de lancer de la crème par la fenêtre et endommager tous ses livres. J'ai fait ça, malgré cette voix dans ma tête qui me disait de ne pas le faire. Bon, je dois être honnête, ça a attiré l'attention. Sauf pas de la façon voulue. La première chose que j'ai entendue c'était « AH ! DE LA CRÈME SUR MES LIVRES, MON PIANO ET MA CHAISE ! SI JE DEVAIS DEVINER ET JE NE SUIS PAS FOU, JE DIRAIS QUE C'ÉTAIT CETTE FILLE QUI A LANCÉ LA SOUPE SUR MOI LUNDI ! »

Il avait raison... Mais quand le pianiste l'a découvert, il n'était pas content.

« Monsieur le pianiste, m'sieur... C'est ma faute... Mais... »

« MAIS QUOI ?! » a rugi le pianiste. Puis, il a joué des accords violents sur le piano et l'a presque brisé.

J'ai dû prendre l'épée sur le mur et l'ai amené vers le visage du pianiste. Ça lui a-t-il fait peur ?

Pas exactement. Il a seulement eu peur quand j'ai utilisé l'épée pour couper un livre. « Bon, a-t-il finalement dit. Je pense que tu a voulu que je t'enseigne alors voilà, je vais le faire. »

J'allais sûrement bientôt le regretter...

Jeudi

Imagine la personne la plus perfectionniste que tu aies connue. Multiplie la quantité de perfectionnisme de cette personne par deux mille, ajoute cent, divise par deux et soustrais deux. Multiplie par cent mille et tu auras la quantité de perfectionnisme dans ce pianiste.

Après environ trois secondes, j'ai voulu le jeter dans un sac de viande et le jeter aux loups affamés. Je jure que je n'ai jamais eu ce sentiment auparavant. N'importe qui dans ma position le penserait.

Aussi, il m'a fait travailler très dur à tous ces exercices techniques. À la fin, j'étais si épuisée que je me suis assise sur un chien par accident. Le pianiste se fâchait quand même très fort quand je ne jouais pas les notes correctement. Avec son prochain étudiant, j'ai renversé de la crème pâtissière. Maintenant, il



y avait trente personnes qui voulaient me tuer ! Alors, j'ai sauté par la fenêtre et j'ai atterri dans un tas de baguettes, suivi par des jurons du boulanger. Quand je suis sortie, la même voix que mardi m'a dit : « Bien ! Il ne reste qu'une clé à collectionner. »

J'ai crié : « Quelles clés ? » La voix m'a répondu: « Ne t'inquiète pas ! Insulte juste quelqu'un demain, c'est tout ! Puis tu peux rentrer au XXIII^{ème} siècle. » Insulter quelqu'un ? Avec cette note confuse, je me suis couchée dans une ruelle abandonnée.

Vendredi

La ruelle était à côté d'un grand bâtiment rouge. La même voix qui m'a dit hier d'insulter quelqu'un m'a dit: « Va dans ce bâtiment ! Ton opportunité est là ! Bientôt, même demain, tu pourras rentrer chez toi ! » Puis, une force invisible m'a poussé dedans. Il y avait un autre musicien et j'ai présumé que c'était un concert. Peu importe. Je n'ai pas pu voir le musicien même, parce que des filles folles ont crié et ont jeté leurs bijoux ! C'était vraiment dérangement. Soit ces filles étaient mentalement folles, soit le musicien était un démon aimant qui n'est pas humain. Évidemment, j'ai fait l'erreur de le dire tout haut. Une autre note si dièse puis du silence. Ensuite, le musicien est devenu absolument enragé et m'a emmené dans une salle. Dans la salle, il y avait une épée et un pot de fondue au fromage bouillant. Beaucoup de personnes en 1840 ont voulu me tuer. Apparemment, ils ne sont pas habitués à voir une fille qui tranche des livres avec une épée. Comme la fenêtre était ouverte, j'ai encore sauté par la fenêtre et j'ai encore atterri dans le même tas de baguettes qu'hier, suivi par des jurons et cinq cent quarante-six personnes qui m'ont pourchassé, tous en voulant me tuer. J'ai juste remarqué ça quand une autre clé est apparu dans ma main. Deux clés. Demain, XXIII^{ème} siècle. Hourra ! Sauf si je ne survvis pas aussi longtemps...

Samedi

La porte rouge disait : « XXIII^{ème} siècle ici. Prix : deux clés. » J'ai mis les deux dans la porte et j'ai marché droit dedans. La dernière chose que j'ai entendue de 1840, c'était : « Si je t'attrape, espèce de petite c... » Et ainsi s'est terminée mon aventure d'une semaine dans une époque lointaine. Mon avis : n'apporte jamais de soupe puante dans une salle pleine de personnes. Sinon, peut-être qu'un jour, tu pourrais avoir une expérience comme la mienne...



La couleur des objets vivants



SCHOOL: St. John
TEACHER: Hilde Acx
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Leann Minutillo
UNIT: Waterloo
UNIT PRESIDENT: Patrick Etmanski

GRADES 5-6 / POEM
by Hanaja Lutka

Rouge est un feu chaud et fort.
Orange est une orange délicieuse.
Jaune est un citron très brillant.
Vert est la joie de vivre.
Bleu est le ciel où volent les oiseaux.
Violet est une améthyste, ma pierre de naissance.



La Tortue et le Lézard



SCHOOL: Madonna Della Libera
TEACHER: Maria Trombetta
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Liane Lalonde
UNIT: Brant Haldimand Norfolk
UNIT PRESIDENT: Tom Laracy

GRADES 5-6 / PLAY
by Garcia Pucci

Narrateur : Un jour de printemps dans la forêt.

La tortue : Je dois aller au lac pour chercher de l'eau.

Le lézard : Je dois aller au lac pour chercher de la nourriture.

T/L : OUF ! (Le lézard se heurte avec tortue.)

L : Oh ! Bonjour Tortue. Euh !

T : Bonjour Lézard.

T : Aïe ! Tes épines m'ont fait mal à l'estomac.

L : Ta carapace m'a fait mal au dos.

T : Je pensais que les lézards étaient rapides ! Pourquoi tu n'es pas allé autour de moi ? Je pense que je suis peut-être plus rapide que toi !

L : Clairement pas ! Nous devons faire une course !

Narrateur : Alors les deux sont allés au lac.

T : Bonne chance ! Tu vas en avoir besoin.

L : Je n'en ai pas besoin.

Narrateur : La course commence. La tortue est en tête et le lézard est loin de la tortue. Tout est allé très vite, puis la tortue a fini la course.

T : Lézard ! Tu es en retard ! Ha ! J'ai gagné la course !

L : Ce sera pour une autre fois ! Et cette fois, je vais gagner !



Narrateur : Alors, les deux sont allés dans le désert pour la deuxième course et la course commence. Le lézard est en tête. La tortue est plus loin.

L : Tortue ! Tu es en retard ! Ha ! J'ai gagné la course !

T : Tu sais quoi ? Ce n'est pas important. Le plus important c'est que toi et moi sommes des amis !

L : Tu as raison. Tout le monde a des talents différents !

Narrateur : Les deux amis sont contents et mangent un pique-nique ensemble.



C'est quoi un réfugié ?



SCHOOL: St. John the Baptist
TEACHER: Olivia Coughlin
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Tom Fuerth
UNIT: Windsor–Essex Elementary
UNIT PRESIDENT: Darryl Fanick

GRADES 5–6 / NONFICTION
by Peyton Kennette

Un réfugié est une personne qui a quitté son pays à cause du danger. Certains sont allés à la guerre. Le gouvernement ne prend pas en compte leurs opinions. Leurs maisons sont détruites. Ils doivent trouver une nouvelle maison dans un nouveau pays et ce n'est pas facile. Quelques pays n'acceptent pas les réfugiés. Quand il n'y a pas de maison, ils doivent aller dans un camp et vivre avec d'autres personnes. C'est très difficile. Ils doivent trouver un emploi et c'est très difficile parce qu'ils ne parlent pas anglais.

« On naît tous égaux » veut dire « We are all born equal. » Ça veut dire que nous sommes tous nés égaux et devrions être traités également et les réfugiés sont comme nous. Ce sont des personnes. Ils ne sont pas différents. Nous devons traiter de la même manière que les autres. Finalement, tous les réfugiés étaient des personnes ordinaires avant qu'ils ne doivent quitter leur pays. Alors, il est de notre devoir d'accueillir les réfugiés et de les aider en cas de difficultés et dans leurs changements.



La Maison Effrayante



SCHOOL: Blessed Trinity
TEACHER: Clelia Di Leo
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Rosa Capizzo
UNIT: York
UNIT PRESIDENT: Mike Totten

GRADES 7-8 / SHORT STORY
by Sabrina Campanaro

Tout a commencé dans un petit quartier, au milieu de l'automne. Alors que les feuilles colorées tombaient au sol et que l'air frais remplissait la ville, c'était un indicateur qu'Halloween était juste au coin de la rue. Dans la partie la plus ancienne de la ville, il y avait une grande maison vacante qui était négligée par tous ses voisins. Cela est dû au fait que tout le monde a peur de la maison parce qu'ils croient qu'elle est hantée. Ce qui était surprenant, c'est que les odeurs les plus merveilleuses venaient de la maison et remplissaient la rue.

Cela faisait penser aux gens que la maison était une boulangerie ou une ancienne maison de boulanger. Parfois, les voisins entendaient le son de la musique forte et des rires venant de la maison vide comme s'il y avait une merveilleuse fête à l'intérieur. Chaque fois que cela se produisait, les voisins disaient toujours qu'ils voulaient être invités malgré le fait qu'ils pensaient que c'était hanté. Une fille a dit : « On dirait une fête vraiment amusante ! » Un garçon a dit : « Oui ! J'espère être invité ! »

Malgré le fait que tout le quartier avait peur de la maison, ce n'était pas du tout effrayant. Même s'il y avait des fantômes qui hantaient la vieille maison, ils étaient très gentils et n'avaient jamais fait de mal. Chacun des fantômes avait de bonnes intentions, donc ils ne voulaient blesser personne. Mais parce que les gens pensaient simplement que les fantômes étaient effrayants, ils ne sont pas que seuls et tristes. Ils se sentaient seuls parce que personne n'a jamais été vu entrer ou sortir de la maison. À l'exception des jeunes enfants avec leurs camarades, personne n'a même mis les pieds sur la propriété. Cependant, même les esprits les plus gentils peuvent parfois faire peur.

Un jour d'automne en octobre, une famille sympathique du nom de famille Miller cherchait à trouver un nouvel endroit pour vivre. Pendant longtemps, ils ont eu du mal à trouver une maison à acheter à proximité. En l'espace de quelques jours, une étrange maison était disponible dans une ville lointaine. Désespérée pour une nouvelle maison, la famille a décidé de commencer à en trouver une. Afin d'être à l'aise avec leur nouvelle maison, la famille voulait connaître les anciens propriétaires. C'est pourquoi ils ont posé quelques questions à leurs voisins. Leurs voisins leur ont dit que le propriétaire était inconnu. La famille Miller n'y pensait pas du tout et ils pensaient que ce n'était pas étrange.

Peu de temps après leur déménagement, des choses étranges ont commencé à se produire. Les enfants ont même commencé à voir des choses inhabituelles dans la maison. Toute la nuit, l'odeur de pâtisseries est venue de la cuisine. Le petit garçon a dit : « Je ne peux pas dormir à cause de ces bruits ! » En plus de cela, il y avait trop de bruit qui semblait provenir d'une fête. C'était pendant que la famille essayait de dormir. Au bout de quelques jours, la mère et les deux enfants ont décidé qu'ils ne voulaient pas vivre dans un endroit hanté, alors ils ont fait leurs valises aussi vite que possible. D'un autre côté, le père était très en colère que les voisins ne lui aient pas parlé de la maison hantée.



Comme il était en colère contre ses voisins pour avoir été maltraité, il est allé voir son ami qui lui avait vendu la maison pour voir s'il pouvait récupérer son argent. Son ami a dit qu'ils pouvaient encore parfaitement vivre dans la maison et qu'il n'y avait rien de mal à cela. Le truc est d'être amis avec les fantômes. Le père était encore fâché, c'est pourquoi il a demandé à son ami de visiter la maison. Son ami a demandé quelle était la merveilleuse odeur et le père a répondu que c'était les fantômes.

Son ami était surpris que les fantômes soient réels. Soudainement, sorti de nulle part, son ami a dit qu'il avait entendu de la musique et demandé si quelqu'un organisait une fête. Toujours surpris, il réalisa que c'était en fait les fantômes qui faisaient tout. Après avoir accepté la réalité, son ami était étonné. Une fois le temps écoulé, le père et son ami ont parlé de leurs costumes d'Halloween puisque Halloween était au coin de la rue. À la fin de la journée, ils ont fini par passer un bon moment ensemble et pendant une seconde, le père a tout oublié des fantômes.

Ils étaient partis si longtemps que la mère avait eu très peur. Elle avait tellement peur qu'elle pensait que les fantômes les avaient atteints. C'était alors son premier instinct de regarder à travers les fenêtres. À l'intérieur de la maison, les amis étaient assis à une table et ils riaient et s'amusaient. La mère était alors soulagée. Elle et ses enfants se sont joints à eux aussi. Tôt ou tard, la cuisine était remplie de l'odeur des pâtisseries et le reste de la maison de la musique forte. Quelques minutes plus tard, tous leurs voisins et amis sont également venus à la maison. Leurs voisins ont apporté des bonbons et en quelques secondes, il y a eu une fête d'Halloween.

Lors de la soudaine fête d'Halloween, tout le monde portait différents costumes amusants et mangeait des tonnes de bonbons. Leur maison était remplie de voisins et d'enfants, et en quelques secondes, tout le monde était dans l'esprit d'Halloween. Pour la première fois depuis des lustres, la vieille maison était remplie de vraies odeurs, de vraie musique et elle a finalement pris vie. C'était tout ce que la maison voulait depuis le début. Pendant des années, la maison a manqué de passion, de plaisir et de rire. Maintenant cela a finalement changé. La maison était maintenant pleine de joie et personne n'en avait plus peur. À partir de ce jour, la maison des Miller fut remplie de vie et les fantômes commencèrent lentement à disparaître.

La Fin

La Morale de l'histoire :

La morale de cette histoire est l'importance de ne jamais avoir de préjugés. C'est presque comme le dicton « Ne jugez pas un livre par sa couverture ». Cette expression s'applique également aux personnes et dans notre cas, les fantômes. C'est une expression figurative qui signifie « Vous ne devriez pas juger la signification de quelque chose uniquement par son apparence extérieure ». Il ne faut pas se forger une opinion sur quelqu'un ou sur quelque chose en se basant uniquement sur ce qui est vu en surface, car après avoir examiné de plus près, il peut être très différent de ce qui était attendu. C'est très important de ne jamais croire tout ce que quelqu'un dit parce que quelquefois, ce n'est pas vrai. Au début, la famille Miller pensait que leur maison était hantée et qu'ils devaient partir le plus vite que possible. Tout le monde leur disait qu'ils devaient partir leur maison et que les fantômes étaient là depuis des années. Cependant, au fil du temps, tout ce que les fantômes avaient voulu était de ramener de la vie dans la maison. À première vue, on pourrait penser que les fantômes sont mauvais mais ils sont tout le contraire. Ils sont gentils, attentionnés et compatissants. À la fin de l'histoire, la maison est remplie de la vie et les fantômes ont commencé à disparaître.



Nous Sommes Tous Unis



SCHOOL: Blessed Trinity
TEACHER: Clelia Di Leo
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Rosa Capizzo
UNIT: York
UNIT PRESIDENT: Mike Totten

GRADES 7-8 / POEM
by Julia Campanaro

L'inclusion est l'acte de travailler ensemble malgré les capacités, les races ou les **religions**.

Cela signifie que toutes les personnes ont le droit d'être respectées
et appréciées à n'importe quelle **saison**.

La diversité et l'inclusion consistent à donner
de la valeur à chacun, quelles que soient nos **différences**.

Lorsque les gens se sentent inclus, cela augmente les résultats de performances positive et crée des
équipes collaboratives qui éliminent la **violence**.

Montrer l'inclusion dans notre vie quotidienne est très simple,
tout ce que vous devez faire est d'inclure tout le **monde**.

On peut organiser des activités de groupe et des équipes sportives parce que cela permet
aux gens de coopérer et de travailler ensemble en juste une **seconde**.

Lorsque nous sommes tous unis, nous pouvons affronter les défis avec la force et le **courage**.

Nous devons tous apprendre à vivre et à travailler avec des personnes qui sont différentes
de nous et apprendre à les écouter même à la **plage**.

Nous devrions tous apprendre à traiter tout le monde
d'une manière égale et à voir la beauté de nos **différences**.

Nous pouvons prendre soin de la terre et de tous les êtres vivants
et essayer de répandre la paix partout où nous allons en **silence**.

Surtout, nous devons tous traiter le monde avec **égalité**,
et donner à tout le monde l'**hospitalité**.



Ne joue pas avec le feu



SCHOOL: Notre Dame, Caledonia
TEACHER: Paige Thachuk
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Anne Zinger
UNIT: Brant Haldimand Norfolk
UNIT PRESIDENT: Tom Laracy

GRADES 7-8 / PLAY

by Sara Carisi & Gianna Isabella White

Personnages :

Narratrice

Derek Miller

Samantha Miller (mère)

David Miller (père)

Nico (le meilleur ami de Derek)

Opératrice du Service d'Urgence (OSU)

Capitaine des pompiers

Docteur

Infirmière

Narratrice : Par un matin ensoleillé à Ketchikan, en Alaska, nous retrouvons un garçon qui s'appelle Derek. Il habite avec ses parents, Samantha et David.

Samantha : Mon chou il est temps de se réveiller ! Ton petit déjeuner est toujours froid ! En plus, Nico va être ici dans dix minutes.

Derek : D'accord maman, je serai là dans une minute.

Narratrice : Peu de temps après l'arrivée de Nico, David l'accueille.

David : Bonjour Nico, entre ! Tu peux prendre un siège à table. Derek va être ici dans une minute.

Nico : Ok, merci M. Miller !

(Derek descend les escaliers.)

Derek : Bonjour Nico ! Comment vas-tu ?

Nico : Bonjour ! Ça va bien et toi ?

Derek : Ça va bien, merci !



(Derek s'assoit avec Nico pour prendre le petit déjeuner.)

Samantha : Voilà les garçons ! J'ai fait des crêpes avec du bacon. Vous pouvez manger maintenant !

Derek : Merci maman !

Nico : Merci Mme Miller !

Narratrice : Une fois les parents de Derek partis pour le travail, les deux garçons décident de s'amuser.

Derek : J'ai une idée !

Nico : Quoi ?

Derek : Veux-tu voir un truc sympa que j'ai appris au camp ? Ça s'appelle « Dragon's Breath ». Tout ce dont tu as besoin c'est un briquet et de la laque. Ce que tu dois faire, c'est allumer le briquet puis vaporiser la laque sur la flamme.

Narratrice : Derek continue de montrer à Nico sa nouvelle astuce, mais ils n'avaient pas remarqué un chiffon qui avait pris feu pendant leur petite expérience.

Nico : Allons jouer à des jeux vidéo dans ta chambre ! C'est plutôt ennuyeux ici.

Derek : D'accord.

Narratrice : Pendant qu'ils jouent à un jeu vidéo, Nico commence à sentir quelque chose d'étrange mais très fort.

Nico : Derek, est-ce que tu sens ça ?

Derek : Sentir quoi ?

(Nico dépose sa manette de jeu.)

Nico : Je vais descendre pour vérifier.

(Nico commence à descendre les escaliers.)

Derek : D'accord, mais fais vite !

Nico : OH MON DIEU ! La cuisine est en feu ! Derek, descends ici maintenant !

Derek : Nico, tu essaies de me faire une blague ?



(Derek se lève lentement et descend les escaliers.)

Nico : Nous devons sortir d'ici maintenant !

Narratrice : La bouteille de laque que Derek a utilisée pour montrer à Nico le tour a explosée à cause de la chaleur du feu.

(BOOM !)

Nico : OH MON DIEU ! Derek es-tu toujours dedans ?

Narratrice : Derek ne répond pas, alors Nico sort son téléphone de sa poche et appelle les services d'urgence.

Nico : Accroche-toi Derek ! J'appelle la brigade des pompiers !

(Sonneries de téléphone.)

Nico : Bonjour, mon ami est bloqué dans une maison en feu et je ne sais pas s'il va bien ! Je pense qu'il est blessé ! S'il vous plaît, venez rapidement !

OSU : D'accord, reste calme et donne-moi l'adresse de la maison.

(Nico a pris une profonde inspiration.)

Nico: L'adresse est 19 AppleView Drive.

OSU : L'aide est en route ! Reste juste au téléphone avec moi mon petit.

Narratrice : Une fois que les pompiers et l'ambulance sont arrivés, ils ont sauvé Derek aussi vite qu'ils le pouvaient.

Capitaine
des pompiers : Je l'ai trouvé ! Il respire encore !

Nico : Dieu merci, vous l'avez trouvé ! Va-t-il survivre ?

Capitaine
des pompiers : Nous pensons que oui, mais nous devons d'abord l'emmener à l'hôpital.

Narratrice : Le capitaine des pompiers aide à mettre Derek sur un brancard. Derek est sérieusement brûlé et doit aller à l'hôpital pour l'aider immédiatement pendant que Nico suit. Il ne faut pas longtemps pour que les parents de Derek arrivent à l'hôpital depuis leur travail pour s'assurer que leur petit garçon soit bien.



Narratrice : À leur arrivée à l'hôpital, Derek était déjà dans la salle d'opération d'urgence. Depuis que Derek a été gravement brûlé, il se battait pour rester en vie. Les parents de Derek arrivent à l'hôpital inquiets, paniqués et terrifiés.

Samantha : Ou est mon fils ? Qu'est-ce qui se passe ?

L'infirmière : Votre fils est présentement en opération d'urgence et j'ai besoin que vous restiez calme. Nous ne savons pas s'il réussira, mais je crois qu'il se battra pour sa vie. J'ai besoin que vous attendiez dans la salle d'attente jusqu'à ce qu'il sorte.

(Samantha a pris une profonde inspiration pour se calmer.)

L'infirmière : Tant que je vous ai ici, connaissez-vous par hasard un jeune garçon nommé Nico ? C'est lui qui a informé les services d'urgence de l'incendie de la maison et de la présence de votre fils.

Samantha : Oui, c'est le meilleur ami de mon fils et nous avons laissé les deux garçons chez moi pour passer du temps ensemble pendant que mon mari et moi étions au travail. Pourquoi ? Est-ce qu'il va bien ?

L'infirmière : Eh bien, en ce moment, il est en bonne santé donc nous savons avec certitude qu'il n'est pas blessé.

Narratrice : Après des heures d'opération, Derek est sorti vivant.

Docteur : Votre fils devrait aller bien, mais vous devrez suivre de nombreuses précautions pour qu'il reste en bonne santé. Sa peau était gravement brûlée, mais il devrait bien guérir. Nico est bien et il n'a aucune blessure. Il était seulement très effrayé.

David : Merci Docteur, nous vous remercions beaucoup pour ce que vous avez fait.

Samantha : Oui, merci !

Narratrice : Une fois que la famille de Derek a pu le revoir, ils étaient très heureux. Derek s'est réveillé, mais pas assez bien pour parler et Nico était tout simplement ravi d'être aussi en vie.

Samantha : Oh mon dieu mon chou, nous sommes contents de te voir !

David : Nous étions très inquiets pour toi.

Docteur : Derek sera très fatigué et ne pourra pas parler pendant les prochaines semaines. À part ça, il va bien.



Narratrice : Après que Nico ait senti que son ami allait bien, ses parents inquiets sont venus le chercher à l'hôpital. Plusieurs semaines plus tard, Derek s'est senti mieux et donc capable de quitter l'hôpital.

Docteur : Avant que tout le monde ne parte, Derek a besoin de ces médicaments pendant trois semaines pour guérir sa peau. Il a besoin d'appliquer ces lotions chaque nuit avant de se coucher et de porter ces masques toute la journée. Tout ceci est seulement temporaire.

Samantha : Merci Docteur !

Docteur : La prochaine fois, essaie d'être un peu plus prudent avec le feu Derek.

(Le docteur fait un clin d'œil à Derek. Derek sourit. Derek et ses parents marchent hors de l'hôpital vers leur voiture.)

David : Nous sommes extrêmement contents tu ailles bien Derek ! Nous espérons que ceci ne se passe plus jamais.

Narratrice : Ceci est une leçon sur ne jamais jouer avec le feu. La laque et un briquet ne sont pas des jouets.

La Fin



Mes Vacances D'hiver



SCHOOL: St. Peter & St. Paul's
TEACHER: Sioety Radan
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Sioety Radan
UNIT: Bruce-Grey Elementary
UNIT PRESIDENT: Kristen Fry

GRADES 7-8 / NONFICTION
by De Lunick Marie-Esther Asseke

Mon premier jour d'hiver était bien. J'ai aimé avoir la chance de pouvoir dormir la moitié de la journée. J'ai aussi eu la chance d'aller marcher un peu. Mon travail m'a un peu fatigué mais quand j'ai tout fini, je suis allée dormir. Donc, oui j'ai aimé ma première journée d'hiver.



Expérience mémorable



SCHOOL: Neil McNeil
TEACHER: Alma Prendi
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Patricia Murphy
UNIT: Toronto Secondary
UNIT PRESIDENT: Pete McKay

GRADES 9–10 / SHORT STORY
by Dylan Mehra

J'ai eu une enfance très facile. La seule chose que mes parents voulaient de moi était d'avoir de bonnes notes. Si je faisais cela, ils me donnaient tout ce que je voulais. Mes parents me prenaient en vacances deux fois chaque année. Ils m'achetaient tout ce que je voulais et se sont assurés que j'avais tout ce dont j'avais besoin. Je ne pensais pas aux personnes dans le monde qui étaient moins chanceuses que moi.

Quand j'avais douze ans, tous les membres de ma famille paternelle sont allés à Cuba. On est resté dans un hôtel fantastique où je me suis amusé. Tout ce que j'ai fait est nager, jouer et manger. Un jour, ma tante et ma grand-mère m'ont demandé si je voulais aller avec elles faire la visite de la ville. J'ai accepté et, la journée suivante, on est sorti de l'hôtel pour la première fois. Il faisait très beau et j'étais très excité. Le premier arrêt de la visite était dans un petit village. C'est ici que j'ai connu mon premier vrai aperçu de la pauvreté. On a vu quelques bâtiments dans une condition qui n'était pas habitable et il y avait beaucoup de familles qui vivaient là. À ce moment, je suis devenu très triste. Je ne pouvais pas accepter que les personnes vivent ici pour toutes leurs vies. J'ai demandé à ma tante : « Pourquoi quelqu'un ne les aide pas ? » Elle m'a dit qu'il n'y avait pas de personnes qui se sentaient concernées. Après qu'on soit parti de ce village, on est allé à une métropole. Quand nous étions là, je pensais qu'on avait vu le pire, mais j'ai été témoin de quelque chose qui m'a presque fait pleurer. On était dans un restaurant quand j'ai dû utiliser les toilettes. Quand je les ai trouvées, j'étais très surpris qu'il y avait seulement un trou.

C'était le moment qui a changé ma vie. Maintenant, j'essaie d'aider les gens partout où je vais, même si c'est dans la rue ou en Inde. Ce Noël, ma famille va faire un don aux charités qui aident les adolescents pas privilégiés. De plus, j'espère qu'après la pandémie, je pourrai m'engager dans un travail bénévole avec des personnes âgées et aussi avec les banques de nourriture.



Le petit Nicolas - Monologue



SCHOOL: St. Brother André
TEACHER: Liana Sciascia
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Cynthia Arabian Mechrek
UNIT: York
UNIT PRESIDENT: Mike Totten

GRADES 9–10 / POEM
by Lauren Vassos–Martino

Le jour a commencé, plein de soucis et de travaux.
Il y avait beaucoup à faire, donc je me suis levée tôt.
Le directeur a pris sa retraite,
donc l'école a eu une grande fête.

La classe, qui me rendait toujours énervée,
devait jouer la pièce « Le Petit Poucet ».
La classe commençait la répétition,
donc je croyais que le jour serait dur et long.
« Je veux être un cowboy ! », Geoffroy a crié.
Il ne m'écoutait pas, donc je l'ai mis au piquet.
J'ai raconté l'histoire, et puis j'ai demandé,
« Qui veut jouer le rôle du Petit Poucet ? »

Le jour devenait mauvais à partir de ce point-là,
et il semblait que les élèves ne m'écoutaient pas.
Eudes faisait des remarques inappropriées,
pendant qu'Agnan commençait à pleurer !
Donc, j'ai dû le mettre au piquet. Je commençais à perdre la tête,
mais ces élèves parlaient sans arrêt !

Ensuite, j'ai continué à donner des rôles,
avant que cette classe ne me rende folle.
Alceste ne voulait pas jouer l'ogre,
et comme toujours, tout le monde était en désordre.
« Alors tu joueras les villageois et le souffleur », j'ai expliqué,
« Et Maixent tu feras le Chat Botté. »



Comme d'habitude, quelqu'un n'était pas content.
« J'aurai l'air d'un singe », s'est plaint Maixent.
Puis, Joachim a eu une remarque à dire.

Encore, cette journée continuait d'être la pire.
Puis, Maixent a donné à Joachim un coup de pied,
et enfin je les ai mis tous les deux au piquet !

Ensuite, j'ai respiré et j'ai pris une pause.
Puis calmement, j'ai distribué les rôles.
Soudainement, j'ai vu tous les acteurs au piquet,
et donc je leur ai dit de se retourner.
J'ai donné aux élèves les directions
et enfin, on a commencé la répétition.

Quand Alceste parlait, il envoyait des miettes,
alors Agnan a enlevé ses lunettes.
Il était en train de les essuyer
quand Alceste lui a donné un coup de poing sur le nez !
Eudes criait pendant qu'Agnan pleurait,
et Nicolas et Rufus se battaient !

« Ça suffit ! » j'ai dit, « Assez ! Vous ne jouerez pas cette pièce pendant la fête ! »
Comme le directeur était chanceux de prendre sa retraite.



SCHOOL: St. Theresa of Lisieux
TEACHER: Claudia Sabatini
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Rocky Savoia
UNIT: York
UNIT PRESIDENT: Mike Totten

GRADES 9–10 / PLAY

by Lillian Liu & Richelle Antonythasan

Scène 1

(Sarah et Raphaël entrent.)

Narrateur : Les grands arbres cachent la lumière du soleil, mais le chant des oiseaux pouvait être entendu ; un signe que le matin était venu. Sarah et Raphaël ne savaient pas comment leur vie de couple marié s'effilerait... Seraient-ils confrontés à des obstacles ? Seraient-ils capables de les surmonter ensemble ?

Sarah : Une minute. J'ai juste besoin d'une minute.

Raphaël : Le roi nous attend, ma belle. Il faut que nous retournions au palais maintenant.

Sarah : Jamais sans elle ! Elle est vraiment importante pour moi. Tu sais que je ne peux pas simplement partir.

Raphaël : Donc, qu'est-ce que tu veux faire ? Tu veux frissonner ici dans le froid ? Sans nourriture ? Sans eau ? Sans un toit au-dessus de ta tête ? Nous n'avons pas le choix !

Sarah : Non, ne mens pas ! Si nous partons maintenant, nous choisissons de l'abandonner. Comme résultat, elle va mourir.

Raphaël : Si nous restons, il n'y a aucune chance de survivre pour nous tous. C'est ce que tu veux ? C'est vraiment ce que tu veux ?

Sarah : Oui, Raphaël, je choisis de rester. Sans elle, je ne peux pas continuer à vivre. Mais si tu veux y aller, vas-y. Je serai bien sans toi.

Raphaël : Mais ma chérie, comment pourrais-je te laisser seule dans cet endroit affreux ? Je me blâmerais toujours si tu étais blessée.

Sarah : C'est ton choix, Raphaël. C'est à toi de décider.

(Ils sortent.)



Scène 2

(Sarah et Raphaël entrent.)

Narrateur : Il y a six mois, Sarah et Raphaël, les nouveaux mariés, étaient en lune de miel magique. Ils ont été connus comme le couple le plus mignon de la ville ! Ils étaient heureux et excités pour l'avenir qui les attendait, mais ils en savaient peu...

Sarah : Voudrais-tu un peu de ce gâteau au chocolat ? Magnifique, non ?

Raphaël : Parfait. Juste parfait. Le goût est incroyable !

Sarah : Je sais que c'est un moment étrange pour dire ça, mais je pense que je devrais aller voir un médecin bientôt. J'ai eu la nausée chaque matin de cette semaine et je commence à m'inquiéter.

Raphaël : Bien sûr ! Je ne voudrais pas que tu deviennes sérieusement malade, n'est-ce pas ?

(Ils sortent.)

Scène 3

(Sarah, Raphaël et le médecin entrent.)

Narrateur : Après leur lune de miel, Sarah et Raphaël ont finalement décidé de rendre visite au médecin.

Le médecin : Sarah, Raphaël, vos résultats sont arrivés. Vous êtes enceinte, Madame !

Sarah : Vraiment ? C'est merveilleux ! Raphaël, c'est un miracle !

Raphaël : Comment est-ce possible ? Je pensais qu'elle ne pouvait pas avoir d'enfants !

Le médecin : C'est inattendu, oui. Nous pensions que ses organes ne fonctionnaient pas, mais vous semblez être enceinte de trois mois ! Cependant, une échographie est nécessaire pour vous assurer que le bébé est en bonne santé.

Raphaël : Bien sûr, nous ferons tout ce que vous dites. Nous allons être parents, mon amour !

(Ils sortent.)

Scène 4

(Sarah, Raphaël et les infirmières entrent.)



Narrateur : Le grand jour de la naissance du bébé est arrivé. Quand Sarah et Raphaël découvriront la vérité, que feront-ils ?

L'infirmière : Bravo, Madame ! Le bébé est sorti ! C'est une petite fille !

Sarah : Ma propre petite fille... Oh, laisse-moi la voir !

L'infirmière : Oh là là... Oh là là...

(Les infirmières emportent le bébé.)

Raphaël : Qu'est-ce qui se passe ?! Soyez prudent avec notre bébé !

L'infirmière : Juste un moment, calmez-vous s'il vous plaît. Le médecin est en route et il vous expliquera tout.

Sarah : Pourquoi ?! Mon bébé, respire-t-il ? Dis-moi qu'elle survivra !

(Le médecin entre.)

Le médecin : La bulle, Sarah. La bulle de votre bébé. Normalement, comme vous le savez, ce devrait être l'une des couleurs de l'arc en ciel.

Raphaël : Oui, et ?

Le médecin : Cette bulle représente la compétence spéciale du bébé. La bulle rouge pour l'athlétisme, la bulle orange pour l'art, la bulle jaune pour le chant, etc. Cependant, votre fille a une bulle grise.

Sarah : Qu'est-ce que ça veut dire ? Est-elle en sécurité ?

Le médecin : Honnêtement, dans toutes mes années de travail, je n'ai jamais vu quelque chose comme ça.

Raphaël : Faites un plan alors ! Nous n'abandonnons pas cet enfant. C'est notre seule chance d'être parents.

Le médecin : Malheureusement, ce n'est pas votre choix à faire. C'est le choix du roi.

(Ils sortent.)

Scène 5

(Raphaël et Sarah entrent.)

Narrateur : L'histoire revient au présent, dans une forêt abandonnée avec le couple et un enfant dont le



destin est inconnu.

Raphaël : Mon amour, tu as entendu ce que le roi veut que nous fassions. Une commande est une commande.

Sarah : Comment peux-tu dire ça ? Tu as dit que tu ne m'abandonnerais jamais. Tu m'as dit que tu persévérerais.

Raphaël : Le roi a dit que le bébé était maudit.

Sarah : Elle est notre fille, Raphaël. Regarde ses yeux... Elle est vraiment une bénédiction. Reste avec nous, Raphaël, dans la forêt. Nous pouvons vivre notre vie ici. Elle peut jouer avec les animaux et manger les fruits des arbres...

Raphaël : Nous aurions la famille que nous avons toujours voulu... Et si le roi essayait de nous trouver ?

Sarah : Alors, laisse-le nous trouver, Raphaël. La forêt ne fait pas partie de son royaume. Il n'a pas le droit de nous dire de partir.

Raphaël : Sarah, tu as raison. C'est mon choix. Je te fais confiance, je crois en toi et je t'aime beaucoup. Vraiment, je ne pense pas que je puisse vivre sans toi ou notre bébé. Mon choix... est de rester.

(Ils sortent.)

Scène 6

(Raphaël et Sarah entrent.)

Narrateur : Une décennie s'est écoulée depuis que Raphaël, Sarah et leur belle fille, Ria, ont échappé au règne du roi. Ils vivaient loin des frontières du royaume, au fond des bois où c'était paisible. Personne ne les a retrouvés depuis leur départ. Ria était en train de célébrer son dixième anniversaire.

Raphaël : Mon amour, nous n'avons plus de bois de chauffage. J'irai en ramasser plus. Prends soin de Ria pour moi !

Sarah : Bien sûr ! Porte-toi bien !

(Raphaël sort.)

Narrateur : Cependant, Raphaël est revenu quelques instants après son départ. Il n'a pas rapporté de bois de chauffage. Au lieu de cela, il est arrivé avec un air de panique.

Raphaël : Un homme se tenait près d'un cheval au milieu des arbres. Un cheval que nous n'avons pas vu depuis longtemps. Un des chevaux du roi.



Sarah : Les chevaux du roi ? Mais ça fait des années... Ils ne peuvent pas nous séparer maintenant, non ?

(Quelqu'un frappe à la porte.)

Raphaël : Vite, Ria ! Cache-toi sous le lit ! (Raphaël commence à haleter.) Nous savions que ce jour viendrait. Tout va bien se passer.

(Raphaël ouvre la porte.)

L'homme : Bonjour, Raphaël. Je ne vous veux aucun mal, je vous assure.

Sarah : Êtes-vous ici pour notre fille ? Je ne vous laisserai pas la toucher.

L'homme : Vous deux ne vous souvenez pas de moi, mais j'étais le médecin qui a examiné votre bébé. Je ne l'ai jamais oublié. J'ai regardé plusieurs fichiers au fil des années et j'ai finalement trouvé des nouvelles que vous aimerez sûrement entendre.

Raphaël : Qu'avez-vous découvert ?

Le médecin : La bulle grise. Votre fille n'est pas la seule à être née avec une bulle grise. La raison pour laquelle le roi a voulu se débarrasser de votre fille est qu'il est aussi né avec une bulle grise, ce qui signifie que le bébé est censé être un membre de la famille royale. Le roi ne voulait pas qu'un roturier soit l'héritier du trône.

Sarah : Quoi ? Je ne comprends pas.

Raphaël : Notre fille ? Notre petite fille. Elle est la future reine de tout le royaume, Sarah !

Sarah : Pourquoi est-ce que vous nous le dites ? Vous êtes fidèle au roi.

Le médecin : Non, je suis fidèle à la science. Et la science a choisi votre fille.

Sarah : Ria, sors de sous le lit ! Nous avons des nouvelles...

(Ria entre.)

Raphaël : Avant d'expliquer ce que je viens d'apprendre, je veux que tu saches que pour ta mère et moi, tu as toujours été notre reine. Royauté ou pas.

Sarah : Nous t'aimons, Reine Ria. (Ils rient.)

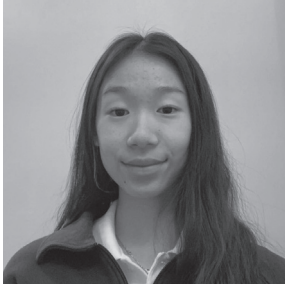
(Ils sortent.)

Narrateur : À la fin, leur vie ensemble n'était pas comme ils l'avaient imaginée, mais contre vents et marées, Sarah, Raphaël et Ria sont restés unis. Ils étaient vraiment une famille unique.

LA FIN



Notre planète Terre, magnifique ou désastreuse ?



SCHOOL: St. Theresa of Lisieux
TEACHER: Claudia Sabatini
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Rocky Savoia
UNIT: York
UNIT PRESIDENT: Mike Totten

GRADES 9–10 / NONFICTION
by Alyssa You

Combien de temps doit s'écouler avant que nous nous rendions compte de toutes les conséquences de nos actions que nous, les humains, avons créées au cours des années ?

Tout le monde sur cette planète va souffrir des impacts du changement climatique. À cause de nous, les espèces d'animaux en danger vont disparaître pour toujours. Et comme si cela ne suffisait pas, on laisse certains animaux dans des habitats détruits et invivables. En outre, les humains subiront également des conséquences. Nous, les citoyens de la planète Terre, ressentirons la pollution du gaz créé par les avions, les automobiles, et les bus qui contribuent à la destruction de notre environnement vert. La chose qui est ironique c'est qu'avant les humains, la planète était merveilleuse et en condition parfaite. Après tout le mal que nous avons réussi à créer, nous trouvons toujours un moyen d'éviter le blâme.

Les hommes et femmes politiques jouent un grand rôle dans l'opposition de la réalité du changement climatique. Les politiciens ne croient pas que les activités humaines sont responsables des changements dans notre climat que tous les scientifiques décrivent. Les politiciens et les dirigeants sont seulement concernés par l'économie de leur pays, et les situations dans lesquelles ils peuvent profiter le plus. Ces gens qui ont tout ce pouvoir choisissent d'ignorer la réalité pour qu'ils puissent éviter les problèmes dont ils sont responsables. Prenons par exemple Donald Trump : dans ses derniers jours au bureau, il a annoncé qu'il allait ouvrir le territoire arctique d'Alaska pour le développement de pétrole qui était autrefois protégé de cette fabrication. Son plan impliquait de détruire environ 80% de la réserve. "Ce territoire fournit un habitat à plus de 270 espèces, notamment les ours polaires du sud de la mer de Beaufort, 250 boeufs musqués et 300 000 oies des neiges. Le nombre total d'ours, dont certains vivent sur terre, a diminué de 50 pour cent depuis 1980 pour atteindre un total d'environ 900," (Eilperin, Juliet. "Trump Finalizes Drilling Plan for Arctic National Wildlife Refuge." The Washington Post). C'est comme si notre planète n'était pas assez en crise. Tout ce à quoi Donald Trump pense, c'est comment les États-Unis peuvent gagner plus d'argent même si c'est au prix des animaux magnifiques et notre seule planète. Il sera trop tard si aucune action immédiate n'est prise.

Pourquoi les gens ne croient-ils pas que le changement climatique est réel et s'aggrave à chaque seconde ? Peut-être car cela prend beaucoup de temps pour que le climat change d'une manière que les gens le ressentent. Quelques degrés de changements en température ne semble pas être un gros problème. Mais en réalité, selon Sky News, si la température du monde est augmentée de 2 degrés Celsius, "les gens vont mourir. L'écosystème s'effondrera et un tiers de la vie sur terre sera menacée



d’extinction. Le développement des plantes ralentira, puis s’arrêtera.” Qui sait quand les humains feront face à la plus grande peur de tous : l’extinction de notre propre race humaine.

Même si nous avons tous le droit à nos propres opinions, la vérité et les faits qui ont été présentés devant nous ne peuvent pas être négligés et ignorés. Le plus grand défi qu’on doit surmonter, c’est comment faire comprendre à tout le monde la réalité horrible à laquelle on va faire face à bientôt. Les conséquences et les impacts ne s’arrêteront jamais si nous continuons à vivre comme ça. Comme chaque humain, nous craignons le changement. Que ce soit une nouvelle école, un nouvel emploi, de nouvelles personnes, un nouvel environnement... Nous avons toujours une raison d’avoir peur. S’adapter aux nouvelles circonstances demande beaucoup d’efforts et de temps que nous ne voulons simplement pas trouver. Pour faire une différence, nous devons travailler ensemble pour arriver à un plan qui est sur le long terme et réaliste. S’il n’y a qu’une seule personne qui se bat pour un changement, rien ne se passera et une amélioration ne sera jamais vue. Il faut l’effort et l’engagement de chacun de nous pour mettre fin à ce problème que nous avons créé pour nous-mêmes.

Prenons un moment pour penser à toutes les choses que nous avons achetées et puis jetées de côté au cours du mois dernier. Par exemple les bons restes de repas, des vêtements portés qu’une seule fois et des produits plastiques. Combien de ces choses étaient nécessaires ? Imaginons la population mondiale : presque 7,6 milliards de personnes qui font la même chose. Ce n’est pas étonnant que notre planète Terre est en crise. Alors, combien de notre planète reste-t-il ? Nous avons déjà utilisé un tiers des seules ressources du monde. En Amazonie, 2000 arbres sont coupés chaque minute. Ces arbres sont là pour nous donner de l’oxygène sur lequel nous comptons pour survivre. Pourtant nous sommes si ingrats et saisissons chaque opportunité pour les transformer en produits que nous voulons dans nos vies. Cela prend presque 100 ans pour ces arbres de grandir et seulement un seconde pour les arracher de la terre.

Dans les moments comme ceux-ci, c’est de l’initiative dont nous avons besoin. Même si chaque personne fait un petit pas pour aider notre environnement, cela fera une grande différence. C’est-à-dire, au lieu d’acheter des bouteilles d’eau en plastique, nous pouvons acheter une bouteille réutilisable. Ou bien, on peut signer des pétitions pour arrêter notre crise climatique et faire entendre nos voix au monde.

Il doit y avoir un moyen de vivre en harmonie avec la Terre. Les humains au cours des siècles passés l’ont fait et ils nous ont laissé avec tout en condition parfaite, mais nous en détruisons chaque partie avec chaque opportunité. Nous, les humains, sommes tous pareils même si nous n’aimons peut-être pas l’avouer. On cherche toujours les opportunités qui nous mettent à l’avantage. Cependant, si nous travaillons ensemble pour trouver un plan durable, le futur va continuer à briller. Je crois qu’à la fin de la journée, ces compétences essentielles de collaboration et de travail en équipe que nous, les humains, sommes venus si loin pour se développer, mèneront toujours sur le chemin du succès. Donc, espérons garder notre foi en l’humanité afin de préserver le peu qu’il nous reste de notre magnifique planète, la Terre.



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La petite ballerine, plus que parfaite !



SCHOOL: Cardinal Carter Academy for the Arts

TEACHER: Maria Vaira

SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Isabel Molino

UNIT: Toronto Secondary

UNIT PRESIDENT: Pete McKay

GRADES 11-12 / SHORT STORY

by Ivanna Vaitkus

Il était une fois une petite fille très mince qui voulait faire du ballet. Quand elle avait quatre ans, elle est descendue au centre-ville avec sa grande cousine pour assister à un spectacle de ballet. Elle a adoré ce qu'elle avait vu... Les ballerines en tutu, les grandes lumières, la belle musique ! Elle est restée bouche ouverte pendant toute la soirée.

Le lendemain, elle a expliqué à sa mère qu'elle voulait prendre des cours de ballet, elle aussi. Alors, sans hésitation, sa mère l'a inscrite pour des cours de ballet qui devaient commencer dans une semaine.

Quand le jour de son premier cours de ballet est enfin arrivé, elle s'est réveillée, elle a mis son costume de ballet que sa mère lui avait déjà acheté, et elle est finalement partie pour le studio avec beaucoup d'enthousiasme.

Lorsqu'elle est arrivée au studio, elle a été accueillie dans sa première classe de ballet avec tous les autres enfants. Elle avait l'impression que tout le monde la regardait.

Au début de la classe, elle a remarqué qu'elle était beaucoup plus petite et plus mince que le reste des filles de la classe. Elle est vite allée se cacher au fond de la classe. Elle s'est dit sous son souffle, « Qu'est-ce qui ne va pas chez moi ? Pourquoi est-ce que je ne ressemble pas aux autres filles ? »

Le professeur de danse, Madame Sensible, a immédiatement remarqué sa timidité, mais aussi son talent et son potentiel pour devenir une ballerine professionnelle. Madeleine avait un corps de ballerine et elle dansait avec beaucoup de grâce. Madame Sensible savait que Madeleine ne se sentait pas en sécurité à cause de sa taille. Elle savait qu'elle devait lui donner un petit coup de pouce. Durant cette classe, Madame Sensible a observé Madeleine avec soin mais elle ne lui a rien dit. Madeleine avait ressenti quelque chose mais ne pouvait pas expliquer ses sentiments.

Ce jour-là, elle est sortie du cours les yeux baissés. Madeleine a pleuré un petit peu dans la voiture quand sa mère est venue la chercher. Ce soir-là, elle n'a pas bien dormi et elle a même fait des cauchemars. Elle avait peur de retourner en classe le lendemain.

« Madeleine, il faut toujours que tu aies une bonne attitude en classe, sans faire attention à ce que les autres pensent de toi. De cette façon, tout va se régler ! »

Au début du prochain cours, Madame Sensible est entrée en classe avec un grand sourire. Elle a regardé Madeleine et lui a fait un clin d'œil. Madeleine n'a pas compris ce geste, mais elle s'est vite



préparée pour les exercices à la barre de ballet. « On va commencer la chorégraphie pour notre danse de ballet ce soir. Madeleine, viens ici devant tout le monde, au milieu s’il te plaît. » Madeleine s’est placée devant. « Votre attention à toute la classe : je l’ai mise en avant pour que vous suiviez ses beaux mouvements. » Madeleine était choquée, embarrassée, mais aussi très heureuse ! Durant toute la semaine, elle a continué à travailler très fort en classe.

La semaine suivante, Madeleine a remarqué que les autres filles se moquaient d’elle. Madeleine était déçue que ses camarades de classe l’aient ignorée pendant tous les exercices de réchauffement. Maintenant, elles pensaient que Madeleine devenait le chouchou de la maîtresse et les autres filles étaient jalouses. Tout le monde est devenu plus furieux quand soudainement Madame Sensible a crié : « Madeleine, tu vas aussi avoir un petit solo pendant que tu dances à l’avant ! »

Quelle joie ! Quel honneur ! Quel privilège ! « Et une autre chose, Madeleine : les autres filles vont te soulever quand elles commenceront à te rejoindre dans la danse. »

La maman de Madeleine avait raison. Il faut toujours travailler fort et avoir une bonne attitude sans faire attention aux opinions des autres... Tout s’était bien réglé à la fin. Madeleine était heureuse qu’elle ait continué à faire des efforts en classe malgré la réaction des autres. Il est aussi absolument nécessaire d’avoir confiance en soi-même car on ne sait jamais qui va te remarquer et t’apprécier pour tes talents !



SCHOOL: Regiopolis–Notre Dame
TEACHER: Nathalie Béliveau–Scott
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Geoffrey Mackler & Lise Comartin
UNIT: Algonquin–Lakeshore
UNIT PRESIDENT: Sheena Cassidy

GRADES 11–12 / POEM
by Lorelei Secrieru

Un miroir éternel
Ses reflets prolongeant les longs bras de la lune
Bleu comme une pierre de saphir
Parfois vert émeraude
Une surface qui scintille dans les yeux
De tous qui la regardent

Sur cette étendue mirifique
Une petite barque se berce doucement
Guidée par des mains
Invisibles à l’œil nu
Qui poussent la barque
Vers une destination inconnue

Deux coeurs battants s’y retrouvent,
Leurs rythmes parfaitement synchronisés
Deux paires d’yeux, qui se percent
Comme un doigt dans le sable
Deux mains se tiennent
Leurs doigts entrelacés

Et donc voici ce qui s’est passé
Dans l’aventure d’une barque dans mes pensées



Le Clignement d'un Oeil



SCHOOL: St. Theresa of Lisieux
TEACHER: Claudia Sabatini
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Rocky Savoia
UNIT: York
UNIT PRESIDENT: Mike Totten

GRADES 11–12 / PLAY

by Brianna Chan & Nethmi Illamperuma

Une histoire inspirante pour tous ceux qui subissent des difficultés dans la vie...

Personnages

Le narrateur

François Dupont : personnage principal

Gabriel Dupont : le frère de François Dupont

Léo Gagnon : l'ami de Gabriel Dupont

Thomas Morin : l'ami de Léo Gagnon et Gabriel Dupont

Nathalie : une employée au bar

Le garçon : un jeune, ivre au bar avec ses amis

Les jeunes : les amis du garçon

La foule : les participants à une présentation

Sommaire

François Dupont est un auteur passionné et persévérant. Après que son frère Gabriel soit mort d'un horrible incident, François commence à se blâmer pour ce qui s'est passé et tombe en dépression. Suivez François Dupont dans son expérience à essayer de trouver sa place dans le monde.

Scène 1 : Gabriel et Léo vont à une soirée chez leur ami

(Un samedi, à la maison de François et Gabriel : François est assis à table, en train d'essayer de penser à une idée pour son nouveau roman. Gabriel se prépare pour la soirée.)

Narrateur : François Dupont et son frère Gabriel habitaient ensemble dans un appartement pas loin du centre-ville. En tant qu'auteur, François s'occupe la plupart des jours dans son cahier en pensant à des idées à écrire.

François : C'est si frustrant ! Avec autant de livres dans le monde, chaque idée que je propose est déjà écrite ! Pourquoi est-ce si difficile ?



(François lance une boule de papier sur le plancher, irrité. Gabriel fait des allers-retours en regardant sa montre.)

Gabriel : Je suis désolé ! Je t'aiderais volontiers mais nous sommes déjà en retard pour la fête ! Léo était censé arriver il y a une demi-heure ! Où est ce fou ?

François : (Dérangé) Aie de la patience ! C'est seulement une fête. Tout le monde s'en fiche si toi et Léo êtes un petit peu en retard. Il est probablement coincé dans les embouteillages. Tu sais comment la circulation peut être à cette heure.

(Gabriel continue à faire les cent pas autour de la salle en murmurant.)

François : (Criant avec colère) Gabriel, sors ! Tu me distrains trop ! Ne peux-tu pas voir que j'essaie de me concentrer ? Contrairement à toi, j'ai un emploi réel et du travail à compléter !

Gabriel : (Offensé et outragé, il marche vers la porte et regarde par la fenêtre.) Bien, je sors car je vois Léo dehors, alors je vais te laisser à ton travail.

Scène 2 : Gabriel et Léo ont une collision d'automobile

(Quatre heures plus tard, à la maison de l'ami de Gabriel et Léo. La musique joue bruyamment et la salle est encombrée de jeunes qui dansent et boivent de la bière. Gabriel et Léo dansent au milieu de la foule, ivre. Tout fatigués de plusieurs heures à danser, les garçons se dirigent vers la porte pour retourner à la maison.)

Gabriel : (Saoul, brouillant ses mots) Je suis épuisé ! Allons-y, on va retourner à la maison !

Léo : (En trébuchant sur ses pieds, essayant de garder son équilibre) Appelle François, il peut venir nous chercher !

(Gabriel sort son téléphone et appelle François. Personne ne répond. Gabriel regarde autour de lui et voit Thomas qui approche sa voiture. Il se dirige vers lui.)

Gabriel : (En mettant sa main sur l'épaule de Thomas.) Eh Thomas, mon gars ! Comme tu peux le voir, nous sommes tous saouls et nous avons besoin de retourner chez moi. Peux-tu nous ramener à la maison ? Nous habitons dans le même quartier.

Thomas : (Indifférent) Très bien, montez.

Narrateur : Les deux garçons montent dans la voiture de Thomas, pensant que c'était une bonne idée d'avoir quelqu'un ayant d'habitude conduit. Ce qu'ils n'ont pas remarqué, c'est que Thomas aussi était intoxiqué et était incapable de conduire correctement.

(Thomas conduit sur l'autoroute. Peu à peu, la voiture se dirige vers la voie routière opposée, avec les



voitures qui s'approchent vers eux. Thomas se rend compte de ceci et, sans y penser, il tourne le volant à gauche agressivement vers les collines. La voiture roule et rentre dans les arbres. Tous les jeunes meurent instantanément.)

Scène 3 : La dépression de François

(Trois ans plus tard, à l'appartement de François. Il est assis à table avec son journal. Il semble épuisé et douloureux. Il regarde son cahier sans bouger.)

La narrateur: Après la mort de son frère, François a perdu toute sa motivation pour l'écriture. Se souvenant que ses derniers mots à Gabriel étaient des insultes, François ne peut que penser que le décès de son frère était de sa faute. Gabriel avait appelé François pour les conduire ce soir-là, mais parce qu'il ne voulait plus être dérangé, il l'a ignoré et n'a pas répondu à son appel. Cette erreur a finalement mené à la mort de Gabriel, Léo, et Thomas. Pour les trois prochaines années, François tombe dans la dépression. Avec son meilleur ami mort, il n'y avait pas de raison de vivre. Durant ce temps, François a visité plusieurs thérapeutes et docteurs, essayant d'être soigné, mais personne ne pouvait l'aider. Tout le monde qui le connaissait est devenu inquiet de son bien-être.

François: (Désespéré) Pourquoi étais-je si ignorant ? J'ai accusé Gabriel parce que je n'avais pas réussi à proposer une idée pour mon roman et maintenant il est mort. Je suis tout seul.

(François baisse sa tête sur la table entre ses bras et commence à pleurer.)

Narrateur : Pendant plusieurs mois, cette routine se répète chaque jour. Quand François essaye de commencer à écrire, il se rappelle de son erreur grave qui a tué son frère. Au fil des jours, il se blâme de plus en plus et développe une haine pour lui-même.

Scène 4 : Un moment décisif pour François

(Un bar au centre-ville. François est assis seul. Il regarde trois jeunes qui boivent à une table à côté de la sienne. Les jeunes sont ivres et rigolent tous ensemble.)

Narrateur : Un jour, François décide qu'il ne veut plus continuer sa routine qu'il a créée ces dernières années. Il décide d'aller au bar pour débarrasser son esprit des pensées qui le dérangent depuis longtemps. En entrant dans le bar et en voyant les jeunes, il commence à douter de sa décision.

François : (À soi-même.) Pourquoi suis-je venu ici ? L'alcool est la raison pour laquelle j'ai perdu mon frère. Je ne devrais pas suivre ses traces. Malgré tout, je n'ai pas quitté l'appartement depuis longtemps et peut-être qu'un nouvel environnement m'aidera pour mon écriture.

(François sort son cahier et commence à réfléchir. Une employée du bar approche la table où François est assis.)

Nathalie : (Avec enthousiasme) Salut, comment allez-vous ?



François : (Avec politesse) Ça va bien, merci. Et vous ?

Nathalie : (D'un air heureux) Très bien merci ! Je m'appelle Nathalie ! Puis-je vous aider aujourd'hui, quelque chose à boire peut-être ?

(Nathalie sort son cahier et un stylo, prête à écrire la commande de François.)

François : Puis-je avoir un thé glacé s'il vous plaît ?

Nathalie : Bien sûr, est-ce tout ?

François : Oui, merci.

Nathalie : (Avec curiosité) C'est quoi ce cahier ? Qu'est-ce que vous faites ?

François : (Avec un sentiment d'humiliation) Je suis auteur. Je pensais que peut-être un environnement différent pourrait me redonner de l'inspiration pour mon roman. J'avais de la difficulté récemment. J'ai le blocage de l'écrivain. Ça fait plusieurs années.

Nathalie : (Intriguée) Ah, c'est intéressant ! J'espère que vous surmonterez cette difficulté bientôt !

François : Merci Nathalie ! Moi aussi.

(Nathalie part dans la cuisine et revient avec le thé glacé quelques minutes après. Elle donne à François sa boisson et va aux autres tables pour les aider. François continue à écrire dans son cahier. Après quelques minutes, les jeunes se lèvent de leurs chaises pour partir. Un garçon sort ses clés de voiture de sa poche. François se lève et saisit le bras du garçon.)

François : (Frustré) Monsieur, qu'est-ce que vous faites ? Vous ne pouvez pas conduire, vous êtes complètement intoxiqué !

Garçon : (Ivre, avec colère, brouillant ses mots) Qui êtes-vous ? Je ne vous connais même pas. Ce que je fais n'est pas votre problème. Je peux très bien conduire et ma maison n'est pas trop loin d'ici.

(Tous les jeunes rient et encouragent le garçon, en pensant que la situation est drôle.)

François : (D'un ton stricte) Non, je ne vais pas vous laisser conduire votre voiture. C'est dangereux !

Garçon : (Ennuyé) Monsieur, je me sens bien ! J'avais seulement consommé quelques bières, ce n'est rien !

François : Non, vous vous trompez. C'est ce que l'ami de mon frère pensait quand il a conduit ivre sur l'autoroute et s'est tué, ainsi que mon frère et son ami. Venez, je vais vous accompagner tous chez vous. Je ne vais pas laisser quelqu'un d'autre mourir de la conduite en état d'ivresse.



Garçon : (Plein de remords) D'accord, nous comprenons.

(François paie son addition et les conduit à la maison.)

Garçon : (Avec reconnaissance) Merci Monsieur ! Je suis désolé que vous ayez subi une telle expérience horrible. Vous avez peut-être sauvé nos vies aujourd'hui, et peut-être la vie des autres gens aussi. Bonne journée !

François : (Avec gentillesse) Ce n'est pas un problème. Mais promettez-moi que vous ne conduirez jamais sous influence. Si vous avez besoin de retourner chez vous, appelez un ami ou prenez un taxi.

Garçon : (Avec sincérité) Oui Monsieur, je vous promets.

François : (Regardant vers les autres jeunes) Et vous ?

Les Jeunes : (Avec sincérité) Oui, nous vous le promettons.

François : Bien. Bonne journée. Ne vous mettez pas dans des situations dangereuses !

Garçon : Bonne journée et merci encore !

(Le garçon et ses amis sortent de la voiture et entrent dans la maison. François retourne chez lui.)

Scène 5 : François recommence à écrire

(À l'appartement de François. Il est retourné à son appartement et s'est assis à table. Il sort son cahier et son stylo et commence à réfléchir à l'ensemble de la situation.)

Narrateur : Quand François retourne à la maison, il s'assied à table et commence à réfléchir aux événements de ce jour-là. Il pense aux jeunes qu'il a aidés et à ce qu'il a dit avant leur départ. Au lieu de s'attarder sur ses souvenirs, François décide d'utiliser les expériences qu'il a subies pour sensibiliser les dangers de la conduite sous influence, et l'importance de chérir chaque instant avec ses proches comme si c'était le dernier. En partageant son histoire, il peut éduquer les autres à propos des risques et des impacts qu'un événement comme ceci avait sur sa vie. Il commence à gribouiller ses nouvelles idées dans son cahier pour un roman.

Scène 6 : La résolution et l'impact

(À la présentation de François : il fait un événement de prise de parole en public pour son roman monde-connu, intitulé "Le Clignement d'un Oeil." Il présente un discours à un public qui est impressionné par son travail. Quand il termine sa présentation, les lumières s'éteignent sur François et la foule. Seul le Narrateur reste sur scène.)

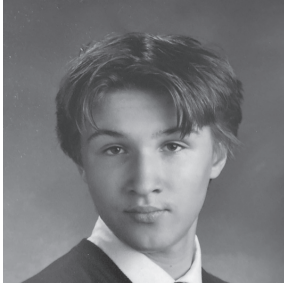


Narrateur: François reçoit des louanges mondiales pour son roman motivationnel et transformatif. Maintenant, il voyage et partage son histoire avec les autres, en sensibilisant les individus de tous âges et de tous horizons à l'importance de faire des choix prudents, et à chérir les relations chères. Mesdames et Messieurs, nous pouvons tous apprendre de l'histoire de François. Numéro un : nous pouvons voir les traumatismes mentaux et physiques des décisions négligentes, non seulement de ceux qui sont directement touchés, mais aussi de ceux qui les entourent. Numéro deux : nous devons embrasser chaque instant entièrement car on ne sait jamais si c'est notre dernier ou le dernier de nos proches. Et numéro trois : nous devons toujours soutenir les autres à surmonter chaque défi !

LA FIN



L'inhérence de l'intimidation



SCHOOL: Neil McNeil
TEACHER: Alma Prendi
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Patricia Murphy
UNIT: Toronto Secondary
UNIT PRESIDENT: Pete McKay

GRADES 11–12 / NONFICTION
by William Pansieri

L'intimidation à l'école est un problème gravement négligé pendant ce siècle. Ces dernières années, il est venu au premier plan des questions liées à l'éducation. Cependant, l'intimidation fait partie perpétuelle de la nature humaine. Les raisons sont multiples, y compris la survie du plus apte, le manque de compétences sociales parmi certains éléments et le besoin de compenser ses insécurités. Lorsque ces facteurs sont pris en compte, il est impossible d'éliminer l'intimidation.

Le concept de la survie du plus apte est pratiqué inconsciemment dans tous les cercles de la société, y compris les écoles. En fait, l'école est un exemple très poignant du concept en raison de l'atmosphère inévitable de compétition que crée la classe. La politique de classe se manifeste très subtilement à travers des facteurs tels que : qui domine la classe, qui prend la parole, et qui obtient les notes les plus élevées. Cela déclenche en nous un instinct de surpasser ceux qui nous entourent, ce qui peut entraîner de la violence chez certaines personnes. Les intimidateurs sont aussi plus conscients de la hiérarchie de la classe ; ils ressentent donc le besoin de faire tout ce qu'ils peuvent pour éviter le fond. Cela découle du fait que les intimidateurs ont tendance à ne pas bien performer sur le plan académique. Ils pensent donc qu'ils pourraient être plus bêtes que le reste de la classe. Incapables de surpasser quelqu'un sur le plan académique, ils recourent à des méthodes humiliantes. Les intimidateurs servent également d'adversité nécessaire pour que les victimes deviennent plus fortes et plus confiantes en elles-mêmes. Les humains ont besoin de vivre l'adversité et la douleur pour devenir plus forts, et l'intimidation peut être un moyen efficace pour certaines personnes de construire leur caractère. Quelqu'un aura toujours besoin de jouer ce rôle pour que les humains progressent, donc cet élément ne disparaîtra jamais. Avec ces facteurs à l'esprit, on peut se demander si Darwin serait allé à son école locale au lieu des Galapagos pour terminer ses études s'il vivait à notre époque.

Les intimidateurs ont également tendance à être affligés de très faibles compétences sociales qui pourraient exacerber les tendances violentes. Une raison très courante de cette affection est un grave manque d'attention des adultes en bonne santé dans leur vie à la maison. Les humains apprennent à interagir avec les gens principalement en observant et en interagissant avec leurs parents, de sorte que les parents violents produisent généralement des enfants agressifs. Puisque les personnes qui sont leurs modèles naturels ont démontré aux intimidateurs qu'il est normal d'agir violemment lorsqu'ils sont bouleversés, l'intimidateur ne saura pas mieux que d'agir violemment



dans certaines situations sociales. Il est également essentiel que les enfants soient socialisés le plus tôt possible afin qu'ils puissent se familiariser avec les nuances de l'interaction sociale, ce qui rend la réponse de combat ou de fuite moins écrasante. La réponse naturelle des humains confrontés à une situation qu'ils ne comprennent pas est de la combattre ou de la fuir. Quand on ne socialise pas assez à un très jeune âge, la probabilité que leur combat ou leur fuite se déclenche est considérablement augmentée pour des interactions apparemment insignifiantes. Un autre facteur très important dans la mentalité des intimidateurs est l'influence qu'ils reçoivent du fait d'être témoin d'une relation malsaine entre leurs parents. Tandis qu'être victime de violence domestique rendra une personne violente à cause d'une rage réprimée, être témoin de violence domestique désensibilise et même justifie la violence pour un intimidateur. Ces deux relations avec la violence domestique servent à normaliser la violence, mais le fait d'être témoin de violence domestique modifie la perception d'une personne sur les abus punissables. Si le mari bat la femme pour s'être mise sur son chemin, l'enfant apprend qu'il peut battre les autres pour avoir transgressé son espace arbitraire. Ces expériences d'enfance forment un processus de pensée chez un intimidateur dans lequel ils ne sont même pas capables de concevoir qu'ils agissent de manière qui manque la socialisation.

Les intimidateurs sont de loin les personnes les moins sûres à l'école. La raison pour laquelle ils dépeignent un extérieur dur et hostile est de s'assurer qu'ils n'exposent pas leurs défauts fondamentaux. Les intimidateurs se sentent souvent écrasés par les insécurités parce que personne ne les a jamais validés ni montrés d'affection pour eux. Par conséquent, ils sculptent une image extérieure d'eux-mêmes qu'ils sont sûrs que personne n'oserait contester. À leur tour, ces insécurités mènent à la jalousie de leurs victimes. Alors, ils font de leur mieux pour éliminer les traits dont ils sont jaloux afin d'égaliser les règles du jeu. Un trait qui déclenche généralement la jalousie d'un intimidateur est une capacité à se contenter de soi-même, ce que l'intimidateur est douloureusement incapable d'atteindre. L'intimidateur ne peut tout simplement pas supporter cela, et il fait donc ce qu'il peut pour rendre l'objet de son envie aussi misérable que lui. Les intimidateurs sont généralement victimes d'intimidation à part entière. Alors, ils recherchent des proies sur lesquelles ils peuvent se libérer de leur colère. Les intimidateurs sont souvent un lien dans le cycle des abus, qui est l'idée que les agresseurs créent des agresseurs. Quelqu'un qui est abusé, que ce soit verbalement ou physiquement, porte beaucoup de rage qu'il cherche maintenant à décharger. La personne sur laquelle il le décharge a alors également le potentiel de devenir un agresseur vu que les gens sont motivés, dans leur ensemble, par leurs insécurités.

Il y a certains éléments de la psyché humaine qui seront à jamais présents, à savoir le besoin d'éviter le fond, la quantité d'interactions sociales pendant la période infantile et l'instinct de compenser nos lacunes. Le résultat de ces éléments, l'intimidation, est simplement un problème qui ne disparaîtra jamais de l'expérience humaine. Sans une telle adversité, nous serions voués à une médiocrité satisfaite.



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