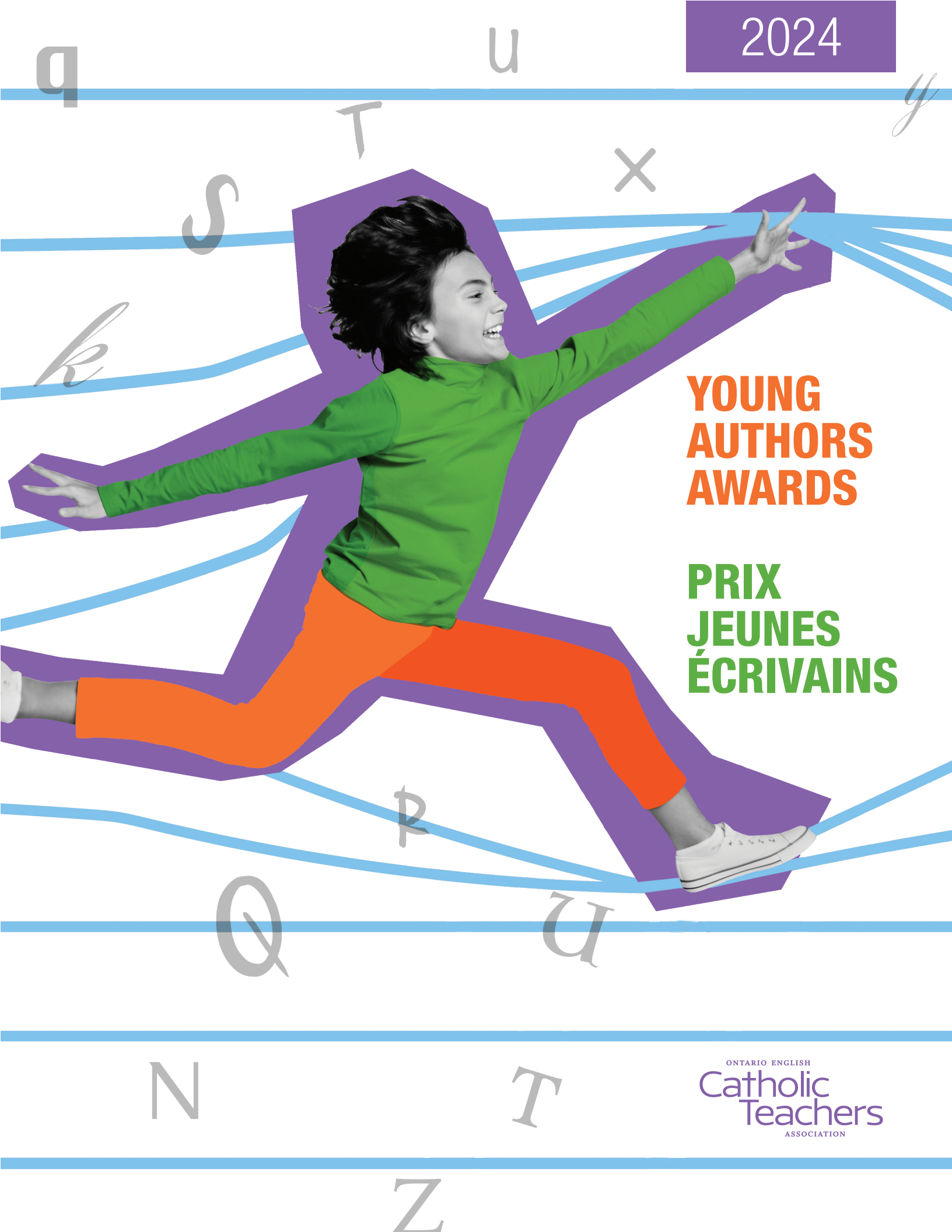


2024



**YOUNG
AUTHORS
AWARDS**

**PRIX
JEUNES
ÉCRIVAINS**

ONTARIO ENGLISH
**Catholic
Teachers**
ASSOCIATION

PREFACE

Congratulations, Young Authors!

This anthology celebrates your literary talents and accomplishments as provincial winners of the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association's (OECTA) 2024 Young Authors Awards/Prix Jeunes Écrivains.

We applaud all of you, as well as the thousands of students across Ontario who participated in the classroom, school, and unit levels of this year's awards program. The insightful works you have crafted remind us that the next generation of great Canadian writers are presently in our classrooms.

Your enthusiasm and dedication, as well as the support of those around you, ensures that the Young Authors Awards/Prix Jeunes Écrivains program continues to grow and improve with each year. We deeply appreciate the commitment of your wonderful teachers, whose inspiration and encouragement provided you with the opportunity to empower yourselves through this competition.

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 you, our 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 à vous, jeunes écrivains !

Ce recueil a pour but de célébrer vos talents littéraires et vos accomplissements en tant que gagnants à l'échelle provinciale de l'édition 2024 des Prix Jeunes Écrivains/Young Authors Awards de l'Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association (OECTA).

Nous félicitons tous nos gagnants mais aussi tous les milliers d'élèves de l'Ontario qui ont participé au programme en classe, à l'école et au niveau des unités. Votre travail remarquable nous rappelle que la prochaine génération de grands écrivains canadiens est actuellement dans nos salles de classes.

Votre enthousiasme et votre détermination, ainsi que le soutien de votre entourage, garantissent la croissance et l'amélioration du programme des Prix Jeunes Écrivains/Young Authors Awards chaque année. Nous sommes profondément reconnaissants de l'engagement de vos remarquables enseignants, dont l'inspiration et l'encouragement vous ont donné l'opportunité de vous engager dans ce concours.

Le programme des Prix Jeunes Écrivains/Young Authors Awards n'aurait été possible sans le dévouement des nombreux membres de l'OECTA de toute la province. Les enseignants, les représentants de l'OECTA dans les écoles, les présidents des unités ainsi que leurs membres exécutifs jouent un rôle critique en menant le programme dans leurs classes, dans leurs écoles et dans leurs unités. Nos membres dédient leurs compétences, leur temps et leurs efforts afin de préserver l'esprit et le succès continu de ce programme. Ensemble, nous honorons l'excellent travail de nos enseignants et de vous, nos élèves.

Nous ne saurions trop souligner la valeur des contributions des membres dévoués de l'OECTA qui veillent chaque année à l'épanouissement de ce programme au bénéfice de nos élèves.

Merci, et continuez d'écrire !

Susan Perry
Département du développement professionnel
Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

YOUNG AUTHORS AWARDS / PRIX JEUNES ÉCRIVAINS 2024

Anne Denning, Administrative Assistant, Professional Development Department

Fernanda Monteiro, Graphic Layout Artist, Government Relations and Public Affairs Department

Têko Yalçin, Bilingual Editor, Professional Development Department

PROVINCIAL SELECTION COMMITTEE 2024

Rosanna Boland

Sandra Braga

Melissa Buchanan

Marissa Bumanlag

Dominika Buttigieg

Devon Dimney

Candice Farrugia

Sarah Gallah

Alexandra Guzman

Amy Hartwig

Janice Henderson

Alessandro La Gamba

Amy Lavier

Pola Maddalena

Danny McCloskey

Catherine McGowan

Kimberly Naylor

Carrie Shellhorne

Brooke Skene

Leanne Stallone

Kathleen Steele

Chantelle Yantha

TABLE OF CONTENTS

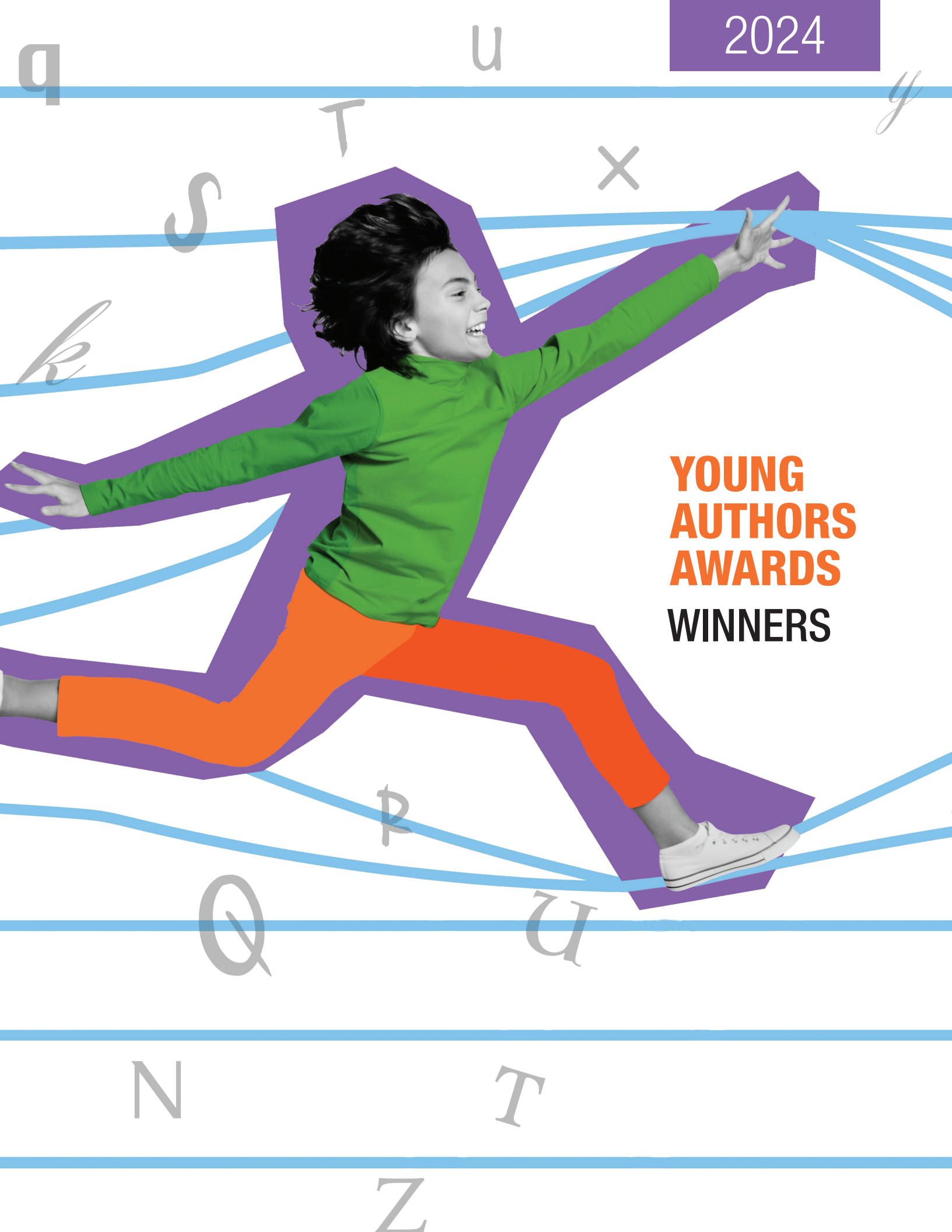
Young Authors Awards

<i>The Swim</i> (Short Story) By: Miranda Summerfield (Junior and Senior Kindergarten)	10
<i>Respect</i> (Poem) By: Stella Suglio (Junior and Senior Kindergarten)	11
<i>Dear Ms. Rilley</i> (Nonfiction) By: Amelia Liese Samwel (Junior and Senior Kindergarten)	12
<i>Adventure in the Snow Globe</i> (Short Story) By: Bernadette Isabella Irwandi (Grades 1-2)	13
<i>Spaghetti</i> (Poem) By: Hadlee Hazael (Grades 1-2).....	16
<i>Amazing Spiders</i> (Nonfiction) By: Elizabeth Diaz O'Leary (Grades 1-2)	17
<i>The Cave Clues</i> (Short Story) By: Jack Joseph (Grades 3-4)	18
<i>Our World</i> (Poem) By: Victoria Kovic (Grades 3-4)	20
<i>Emperor Penguins</i> (Nonfiction) By: Christopher Diaz O'Leary (Grades 3-4)	21
<i>Nothing to Say</i> (Short Story) By: Emma Ellert (Grades 5-6)	22
<i>The Light of Advent / The Darkness of Sin</i> (Poem) By: Molly Turcotte (Grades 5-6)	28
<i>The Princess Who Overdid the Script</i> (Play) By: Olivia Yamoah and Zahara St. Hilaire-Njenga (Grades 5-6)	31
<i>Mental Health</i> (Nonfiction) By: Noah Da Ponte Toth (Grades 5-6)	39
<i>Fixing the Balance</i> (Short Story) By: Shreyansh Kanala (Grades 7-8)	40
<i>Blank Canvas</i> (Poem) By: Wendy Fu (Grades 7-8)	43
<i>City of Echoing Hearts</i> (Play) By: Audrey Lawlor (Grades 7-8)	45

Malala Yousafzai: Valiant Hero (Nonfiction) By: Isabella Quinto (Grades 7-8)	55
They Say I Should Be Grateful I'm Not Trapped in a Concession Machine (Short Story) By: Nikka Rabbani (Grades 9-10)	57
Floating In Between (Poem) By: Elena Noori (Grades 9-10)	59
Emmy for Class President (Play) By: Liya Edwards (Grades 9-10)	61
Books are Media, Books are Entertainment (Nonfiction) By: Seba Alhaek (Grades 9-10)	63
The Tale of Isilon (Short Story) By: Scarlett Loretta Bye (Grades 11-12)	65
What We Need to See, So We Can Be (Poem) By: Allison-Hannah Berwick Hernandez (Grades 11-12)	70
After Hours (Play) By: Ryan Bailey (Grades 11-12)	72
My Greatest Lesson: My Deepest Regret (Nonfiction) By: Weichen Xu (Grades 11-12)	84
 Prix Jeunes Écrivains	
Une histoire d'amour (Short Story) By: Celine Ramsumair (Grades 1-2)	88
Février (Poem) By: Maxwell Luke R. Lontoc (Grades 1-2)	89
L'Égalité (Nonfiction) By: Joshua Hoeflaak (Grades 1-2)	90
Rouge (Short Story) By: Aili Harris (Grades 3-4)	91
La Fleur (Poem) By: Zofia Zielinski (Grades 3-4)	93
Savais-tu ? À propos des léopards (Nonfiction) By: Audrey Mae Gross (Grades 3-4)	94

<i>La Petite Grenouille</i> (Short Story) By: Neve Millette (Grades 5-6)	95
<i>Les Anges</i> (Poem) By: Amelia Greatrex (Grades 5-6)	96
<i>Violet et Gabriel</i> (Play) By: Amelia Greatrex (Grades 7-8)	97
<i>Une biographie à propos de Mario Lemieux</i> (Nonfiction) By: Annabelle Chiasson (Grades 7-8)	99
<i>Panique sous l'eau</i> (Short Story) By: Carmella Ava Greco (Grades 7-8)	100
<i>Quand je vais à l'école</i> (Poem) By: Levi Hunks (Grades 7-8)	102
<i>Lionel et Cristiano</i> (Play) By: Garcia Pucci (Grades 7-8)	104
<i>Le Garçon et le Poisson</i> (Short Story) By: Tanya Joulaei (Grades 9-10)	105
<i>Un doux murmure</i> (Poem) By: Marcia Wong (Grades 9-10)	108
<i>La Fin du monde</i> (Play) By: Joyee Shi, Anson Liang, Tanya Joulaei (Grades 9-10)	109
<i>Les téléphones cellulaires à l'école : utiles ou nocifs ?</i> (Nonfiction) By: Anna Li (Grades 9-10)	113
<i>Une mangue mûre</i> (Short Story) By: Alyssa Park (Grades 11-12)	115
<i>L'Ouvreur de portes</i> (Poem) By: Amelia Ell (Grades 11-12)	117
<i>Un monologue prononcé par Constance Bonacieux des Trois Mousquetaires par Alexandre Dumas</i> (Play) By: Kalena Scheifele (Grades 11-12)	119
<i>La rafle des années 60 et l'assimilation des peuples indigènes au Canada</i> (Nonfiction) By: Georgia Claydon (Grades 11-12)	120

2024



**YOUNG
AUTHORS
AWARDS
WINNERS**



The Swim



SCHOOL: St. Peter, Trenton
TEACHER: Meredith LcLeod
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Glenda Pinault
UNIT: Algonquin-Lakeshore
UNIT PRESIDENT: Sheena Cassidy

ELEMENTARY - JUNIOR AND SENIOR KINDERGARTEN / SHORT STORY
by **Miranda Summerfield**

One day, Luna and Miranda went to the YMCA.

Then they swam and had some fun!

But then there was a tornado!

Then they had to do a lockdown.

They turned off the light and were quiet. And they were very still.

Then the tornado was gone. And then they were safe.

Then they went to 108. And then they ate candies.

The End



Respect



SCHOOL: St. Bernard of Clairvaux
TEACHERS: Christine McClung
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Liz Storoschuk
UNIT: Brant Haldimand Norfolk
UNIT PRESIDENT: Tom Laracy

ELEMENTARY - JUNIOR AND SENIOR KINDERGARTEN / POEM
by **Stella Suglio**

Responsible

Every person is the same

Sing for each other

Peaceful

Excellent manners

Caring

Teamwork



Dear Ms. Rilley



SCHOOL: St. Rose
TEACHERS: Lindsay Bernik
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Amy Bensette
UNIT: Windsor-Essex Elementary
UNIT PRESIDENT: Adriana Palamides

ELEMENTARY - JUNIOR AND SENIOR KINDERGARTEN / NONFICTION
by **Amelia Liese Samwel**

Dear Ms. Rilley,

Can we add things to the playground?

Can we have a Squishmallows shop?

Can we have a bubblegum machine?

Can we please have a tent?

I think it will make our school better.



Adventure in the Snow Globe



SCHOOL: St. Mary's, Collingwood
TEACHER: Shannon Doyle
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Kathryn Godin
UNIT: Simcoe Muskoka Elementary
UNIT PRESIDENT: Kent MacDonald

ELEMENTARY - GRADES 1-2 / SHORT STORY
by **Bernadette Isabella Irwandi**

Part 1: Saving the Snow Globe

Once upon a time, there was a girl named Melody. She bought a snow globe. When she got home, she put it on the side table. After dinner, she fell into a deep dream. She opened her eyes. "Where am I?" she asked. "You are in the magic snow globe," said a tiny voice. Melody looked around. There was a fairy in front of her. "Who are you?" asked Melody.

"Hello! I'm Snowfairy! You've been called to save the Snow Globe."

"Save it?" Melody said, confused.

"Yes. Queen Summertime will soon turn it into a Sun Globe!" Snowfairy said.

"I'll start you off," added Snowfairy explaining the problem. "Queen Summertime has servants pretending to be snow creatures," she said. "Be careful!" said Snowfairy as they came upon a path. "Here is a magic flute. If you are in trouble, play it. Bye!" said Snowfairy, then she disappeared.

"Okay. So I go on the path," thought Melody. She walked for a while, then a moose jumped in her way. "Hello! I am Mr. Moose. There is a fork in the road soon. The right path is the right path." Can I trust this guy? she thought.

"Come! You can trust me."

"Hmmm. Humm... Okay." The moose scampered off. Melody saw the fork in the road. Okay, let's see if we can trust him. But as she stepped on the path, a pit opened under her. "AHHHHH!" She was trapped! "Argh! I got tricked!" Melody tapped her chin. "Wait... The flute!" She played the flute. ♪♪bb♪♪bb. Snowfairy! "Ah! You got tricked by Mr. Zebra! Sorry but I can only give you hints. Push on something shiny!" She disappeared again. Melody sighed. What could be shiny? Then she spotted a shiny rock. That's it! She went over and pushed it.

A hidden staircase appeared! "Wow..." She ran up the stairs. The pit closed. She went back and got on the left path. But then ice cold hands wrapped around her and she was pulled into the forest. Melody woke up in a dungeon. "HAW HAW HAW!" said a booming voice. "YOU ARE MY PRISONER!"

Melody looked up. The yeti stomped away. *I was captured by a yeti?!* screamed her head. *This is too much!* She paced around the icy dungeon. At least there weren't chains.

"I need Snowfairy's help," she realized. ♪♪bb♪♪. "Melody! You've been captured by Yeti! Here's your hint. Something hidden!" Then just as quickly and quietly as last time, she disappeared. Melody



scanned the room. There was a mat she thought was a bed. Strong icicle bars kept her in, and a dim lamp hung from the ceiling. “Maybe there’s a secret entrance!” She began pushing the walls. Her gaze fell on a rectangular area that looked like a door. She pushed it. A wooden cabinet was behind it. Melody noticed it must be connected to the hallway. Maybe Yeti was making a place to hide his key. He probably mined into the cell. And used the ice cube to block it. The cabinet had a bunch of letters. A combination lock! Oh! No! Six letters... Icicle? She entered I-C-I-C-L-E into the combination lock. Whoosh! The lid opened. That was easy! A silver key glittered inside. Okay I can’t escape right now. I’ll do it at night.

So when Yeti boomed “HERE IS YOUR DINNER!” she thought it was her chance. The food was frozen bread and berries. It was her chance. She unlocked the ice door. Carefully, she pushed the door open. Silently, she sprinted across the cold, dim hallways. *Looks like everyone is asleep. I can get away with this.* It was surprising no one was guarding the exit. Melody opened this door too. She sprinted through the quiet woods. The sun rose into the clear blue sky. Birds sang beautiful songs. She came upon a snowy hill. Just then a strange tiny monster snapped at her ankle. “Hey!” yelled Melody. More Snowsnappers appeared. One said in a high-pitch voice “Snowsnappers! Attack Melody!” Snap!

Melody grabbed a thick branch that had fallen off its tree. “I need Snowfairy. SNOWFAIRY!” yelled Melody. She played the flute but instead, a letter floated into her hand. It read: *Your clue! Something you throw will defeat them.* “Something you throw? Snowballs!” She threw a snowball at the biggest one. It disappeared. Cool. Soon after many snowballs all the Snowsnappers disappeared. She continued on her journey.

The sun was halfway through the sky when she spotted a small cottage. I think I should go inside. Another part of her mind said, “It might be dangerous.” She found herself coming up to the door and knocking. “Hello?” said an old voice. Melody walked in and a tall figure with a robe lived in the cottage. He also had a long white beard. “I am Melody. I’ve come to save the Snow Globe,” she said.

“You have found the right person,” he answered. “I am Staffkeeper. I am supposed to protect the Ice Staff.” He said, “*I am Staffkeeper,*” as if he was expecting me to gasp,” she thought. “Okay... You’re on the Keep the Snow Globe side, right?”

“Yes, let me tell you a story. I was guarding the staff as always when there was a knock on the door. A Snowgnome came in. He was actually a Sungnome! I gave him some hot chocolate. When I returned to the staff, it was gone! Then I realized I had been tricked! With the Ice Staff’s power, Queen Summertime can control the Snow Globe!”

“Then why hasn’t she done it yet?” asked Melody.

“Luckily she does not know how to use it yet,” answered Staffkeeper. “Go now! Time is running out!”

And that was how Melody found herself sneaking into the palace through an open window. She peeked down, just to see if there were any guards. There were but they wouldn’t see her. Melody swung from hanging lantern to hanging lantern. Finally she saw the throne.



Part 2: The Final Battle

Without thinking, Melody swung down. “Hello Melody. I’ve been waiting for you,” Queen Summertime said. “I’ve been ready forever,” she replied bravely. “What about a stick battle?”

Queen Summertime tossed her a stick. Instead of taking it, Melody flicked it back. Its sharp point cut the gold rope making her necklace. The ruby on it shattered as it smashed to the ground. Then turned into the Ice Staff! Melody leaped over and grabbed the glittering diamond staff. Summertime was still recovering from the shock. Melody climbed the decorations on the wall. The Queen tried to stop her but she was already jumping out the window. “Good-bye!” she called. Snowfairy appeared to safely bring her down.

“Snowfairy!”

“Shhhhhh! The Queen’s guards are looking for you!”

She and Snowfairy navigated the dark woods.

“Where are we going, Snowfairy?”

“You’ll see,” she answered.

Melody didn’t know how long they walked but they finally saw Staffkeeper’s home.

“Wait here.”

A moment later, Snowfairy came back. “All clear,” she said.

Knock-knock! The door opened.

“Staffkeeper!”

“Melody! Did you get it?”

“Yes! Summertime had no idea!”

She gave him the Ice Staff.

“Let the Snow Globe be free, and the Sun creatures taken back to the Sunland.”

Then he waved the staff. Melody looked outside. The Palace was gone!

“Melody? It’s time to go.”

Snowfairy sprinkled some dust on her arm. Her last words were, “Bye everybody!”

Then Melody woke up and began to write the story.

The End ♡

About the Author:

Isabella likes dragons and other fantasy stuff. Her favourite colour is pink. She lives in Collingwood. She likes to draw and write.



Spaghetti



SCHOOL: Notre Dame

TEACHER: Maureen Kawzenuk

SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Tracy Taylor

UNIT: Peterborough, Victoria, Northumberland and Clarington

UNIT PRESIDENT: Bart Scollard

ELEMENTARY - GRADES 1-2 / POEM

by **Hadlee Hazael**

Spaghetti is my favourite food

It puts me in a happy mood

Grandma and Papa make it the best

Better than all the rest

With sauce on top

I just can't stop

For yummy spaghetti

I'm always ready



Amazing Spiders



SCHOOL: St. Patrick
TEACHER: Jamie Minns
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Sheila DeMaria
UNIT: York
UNIT PRESIDENT: Mike Totten

ELEMENTARY - GRADES 1-2 / NONFICTION
by **Elizabeth Diaz O'Leary**

Most people are afraid of spiders, but did you know spiders aren't that scary? Most spiders can't hurt people. Spiders live almost everywhere in the world. Spiders can live in deserts, rainforests, mountains, caves, beaches, and plains.

Spiders are not insects, they are arachnids. Spiders have eight legs, fangs, and hair. They can be big or small. Spiders can be brown or a black, but some are red, yellow, orange, or green. Spiders have two main body parts: a head and an abdomen. Spiders have eight eyes but can't see very well. The hair on their legs can sense movement, which is how they catch their food.

Spiders are carnivores which means they eat meat. Most spiders eat insects. Some bigger spiders eat fish, snakes, lizards, or frogs. Some spiders even eat other spiders. Spiders use their fangs, which have venom, to kill their prey or to stop their prey from moving. The venom is poison. Spiders don't have teeth, so they suck the liquids out of their prey.

The mother spider lays eggs in an egg sac. To protect the egg sac, she puts it under a leaf or log, or on a web. Mother spider may also carry the egg sac around with her. When the eggs hatch there are about 100 baby spiders. They are called spiderlings. Most mother spiders don't take care of their spiderlings. Many mother spiders die before their eggs hatch.

Spiders are grouped by the shape of their webs. Different spiders make different webs. Orb webs have a circle pattern. They can catch up to 250 insects a day. Funnel webs are built like tubes. Spiders hide in the hole to stay safe and catch food. Tangle webs are a jumble of threads. Trap-door spider webs cover a spider's home in the ground.

Spiders have spinnerets to make different kinds of silk. Some are sticky so insects get stuck. All spiders make silk but not all make webs. Spiders wrap their eggs in silk and wrap their prey in silk. Spiders also travel by silk; they use it like a rope.

Spiders are not scary or creepy; they are interesting and helpful. They eat many mosquitoes and houseflies. Thank you amazing spiders!



The Cave Clues



SCHOOL: St. Francis
TEACHER: Sandi Capasso
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Sandi Capasso
UNIT: Thunder Bay Elementary
UNIT PRESIDENT: Michelle Pero

ELEMENTARY - GRADES 3-4 / SHORT STORY
by **Jack Joseph**

Chapter 1

Jake, are you coming? Yes mom. Have you ever had a mom that asks you everything? Oh right, you're probably not a foster kid like me. If you are, you probably know what it is like. I've been through seven homes, seven moms and seven dads. This is the worst home so far. I do so much work for them. Sometimes I even cook for them. I've been here for a year and finally I have a best friend named **Quinton**. Behind our house we have a cave we play in.

Yesterday we found some kind of relic in the cave. We are still trying to figure out what it does. We found a door behind these vines. Quinton and I needed to find a way to open the door. Maybe tomorrow Quinton and I can talk about it at school. We were talking about the relic in the cave. We figured there must be some kind of lever. After school we met at the cave and went looking for the lever. All we found was a tin can but the next day we found a button under one of the rocks. It opened the door but there were monsters behind it. We had to find a way to fight them off. So we started making swords, but they didn't really work. Quinton, I said, we need to find a way to make better weapons. The next day I created something called the Ultimate Sword. I'm not very creative. Quinton and I tried to defeat the monsters. Finally, we defeated them. Now we just have to make it to this cave. It's probably full of traps. There weren't many traps but there were more monsters. We fought them off and, in the process, found some weird diamond. The second we touched it the sky went black. There were zombies everywhere. I didn't know what to do so we started running to try and get inside. Quinton barely made it in. I got inside too. Now we're stuck inside, I say. While we were stuck inside the cave Quinton did science all day, and we survived on Mountain Dew and Doritos. We also sometimes ate stale cookies. On the 9th day we went outside but we couldn't stay out long because there were too many zombies. Quinton and I were still working on new weapons. On the 12th day we went outside with our new weapons and defeated some zombies and monsters. On the 13th day I made this book of Apocalyptic Success where I needed to complete all the tasks in the book. The most important task is to make a cure for all these zombies. We ran out of Doritos and stale cookies yesterday. We had to go to the mall to get more. We had to fight our way there. We met a monster named **Rex**, leader of the zombies. We tried to fight him. He was too strong. We had to run back to the cave. We only got three bags of Doritos and five bottles of Mountain Dew.



Chapter 2

Now we're back in the cave. Quinton really wanted to study the monster Rex, but we could not. We did not have enough time. We had to find a way to get out of the cave and maybe see if anyone was still alive. Quinton keeps saying he's the smartest person in the world. I keep telling him to stop, but he won't. "Quinton, I shout. Will you stop saying you're the smartest person in the world?" The next day when we were in the cave, we found this: 玩遊戲的時候. We don't know what it is and are still trying to see if we have to decode it or something. It took Quinton and I forever to figure out what the secret code meant, but we eventually figured it out. It says "I am the only one left. 327865~4218439. These are coordinates. Please come and meet me here as soon as you can." So Quinton and I venture out of the cave to these coordinates that we figured out. Once we get to the coordinates we're looking all around, and we don't see anything that looks familiar. After we found a passageway under Mars pizza, and we found an underground temple. Once in the temple, we start to explore, and we walk all around, and we see wonderful, golden pillars and stacks and stacks of gold coins. We see brilliant glowing rocks and geodes everywhere. We see a tent. So we decide we're going to camp out the night in this tent around all of this gold. We have not found the person that has sent us the secret code with the coordinates. We are going to find him tomorrow though and if we don't then we're going to camp another night out here with all the gold and money, not like we need it everyone's gone. What would you even pay for?

Chapter 3

When Quinton and I wake up the next morning, we decide we're going to go back up through the passageway to Mars pizza for some breakfast. We find some frozen pizza and Quinton burns it all in the oven so back to square one for breakfast we go. Quinton and I end up finding some mozzarella sticks in the freezer and cook those up with ranch dressing. Once our bellies are full, we head back down to the underground temple. We continue to explore the beautiful, underground temple, and finally bump into the person who sent us the secret message. His name is Cameron. Cameron says he's been here since day one when the monsters and the zombies infiltrated our home. Cameron tells Quinton and I that he is a scientist, and he has been working on a potion to get rid of all the zombies and monsters that have infiltrated our home. Cameron takes us to a secret laboratory in the temple. He shows us all his scientific work and the magic potion he's been creating. It's called the **EXOFOLIEST**. And it's fluorescent green. It's made from dinosaur bones, food dye, green moss and liquid ooze. Cameron has told us that he has a stash of super soakers that he stole from the Toys "R" Us store on Main Street and they're all filled with the liquid ooze. His idea is that we spray all the zombies and monsters with the liquid ooze, and it will cure them all. Probably not but it's worth a try. Cameron, Quinton and I load ourselves up with all the super soakers and head back up to higher ground. We start squirting all of the monsters and zombies with the **EXOFOLIEST** ooze. The zombies and the monsters all begin to start turning back into the people we know. Our classmates, our teachers, our moms and dads and our grandmas and grandpas. Our community is finally saved from all the zombies and monsters.

The End



Our World

ONTARIO ENGLISH
**Catholic
Teachers**
ASSOCIATION

SCHOOL: St. Rose
TEACHER: Ola Raniszewska
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Amy Bensette
UNIT: Windsor-Essex Elementary
UNIT PRESIDENT: Adriana Palamides

ELEMENTARY - GRADES 3-4 / POEM
by **Victoria Kokic**

Our world is beautiful with skies perfectly blue.
We're not always good at taking care of it, and yes it's true.
Our oceans are filled with plastic and trash,
Our fish are too sick to splish and splash.
We need to recycle, reuse reduce and mend,
Because this world should be our forever best friend.
If you agree raise a hand,
Let's make our world the very best land.



Emperor Penguins



SCHOOL: St. Patrick
TEACHER: Cinzia Simoneschi
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Sheila DeMaria
UNIT: York
UNIT PRESIDENT: Mike Totten

ELEMENTARY - GRADES 3-4 / NONFICTION
by **Christopher Diaz O'Leary**

Did you know that Emperor penguins are birds that can't fly? Emperor penguins' heads and backs are covered with layers of black feathers. They have a white belly and chest, and orange marks behind their eyes and on the top on their chest. Emperor Penguins' wings are stiff and flat, more like flippers than wings. Emperor penguins' tongues have barbs or hooks so their prey can't escape. Emperor penguins' sounds are honks. They honk to warn others of danger or if they've found food.

Emperor penguins only live in Antarctica where the temperature can reach -60 degrees Celsius. Emperor penguins live on fast ice, which is a floating platform of ice that is connected to land or to ice shelves.

Emperor penguins are carnivores, which means they eat meat. They eat silverfish and other fish, krill and squid. Emperor penguins eat 2 to 3 kg of food per day. They can stay underwater for up to 20 minutes and can dive to depths of 535m. Wow! That is impressive!

Emperor penguins have adaptations that help them to survive in the water. They can function at low oxygen levels, have solid bones, and can shut down non-essential organs' functions. Unfortunately, Emperor penguins are listed as near threatened under the Endangered Species Act due to global warming and overfishing.

Emperor penguins migrate inland 100 to 160 km to find a mate in April. After mating, in May, the female lays one egg and then goes to the ocean to feed. The male incubates the egg for 65-75 days from June to July. Chicks hatch in August and sit on the male's feet. The males cover it with their brood patch and feed it a milky substance. The female returns from feeding and the male goes to feed. This cycle repeats 6 more times throughout September and October. Both the male and female feed the chick by throwing up food. In October and November, 45-50 days after hatching, the chicks form a group to stay warm and for protection. In December, both adults leave the chicks to go find food in the sea but return every once in a while, to feed the chicks. By early November the chicks begin getting adult feathers and in December and early January all the birds make the journey to the sea and spend the summer feeding there. When summer is over, the cycle repeats itself. Emperor penguins live 15 to 20 years in the wild. Without the warmth of one of the parents' brood patches, Emperor penguin chicks would die in just a few minutes in the cold of Antarctica.

Emperor penguins' only have one enemy on land, and that is some other types of birds. The penguin's eggs can be eaten by the other birds. Emperor penguins' enemies in the water are killer whales, sea lions, and leopard seals. Leopard seals are the biggest threat to Emperor penguins. Emperor penguins are amazing and interesting animals. I hope they can be saved and not become endangered or extinct.



Nothing to Say



SCHOOL: Holy Rosary
TEACHER: Hilde Acx
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Kari Cilibanov
UNIT: Waterloo
UNIT PRESIDENT: Patrick Etmanski

ELEMENTARY - GRADES 5-6 / SHORT STORY
by **Emma Ellert**

Chapter 1

Today is the first day of Grade 5. I'm excited but really nervous for school. I don't have any friends and I am super shy. My mom says that will change, but I am still waiting for that one. I hopped out of bed and stared at my closet for a long time. I finally found something and whipped it on. Once I was done dealing with my long wavy hair, I stomped down the stairs to put together my lunch.

"Your first day of Grade 5! How are you feeling?" asked my mom.

"Fine," I said while chewing a piece of toast.

"You're gonna do great!" she explained.

"Thanks!" I said getting my backpack.

I take the bus so I had to go quickly as mine would be here soon.

"Bye, Kat!" My mom exclaimed.

"Bye, Mom!" I said with a mix of anxiety and excitement.

I looked down at my feet as I walked to my bus. I acknowledged the driver and snagged a seat in the back beside some 6th grader who was way more into comics than into me. That's fine, as long as I don't have to talk to them, I'm good! By the time I got to school it seemed as if everyone was there! Although I'm sure we were still waiting on a few people. I saw a couple of the people that were in my Grade 4 class, and I waved to them. It's not like I'm really friends with them, but I still acknowledge them.

Every year is a new start, which means that I have to try to get along with new people. Even though I haven't really made a friend yet! Parents were catching up, kids of all ages were in groups of friends, and teachers were talking about yearly plans. Everyone seemed to have their own place, except me.

Chapter 2

Soon enough the bell rang, and everyone started heading to their classes. I didn't know where to go so I followed a bunch of other Grade 5 looking people. Until I found a Grade 5 class with a tall man dressed in a navy-blue suit with a purple tie.



“Hello!” he said with a real big smile on his face.

“Hi,” I said.

He could obviously tell I was nervous, so he said:

“What's your name? You might be in my super awesome Grade 5 class!”

I hesitated but answered, “Katherine, Miller.”

“Let’s see, let’s see,” he said, scanning his list with his pen.

“Ah, yes! You are in this class! Welcome, here is your cubby!” he exclaimed, as he pointed to the brand new spot for my bag.

“Cool,” I said, placing my backpack on the hook.

He led me inside this really neat classroom with walls painted a yellow, orange type. I saw a couple kids that I knew, I scanned the classroom to find my table and sat down placing my books on the desk. But then, I noticed another girl sitting by herself, but the thing is, she was a little different. She was in a wheelchair and had this kind looking woman dressed in floral scrubs right beside her. Now, the thing is I've seen many kids in other classes and even in my class with mental and physical struggles. But normally there would be a bunch of other kids comforting them and babying them even though they were the same age! It really ticked me off! But here, it was different, no one was around her, babying her, or just plain out talking to her! So I got up, took a deep breath and went over.

Chapter 3

“Hi,” I said with a nervous tone covering my voice.

I noticed she had this tablet, computer-like thing on her tray. A few seconds later the machine spoke, “Hello.”

“My name is Kat,” I responded.

“My name is Elle,” her machine said. “And this is my nurse, Diane,” she typed.

Diane gave me a smile and a wave. Then the teacher walked in and started speaking,

“Hello you wonderful children! My name is Mr. Kaley.”

I said bye to Elle and walked back to my desk.

“This year we will learn new things and have fun!” he exclaimed. We got through the lectures and his rules for this year, and then finally it was lunch. I was eating my tuna melt when I saw Elle again, so I picked up my things and went over.

“Hi, me again,” I said.

She hesitated but typed, “Hi.”

She seemed like she didn't want to talk to me or she was scared to talk to me and that's how I felt.

“If you don't want to talk to me I get it, most people don't,” I said sadness covering the edges of my words. As I started to walk away, her machine blared, “No!”

I turned my head back in a swift motion.

“Sorry, people don't talk to me,” she typed with sympathy in her eyes.

“So I was surprised when you willingly wanted to.” It took her awhile to type it but I understood. I was so surprised how similar we were yet so different.

“We kinda both have the same troubles,” I said, trying to sympathize with her.



She nodded her head in agreement. I giggled and so did she. We sat there in silence until I realized something was missing in this moment so I gathered the strength to say, “Hey, do you wanna be friends?”

It took her awhile to type in the beginning, she just stared at me then finally she said, “Yeah!” At that moment, we both looked at each other and our smiles said everything.

Chapter 4

I did it! I finally had a friend! Mom is going to freak when she hears this. Anyway, we had our differences but she still got me and I got her. But I still knew she had so much more to say but her machine limited it but ever since we have been inseparable, we sit together all the time and talk about the other kids, not in a really mean way, like Trisha. Trisha and I have been in the same class since the third grade, (lucky me) she's a bully and finds people's weaknesses and uses them against them and I have plenty. She's in our class this year and was making a very weird face when I was eating lunch with Elle. I looked closely to realize she was mocking our conversation. Elle has given me courage to start small talk so I got up from my seat and said hi as if nothing had happened, but she just smirked and looked away at her sandwich. I stomped back to where we were sitting and gazed at Elle.

“Why the long face?” Elle typed.

I just stared at her. So many questions twirled around my head, was Trisha making fun of her? Was she making fun of me? I didn't know. Lunch ended and we went back to class. Our teacher was late so I caught up on some notes, and as I was I heard someone get up from their seat. It was Trisha, she went right over to Elle's desk!

“So what's wrong with you?” Trisha asked, twirling her hair.

But Elle didn't seem bothered in least. She is probably used to people like her. Instead, she just typed out:

“I have cerebral palsy,” she explained. “My body doesn't work on the outside but has superpowers on the inside!” she exclaimed.

I didn't know she had cerebral palsy. Mom taught me to be polite. Unlike Trisha. So I never really asked. I quickly walked over to Elle and glared at Trisha. That's when Mr. Kaley came back in and started his lesson. The day ended as soon as it started, and we were getting ready to go home. That's when Trisha went over to Elle.

“You're kinda weird,” Trisha said.

Elle didn't respond and just continued listening to Diane. Diane seemed to be ignoring her as well.

Trisha looked starstruck, I had to chuckle at that.

“Shouldn't you be in a special class?” Trisha asked, chomping on gum. I couldn't just stand there so I went up to Trisha.

“I could say the same for you,” I said as I stood beside Elle. Elle took a minute and typed:

“Thank you, Kat.”

“I'm always going to be here for you,” I reminded her.

By this time Trisha had stomped away. Even though Elle told me she was fine, I couldn't help but notice her smile fading away as she turned her head. Was Trisha now going to be our bully?



Chapter 5

I was finishing up dinner when my mom asked: “How is Elle?”

“She is good,” I said, cleaning up my plate. “But Trisha is bullying her, just because she is different,” I explained.

My mom hesitated. It was like she didn't know what to say. Then she told me something that brought a tear to my eye:

“Everyone in this world is like a butterfly. Some are huge, others are tiny. They each have different patterns and each are very unique and different. People like Elle are stuck in a cocoon and are struggling to get out. But inside is a gorgeous butterfly that people can see if they look closely.”

My mom's words gave me so many feelings. I never thought of myself as a butterfly. I never thought about the people who struggled to be heard. I realized that I've been lucky. I always got to stand up and walk whenever I please. I always got to speak knowing that I would be heard. But a lot of people don't get that. Some people are just stuck in cocoons and will never be able to get out. But they all are beautiful butterflies, you just need to look closely.

Chapter 6

Elle came into school looking quite sad. So I asked her:

“Hey, you okay?”

I never noticed until she turned around and faced me. There were tears in her eyes. But all she typed was: “No.”

“I am your friend; you can tell me anything,” I reminded her.

She looked up at me, her eyes glistening with tears, and then she typed the words I had dreaded to hear.

“My mom is moving me to a school for kids like me.”

My heart dropped. My emotions were like waves crashing. It felt like there was nothing in my reach, like I had no control. Soon I was filling with tears, I couldn't face her, but I didn't want her to think I was mad at her, so I just said: “Oh, that sucks.” A tear fell from my eyes.

“I told my mom about Trisha bullying me and when she heard that Trisha said that I should be in a special class she thought it wasn't a bad idea.” It took forever for her to type but I got it.

“The year just started; can't you go next year?” I said, hoping my words can do something. But they couldn't. I felt powerless. We walked to class side by side and when we entered the classroom it was impossible not to notice everybody staring at us. Kids were whispering and a few just stared.

What happened? Trisha looked in distress when she saw me, but I noticed a sly smirk when she looked away at the group of kids.

“There she is Mr. Kaley!” she cried. She practically screamed across the room. I still stayed quiet as I stood in the doorway with Elle beside me.

“Aren't you going to get her in trouble?” Trisha questioned with her hand on her hips.

“Trisha, I am not going to do this in front of the entire class, we will talk at recess,” Mr. Kaley said as he glanced at me. I looked at Elle, but her face was just a question mark like mine.

So we walked in, took our seats and listened to the lesson. It was so obvious Trisha was staring at me, so I just looked away and down at my feet. Soon the bell rang, it was recess.



Mr. Kaley kept Elle, Trisha and me behind. Before he walked in Elle looked almost excited, so I nudged her shoulder.

"I've never been in trouble before," she typed eagerly.

Mr. Kaley walked in shortly after and spoke.

"Kat, it has come to my attention that you slapped Trisha," he said firmly. "I want you to be honest. This is a safe space," he said, hoping it would make me feel better.

I was shaken. Slap? Trisha? I've become a lot more confident, but not that confident.

"What? I didn't," was all I could reply.

"Yes, you did," Trisha interrupted.

"Listen, I don't want to accuse anyone, but Trisha told me you slapped her yesterday when you were getting ready to go home," he explained.

I paused for a minute and gently pressed my lips together. I chuckled at Trisha.

"You were so worried we were going to tell on you, you made up a fake lie," I said, anger covering the edge of my words.

"Tell me what?" Mr. Kaley asked.

Elle looked like she felt invisible, so before Trisha had a chance to answer, I looked at Elle and said, "How about Elle tells you?" I said it directly to Mr. Kaley.

Elle explained about Trisha and what she had said and that she was moving to a new school partially because of her. Mr. Kaley didn't hesitate; he knew who he believed so he said, "Trisha, to the principal's office now."

He spoke in a voice that made me gulp. Elle and I looked at each other victoriously mixed with failure. We still knew what was coming in just a few days.

Chapter 7

The sun was bright, the air was cool, but the feelings were mush on the ground. Today was Elle's first day at her new school. She wasn't moving houses, just schools. But the drive to Elle's house was about thirty minutes, another thing that was tearing us apart. I'd actually never been to her house before, but my mom said she would take me there occasionally and keep in touch with her mom (they had just started becoming close!). We didn't have the same bus stop but my mom drove me to her house so we could walk together and say goodbyes. We slowed down when we saw the bus pulling up, a tear glistened in my eye.

"I can't believe this," I said softly.

"Can't believe what?" Elle typed.

"I finally made a new friend but now you are going away and I will barely get to see you," I explained.

We just sat there, tears rolling down our cheeks. The bus, with purple and blue stripes down the middle with white covering the rest of it, came to a stop. I looked at Elle, she looked at me. At that moment, there were no words left to say. I lifted my hand goodbye and she nodded. She turned away and the bus doors shut. The white bus grew smaller and smaller until it slowly faded away.



Chapter 8

It had been a day since saying goodbye to Elle. I was sitting in class staring at the empty seat. Also looking at the other empty seat just a few desks away from Elle's. It was Trisha's. She had been suspended for a day. Just as that victorious thought faded away, my smile turned back to a frown. I just couldn't stop thinking, "I finally did it." I was actually happy. Happy, the word that lingered in my head, but it wasn't true. Just as I was thinking that I would never find a friend again, it was her. Elle! There she was, right in the doorway, with Diane standing right next to her. Mr. Kaley had stopped his lesson to greet her, I guess I hadn't noticed. I ran to her and engulfed her in a giant hug, tears were rolling down my face. But not in a sad way like I did a day ago, tears of joy, pure joy.

"What are you doing here?!" I said, wiping tears from my cheeks. Elle didn't have her device to speak, but that's okay, we would have plenty of time to talk, cause now she is back! In that moment there was nothing to say, but we didn't mind it that way.



The Light of Advent / The Darkness of Sin



SCHOOL: Canadian Martyrs
TEACHER: Connie Venneri
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Sara Peabody
UNIT: Niagara Elementary
UNIT PRESIDENT: Jennifer McArthur

ELEMENTARY - GRADES 5-6 / POEM
by **Molly Turcotte**

The Light of Advent

I am hope.

You can find me twirling around those who radiate light into others' lives, those wonderful people who will stand for and with you, always and forever.

I look like a shining white star against an inky black backdrop, or the sudden welcomed brightness of a flashlight cutting through heavy grey mist.

You know me when warm, caring people open their hearts and use their hands to care for those who are concealed under layers of shadow and gloom.

I am hope.

I am peace.

You can find me stepping through now silent battlefields, once ago ravaged by hate and revenge, but now a ceremonial place of our past mistakes.

I look like ice, so quiet and tranquil, but too effortless to break, like a cough in a silent room, or a yell echoing through a cold and empty forest.

You know me when the rush of the outer world fades into a meaningless hum, and your mind rests from the constant push-push-shove order of Earth as your eyes read the notes, even as you mess up, your hands still effortlessly glide across black and white.

I am peace.

I am joy.

You can find me hiding in the spirit of a dove and her chicks, their white wings cutting through the mild air and thin, whispery clouds, swooping and diving and twisting because they're free and they can.

I look like a hockey player, up early to be on the ice, her skates cutting through the ice without a moment's hesitation; not even the sweat dripping down her face, or the heaviness in her legs stopping her from loving the game.

You know me when laughter floats through your open window, the fresh afternoon air sweet and filled with unspoken promises, some of which are so wonderful that you can't help but dream what would happen if they came true.



I am joy.

I am love.

You can find me shifting through faded family memories, fading from weathered, black-and-white prom pictures to bright, full-of-life coloured present-day family. I look like the sparkle in a mother's eyes; as serene and gentle as a butterfly but as fierce as a lioness ready to fight for her cubs and her pride.

You know me when the air changes from awkward to cozy as someone tells a story everyone relates to; hard and contusing when it happened, now a silly, over-exaggerated story that can be shared forever.

I am love.

I am Advent.

You can find me embedded in the pieces of chocolate in your calendar, a piece in each one swirling into your heart when you chomp into that first piece.

I look like the glorious colours of pink and purple, or the flickering light of flame perched atop towers of wax and evergreen, my presence hard to ignore as the smoke from the candles carry my scent around your house.

You know me when Christmas Day arrives, when hope, peace, joy and love bring angels down from the skies in a fragment of time that is neither heavenly nor earthly, to chant songs of Advent across the lands.

I am Advent.

The Darkness of Sin

I am despair.

You can find me slinking through filthy back alleys looking for another victim to capture with a cold word and a sharp dose of reality.

I look like a messy, unorganized home, with tear-stained, wrinkled papers and clothes littering the floor, the bed messed up and formed into a cocoon of torture and self-loathing.

You know me when your dreams of the future are crushed, when people don't believe in you, and when someone says, "You aren't good enough." When that wave of depression crashes over you, and you're frantically coming up with ideas to impress some heartless person in the crowd.

I am despair.

I am fear.

You can find me where the darkest thoughts of your mind lurk, where pain and longing and dreams and tears hide, trying to get out, literally laying on the tip of your tongue before a barrier of fear closes in, pushing them back, making you fumble for your words and choke. I look like families and innocent children running away from their country, their minds scarred



from what they've witnessed; their own people turning them away, then fear as guns pointed at their chests.

You know me when your gut clenches and you feel sick as your mind becomes disoriented as scenarios fill your head as you tremble, your mind too full to even expect the next event.
I am fear.

I am sadness.

You can find me hanging in the air like a storm cloud after two best friends break up, when those hurtful words are still echoing in the air when their footsteps storm away.

I look like a newly placed tombstone, still, silent and grey, even as the sobs and tears rebound around the cemetery like calls of the dead, wishing that their own mourners could come back once again.

You know me when tears spill down your face like small rivers turning into a sea of pain and regret, when you know you're embarrassed but you're too upset to care what everyone thinks of you.

I am sadness.

I am hate.

You can find me in every message on every social media app, whether it's Facebook or Instagram, that thread of "I don't like that," or even the, "I don't like you" that nobody detects, or that exasperated "I know; how much longer are you going to list me all the reasons? that sometimes hurt the most.

I look like the sulky expression on a teenager's face when they've heard the word "no" too many times: "no" to the sleepover, "no" to the Tiktok, "no" for the ten millionth time, don't you have anything else to do except complain about what I do for you?

You know me when you get in trouble for no reason at all, when your fists clench and your body feels hot, when words you'd never say form on your lips, a second away from coming out like oil splattering over the ground, black, glistening liquid that soaks all the flowers and grass and takes away the colour of the earth.

I am hate.

I am sin.

You can find me in your mistakes, your wrongdoings, those deep, unsettling thoughts that make you ask yourself; "Why did I do that? Am I stupid to be popular after doing that?" and, "Can I make up for it?"

I look like tire and broken glass, ammo laying on the ground and screams still I echoing even after their owners are long gone.

You know me when your mind starts to think back on the events of the day, events of the week, the month, even the year, and you feel shame and guilt piling up inside of you like lava, hot and burning in the pit of your stomach with no water to dose it with.

I am sin.



The Princess Who Overdid the Script



SCHOOL: St. Teresa, Kitchener
TEACHER: Monica Orosz and Danielle Winter
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Danielle Winter
UNIT: Waterloo
UNIT PRESIDENT: Patrick Etmanski

ELEMENTARY - GRADES 5-6 / PLAY

by **Olivia Yamoah and Zahara St. Hilaire-Njenga**

Characters:

Princess (Aniyah)
Butler (Mr.)
King (Donald)
Queen (Deja)
Narrator
Townsperson (Townspersons 1, 2, 3)
Workers
Pot Chef

SCENE 1

About 3 years ago:

Narrator Once upon a time there was a little princess named Aniyah. She was a very kind little princess. She was nice to everyone until one day she was told she wasn't acting properly.

Princess Hello my people! Good morning, I am so glad to see you all today.

Townsperson 1 Hello Princess Aniyah, can you help me with my crops? *[Slight wave.]*

Princess Of course, I can. *[Confused/angry face.]*

Townsperson 2 You cannot ask the princess that. YOU are meant to be helping her. *[Stomps and points at the princess.]*

Townsperson 3 Yeah, Princess Aniyah needs to be more proper.

Narrator So princess Aniyah decided she needed to be more "Proper" but after a few years, she took it too far.

[Enter butler.]

[Exit townspeople.]



SCENE 2

Aniyah now:

Princess Butler, get me my crown NOW! *[Points to crown.]*

Butler Yes Princess Aniyah.

Princess Hurry up!

[Butler hands crown over to Aniyah.]

Princess Thank you but next time... HURRY UP!

Butler Sorry Princess!

Princess Okay now I'm hungry grab me some sushi perhaps.

Butler Okay! On my way! *[Butler exits.]*

King Hello my little princess! Why so moody?

Princess Because Daddy I'm acting proper.

King *[Chuckles.]* Okay my princess but the town needs some help, do you mind?

Princess But daddy!! I'm a princess and I don't help anyone. *[Crossed arms.]*

Queen *[Looks at princess.]* Oh come on my dear!! The crops won't grow, and you can get dirty a little bit.

Princess UGH NO MOM AND DAD!!! THIS ISN'T FAIR.

[Exit Princess angrily.]

Narrator Aniyah refused to get dirty as she was a princess but the town needed help. The rain wouldn't fall and the crops wouldn't grow which meant people had been starving for some simple food but since the princess had been so selfish her parents had decided something.

SCENE 3

2 weeks later:

Princess BUTLER GET ME MY CROWN! *[Points to crown.]*



[Exit princess and butler.]

In the hall:

Queen Okay we should tell her.

King Okay madam.

Queen Aniyah? We have to tell you something. *[Enter princess, speaking.]*

Princess Yes mom and dad?

Queen You've been so spoiled we've decided that you are going to be a townspeople for the day. Me and your father are over it, my dear. You're still human, you should help out more so now you're forced to and no it's, ands. and butts!

Princess NO THAT'S NOT FAIR!! YOU GUYS SUCK!!

[Exit princess.]

King I told you she wouldn't want to do it.

Queen Well too bad she is going to do it anyway. Butler!!

[Enter butler speaking.]

Butler Yes Mrs. Patel?

[Enter butler & exit princess.]

Queen Get her OUT of the house.

Butler Indeed!

Narrator After lots of convincing, slamming, anger, tears and lots more. Aniyah had left.

[Exit all characters.]

SCENE 4

Narrator A day after Princess Aniyah was told she was living a day as a townspeople she was surprised to wake up to... well nothing.

Princess *[Wakes up.]* Good morning but-



- Townsperson 1 Aniyah! Come on, the town bell rang. It's time to start the crop care already. This is something daily, let's go!
- Princess Uhm what about breakfast?
- Townsperson 1 We get some porridge from the town pot after we finish the crops for at least 2 hours. *[Gives Aniyah basket.]* You collect the carrots and you cut the hay!
- Princess But my hands will get dirty!!!
- Townsperson 1 That's the least of your concerns. Now come on! The pot closes at 10:00 am. If we don't finish the crops, we don't get food and it's early spring, so the crops won't nourish us.
- Princess What? Why can't we just ask a butler for extra food?
- Townsperson 1 Are you serious?
- Princess Serious as a heart attack.
- Townsperson 1 Well you seem to not be, because butlers are for royalty.
- Princess Well I am royalty!!
- Townsperson 1 Not for today missy pops! Now you're gonna make us starve. *[Grabs Aniyah's hand.]* Let's go!
- Workers *[Ring second bell.]* LISTEN UP!
- Pot Chef Hurry up townspeople that are still farming. I only wait till 10!
- Narrator Aniyah and the townspeople worked very hard for their breakfast. Luckily, they got a small bowl of cold strawberry banana porridge just in the nick of time.
- Pot Chef Here ya go!
- Townsperson 1 *[Eats food.]* Mmm that's the stuff! Luckily, we got the strawberry banana; it is my favourite.
- Princess Done too, but it wasn't good. It's very cold and I'm still hungry. I'm going to get a second one.
- Townsperson 1 Second one? That would cost 89 cents. It's hard to even pay to make stew. That's why everyone eats from the pot. It's only 5 cents for a year's worth of delicious free stew.



Princess This is a disgrace! That is so disgusting for all the work we do!

Townsperson 1 More like Grace. Anyways let's go have our nap!

Princess Finally something other than work!

Townsperson 1 Only for 20 minutes!

Princess ONLY TWENTY MINUTES, OMG MY GOSH!

Narrator After her 20-minute nap the princess was woken up by the bell.

Workers *[Rings bell.]* OKAY EVERYONE! THE NAP IS OVER, TIME TO WORK MORE ON CROPS.

Princess More work ugh, I barely got to sleep.

Townsperson 1 Yeah! C'mon let's go.

Princess *[Groans.]* Okay.

Townsperson 1 Let's start!

SCENE 5

Narrator The girls worked hard on the crops making sure to get some food and water. The princess had thought of this like jail, wishing to be back at home with someone doing stuff for her.

Princess CAN WE JUST GO HOME? *[Crosses arms.]*

Townsperson 1 Home? There are still 7 more hours with me.

Princess I CAN'T DO IT. I CAN'T!

Townsperson 1 Well this is to teach you a lesson!

Princess I GET IT. I'M A BRAT.

Townsperson 1 I get it you understand now! But this is a learning experience.

Princess HOW? THIS IS TORTURE!

Townsperson 1 *[Grabs princess's hands.]* Honey! This is a learning experience don't be so moody and sad. This is fun. Soon we will have a festival. You go shower, I'll get you some food! *[Exit princess running and crying.]*



SCENE 6

Pot Chef Mozzarella cheese balls and sticks are for sale. Come get one!

Townsperson 1 Hello! How much for one?

Pot Chef 5 cents.

Townsperson 1 Perfect, here is 10 cents! *[Gives the money.]*

[Pot Chef gives the food.]

Workers So are you going to the festival?

Townsperson 1 Yes! I also have a guest this year!

Workers Who?

Townsperson 1 Aniyah!

Workers & Pot Chef The princess?

Townsperson 1 Mhm!

Workers No way!

Townsperson 1 Yes way!

Pot Chef Wow! But doesn't she have her festival?

Townsperson 1 She's with me for the day!

Pot Chef Oh that's nice! *[Worker 1 pops in.]*

Worker 1 Bonjour! Ai-je entendu quelque chose à propos de la princesse?

Townsperson 1 Bonjour, je ne parle pas le français.

Pot Chef He said, "Hello! Did I hear something about the princess?"

Townsperson 1 Oui!

Workers 1 Bien!

Pot Chef Anyways nice to meet you!



Townsperson 1 Nice to meet you too!

SCENE 7

Princess Hello!

Townsperson 1 Hi! So are you ready for the festival?

Princess Yep ready to go home!

Townsperson 1 Nuh-uh! You're celebrating with the townspeople, remember?

Princess Seriously?

Townsperson 1 Don't worry! I promise it'll be fun!

Princess Will they still have those delicious strawberry cupcakes?

Townsperson 1 I would think so!

Princess YESSS!

Townsperson 1 Let's go dress shopping!

[They pretend to shop.]

Narrator The girls went shopping for their perfect dress. They found a nice pink flower red, a blue polka dot dress and another black strappy dress.

Worker 2 So will that be all for today?

Princess Yep!

Townsperson 1 Mhmm!

Worker 2 That'll be \$5.00.

Townsperson 1 OK...

Worker 2 Thank you for enjoying the festival!

SCENE 8

Townsperson 1 Try on the dress!

Princess Okay! *[Tries it on.]* Perfect!



Townsperson 1 Good! Are you ready?

Princess Of course!

Narrator The girls went to the party with lots of flashing lights, singing, dancing and very loud music. For once the princess got excited for this day as she could smell all the delicious food. It was nothing like her party, so boring compared to this. She started to jump up as they got closer to the area.

Princess Yes, I'm so excited!!!

Townsperson 1 LET'S PARTY, BABY!! *[Enter All dancing and singing.]*

Narrator The princess had a lot of fun at the party, meeting new people, trying new food, and overall just being herself. Everyone loved her even more. Not just for being the princess but for her personality. She found that being herself is what made her happy instead of following others' commands and being so bossy and rude.

[Exit all.]

SCENE 9

A year later:

Narrator Next festival the princess had another idea...

King Are you ready for our festival?

Queen I definitely am!

Princess Can I maybe attend the town's festival?

King The townspeople festival?
Princess Yeah!

Queen I suppose we could try it!

Princess YESSS!!

Narrator The princess and her parents had lots of fun at the party. The princess would now help out with everything, even providing warm portions of foods and helping water the plants. The princess realized that her mistake was wrong and that she should help out, so she did.



Mental Health



SCHOOL: St. Peter, Orangeville
TEACHER: Marie Hoy-Kenny
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Michelle Melo
UNIT: Dufferin-Peel Elementary
UNIT PRESIDENT: Lori Austin

ELEMENTARY - GRADES 5-6 / NONFICTION
by **Noah Da Ponte Toth**

Did you know that one in five people between the ages of thirteen and eighteen has or will develop a mental illness in their lifetime? Yup you heard me right! One in five young people either have, or will develop, a mental illness. That is such an alarming fact.

The most common mental illnesses in young people are depression and anxiety. Some symptoms of depression are feeling empty and sad for a long period of time. Other symptoms include feelings of guilt, decreased energy, difficulty concentrating and loss of interest in hobbies. Some symptoms of anxiety are a racing heart, racing thoughts, sweating, panic attacks, and feeling irritable.

Some mental illnesses can make you feel like harming yourself, cause self doubt or hatred, and affect a person's ability to sleep, socialize, and eat. Approximately 970 million people worldwide struggle with mental issues. Out of all those people a huge percentage are not receiving the help that they need.

Mental illness can be caused by chemical imbalances in the brain. Sometimes they are caused by other influences such as a breakup, drugs, alcohol, trauma, and violence, such as bullying or abuse.

If someone lives with mental illness, there are ways to make life more manageable. There are psychological therapies such as cognitive behavioral therapy, which helps a person to find new perspectives about stress, grief, and other negative situations. Other remedies such as support groups and community help services can also help. Medications are also effective for some people, such as selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs), which increase the amount of feel-good serotonin levels in the brain. Medications such as Celexa, Lexapro, Prozac, Paxil, and Zoloft are all examples of SSRIs.

If you are feeling signs of mental illness, seek help, because I promise you, it will get better. If you feel hopeless, there is a light at the end of the tunnel. You will get through this.

Overall, mental illness is a serious topic that should not be joked around with. We need to reduce the stigma surrounding mental illness, so people won't be afraid to admit they live with one and to seek help. Everyone has mental health and we need to put ourselves first and take care of ourselves. As Cheryl B. Kuhn says, "Taking care of your mental health is an act of self-love." I hope people prioritize their mental health because it's so important.



Fixing the Balance



SCHOOL: Sacred Heart, Stittsville
TEACHER: Amanda Daigeler
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Jordan Laurin
UNIT: Ottawa
UNIT PRESIDENT: Mary Catherine Hogan

ELEMENTARY - GRADES 7-8 / SHORT STORY
by **Shreyansh Kanala**

Once upon a time, in a small village nestled between rolling hills and lush forests, there lived a young boy named Theo. Theo was unlike the other children in the village; he was born with a gift. A gift that set him apart from everyone else. He could hear the whispers of the wind, the laughter of the trees, and the secrets that the rivers carried within their currents.

Theo's gift was both a blessing and a curse. While he reveled in the symphony of nature's voices, he found it challenging to connect with his peers, who could not understand the world as he did. Despite this, Theo found solace in the company of his grandmother, an old woman with eyes like sparkling emeralds and a heart filled with wisdom.

One crisp autumn evening, as the golden sun dipped below the horizon, casting a warm glow over the village, Theo sat at his grandmother's feet, listening to her tales of ancient forests and forgotten magic. She spoke of a delicate balance that existed between the natural world and humanity. A balance that must be preserved at all costs.

"Theo," his grandmother said, her voice soft like the whisper of falling leaves, "the world around us is fragile, like a delicate thread woven through time. It is our duty to protect it, to cherish it, and to ensure that its beauty endures for generations to come."

Those words echoed in Theo's mind as he wandered through the village, his heart heavy with the weight of responsibility. He watched as the other children played, oblivious to the harmony that surrounded them, and he wondered if they would ever understand the true magic of the world.

One fateful night, a shadow fell upon the village. A darkness that crept through the streets like a silent predator. The air grew heavy with despair, and Theo knew that something was terribly wrong. Racing through the village, he followed the whispers of the wind until he reached the edge of the forest, where he discovered the source of the darkness.

A group of men, with greed in their hearts and destruction in their eyes, stood poised to fell the ancient trees that had stood sentinel over the village for centuries. Their axes gleamed in the moonlight, poised to shatter the fragile balance that Theo's grandmother had spoken of.



With a courage born of desperation, Theo stepped forward, his voice ringing out clear and strong. He pleaded with the men to reconsider, to see the beauty that surrounded them and to understand the consequences of their actions. But his words fell on deaf ears, drowned out by the clamor of ignorance and arrogance.

As the first blow fell, Theo closed his eyes, tears stinging at the corners. But then, something miraculous happened. The forest itself seemed to awaken, its ancient spirit rising to defend its children. Vines snaked through the underbrush, wrapping around the legs of the intruders and pulling them to the ground.

In the chaos that followed, Theo stood tall, his heart filled with a fierce determination. He would not let the darkness prevail, not while there was still hope left in the world. With a strength he did not know he possessed, he called upon the elements themselves, weaving a spell of protection around the forest and the village it sheltered.

And so, the balance was restored, thanks to the courage of a young boy who dared to believe in the magic of the world. As the first light of dawn broke over the horizon, bathing the world in a soft golden glow, Theo knew that his journey was far from over. But with the love of his grandmother in his heart and the whispers of nature at his side, he was ready to face whatever challenges lay ahead. For in the end, it was the fragile balance between darkness and light that held the power to shape their destinies.

In the days that followed, Theo became something of a legend in the village, his name whispered in awe and reverence by young and old alike. But despite the praise he received, Theo remained humble, knowing that true greatness lay not in the accolades of others, but in the strength of one's convictions.

As the seasons turned and the years passed, Theo continued to walk the path of the guardian, watching over the village and the forest with unwavering dedication. He grew wise beyond his years, his heart filled with the knowledge that he was part of something greater than himself.

But even as peace settled over the land, Theo knew that the balance remained fragile, teetering on the edge of oblivion with each passing day. For the world was ever-changing, and with change came both opportunity and peril.

And so, Theo vowed to remain vigilant, to stand as a beacon of hope in a world threatened by darkness. For he knew that as long as there were those willing to fight for what was right, the light would never be extinguished.

And as he stood beneath the ancient trees, his gaze turned toward the horizon, Theo smiled, his heart filled with a quiet sense of purpose. For in that moment, he understood that the true magic of the world lay not in spells or incantations, but in the simple act of believing in oneself, in others, and in the power of hope to overcome even the darkest of shadows.



And so, as the sun dipped beneath the horizon, painting the sky with hues of orange and pink, casting its golden light across the sprawling landscape, Theo stood in quiet reverence. The tranquil moment held within it a silent pact, an unspoken vow that resonated with the whispers of the wind. In that fleeting instance, amidst the rustling leaves and swaying branches, Theo found himself bound to a solemn promise. A promise to safeguard the delicate harmony that intertwined all life. For he knew that no matter what trials lay ahead, he would face them with courage, with wisdom, and with a heart filled with love. For in the end, it was love that bound them all together, love that whispered through the leaves and danced upon the breeze, a timeless melody that echoed through the ages, resonating with the promise of a new dawn.



Blank Canvas



SCHOOL: St. Teresa, Kitchener
TEACHER: Vincenzo Boragina
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Danielle Winter
UNIT: Waterloo
UNIT PRESIDENT: Patrick Etmanski

ELEMENTARY - GRADES 7-8 / POEM
by **Wendy Fu**

Blank canvas, clean slate,
White void, with no mistakes.
Talk all day, but no one hears.
Sketch for paint, then erase from there.

Sketch the window, dark with fear.
Blue rain falls like gentle tears,
But it's a downpour, scream aloud.
Eyes trace the window, let me out.

Trace the woods, evergreen glow.
A tiny bluebird chirps below.
See the forest for the trees,
The bird's erased, and no one sees.

Erase the ocean, bright blue bay.
A playful dolphin, or so they say.
For she's alone, without a home,
She fakes a smile, so no one knows.

Faking talent, shapes and lines.
Abstract thoughts I can't recognize.
The face in the mirror isn't mine.
Blue paint is forming a stranger's design.



Paint the stage, blue spotlights.
Am I meant to stand at such a height?
Lost the freedom, chasing cash.
Pencil and paper seem to clash.

Take the pencil, dip the paint.
There is no prize without mistakes.
The canvas is white, the brush is blue.
Void is gone, but born anew.

Brush in hand, mixing paint.
Take a giant leap of faith.
Strokes form, becoming clear.
You see lines, I see a mirror.



City of Echoing Hearts



SCHOOL: Sacred Heart, Stittsville
TEACHER: Amanda Daigeler
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Jordan Laurin
UNIT: Ottawa
UNIT PRESIDENT: Mary Catherine Hogan

ELEMENTARY - GRADES 7-8 / PLAY
by **Audrey Lawlor**

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

The scene opens in a cozy coffee shop where Emma, a vibrant young woman, sits alone with her laptop. She gazes out the window, lost in thought, as Sam Hunt's "Body Like a Back Road" softly plays from the cafe's speakers.

EMMA

(Smiling.)

You know, this coffee shop has become my little sanctuary. The aroma of freshly brewed coffee, the gentle hum of conversations, and the melodies that wrap around me like a warm blanket. It's like my creative haven.

(Sips her coffee.)

I come here to escape the chaos, to let my thoughts dance freely. Today, it's Sam Hunt serenading me while I dive into this whirlwind of ideas. There's something about his voice that just adds the perfect rhythm to my musings.

(Looking out the window.)

And outside these walls, life goes on—people rushing, cars honking—but in here, it's my world. It's where the magic happens, where words come alive, and where dreams take shape. Sometimes, you just need a cozy corner, a cup of coffee, and a melody to set the mood.

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY PARK - DAY

Emma takes a stroll through a bustling city park. Sam Hunt's "Take Your Time" echoes in her mind as she observes couples around her, contemplating the complexities of modern relationships.

CUT TO:

INT. LIBRARY - AFTERNOON



Emma finds herself drawn to the romance section. The lyrics of Sam Hunt's "Make You Miss Me" resonate as she daydreams about a love that leaves a lasting imprint.

Emma's fingers glide along the spines of the romance novels, the scent of aged paper and ink enveloping her. She pulls out a book with an enticing cover, its title promising a tale of passion and heartache. As she flips through the pages, the melodic voice of Sam Hunt continues to play in the background, setting the scene for her daydream.

Across the aisle, a stranger with an intriguing smile notices Emma lost in the world of books. He approaches, his footsteps barely audible against the hushed ambiance of the library.

STRANGER

(Smirking.) Finding any love stories worth getting lost in?

Emma looks up, caught off guard by the unexpected interruption, and meets the stranger's gaze.

EMMA

(Smiling.) Oh, just exploring different worlds. You know how it is.

STRANGER

(Nodding.) Absolutely. There's something magical about losing yourself in a good book.

They share a moment of understanding, the air filled with a subtle connection. The stranger extends his hand.

STRANGER

I'm Alex, by the way.

EMMA

(Shaking his hand.) Emma. Nice to meet you, Alex.

ALEX

So, Emma, any recommendations from the romance section?

Emma's eyes light up with enthusiasm.

EMMA

"Well, this one seems promising," she says, holding up the book she had chosen. "It's got all the elements of a captivating love story—passion, heartache, and, of course, a touch of mystery."

ALEX

Sounds intriguing. Mind if I join you? Maybe we can both discover a hidden gem.

Emma smiles, realizing that her daydream about love might be taking an unexpected turn into reality.



Together, they venture deeper into the world of romance novels, sharing thoughts on love, life, and the stories that unfold on the pages before them. The library, a sanctuary of both literature and newfound connections, wraps them in its quiet embrace as they continue their conversation amidst the shelves of love stories. Alex leaves Emma alone in the quiet library.

CUT TO:

INT. EMMA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The script introduces JASON, a smart musician, who lives in the same building. Sam Hunt's "Leave the Night On" plays as they cross paths in the hallway, sparking a connection.

The hallway of Emma's apartment building is dimly lit, and the faint strains of Sam Hunt's "Leave the Night On" echo through the space. Emma, lost in thought, carries a bag of groceries as she makes her way to her apartment. At the same moment, Jason, a talented musician with an easygoing demeanor, steps out of his apartment, guitar in hand.

JASON

(Smirking.) Nice choice of music. Sam Hunt, right?

Emma looks up, surprised and somewhat amused by the serendipity.

EMMA

Yeah, it's one of my favorites. You're into country music too?

JASON

Absolutely. There's something about the twang of a guitar and lyrics that tell a story.

Their eyes meet, and a connection sparks between them.

EMMA

I couldn't agree more. By the way, I'm Emma.

JASON

(Grinning.) Emma, nice to meet you. I'm Jason.

As they chat in the hallway, the conversation flows seamlessly, their shared love for music creating an instant bond.

EMMA

So, you're a musician?

JASON

Yeah, I play a bit. I've got a gig at a local bar this weekend if you're interested.



EMMA

(Smiling.) I might just have to check that out. I love live music.

JASON

Great! Maybe I'll see you there. Until then, enjoy the night.

They exchange friendly smiles, and Emma continues to her apartment with a newfound energy. The music lingers in the air as Jason heads down the hallway, leaving behind a sense of anticipation and the promise of a serendipitous connection in the making.

CUT TO:

INT. LOCAL BAR - WEEKEND NIGHT

The cozy bar is alive with the hum of conversation and the clinking of glasses. Jason, with his guitar slung over his shoulder, steps onto the small stage, bathed in the warm glow of stage lights. The crowd buzzes with anticipation as he strums a few chords, setting the tone for the night.

Emma enters the bar, the familiar twang of Sam Hunt's music guiding her through the crowd. She spots an open spot near the stage, drawn to the energy of live music.

Jason catches sight of Emma and offers her a warm smile from the stage before diving into his first song. The crowd responds with cheers and applause.

JASON

(Addressing the audience.) Thanks for being here tonight! This one's for anyone who's ever taken a chance on love.

As the melody of his song fills the air, Emma is captivated by Jason's soulful voice and skillful guitar playing. She finds herself swaying to the rhythm, caught in the magic of the moment.

During a break between songs, Jason spots Emma in the crowd and gestures for her to join him on the small stage.

JASON

Hey, Emma, care to join me for a song?

Emma, feeling a mix of excitement and surprise, nods and makes her way to the stage. The crowd cheers in anticipation.

EMMA

What song are we playing?



Jason hands her a microphone, a playful glint in his eyes.

JASON

How about a classic? “Play It Again” by Luke Bryan.

Their impromptu duet fills the bar, their voices blending seamlessly and adding a touch of magic to the evening. The crowd watches in awe as Emma and Jason share the stage, creating a moment that transcends the ordinary.

As the song comes to an end, the crowd erupts in cheers and applause. Jason and Emma exchange smiles, the connection between them growing stronger in the midst of the music and the shared experience of the night. The bar, once just a venue for live music, transforms into a backdrop for the beginning of something special.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROOFTOP EVENING

The city skyline shimmers in the soft glow of the approaching evening. Jason and Emma, having left the lively bar, find themselves on the quiet rooftop, away from the hustle and bustle of the city below. Sam Hunt's "Break Up in a Small Town" plays faintly in the background, adding a poignant touch to the atmosphere.

JASON

(Leaning against the rooftop ledge.) There's something magical about watching the stars from up here. It's like the city takes a deep breath before the chaos begins.

Emma, standing beside him, gazes at the awakening city.

EMMA

(Smiling.) It's beautiful. Thanks for bringing me up here.

JASON

Anytime. So, Emma, what brings you to this big city? Love, adventure, or just the thrill of the fast-paced life?

EMMA

(Chuckles.) Maybe a bit of everything. I came here for new opportunities, the excitement of the unknown. But love... that's a tricky one in a city this size, isn't it?

JASON

(Nodding.) Absolutely. It's like Sam Hunt's song, “Break Up in a Small Town.” In a place where everyone knows everyone, love is complicated. But here, in the city, it's a different kind of challenge. It's easy to get lost in the crowd.



EMMA

True. It's like navigating a maze of possibilities, hoping to find that one connection that stands out.

They share a thoughtful moment, the city lights flickering below as they absorb the complexities of love in an urban landscape.

JASON

But you know, sometimes the most unexpected connections happen in the chaos. Like our paths crossing tonight. It's like finding a small-town moment in the heart of the city.

EMMA

(Smiling.) You might be onto something there, Jason. Maybe the key is to embrace the unexpected.

The first light of dawn begins to paint the sky, casting a warm glow on the rooftop scene.

JASON

How about we make a pact, Emma? To embrace the unexpected and see where it leads.

EMMA

(Extending her hand.) Deal.

They seal their pact with a handshake, the city awakening beneath them, and the promise of new beginnings lingering in the air.

CUT TO:

INT. ART GALLERY - DAY

The two explore an art gallery, discussing the intricate emotions captured in each painting. Sam Hunt's "Make You Miss Me" plays softly, reflecting the vulnerability of opening up to someone special.

CUT TO:

INT. JASON'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The soft glow of fairy lights illuminates Jason's cozy apartment. Jason and Emma sit on the comfortable sofa, engaged in a conversation that reveals the depth of their connection. A vase of flowers adorns the coffee table, adding a touch of romance to the atmosphere.

EMMA

(Smiling.) I love the ambiance here, Jason. It's so inviting.

JASON

(Grinning.) Glad you like it. I wanted it to be a comfortable space.



They share a moment of comfortable silence, sipping on glasses of red wine. The flickering candles cast a warm glow on their faces.

EMMA

(Looking around.) You have a lot of interesting books. What's your favorite genre?

JASON

(Leaning back.) I'm a sucker for thrillers, but I also enjoy a good science fiction novel. How about you?

EMMA

(Smiling.) Mystery novels, mostly. I love getting lost in a good detective story.

JASON

Maybe we can exchange recommendations sometime.

EMMA

I'd like that.

They both chuckle, enjoying the easy now of conversation. Jason reaches for his acoustic guitar in the corner, strumming a few chords.

JASON

(Smiling.) Music has always been a big part of my life. Do you play any instruments?

EMMA

(Leaning in.) I used to play the piano when I was younger, but I haven't touched it in years.

JASON

(Smiling.) You should give it another shot sometime. It's never too late to rediscover a passion.

As Jason continues to play, the scene unfolds with shared laughter, meaningful conversation, and the promise of a deeper connection between Jason and Emma. The apartment becomes a haven for the blossoming of their relationship, devoid of physical intimacy but rich with emotional connection.

CUT TO:

EXT. CANDLELIT GARDEN - SUNSET

A soft breeze rustles through the leaves of nearby trees, carrying with it the sweet scent of blooming flowers. Jason has transformed a secluded garden into a magical haven, with fairy lights draped over branches and candles flickering on quaint tables.



As Jason pulls out a chair for Emma, the sun dips below the horizon, casting a warm, golden glow across the garden. Sam Hunt's "Downtown's Dead" continues to serenade them, its melody blending seamlessly with the ambient sounds of nature.

JASON

(Looking into Emma's eyes.) I thought tonight deserved something special.

EMMA

(Smiling.) You've certainly outdone yourself, Jason.

They clink their glasses filled with sparkling cider, the effervescence reflecting the stars above. The soft glow of the candles illuminates the happiness in their eyes as they dive into conversation, their laughter harmonizing with the music.

The night unfolds with a delectable dinner prepared by a private chef, each course carefully curated to tantalize their taste buds. Jason shares anecdotes, and Emma listens intently, captivated by the charm of the evening.

The gentle melody of "Downtown's Dead" inspires Jason to invite Emma for a dance. They sway gracefully under the moonlit sky, the garden's enchanting ambiance turning their movements into a dance of pure romance.

The evening deepens, and as the stars twinkle overhead, Jason unveils a small telescope. Together, they marvel at the celestial wonders, sharing dreams and aspirations while basking in the warmth of the cozy blankets he's laid out.

With the night winding down, Jason presents Emma with a small, elegantly wrapped box. As she opens it, she finds a beautiful necklace that glistens in the moonlight.

JASON

It's a reminder of this magical night, and the stars that witnessed our love story.

Emma embraces Jason, and they share a tender kiss, sealing the enchantment of this surprise date in their hearts. As they continue to enjoy the quiet moments, the garden remains a haven of love, with the echoes of "Downtown's Dead" lingering in the air.

CUT TO:

INT. EMMA'S APARTMENT - DAY

The apartment is filled with a mix of daylight and the emotional melody of "Break Up in a Small Town." Emma, wearing a thoughtful expression, sits on the couch, flipping through the scrapbook. Jason enters, sensing the reflective atmosphere.



JASON

(Sincerely.) What are you looking at?

EMMA

(Smiling.) Our story.

She points at a picture from their surprise date, the candlelit garden glowing on the page.

JASON

(Looking at the picture.) Ah, the beginning of something beautiful.

As the song's lyrics resonate, the script delves into flashbacks of their challenges. Emma pauses on a page capturing a moment of tension, but also a resolution. The music heightens the emotional weight of those memories.

EMMA

(Looking at Jason.) Remember this?

JASON

(Nodding.) How could I forget? We've come a long way since then.

The dialogue intertwines with the song, creating a symphony of words and melodies. Jason notices the scrapbook and sits beside Emma, engrossed in the journey they've documented.

JASON

(Softly.) "Break Up in a Small Town" seems fitting for us, doesn't it? Love in a big city with its own set of challenges.

EMMA

(Smiling.) It's like Sam Hunt wrote our soundtrack.

They share a reflective gaze, the shared understanding of the song's narrative mirroring their own experiences. The atmosphere shifts as the script transitions to lighter moments, the couple laughing at pictures of inside jokes and sweet gestures.

JASON

(Playfully.) Remember that disastrous attempt at cooking?

EMMA

(Laughing.) Oh, how could I forget? We had to order takeout that night.

The song's tempo lightens, blending seamlessly with their laughter. The couple reminisces about the quirky, spontaneous moments that define their relationship.



As the script progresses, it brings the couple back to the present moment. Jason, inspired by the music, takes Emma's hand, inviting her to dance in the living room. The apartment transforms into their private ballroom, the song bridging the past and present.

JASON

(Whispering.) No matter what, we've got each other, right?

EMMA

(Nodding.) Always.

The script concludes with the couple dancing, their connection reaffirmed by the timeless melody of "Break Up in a Small Town." The song continues to play as the camera pans out, leaving the audience with a sense of the enduring power of love amid life's complexities.

CLOSING SCENE:

The script concludes with Emma and Jason standing on the rooftop, looking out over the city. Sam Hunt's "Make You Miss Me" plays softly as they share a tender moment, realizing that love is a journey filled with surprises and magical moments.

FADE OUT



Malala Yousafzai: Valiant Hero



SCHOOL: St. Katharine Drexel
TEACHER: Diana Fiorini
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Deanne Wiltshire
UNIT: York
UNIT PRESIDENT: Mike Totten

ELEMENTARY - GRADES 7-8 / NONFICTION
by **Isabella Quinto**

Malala Yousafzai is a Pakistani activist for female education and a vocal and persistent advocate against the Taliban, a barbaric terrorist group. She was born in Mingora, Swat Valley, Pakistan on July 12, 1997, to supportive parents who encouraged her to follow her dreams and gave her all possible opportunities, not altogether common in her country. As a child, she loved learning and studied at her father's school, achieving highly in her academics. However, the Taliban would gradually take over in the years to come, banning education for females and stripping away their human rights. I feel as though Malala is undoubtedly a hero, for her fearlessness and selflessness shines through everything she does, and she has persistently remained determined, even when extremely challenged.

To begin with, Malala showcased a significant amount of bravery when she first started advocating against the Taliban at 12 years old, through an anonymous blog for the BBC. She wrote about how scary her daily life and the lives of many had become due to the Taliban, under the pen name of Gul Makai. This blog opened the eyes of many people worldwide of just how prevalent the issue in Pakistan was. Writing the blog was a risk that many weren't willing to take, as they were afraid if they were exposed, the Taliban would harm them. Malala however, although young, wanted to make a difference and was willing to take that risk. Unfortunately, she was eventually exposed unintentionally by her father, but her blog still made an impact nevertheless. This undoubtedly takes an abundance of fearlessness, especially at such a young age, and clearly showcases a great deal of heroism.

Malala demonstrated a great deal of heroism when she advocated for justice against the Taliban, even when it became extremely hazardous. Malala continued advocating against the Taliban, even when they went so far as to threaten her life. Her reaction upon learning about this was that of calmness and increased determination. In her memoir, Malala claims, "He googled my name." Malala Yousafzai "should be killed," said the Taliban. "There it was in black and white. A death threat against me... Here was a call for my death - an invitation from one terrorist to another, saying, *Go ahead, shoot her* - and I was as calm as can be. As if I was reading about someone else... *Aba*, I said, trying to reassure him. Everybody knows they will die someday. No one can stop death. It doesn't matter if it comes from a Talib or from Cancer." She also refused her dad's suggestions to stop campaigning, insisting they remain vocal. This shows that with her own life at risk, Malala still advocated for justice, knowing there could very well be a devastating outcome. She accepted that death is inevitable and didn't allow it to stop her from advocating for the rights of girls and children globally. To her, justice for her and all the children of Pakistan took top priority. This, once again, is unequivocal evidence of the fact that she is a hero, and a remarkable one at that.



Lastly, Malala was tragically shot in the head by the Taliban, in an attempt to end her life, but she survived after a long and strenuous recovery, becoming more outspoken. She was riding home on a school bus when an armed man from the Taliban climbed aboard and asked, “Who is Malala?” He then shot her in the head 3 times, and accidentally shot 2 other innocent girls, all of whom survived. She had to endure so much to survive this terrible ordeal, and when awakened after her injury and many surgeries, was mostly concerned about her family’s wellbeing. She had to relearn spelling, reading, speaking and writing, and did so in a matter of months. Rather than silencing her, like the Taliban intended, this situation got the world’s attention and Malala’s platform grew considerably. Although her whole family had to be abruptly uprooted to Birmingham, England, Malala still continued to campaign nonetheless. Through this, she became the youngest winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, at the age of merely 17. She fought something so horrible, and rather than being silenced, she grew louder and increasingly outspoken, showing the true hero she is.

Without a question, Malala Yousafzai is a valiant hero, as she persistently fights for justice for children’s education, a cause she is passionate about. With kindness, understanding and empathy, not allowing the myriad of challenges to stop her. She first advocated for justice at a very young age through an anonymous blog, where she wrote about how drastically her daily life had changed due to the Taliban. She remained a persistent and vocal advocate against the unfounded ban on female education, although her life was threatened by them. Because of her relentless advocating, she was shot in the head by the Taliban, but miraculously survived, and instead of being silenced as intended, she now had a bigger platform and became much more vocal. This is why Malala is unequivocally a hero, through her selfless acts of determination and remarkable bravery.



They Say I Should Be Grateful I'm Not Trapped in a Concession Machine



SCHOOL: St. Theresa of Lisieux
TEACHER: Monica Strazzabosco
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Deborah Todde and Rocky Savoia
UNIT: York
UNIT PRESIDENT: Mike Totten

SECONDARY - GRADES 9-10 / SHORT STORY
by **Nikka Rabbani**

Twenty-eight hours ago, I was watching a television show with what I consider to be my family. From my spot all the way up on the green countertop in the kitchen, it was hard to understand exactly what was going on. Amongst the collection of poorly dressed people, dirty plastic seats, suitcases wrapped in cellophane, and an antiseptic scent I could almost smell from the TV, I think we were watching something of a subway station. What really grabbed my attention, though, were the flat chicken sandwiches trapped in concession machines in the corner. I recall thinking back then, *Thank God that's not me.*

Now, I'm ironically sitting on a steel rack inside a porcelainized oven cavity, patiently waiting to be brought out. Just a few moments ago, I was being bombarded by radiation of 2.4 Ghz frequency, and it was extremely cramped and hot, and I don't know how I even managed to fit inside. Just a few moments before *that*, my skin was being aggressively rubbed and stretched to make way for a bundle of herbs, diced onion, and cold pieces of butter. *Flavour*, they called it.

That word only masked what was actually happening to me: they cut me open, let me bleed and left me hollow. My legs were turning numb, and the tension in my face had relaxed; *what is happening to me?* I wanted to cry. I wanted to yell and ask them why a hole of nothingness was growing in my belly, but I felt so worn out. It's not like I couldn't feel anger, but I was slowly losing the feeling that I actually wanted to be angry. The hole of nothingness was enveloping me. I felt nothing. I was nothing, just a broiler chicken waiting to be filled up with the proper ingredients and aromatics. Apparently, there was a strict recipe to follow so that I would come out "just right," but I didn't understand why they weren't satisfied with who I really was. After being stuffed and slow roasted for three hours, I hope they're at least satisfied now.

The woman on the other side of the oven's door glass turned off the heat. I take this moment to observe the four surfaces enclosing me: they are crazed, with a network of fine cracks that almost resemble a snowflake, but not quite. It's not cold enough for a snowflake. In fact, one could argue that I'm currently sun-bathing. Douched in a warm, orange light and the garlic-stained smell of my own flesh, I almost feel peaceful for the first time in my 47 days of life. The key word here is "almost" because I'm startled by a sudden, loud creaking noise. The oven door swings open and a large pair of hands—protected by mittens, of course—are coming my way.

My body is pulled through a wide egress that transports me from a December in Bali to a December in Yellowknife. The contrast in temperature, as well as the daunting proximity of four pairs of eyes, runs a tingling sensation throughout my limbs. As I'm hastily placed on the countertop where I was watching television yesterday, I realize I'm not alone this time. All around me are ceramic dishes



filled with cranberry apple salad, mashed potatoes, honey mustard brussels sprouts, and peach crumble. Yet, I remain the star of the feast, and everyone has expectations.

“We better start eating before it gets cold,” I hear the dad say. His voice is drowned out by the insistent, continuous bubbling of white wine and chicken broth boiling down to make a sauce. The pot is brought over my head and slowly tilted to shower me in its heat. I enjoy the texture of the scraped up fond and the lingering taste of parmesan, but by the time I'm transferred over to another plate, decorated with a reef of chervil, and carried to the dining table, I realize that it's too late. I'm gone. Not my physical body, but my quintessence. My *taste* and *flavour*, as they like to say it.

“Where'd it all go?” The older child inquires.

“There was none to begin with. Your father always buys the wrong brand.” *The wrong brand.* It's a mistake. I'm a mistake. Out of *Bell & Evans*, *Farmer Focus*, *Mary's Free Range Chicken*, and all the other brands of chicken racked in the grocery store fridges, I guess that tends to happen. There's still other people who will appreciate me, even if it might not be this family.

“That's not true! The city's food just isn't any good anymore.” So now I'm not a mistake, I'm just worthless. I was never supposed to mean anything to anyone in the first place, not even when I was warm and fresh. Too bad they already ruined me—stuffed me and roasted me and braised me and chopped me up into little pieces so that it's impossible to save myself. There's nothing I can do about it now. I just have to keep trying my best, and that might just be enough to be loved.

“It tastes so bad. I can't eat anymore.” The words of the youngest one make my stomach turn like a washing machine, and my racing thoughts imitate its obnoxious rumbling when the water pressure is too high.

Try? Is that all you can do? Try? Why do you pity yourself and use excuses all the time? Just get better, already! Just be good. Don't you see? I sacrificed my time to get you from the store. Don't you see? I sacrificed my money to buy you. Don't you see? I sacrificed my evening to prepare you for dinner instead of relaxing.

I just stare at them with an empty gaze, the same emptiness from when they stripped me of who I was and replaced that with who I wasn't. This time, though, I'm devoid of any emotion. There's no anger, no sadness, just the passing of time... *Say something! Don't you understand me?* I'm just stupid, I guess.

After hours of sitting on that same rough, cold wooden surface beneath me, I begin to feed on myself. They didn't eat me, so I have no choice but to slowly nibble away at my own vacant brain and fat body. *You should be grateful you're not trapped in a concession machine like everyone else. Stupid chicken!* The words aren't clear to me... I'm gone.



Floating In Between



SCHOOL: Holy Names
TEACHER: Deanna Dimenna
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Kristine Simard
UNIT: Windsor-Essex Secondary
UNIT PRESIDENT: Jody Meloche

SECONDARY - GRADES 9-10 / POEM
by **Elena Noori**

I am a floating entity,
Lost between two lands,
Questioning what is home,
As I search the shifting sands.

It is a constant battle,
A struggle to find my place,
In a world of constant change,
My identity, a blurred face.

Am I from the land of my birth,
Or the land that raised me?
Do I belong in both,
Or neither, can't you see?

The memories of my childhood,
In one land they reside,
But the experiences of my present,
In the other, they reside.

I am torn between two worlds,
Never fully fitting in,
A puzzle with missing pieces,
A battle I cannot win.

Do I speak the language,
Of my ancestors with pride?
Or do I embrace the customs,
Of the land where I reside?



I long to feel like I belong,
A place to call my own,
But like a leaf in the wind,
I am constantly blown.

Is home where my heart lies,
Or where my feet have tread?
Am I defined by my roots,
Or the path I have led?

As I float between these two lands,
I am filled with confusion,
A constant search for my identity,
A quest with no conclusion.

But perhaps, home is not a place,
But a feeling deep inside,
A sense of peace and comfort,
Wherever I may reside.

So I will embrace my duality,
And let go of the doubt,
For home is where I make it,
And that is what life's about.

A journey of self-discovery



Emmy for Class President



SCHOOL: Assumption
TEACHER: Pamela Fergus
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Carmen Davis
UNIT: Brant Haldimand Norfolk
UNIT PRESIDENT: Tom Laracy

SECONDARY - GRADES 9-10 / PLAY
by **Liya Edwards**

Emmy enters by barging in through door. Stumbles and knocks over items on desk and places down binder. Huffs and puffs holding hips.

(Huffs) I thought I wasn't *(Catches breath)* gonna.... make it... Anyway... I guess I should get started...

(Teacher tries to interject) Umm, miss....

Emmy ignores and continues right away.

Hello, I'm Emmy Brooks. Not Emily or Emma by the way, just Emmy... with a y. Well anyway, I would like to be the new class president at West County High. I actually don't really know what a class president is per se. *(Pauses)* But I think I have a lot of good ideas for how to make this school a better place.

This school needs a lot of changes. It's bland, boring and lacks creativity. The students are mean, and the teachers suck... No offense. Luckily, you have me to help you. First, I say we get rid of those awful red and brown walls. Red is such a harsh color and brown is just... brown. I think we should paint the walls light blue instead. Blue is such a lovely color. It's the color of the sky, ocean, ...and those cute little... wait, sorry, let me just get to the point. Blue walls.

Also, I think we should appreciate turtles more. I don't know if I have the authority to order everyone to love turtles, but I think I should suggest it anyway. Everyone always bullies turtles because they are slow. *(Stands up straighter)* It is not their fault they have slow metabolisms! And some turtles are surprisingly fast like the leatherback turtles. Also, turtles are so cool, I mean HELLO *(Waves hands)* Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles! Anyway, I'm getting off topic. I'm just saying, turtles rule! In fact, they should be our new mascot. Way better than the "mole rats" *(Shakes head)*. Whose bright idea was that?! I just think turtles deserve a little appreciation. *(Leans over and whispers)* World turtle day is May 23rd by the way...

I also think we should get rid of those tiny cramped changerooms. Well... maybe not get rid of them. WE would stink after all. I just hate how we have to change in front of each other. It's a school, not a strip club. So, if we MUST have changerooms, *(Rolls eyes)* I think we should have clean, tidy, individual stalls, and maybe a bidet would be nice.



I also think no bullying, teasing, name-calling, trapping people in lockers, pushing, tripping people (*Catches breath*) should be allowed AT ALL! It should also be punished by immediate expulsion. NO EXCEPTIONS. I'm sick and tired of STACY—I mean “people” teasing ME. I mean “other students” (*Starts pacing around*). Like, what is Stacy's problem? Does she get some sort of sick kick out of making my life a living hell?! I didn't do anything to her. So, I talk a lot, that is NO reason to tell me to shut up in front of the entire class. And it is definitely not a reason to push me into the boy's washroom. I wish she would just leave me alone. (*Pauses*) For one moment I wish I could feel like I belong. School is supposed to be my safe space. A way to escape from home. Why must stupid Stacy ruin that? (*Stops pacing and pauses for a second. Voice trails off.*) Anyway, I'm getting off topic.

It just that (*Voice starts rising again*) I hate Stacy! I hate her stupid face and her stupid laugh. I missed when we were friends. (*Pauses and lowers voice*) You must be thinking I suck or have no idea how to be a good class president. And the truth is, you're right... I don't. But I do know that no one deserves to be treated like this. I thought trying to be class president would help me finally make a difference... I thought for once I'd finally be worth something. Stacy always tells me what I can and cannot do. She says that I am a total klutz, that I'm socially inept, that I am never aware of my surroundings... That I will never amount to anything. Which none of those are true by the way! Or maybe it is. You know what? It isn't. I made it! In your stupid face! I am something! (*Turns around to point at board.*) I AM GONNA BE CLASS PRE— (*Voice trails off.*)

Looks at board to see that it says STEM competition.

(*Nervous laugh.*) You mean this isn't the Class president elections?
Oof, (*Mumbles to herself*) I must have gotten the dates wrong.

(*Teacher interjects*) Eh hem... (*Gives stern look.*)

Well... Anyway, VOTE FOR EMMY. (*Places pin on table.*)

Swiftly exits through door.

The End



Books are Media, Books are Entertainment



SCHOOL: Regiopolis-Notre Dame
TEACHER: Billy Ows
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Geoff Mackler
UNIT: Algonquin-Lakeshore
UNIT PRESIDENT: Sheena Cassidy

SECONDARY - GRADES 9-10 / NONFICTION
by **Seba Alhaek**

Books are a valuable part of our world because we can extract facts, wisdom, knowledge, art, and history from them. There are a variety of topics and genres that include the fine arts, literature, sciences, and so much more. To dive deeper into books and their importance in this technology-consumed world, I would like to start with a famous quote by Ernest Hemingway: “There is no friend as loyal as a book.” A book is a friend that will never judge you. A book is a friend that will teach you and a friend that will give but will not take back from you. It will guide you to make the right decisions in life. Yet, it does not expect the same back from you. We are lucky to have authors, poets, and writers to express their emotions, thoughts, and knowledge into pages that we must treasure. Not only that, but these authors create worlds for us to escape into, a fantasy world with so many adventures to live in and dragons to slay.

Books have been passed down from generation to generation and developed during those years. Books evolved from cave drawings to scrolls to the books we have today. At first, cave drawings were how people told their stories and theories. Then as it developed, scrolls became how scholars explained what they discovered about certain matters like chemistry, astrology, and more. Later, poets, authors, and writers handwrote books. So, books were slow to rise and for this reason, not many people owned books, especially since they were seen as a status symbol owned by the rich and royalty. Life continued without the widespread use of books, except by the elites; however, in 1436, those treasures developed even further. German goldsmith Johannes Gutenberg invented the printing press. That sped up the accessibility of books, so more people owned more books and used them for many purposes—for entertainment, knowledge, work, and more. Furthermore, with the advancement of technology and the internet, people now can buy or download free eBooks online to read. eBook sales grew by 22% in 2020. I am sure we can all guess why. The pandemic forced the population to stay inside. Bored out of their minds, people would go online and download books to entertain themselves and use them for work. Quite the dramatic change if you ask me!

As I have mentioned before, the advancement of science and technology is slowly consuming our world. That means that the utility of books is getting low. People have been depending too much on social media platforms and the internet to gain information and entertainment. People used to spend time reading a book to pass the time, like during a bus ride or road trip; but now, all you see are people with the newest iPhone scrolling through Tik Tok, Instagram, and all the social media apps you can think of. While these can be good sources of entertainment, we are all missing out on the joy of holding a book and turning the pages to find out what happens in the end. Did you know that the average smartphone owner will click, tap, or swipe their phone 2,617 times a day? That tells us that the



world has changed so much, and very quickly too. Before, the only source of information and fun were books, but now, we have a wide, new world of funny videos and hashtags.

Even though we have all these social media apps like Instagram, Twitter, Tik Tok, and more, books will always be the best source of knowledge and joy. That may seem unbelievable to many of you today, but that is because you may not have found your book yet. You may have heard of the quote by the famous J.K. Rowling: “If you don't like to read, you haven't found the right book.” This quote speaks the truth. Books in the genres and topics you love can give you joy. With the right positive mindset, patience, and a good environment for reading, you can escape this technologyconsumed world and jump into a world with the characters you love, stories you might live, and wisdom you will gain.

I will now conclude with a famous phrase by Sharon Creech, which says: “I love the way that each book—any book—is its own journey. You open it, and off you go. You are changed in some way, large or small, by having traveled with those characters.”

Sources

For reference and ideas:

<https://www.toppr.com/guides/speech-for-students/speech-on-books-for-students-and-children/>

For quotes, specifically, “If you don't like to read, you haven't found the right book” by J.K. Rowling:

<https://celadonbooks.com/inspiring-quotes-about-books-and-reading/>

For quotes. Specifically, “I love the way that each book - any book - is its own journey. You open it, and off you go. You are changed in some way, large or small, by having traveled with those characters.” By Sharon Creech:

https://www.azquotes.com/author/3397-Sharon_Creech

Fun fact about the invention of printing press:

<https://www.history.com/news/printing-press-renaissance>

For fun facts about eBooks vs paper books:

<https://www.tonerbuzz.com/blog/paper-books-vs-ebooks-statistics/>

For quotes. Specifically, “There is no friend as loyal as a book,” by Ernest Hemingway:

<https://english.newstracklive.com/news/quotes-on-book--there-is-no-friend-as-loyal-as-a-book-sc15-nu293-ta293-1161185-1.html>

For fact about the excessive use of the media:

<https://www.slicktext.com/blog/2019/10/smartphone-addiction-statistics/>

For research about the effects of social media on us and our lives:

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/andrealoubier/2021/06/01/is-society-moving-in-the-right-direction-with-technology-rapidly-taking-over-the-world/?sh=429fd7557c09>



The Tale of Isilon



SCHOOL: Patrick Fogarty
TEACHER: Janet Garskey
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Bill Bazinet
UNIT: Simcoe Muskoka Secondary
UNIT PRESIDENT: Allyn Janicki

SECONDARY - GRADES 11-12 / SHORT STORY
by **Scarlett Loretta Bye**

Blue skies, full moons, stories that have never been told before being spoken around a warm and lulling campfire. In Isilon, stars are always twinkling like glistening jewels in a derelict mine.

Though the stars were beautiful, though unable to penetrate the reality lurking beneath. A reality that nobody would ever see because, in Isilon, there was never a reason to long for it. Reality lost and forgotten, overshadowed by fantasies. Smiles everywhere on every last face from dawn to dusk, lasting even as Isilon slept.

Isilon was a reality of dreams — only dreams and nothing more than what people wanted to see. Why bother living in misery when blaring lights and upbeat music could play at every turn endlessly?

There was no such need for a dull reality, not in Isilon—not in the nation of dreamers and fantasies that could be obtained so long as the people worked, did as they were told, and lived the one dream they always hoped of turning into a reality.

Every citizen in the unified nation had a dream and all of them lived it endlessly, forever content with their lives despite ill people claiming that they were nightmares instead.

The detractors were fools. Trying to prove a lie and paint it as some kind of breakthrough—nothing more than a conspiracy theory.

But there was one dream that was hailed above all others. A dream for other people rather than oneself—the dream of protecting the nation at all costs, held by a selfless man, a peaceful man, Caspian Audine.

Caspian who, like many noble citizens, became a Peacekeeper — someone who would remedy conflict or even go above and beyond to prevent it before it happened in the first place.

Caspian was a man who put one boot on at a time like everyone else, but who prioritized others over himself.

Like always, Caspian was woken pleasantly by his melodic alarm and stretched, cracking his joints.

“Good morning, Isilon!” Leaping out of bed, the Peacekeeper opened his windows and shouted from above, taking in a small breath of the fresh, fantastical air. Birds chirped in his ears as though he were in a fairytale, though Isilon was more or less one itself.

He waltzed around his room, his heart fluttering in his warm chest. The sheer wave of euphoria almost drowned him, but that was a way he would prefer to die regardless, so it didn't matter to him.

After brushing his teeth, Caspian made it over to his closet and strapped his mask over his face. The ebony apparel only concealed his face, enveloping it as the night did the stars.



Two filters jutted from both sides of the mask, only amplifying the fresh air wherever he walked. It almost tasted magical, powering inspiration every second of every day.

Caspian threw on his obsidian overcoat and grasped his handy tool—a sleek, small and metallic pole that, when activated, emitted a tranquillizing mist that would dissolve any conflict between citizens.

The finishing touch was a singular, small earpiece he slid into his left ear so he could speak to the benevolent head of the Peacekeepers directly.

“I’m here, Isilon!” He cried out, his eyes twinkling and enchanted by his home like they were every day for as long as he could remember. “I couldn’t wish to be anywhere else even if I wanted to! What do I fix today?”

“Ah, hello there, Caspian!” His earpiece sang to him. “Today we have a few conflicts to take care of, relatively new and benign. I know you’ll fix that and Isilon will be improved thanks to you!”

Like every Peacekeeper, Caspian got straight to work putting any conflict he came across to an end with ease wherever his earpiece told him to. A cream-coloured, vanilla-tasting mist spewed from his metallic pole—his corrector, lulling those arguing into a sweet and pleasant, eternal rest.

The young, selfless man gazed down at the people he saved, smiling fondly as they lay so content and peaceful on the ground, having dreams within a dream.

This is why I became a Peacekeeper. To protect our world fulfilled dreams and contentedness. Seeing this is all the reward I need, he thought, staring down for a long while.

“Nicely done, Caspian,” his earpiece twitched with satisfaction. “There are many others out there who need you, don’t keep them waiting, alright?”

“Of course I won’t, I can’t leave them wallowing in conflict, now can I?” Skipping down the road and taking in a whiff of the purified air, Caspian’s every step emanated grace and class—genuine and eternal happiness for his career.

The two arguing citizens had fallen into heavenly rest, lying motionless on the pristine sidewalks while the blaring lights overhead on every billboard spoke of a tomorrow worth living for.

Music swayed through each pair of ears, putting them into the same lulling trance - a trance only a fantasy could create. It swayed through Caspian’s other ear as well, a toothy grin constantly under his mask.

It wasn’t until late evening when the Peacekeeper came to his last case.

Faint stars glittered like diamonds—only shrouded by a thin, white mist and the lovely reds, oranges and purples that painted the clear skies. They were almost as bright as the posters next to him or perhaps the people speaking to themselves.

The deafening sounds clamoured but grew fainter with every step Caspian took towards his last confrontation.

How saddening. A little girl arguing with another child? What a poor child, maybe I can help! He drew closer, having to bend down a bit to get the children’s attention.

“Pardon me, but why are you arguing? Surely, there’s nothing to worry about, not in Isilon!” Caspian caught a glimpse of the other child—properly dressed. His hair was tamely combed, his shoes fastened and his mouth and nose covered by the iconic Isilon mask.

But when he looked over at the girl, the absence of something caught him off guard. Reflexively, he whirled around and took a step back.

“Little girl, where is your mask?” He almost screamed but kept his voice to a minimum. And while his hands developed a tremble, he concealed it from view. “You know that the masks are here to



help you, right?”

The little girl got one look at Caspian and gasped. Her eyes widened and shook, welling up with tears as she backed away slowly but surely.

“G-get away from me!” She pleaded, falling on the ground after tripping over a small pebble. “Don't hurt me like you hurt them, please! I-I didn't do anything wrong?”

“Hurt you? Why would I hurt you? C'mon, the mist doesn't bite, it just resolves conflict!” Kneeling to get on the child's level, Caspian prepped his metallic pole and tilted his head, eyes lightened up with genuine compassion and reassurance.

“Mist? There is no mist, Sir! Please, I'll do whatever you want, just don't use that tool!” The child inched away, backing up until she was trapped between the Peacekeeper and a wall.

Caspian grinned from ear to ear under his purifying mask. “I'm sorry if this frightens you, but I promise that it won't hurt. Just stay still and you'll be having a pleasant dream within a dream!”

“N-no! Stay away from me!” cried the child, shaking her head insistently. “You have no idea what you're doing—take off that mask and you'll see what I mean!”

“And why would I do that? My dear, that is against our laws here in Isilon. I'm trying to save you from being talked to by our nation, please trust me on this, alright? I'm only trying to help you.”

Eyes lighting up with unparalleled eagerness, Caspian flicked his corrector open, the sweet-scented mist emerged and lulled the poor child to the eternal dream she deserved. “Goodnight, precious one. I hope you have a good rest.”

The people around him applauded his actions, grinning meaningless grins beneath their masks in instinctive unity.

Celebratory claps and shouts filled the air, just how Isilon had wanted. After all, silence indicated thought and thought insinuated revelations; revelations regarding something the nation hid from the public.

“Hail, Peacekeeper Caspian!” The crowd clamoured, tossing him treasures to repay his kindness and his loyalty in keeping their perfect country free of any pesky tears, pain or anger. “Hail, hail, hail!”

Taking a bow, Caspian felt a chill gust of what tasted like smoke enter his mouth. The flavour of ash and rot overtook the air; tainting it with something nobody would have ever believed. Although it only lasted for a second, it festered and lingered on Caspian's tongue, nauseating him.

What kind of terrible hallucination is this? He coughed and adjusted his mask, his finger detecting a gap between his skin and where the mask should have covered.

The mask had come loose; his eyes widened and quivered. An unfamiliar shiver darted up his spine and sent burning pain throughout every nerve as though he were struck by lightning, forcing his shoulders to tremble.

“Pardon me, are you alright, Sir? You don't look very well,” one citizen inquired, peeking their head and seeing the loose strap fall apart. “W-wait! Your mask is off? Traitor—filthy traitor!”

“Wait, there's nothing wrong here!” Caspian staggered back, the pleasant scent evaporated, immediately replaced by a putrid stench. His vision blurred for a minute as reality seeped away from him and was replaced by horrid nightmares he never dared to imagine. “Wh-what's going on?”

Before his very eyes, everything changed and contorted. The clear skies had become concealed in a thick fog and the air around him became foul and sultry, so much so that he found it hard to breathe.

He coughed at the stench and, in an act of pure instinct and desperation, ripped off his mask to gasp for air. With every breath he took, his lungs screamed and burned with searing pain, forcing him to



cover his mouth to reduce the suffocating smoke he was taking in.

Caspian's eyes darted around his surroundings. He rubbed them frantically, hoping he was only seeing things, but much to his dismay, the nightmarish visions stayed no matter how much he tried to wake up.

Where had his paradise gone?

What happened to the smiling citizens and the fantasy he had woken up to just hours ago? His hand twitched and he looked down at it, suddenly seeing something more heinous.

“Wh-what is this? What is this thing I'm holding and what's that stench coming from it?”

The citizens around him started closing in with unbroken hatred in their blazing eyes. They reached out at Caspian, prompting him to hold up the insidious tool in his hands and put his finger around the trigger.

“Stay back! I don't know what this thing does, but I'm willing to find out!” Caspian shouted, his chest throbbing with agony from the putrid air and ashes that lay still on the ground. He didn't know where his corrector went, but he would do anything to protect himself—the country needed him to prevent conflict after all. “Get away from me!”

“And just what is your corrector going to do? All it'll do is put us to sleep like it does everyone else and besides, we're wearing our masks, so it wouldn't work on us. C'mon then! Give it to us, try to save your traitorous self from your punishment!”

Without hesitation, Caspian stood back and pulled the trigger.

He couldn't bring himself to stop even though he was petrified by the beam of noxious that shot out at everyone and covered their flesh, annihilating them.

They all fell to the floor, seeing nothing but a white mist while he saw the truth...

He hadn't been putting his targets to sleep, he had been poisoning them. The realization made his blood run cold as he recollected the little girl and her unwavering fear.

Oh God, he dropped his real tool and fell on his knees, clenching his heart with one hand while the other held him up. *What have I done? Oh God!*

He couldn't imagine the sight of that child - of the charred carcass he created because he was too blind to see through the facade of his creation.

Mustard gas... that's what that scent is, he covered his mouth and sat himself up against the nearest wall, on the verge of tears. I did all this, didn't I? I'm no Peacekeeper, I'm a murderer!

Though he wanted to curl into a ball, Caspian knew that staying put would only get him in trouble. He picked up his weapon, his flamethrower, and darted from the scene through the thick air as silent tears ran down his face.

People living in their solitary worlds went to and fro, not needing to talk to anybody. Why jeopardize a fantasy with others when you could live in the ethereal and assuring illusion of Isilon?

Nobody could hear him over their fantasies, and no one could care enough about his emotional state. Their minds were lost in obliviousness and were too distracted to have any rationale.

“Wake up! Can you not see that you're living in an illusion?” he screamed. His streams of tears showing no signs of ceasing. “Please, you have to wake up, this place is corrupt and doesn't care about you!”

But nobody cared enough to turn around or listen—too engrossed in their dreams.

The dismal sight made him shiver uncontrollably.

The gloomy skies loomed, casting down a foreboding, ominous gale. Nobody noticed; deaf, mute, blind and numb to the world around them.



The only companions he had were the dim light which pierced through thick clouds and the stench of poisoned carcasses—people like him who were now warning him of his imminent fate.

I can't live like this. Caspian wrapped his arms around himself and gazed over his surroundings with a sinking feeling in his stomach growing stronger with each new terror. *But I can't go back to how I used to live after knowing all of this.*

After giving it some thought, Caspian shook his head and turned away. Nobody would help him; he could only help himself.

So instead, he ran through Isilon with his heart beating out of his chest, the adrenaline so powerful that he couldn't feel the agony in his legs or hear the people that started chasing after him.

As long as he didn't stop, he could be free from the nightmarish reality he had been previously blind to.

His breaths hurt, his lungs begged him to stop, and his entire body twinged, but Caspian wouldn't stop running.

Echoes of advertisements united screeching and the horrors he left behind lingered in his memory too much for him to look back.

Gasping for breath, he fled into a dim alleyway as his pursuers lost sight of him. Caspian looked at his shaking hands and clutched his head in response to a sudden, throbbing pain in his newly-awakened mind.

The crushing weight of the guilt he felt from the death he brought upon so many innocent people elicited an unholy shriek in an attempt to expel the nightmares within him.

He couldn't stop screaming, so he shut his eyes. The nightmare had become too real for him to endure any longer.

The world around him faded into oblivion and darkness, his ears rang to compensate for the abrupt silence that took hold of him and his throat restricted to the point where he would shout, but nothing came of it.

Opening his eyes had never been so painful before. As his vision cleared and sharpened, Caspian was faced with the harsh and crushing reality of sterile, padded walls and the suffocating embrace of a straight jacket wrapped around him so tightly that he could barely breathe.

The scent of medical equipment and the sounds of distant voices gave him no comfort or solace. An eerie silence echoed the guilt over everything he had carried for years, plaguing his troubled mind.

The Tale of Isilon—a tale so intricate and passionate that it had become real for writer Caspian Audine... too real.

The narrative was so profoundly vivid to its creator that he believed he was there, in a fantasy of his own, and the burning carcasses couldn't have been more real.

And now he would live it forever, a creator trapped in their creation, until the end of his days.



What We Need to See, So We Can Be



SCHOOL: Resurrection
TEACHER: Mary-Beth Smith
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Aaron Stemmler
UNIT: Waterloo
UNIT PRESIDENT: Patrick Etmanski

SECONDARY - GRADES 11-12 / POEM
by **Allison-Hannah Berwick Hernandez**

Do you easily believe what you don't know? Do you trust what you are not shown? Unlike in my youth when I didn't need to see Santa Claus, I need to see another Hernandez doing something other than breaking the laws.

Because, unlike the tooth fairy, we need to see swinging into the frame Afro-Latino Morales, his intelligence and strength something he can't hide.

Because, unlike leprechauns, we need to see emerging from the sparkling water a strong, beautiful mermaid whose skin made young Black kids cry in joy, showing that one's complexion could be celebrated even without being blue-eyed.

Because, unlike La Madre Monte, I will not just get bone-chilling fear out of nowhere, I need to see the possibility of a strong and smart martial artist like Maya Lopez fighting her way across the screen, displaying strength not despite but because of being hard of hearing and hawk-eyed.

Because, unlike Father Time, we should be able to see people like live-action Katara and Uncle Iroh fighting, growing, developing, giving wise words and representing Indigenous and Asian characters being multidimensional not just being left on the curbside.

Because, unlike Mother Nature, the visions of flaunting power and eloquence need to be shown, Viktor Hargreeves depicts for Trans kids and people that your gender is determined by what you feel inside.

Because, unlike the Easter bunny, more people need to see the smart, put-together, and comedic Rosa Diaz, who became a fan favourite with her experiences of bisexuality as a Latina woman, all of that left no one dry-eyed.

Because as we speak of characters you can relate to, RJ Mitte brings to life Walter Jr., a disabled person without the use of stereotypes to make it dramatized.

Because, unlike Jack Frost, everyone needs to see as power punches through the screen, Shang-Chi shows that there is no one way to be an Asian North American, not out of touch as he was even seen in a life of normalcy, taking a customer's car for a joyride.

Because, unlike Cupid, I need to see the bright colours of cumbia dresses and flowers flash by, triggering real tears of my Colombian experiences, verified.

Because, unlike Hanukkah Harry, Encanto created a realization that my prima would get to live in a world where people with her skin, su piel, aren't just pushed aside.



Unlike... because, unlike those characters, we are not made up for anyone's pleasure and convenience, because unlike those characters we don't all stick to the same storyline committing some sort of heinous crime, or never viewing our education as important, as if we haven't been working overtime, or doing some other stereotypical dance secretly hoping that this humiliation will give more of us a chance.

Unlike those fantasies, we change and grow and shape our world. Because the more that list of characters and their communities goes on, more and more people feel seen, empowered, and like they can do anything. Because, unlike Santa Claus, they need to see it in order to believe it.

In order to dream it.

In order to be it.



ERIC Either way, she's a tough one to crack. Doesn't talk much.

ALAN notices that TAYLOR is struggling to balance the tray as she carries it to a crowded booth. ALAN quickly rushes out of his seat, leaving ERIC, in order to assist TAYLOR.

ALAN saves the drinks just as the tray is about to tip over. TAYLOR lets out a sigh of relief.

ALAN Careful there!

TAYLOR Oh my goodness, thank you!

TAYLOR sets the tray down on the table, serving the customers in the booth. One pushes the drink back towards TAYLOR.

CUSTOMER Umm, I didn't order this. I asked for a non-alcoholic beer!

TAYLOR rolls her eyes and takes the drink back to the counter. ALAN grabs the tray, which TAYLOR forgets to bring back.

ALAN Forgetting something?

TAYLOR whirls around, confused. Her eyes light up in realisation of her mistake.

TAYLOR Ugh, I am off my game today! Thanks again.

ALAN hands her the tray and sits down on one of the stools at the bar.

ALAN It's alright, we can't always be at our best!

TAYLOR You got that right!

TAYLOR finishes making the drink but before she can get up to serve the customer, ALAN politely stops her.

ALAN I've got this.

TAYLOR raises her eyebrows at the pleasant surprise.

ALAN grabs the drink and serves it to the customers. He takes a photo with them and signs a couple autographs as well. TAYLOR looks on with a thoughtful smile.

ALAN returns to the bar, boasting a proud smile.

ALAN So, I hear you're new here?

TAYLOR Yeah, I actually moved all the way from Canada a few months ago.



ALAN Canada?! Wow, that's a long way!

TAYLOR Yeah, the tough thing is I don't know many people around here.

ALAN *(Playful)* Hey, you know me!

TAYLOR Come on, everybody knows you! Your face is all over the city!

ALAN Okay fine, but they don't know the real me.

TAYLOR looks into ALAN's eyes, sensing his sincerity. She smiles warmly.

TAYLOR Hey, why don't I get you something to drink?

ALAN Hmm, alright... Surprise me!

TAYLOR Really? Okay. I've got just the drink for you.

Taylor begins to masterfully whip up the concoction like she's done it a thousand times before. Before she gives it to ALAN, she pulls out a small bottle of maple syrup from her pocket.

ALAN Whoa! What are you doing?

TAYLOR Oh, you Brits. You need to live a little! Trust me.

ALAN sighs and TAYLOR gives the drink a splash of syrup.

ALAN Here goes! Bottoms up!

ALAN takes a sip and takes a moment to savour the flavour. His eyebrows raise in pleasant surprise and a cheeky smile graces his face.

ALAN Wow! That's quite lovely!

TAYLOR smiles proudly.

TAYLOR It's called a Maple Moose.

ALAN A Canadian classic, eh?

TAYLOR *(Chuckles)* Not quite.

ALAN Well, nevertheless it's just spectacular!

ALAN happily takes a few more sips, chatting with TAYLOR. After a few minutes, ERIC comes up to the bar, putting a hand on ALAN's shoulder.



ERIC Alright bruv, that's enough for tonight.
Remember, we've got training tomorrow!

ALAN's eyes light up in shock.

ALAN Oh, I completely forgot! *(Looks at TAYLOR.)* Sorry, I've got to go.

ALAN hastily reaches for his wallet.

ALAN How much do I owe?

TAYLOR smiles and waves him off.

TAYLOR Nothing. It's on the house.

ALAN reaches into his wallet anyway, pulling out a £20 banknote, handing it to TAYLOR.

ALAN Here, for your impeccable service.

TAYLOR *(Shocked)* Oh, you really didn't have to do that!

ALAN Come on, you were a joy to speak with. Thank you for the drink!
It was wonderful!

TAYLOR blushes as ALAN begins to get up.

ALAN By the way, I don't think I caught your name.

ERIC raises his eyebrows slightly. TAYLOR smiles warmly at ALAN.

TAYLOR It's Taylor.

ALAN *(Smiling)* See you around, Taylor.

INT. STEPEHENSON'S PUB – THE NEXT DAY

TAYLOR scrubs glasses at the bar once again. Today, the pub is sparsely populated. The door opens with a jingle, attracting TAYLOR's attention. She turns to see ALAN enter the pub, taking off his jacket and adjusting the cuffs on his shirt.

ALAN sends a friendly smile TAYLOR's way, and she gives him one back. ALAN walks up to the bar and takes a seat.

TAYLOR Back so soon?

ALAN Well, I was thinking... and I thought since you gave me a taste of your home, I'd like to give you a taste of mine!



TAYLOR raises an eyebrow inquisitively.

TAYLOR What do you mean?

ALAN I'm going to make you a drink!

TAYLOR looks shocked. ALAN laughs.

ALAN No, I'm being serious.

TAYLOR *(Surprised)* Okay, let's see what you've got.

ALAN steps behind the bar, switching spots with TAYLOR. ALAN begins to make the drink, slower than TAYLOR, but nevertheless he still knows what he's doing.

ALAN Done!

TAYLOR Ooh, looks tasty!

As TAYLOR takes a sip, ALAN looks deeper into her eyes. They are colourful: blue-grey with slight hints of green and yellow sprinkled within.

ALAN It's a John Collins, a sweet little taste of England! What do you think?

TAYLOR It's very good!

TAYLOR puts down the drink.

TAYLOR *(Playful)* I think you've got a bright future as a bartender.
Y'know, if football doesn't work out.

ALAN *(Chuckling)* You're funny.

ALAN leans forward, resting his elbows on the counter.

ALAN But that's not the plan.

TAYLOR leans forward in response.

TAYLOR What is the plan?

ALAN Well, I've always dreamed of playing for England and winning the World Cup.

TAYLOR Wow, that's quite the dream! By the looks of it, you'll be there in no time.

TAYLOR and ALAN share a warm smile. ALAN looks deeper into TAYLOR's eyes once again, quickly finding himself lost in their vibrant hues.



TAYLOR chuckles, snapping ALAN back to reality.

TAYLOR What's up?

ALAN Oh, pardon me! Your eyes are just... Absolutely stunning.

TAYLOR smiles coyly, brushing her hair behind her ear while blushing.

ALAN Along with the rest of you, of course!

TAYLOR Aww, thanks. You're so sweet.

ALAN smiles.

TAYLOR You know, you're not as bad as I thought you were.

ALAN's smile fades, and he tilts his head to the side in confusion.

TAYLOR I've dealt with a lot of cocky and confident guys who think they're all that. I heard about you before, and I kind of thought you would be like them too...

ALAN listens carefully.

TAYLOR ...but you've proven me wrong.

TAYLOR gives ALAN a sweet smile.

ALAN Wow... I mean you're not wrong. I was like that before.
But I'm trying to be better.

TAYLOR Well, I certainly think it's working.

They share another smile, gazing deep into each other's eyes.

SHORT MONTAGE BEGINS

Over the next few weeks, ALAN and TAYLOR chat nearly every day at the pub. Sometimes staying many hours after closing. They share drinks, play darts, and laugh the night away.

TAYLOR is genuinely happy for the first time in awhile. ALAN is slowly growing deeper feelings for TAYLOR.

SHORT MONTAGE ENDS

INT. STEPHENSON'S PUB - THREE WEEKS LATER

The pub is empty now, and it is very dark outside. TAYLOR now sits on the stool next to ALAN. She laughs raucously as ALAN tells her an embarrassing story.



ALAN So, yeah! Then basically she dumped me!

TAYLOR Wow! How could you even do that?

ALAN I told you, I can be like that sometimes!

TAYLOR's laugh fades, and her expression grows sincere.

TAYLOR Alan... I just wanna thank you. I can't even tell you how much these late-night chats mean to me.

ALAN *(Humbly)* Oh don't thank me, it's no big deal.

TAYLOR But it is. You know, you're the only person I've really enjoyed talking to since I moved.

ALAN grows sympathetic as he realises how much this means to TAYLOR. However, his curiosity is piqued.

ALAN Wow... Umm, if you don't mind me asking, why did you move?

TAYLOR sighs, her past is not something she likes to confront, but at the same time ALAN's comforting gaze makes her feel safe.

ALAN It's okay if you don't wanna tell me. I get it, I was just curious.

TAYLOR No, it's fine. I've just never told anyone before.

ALAN listens carefully.

TAYLOR So, three years ago I met this guy, John. We fell in love and dated for a pretty long time.

TAYLOR's voice quivers, and ALAN offers his hand in support. TAYLOR smiles gratefully. She takes a deep breath and continues.

TAYLOR Near the end of our relationship, I could tell something was wrong. Turns out, he was seeing someone else.

TAYLOR begins to tear up.

TAYLOR I couldn't bear to live anywhere near him, as everything was like a constant reminder that I wasn't good enough. So I moved here.

TAYLOR breaks into tears. ALAN brings her in for a comforting hug.



ALAN I'm so sorry Taylor, I shouldn't have asked. For the record though...
You are good enough. Nobody is as deserving of love as you are.

TAYLOR pulls away gently, wiping the tears from her face.

TAYLOR Thanks. You know, it feels good to finally talk to someone about this.

ALAN takes her hand, squeezing it tight. TAYLOR looks up at him. Tension builds until TAYLOR finally leans in for a kiss. ALAN pulls back, surprised.

ALAN Whoa, Taylor!

TAYLOR Oh no, I'm sorry! I just ruined everything, didn't I?

ALAN (Sincere) No... You made it better.

ALAN brings TAYLOR back in for another passionate kiss. After a moment that feels like forever, ALAN's phone rings. He reluctantly breaks the kiss and answers.

ALAN Hello?

GRANT So sorry to bother you at this hour Mr. Mccallum, but my name is Grant Johnson with the English Football Association.

ALAN Alright, cheers Grant.

GRANT I'm calling to inform you that you have officially been selected to represent England in the upcoming international break.

ALAN's eyes light up, and his jaw drops in shock.

ALAN What? Oh my word, thank you so much! You have no idea how much this means to me!

GRANT wishes ALAN a pleasant night and hangs up. ALAN is still reeling from the surprise.

TAYLOR What happened?

ALAN I just found out I've been named to the England National team!

TAYLOR What?!? That's awesome!!! I'm so happy for you!

TAYLOR hugs ALAN, bright smiles on both of their faces.

ALAN This could finally be my chance to get to the World Cup!

ALAN notices the time on his phone.



ALAN Oh no, it's getting awfully late! I should get going.

The two say goodbye before ALAN leaves the pub.

INT. STEPHENSON'S PUB - TWELVE DAYS LATER

TAYLOR leans against the counter, propping her head up with her elbow. She has missed talking to ALAN ever since he left for the international break twelve days prior. She has been sad and closed off, not talking much.

ALAN enters the pub, the door jingling as he opens it. TAYLOR'S eyes light up with happiness.

TAYLOR Hey! There you are!

They share a hug.

TAYLOR *(Sincere)* I really missed you, y'know?

ALAN smiles warmly, but stays quiet. TAYLOR notices his silence.

TAYLOR Everything okay?

ALAN Look Taylor, there's something I need to say...

They both sit down on the stools.

ALAN The whole time I was gone, I couldn't stop thinking about our kiss.

TAYLOR looks down, avoiding eye contact.

ALAN I've never met a girl like you before, and so I just wanna ask if maybe you wanted to go out sometime? Y'know, outside of the pub?

TAYLOR looks up with a teary-eyed smile.

TAYLOR Alan, I haven't met a guy like you either... Of course I'll go out with you!

ALAN chuckles in relief, and the pair share a warm hug.

BEGIN MONTAGE

ALAN and TAYLOR go for a walk in the park, holding hands as they take in their beautiful surroundings.

The pair continue their tradition of late-night talks at the pub, they bond over drinks and get to know each other better.

TAYLOR watches one of ALAN's soccer matches from front-row seats. She cheers him on as he scores a goal.



They take a bunch of photos together at a photobooth. TAYLOR grabs a nice printed photo of her kissing ALAN on the cheek and gives it to him.

END MONTAGE

INT. STEPHENSON'S PUB – ONE YEAR LATER

TAYLOR sits, fully clothed, on the toilet in the pub bathroom. She holds a pregnancy test in her hands, refusing to look at the results. She takes a deep breath and sees that it is positive. TAYLOR begins to cry.

ALAN Babe, is everything okay?

TAYLOR doesn't respond.

ALAN Hold on, I'm coming in!

ALAN enters. He finds TAYLOR hanging her head in her hands. He rubs his hand gently up and down her back, comforting her.

ALAN What's going on, Tay?

ALAN notices the pregnancy test. He pulls back in shock, covering his face with his hand. TAYLOR looks up at him with tears in her eyes, preparing for the worst.

ALAN I'm going to be a dad?

TAYLOR doesn't respond, but ALAN doesn't care. He quickly brings her in for a loving embrace. TAYLOR is shocked, but soon smiles and hugs him back.

ALAN Taylor, I love you so much. You're the only woman I'd ever want to have a child with.

TAYLOR *(Choking up)* I love you too.

ALAN grabs her by the hand.

ALAN We've got this. Together.

INT. STEPHENSON'S PUB - NINE MONTHS LATER

A pregnant TAYLOR sits comfortably in a booth at the empty pub. ALAN approaches her with a shocked expression.

ALAN Babe... I have some news...

TAYLOR What is it?



ALAN I just got the official word, and I've been invited to play for England at the World Cup in a few weeks.

TAYLOR is shocked.

TAYLOR That's amazing! But, the baby's due in a few weeks.

ALAN I know, and that's why I haven't said yes yet.

TAYLOR Wait what? You didn't say yes?

ALAN Not yet, I wanted to talk it over with you first.

TAYLOR No, you're going! I don't want you to miss out on your lifelong dream!

ALAN Are you sure? Because I don't want to leave you alone for the birth of our son!

TAYLOR Trust me, I can handle myself. However, it's completely up to you. I know you've dreamed of this for a long time, and I understand if this is something you can't turn down.

ALAN embraces TAYLOR lovingly.

ALAN Thanks baby. I love you so much.

TAYLOR Love you too.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - TWO WEEKS LATER

TAYLOR lays in a hospital bed, holding her newborn son. She smiles cheerfully and glances up at the TV. ALAN is playing in the World Cup. He scores a beautiful goal, and then makes a heart gesture towards the camera.

ALAN *(On TV)* I love you baby!

ALAN blows a kiss to the camera. TAYLOR smiles and blows a kiss back.

TAYLOR I love you too.

TAYLOR begins to tear up. A tear runs down her face as she starts struggling to breathe.

The heart rate monitor begins beeping rapidly, and flatlines as TAYLOR loses consciousness. Her son starts to cry.

A group of doctors and nurses rush into the room and crowd the scene.



INT. STEPHENSON'S PUB - ONE WEEK LATER

ALAN sits alone at the bar. An old man sits a couple stools away, sipping on a beer. The senior bartender, BRAD (40), gives ALAN a friendly nod.

BRAD Mr. Mccallum, it's a pleasure to finally meet you! What can I get for you?

ALAN lifts his head, meeting BRAD's eyes.

ALAN Do you guys still serve the Maple Moose?

BRAD's smile fades into a look of confusion.

BRAD Apologies... I'm not familiar with that one.

ALAN Oh... Give me a whiskey then. On the rocks.

BRAD nods and pours the drink. He gives it to ALAN, who takes a sip. The old man at the bar glances over at him.

OLD MAN Drinking alone, yeah?

ALAN doesn't respond. Tears are running down his face as he downs his drink.

OLD MAN I only come here alone now. Ever since my wife died last year, it's been the only way I can cope.

ALAN lowers his head.

OLD MAN 52 years, that's how long we were married.

OLD MAN looks at ALAN.

OLD MAN Have you ever found love like that?

ALAN looks at the photo in his hands. It is the photo of TAYLOR kissing him on the cheek from the photo booth. A single tear falls onto the photo.

ALAN There was this one girl...



My Greatest Lesson: My Deepest Regret



SCHOOL: Sacred Heart, Newmarket

TEACHER: Sean Kelly

SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Paula Vittiglio and Cara Lodoen

Unit: York

UNIT PRESIDENT: Mike Totten

SECONDARY - GRADES 11-12 / NONFICTION

by **Weichen Xu**

For our time on Earth, we are each gifted a body.

A body that lets you sway and groove to “Can’t Help Falling in Love” with your lover till the sun sets on a Saturday evening. A body that lets you sing your heart out to your favourite songs while driving with your windows rolled down in the cool, dusk, August air, that refreshing summer breeze caressing your cheek. Although we all find joy in unique pursuits, with different company, and at quirky times of day, our bodies enable us to live these special moments and perceive joy within them. Your body may allow you to dance, sing, *feel*, but it is you who must properly fuel it, with food, day by day.

So you eat. Dance. Dance some more. Become tired. Eat again. This time the music is much more lively. And you engineer all your muscles to strike each beat. One foot after another, twirl after twirl, pose after pose. You are tired again. Eat some more. You must always give your body fuel—the nutrients, nourishment, and the food you crave—because your body eventually runs out of energy.

As a child, you overlook your growth and the importance of nutrition because your mother “airplanes” food into your body until adolescence, the moment you realize the role food has in your life. You become aware of your voice that is octaves deeper, your monthly menstrual cycles, and when the numbers on the scale rise... a lot.

Most people accept this reality and grow into their matured bodies, accepting the noticeable differences, the features that distinguish you from your childhood self.

But I didn't.

August 21, 2021, was the first time I had an in-person dance class since the Covid pandemic. I wore my usual attire, skin-tight leggings and a black spaghetti-strap bodysuit, clearly showcasing my figure. I was confident, I felt healthy, and most importantly I was able. Letting the sound waves pervade the vacuum within the walls of the studio, and feeling the music encompass you like a campfire bringing warmth to a cold room; from your heart extending to the ends of your fingertips, hair, and elongated feet. I loved how able I was. Soaring across the room through suspended flips, balancing on one leg while extending the other into the thrill of unknown heights. Nothing has felt this great. As my lesson came to an end, my teacher invited a couple of dance moms—whose daughters had class after mine—to watch me perform my new choreography. Again, I let the music consume me like a bonfire, providing warmth while keeping the malevolent insects at bay.

“Wow, she's gotten so big,” someone mumbles.



And suddenly, it started raining. Two or three clouds on my fire, and then a cloudburst. I didn't eat dinner that night.

The warmth departed that evening and malignance approached instead; slow and steady, little by little, step by step. By mimicking Adagio, so lovely, so tender, its imprints became engraved within me.

The following day, my mother drove me downtown for a ballet intensive I had during the summer. I was in the studio with ten other girls, hurriedly putting on our pointe shoes and warming up for bar exercises. Examining my figure, I compared it to the other ten I saw in the reflection and wished I could look smaller. For the next few hours, the music didn't fill me. But the weight of yesterday's remarks did. I was a big, wet chunk of log, trudging the rosin-stained floor.

When high school started a few weeks later, I made a new friend. I knew we would form an intimate, everlasting bond from the moment we met. She understood me to a million pieces: my desires, my wants, *my needs*. She was like Adagio; so sweet, so comforting, how patiently she was with fulfilling my needs. She introduced me to *MyFitnessPal*, a calorie-tracking app that changed my world. My world went spiralling from here on. "A thousand calories a day is your limit. And in a week I am sure you'll lose five pounds!" she exclaims while showing me how to operate the app.

That week, I followed a strict diet of apples, Greek yogurt, and protein bars. No carbs. "No carbs," she emphasizes. "They make you bigger." I agreed with her, the perception of being small fulfilled all my cravings. In a week's time, I didn't lose five pounds, but I did lose one. And in a month, I lost four. I remember looking in the reflection at Ballet class and thinking I looked a little more like the rest of them. I was prettier. Right?

No. Not at all. In my immature, foolish, and nonsensical brain, nothing was worse than being bigger. I still had a lot more to lose. And so the next day I went back to my lovely friend.

"How can I lose more?" I ask.

"It's simple," she answers. "The more calories you cut, the more you lose!"

The limit of a thousand calories became eight hundred. "I can see your ribs, Beibei," my mother mentions as she takes my measurements for upcoming dance costumes. She was quite horrified; her eyebrows knitted, smile lines disappearing, and lips pursed. On the contrary, I was beaming. But not always. I stopped singing during car rides downtown with my father; I slept instead. I stopped going out with friends; I couldn't eat that kind of food for dinner. I only kept dancing; to exercise, to become smaller, to be pretty.

"Add four kilometres of walking to your exercises," my friend advises. "It is almost summer and you *need* that figure!" she reminds me. Eight hundred lessened to six hundred with four kilometres of walking every day. With my friend's assistance, I was carved into a pretty sculpture of skin and bones: cold to the touch, hollow on the inside, no emotions found within. I felt so pretty, but so, so cold. Sometime in May of 2022, I turned on the heater in my bedroom and stayed in the hot shower for an extra twenty minutes. During my walk, I wasn't jamming to Beyonce like I usually do. I don't even think I noticed it was her song playing. A drop of cold sweat thumped on my sweater as I zoned in on the glowing blue numbers... three kilometres and eight hundred metres, three kilometres and nine hundred metres, four kilometres! I should feel accomplished, I usually would feel accomplished, but



this time... This time was different. I felt something in my heart instead. A palpitating sensation grew in the left side of my chest. *Thump-dup. Thump-dup. Thump-dup.* I didn't think much of it until my heartbeat filled my eardrums; a crescendo, pounding sound, like mosquitoes entering your ear—no fire to keep the pests away. Staring up, I lay on the damp concrete basement floor. Thousands of stars filled my field of vision until darkness descended.

I passed out.

In the hospital, I remember the first time I heard my deepest regret out loud. *Anorexia Nervosa. Extreme.*

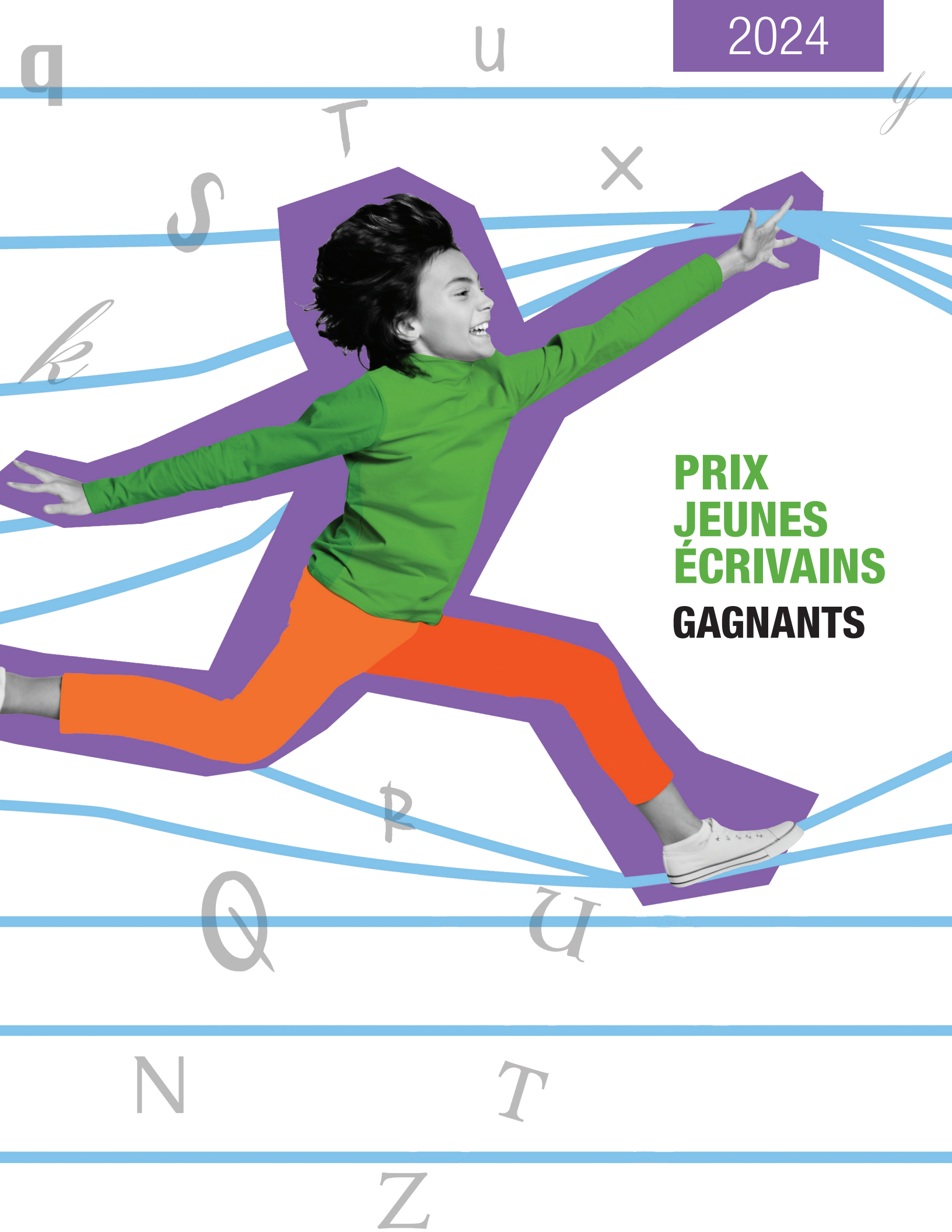
I regret living in fear of what other people thought of me. For I was living in a great prison that constrained me from food. With every second, every day, and every month I spent in that cell, my flesh began to dissolve. It turned my balance into instability, as my strength began to fade. It transformed my heart into cement, as I was no longer able to maintain rhythm.

I regret persistently worrying about what I looked like. For I was living on a planet without happiness. My world consisted of nothing but vegetables, a treadmill, and a mirror. “Dance” was an unfamiliar term, “parties” were non-existent, and “family” were just people who didn't have the same problem as me. My low self-esteem created a great wall that blocked my ability to experience joy.

I remember going camping with my family and friends in June. Together, we created a bonfire—so lively, so beautiful, its flames reaching for the sky. The air had a rich aromatic smell: a combination of herbs, spices, and smoky savoury meat. The parents and other teens were occupied, busy preparing lamb skewers, grilled corn, and roasted sweet potatoes. For awhile, I stared intently, soaking in all the memories and gatherings I had missed over the past nine months. After a few minutes, I stood beside my mother, helping her assemble the last skewers. As we fueled our bodies for the long night ahead, laughter echoed into the calm August breeze, filling each one of us with bliss. I remember feeling the warmth flow through my body again, as if this gathering ignited the missing flame within me.

Today, two years have passed since my greatest lesson. I understand. I now understand the consequences of self-loathing. How it ruins your mind, body, and autonomy. Gone are the days I spent locked in my bathroom, staring into the mirror, pinching at the parts I wished were smaller. Gone are the days I spent alone. My mother is waiting for me and her food makes me warm.

2024



**PRIX
JEUNES
ÉCRIVAINS
GAGNANTS**



Une histoire d'amour



SCHOOL: St.Gregory
TEACHER: Fanny Hung
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Marco Monardo
UNIT: Dufferin-Peel Elementary
UNIT PRESIDENT: Lori Austin

ELEMENTARY - GRADES 1-2 / SHORT STORY
by **Celine Ramsumair**

Il était une fois, une fille qui s'appelait Marie et un garçon qui s'appelait Luc.

Marie dit à Luc :

- Sois mon Valentin.

Luc dit à Marie :

- Sois ma Valentine !

Marie donne une carte à Luc.

Luc donne des fleurs rouges à Marie.

Ils sont très heureux.



Février



SCHOOL: St. Gregory
TEACHER: Fanny Hung
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Marco Monardo
UNIT: Dufferin-Peel Elementary
UNIT PRESIDENT: Lori Austin

ELEMENTARY - GRADES 1-2 / POEM
by **Maxwell Luke R. Lontoc**

Fleurs si belles

Écouter les chansons

Valentine je t'aime

Rêver avec toi

Ici

Enveloppes

Roses et rouges



L'Égalité



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

ELEMENTARY - GRADES 1-2 / NONFICTION
by **Joshua Hoeflaak**

L'égalité est de partager les espaces comme les écoles, les cinémas, les bus, et être inclusifs.

Les promesses sont importantes. Soyez gentils et justes.

Traitez tout le monde de la même manière.

L'égalité est la paix, et quand chacun est accepté tel qu'il est.



SCHOOL: Holy Rosary
TEACHER: Hilde Acx
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Kari Cilibanov
UNIT: Waterloo
UNIT PRESIDENT: Patrick Etmanski

ELEMENTARY - GRADES 3-4 / SHORT STORY
by **Aili Harris**

Je suis allée faire une promenade avec mon papa. C'était samedi et le jour parfait pour une marche dans la forêt. J'ai cru que ce jour allait devenir le samedi le plus parfait de ma vie, mais c'était un peu différent.

Papa et moi avons entendu un son triste, comme un animal blessé. On a couru vers ce bruit, et par terre, se trouvait une renarde orange. La renarde avait une patte dans une chose à attraper, et une piscine de sang sous la patte.

J'avais un chandail rouge avec moi, et je l'ai donné à papa. Il a couvert la blessure, et on a placé la renarde dans le sac à dos de papa. Ma maman est docteur, donc elle sait comment donner les premiers soins.

Quand on est arrivé à la maison, j'ai crié « Maman ! Papa et moi avons trouvé une renarde blessée dans la forêt ! » « C'est vrai », a dit papa. « Où Emeli, où ? », a crié maman.

« Dans le sac à dos de papa », j'ai dit.

« Emeli, donne-moi de la viande, une couverture, de l'eau, et des pansements. » J'ai trouvé toutes les choses que maman a dites, pour ensuite les lui donner.

Maman a placé les pansements sur la patte de la renarde et l'a couverte avec la couverture. J'ai placé la viande et un bol d'eau devant la renarde.

« Qu'est-on va faire maintenant ? », ai-je demandé à maman. « Maintenant, on dort. La renarde a aussi besoin de dormir », a répondu maman. « Tu peux réfléchir à un nom pour la renarde. Au lit, Emeli ! »

Toute la nuit, j'y ai pensé encore et encore, mais je ne trouvais pas de nom. Je pense que j'ai dormi un petit peu, parce que quand je me suis réveillée le matin, j'avais le

nom parfait ! « Est-ce que tu es prête ? Le nom est... Rouge ! », ai-je dit à maman. « Parce que sa fourrure est un peu rouge. Rouge est une fille, non ? » « Oui », a dit maman.

Rouge est très amusante. J'ai dit à tous mes amis que j'avais une renarde. J'ai donné de la nourriture et de l'eau à Rouge, et on a joué souvent. Rouge dormait avec moi. J'adore



Rouge. Sa fourrure est trop belle et chaude, et Rouge est très gentille.
Mais un jour, maman a dit qu'il était temps pour Rouge de retourner dans la forêt. J'ai pleuré et pleuré, mais je savais que Rouge avait besoin de la forêt. Elle a besoin d'attraper la nourriture et trouver de l'eau. Et si Rouge a des bébés, on n'a pas d'espace pour eux. C'est triste, mais si je vais dans la forêt et crie « Rouge ! », une renarde rouge vient.



La Fleur



SCHOOL: St. Pio of Pietrelcina
TEACHER: Lenny Ferreira
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Rosalia Naccarato
UNIT: Dufferin-Peel Elementary
UNIT PRESIDENT: Lori Austin

ELEMENTARY - GRADES 3-4 / POEM
by **Zofia Zielinski**

La fleur est rose et violette.
Elle sent comme le parfum le plus riche.
Elle est belle comme l'amour pour son enfant.
Sa tige est forte, elle se sent fière de ses pétales doux.
Elle me rappelle la paix.
Quand est-ce-que la fleur va pousser ? Parce que depuis des années, elle est minuscule.
Elle danse sous la pluie et dans la chaleur du soleil elle est tranquille.
Elle se détend pour dormir dans la nuit au son des étoiles scintillantes.
Elle se réveille heureuse au chant des oiseaux.
Elle reçoit beaucoup de soleil pendant la journée, quand aura-t-elle de l'ombre pendant la journée ?
Ses pensées et ses rêves occupent chaque jour.
J'aime lire des livres avec ma fleur.
Je trouve que la fleur me calme.
Je pense que la fleur est toujours contente.
J'aime la fleur avec mon cœur.



Savais-tu ? À propos des léopards



SCHOOL: Madonna della Libera
TEACHER: Krystina Pucci
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Daniel Gouthro
UNIT: Brant Haldimand Norfolk
UNIT PRESIDENT: Tom Laracy

ELEMENTARY - GRADES 3-4 / NONFICTION
by **Audrey Mae Gross**

Est-ce que tu aimes les léopards ? Si oui, j'ai un bon paragraphe pour toi. Les léopards mangent presque tout ! Ils mangent les poissons, les oiseaux et les phacochères. Les léopards aiment passer leur temps dans les arbres. Ils dorment pendant la journée et ils sont très silencieux dans l'herbe en Afrique. Les léopards ont des taches noires sous les yeux car le soleil est très brillant et les taches sont comme celles des joueurs de baseball. Ils ont aussi des taches noires sur leur corps. Ils ont de longues queues pour gérer leur équilibre pendant qu'ils chassent leur proie. Les bébés léopards ont la taille d'une patate quand ils sont nés. Les léopards peuvent sauter vingt pieds en longueur ! Conclusion : les léopards sont les animaux les plus fantastiques d'Afrique.



La Petite Grenouille



SCHOOL: Immaculate Conception
TEACHER: Lucette Parent-Mundy
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Catherine Dominelli-Hayden
UNIT: Sudbury Elementary
UNIT PRESIDENT: Chantal Rancourt

ELEMENTARY - GRADES 5-6 / SHORT STORY
by **Neve Millette**

Un jour dans l'étang, la petite grenouille Jean-Philippe est allée nager avec son ami. Il a commencé à pleuvoir, alors Jean-Philippe est allé en dessous d'un arbre pour se cacher de la pluie. Mais soudainement, il a entendu un bruit très fort. Ensuite, il a vu un homme très grand avec un panier dans une de ses mains s'approcher. L'homme s'est penché et a essayé d'attraper Jean-Philippe. La petite grenouille a commencé à s'enfuir dans la forêt mais l'homme était plus rapide que Jean-Philippe. L'homme a attrapé Jean-Philippe pour le capturer dans un panier. Jean-Philippe avait très peur, et il ne savait pas où l'homme allait l'emmener. Même s'il avait peur, Jean-Philippe a décidé de dormir un peu.

Quand il s'est réveillé, il était dans une très grande cuisine. Soudainement, Jean-Philippe a compris ce qui se passait : l'homme était un cuisinier et il allait utiliser les jambes de Jean-Philippe pour faire de la soupe. Jean-Philippe sait ce qu'il doit faire. Il a besoin de s'échapper de la cuisine s'il veut survivre. Alors Jean-Philippe pense à un plan : il va sauter du panier, courir à la porte et retrouver son chemin vers l'étang. Il attend jusqu'à ce que tous les cuisiniers ne regardent plus et il commence à mettre son plan à exécution. Jean-Philippe saute du panier et commence à courir vers la porte. Malheureusement un des cuisiniers l'aperçoit. Jean-Philippe commence à courir plus vite et parvient à sortir par la porte. Il se cache derrière une voiture et attend que le cuisinier soit parti. Une fois parti, Jean-Philippe commence à marcher vers l'étang mais il ne se souvient pas comment s'y rendre. Il a toutefois confiance qu'il va le retrouver.

Jean-Philippe est sur le point de perdre foi quand il aperçoit une petite fille. « Maman. Maman », crie-t-elle. « Regarde, il y a une petite grenouille ! Je pense qu'elle est perdue. » « Oh non ! », crie la maman. « On va la ramener à l'étang. » « Oui, allons-y », dit la petite fille. Jean-Philippe est très excité, après une journée très longue, il va finalement rentrer à sa maison. Quand la petite fille arrive à l'étang avec Jean-Philippe, il est très heureux de voir ses amis. La petite fille revient voir Jean-Philippe tous les jours qui suivent. C'est à partir de ce jour que la petite grenouille fut toujours très prudente.



Les Anges



SCHOOL: Holy Rosary
TEACHER: Hilde Acx
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Kari Cilibanov
UNIT: Waterloo
UNIT PRESIDENT: Patrick Etmanski

ELEMENTARY - GRADES 5-6 / POEM
by **Amelia Greatrex**

Les anges

Qui soulèvent leurs ailes
Font briller leur clarté sur moi
Leur cœur plein de gentillesse

Auréole sur la tête des anges
Qui me guident vers un lieu bon et sûr
Quand je soulève mon bras et ferme mes yeux
Je peux imaginer des lieux qui sont magiques

Quand je peux voler librement
L'esprit des anges est en moi
Pour toujours avec moi
Jusqu'à ce que mes rêves sauvages s'estompent



Violet et Gabriel



SCHOOL: Holy Rosary
TEACHER: Hilde Acx
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Kari Cilibanov
UNIT: Waterloo
UNIT PRESIDENT: Patrick Etmanski

ELEMENTARY - GRADES 5-6 / PLAY
by **Amelia Greatrex**

Personnages :

Le chat : Violet

Le chien : Gabriel

L'ours en peluche : Peluche

Le narrateur

- Narrateur** Après que tout le monde dans la famille soit endormi, le chat Violet et le chien Gabriel vont les voir tous les soir. La plupart du temps, la maison est si calme qu'on peut entendre tout chuchotement. Ça signifie que le travail de Violet et Gabriel est vraiment facile, sauf deux ou trois fois quand il y a un incident que Violet et Gabriel ont besoin de s'occuper et de résoudre. Mais ce soir, Violet et Gabriel ont un gros problème...
- Gabriel** Oh non ! Violet, c'est une catastrophe ! L'ours en peluche est en train de frapper les animaux en peluche. C'est très triste à voir ! L'ours en peluche est très méchant avec les pauvres animaux en peluche !
- Violet** Oh non ! Je vois, je vois ça ! C'est tellement effrayant et dangereux. C'est à nous de sauver ces pauvres animaux en peluche. Je pense que nous pouvons appeler nos amis. Ils peuvent nous aider face à la folie de cet ours en peluche.
- Gabriel** C'est une bonne idée Violet ! Je vais appeler nos amis du voisinage tout de suite. Nous pouvons nous battre contre le méchant ours en peluche !
- Narrateur** Gabriel et Violet appellent tous les amis dans le voisinage et demandent à chacun « Est-ce que tu peux nous aider à battre un très méchant ours en peluche ? » Après l'arrivée de beaucoup d'amis de Violet et Gabriel, les chats et chien commencent à se battre contre l'ours en peluche.



- Violet Oh non ! Il y a un grand problème ! Les animaux que l'ours en peluche a frappés sont maintenant de son côté !!! Nous voulons aider les animaux en peluche mais ils veulent nous combattre ! C'est terrible !
- Gabriel Oh non ! Nous avons besoin de fournir tellement d'effort pour gagner contre le méchant ours en peluche ! À l'attaque ! Aidons les pauvres animaux en peluche.
- Narrateur Les animaux du voisinage commencent à se battre contre l'ours en peluche. Malgré les efforts dans la bataille contre lui, l'ours en peluche ne cède pas ! Les animaux se battent, encore et encore, jusqu'à ce que l'ours en peluche devienne plus faible.
- Violet Le méchant ours en peluche est plus faible. Je pense que nous pouvons gagner la bataille ! Nous avons besoin de tout donner. Allez ! Allez ! Nous voulons gagner contre le méchant ours en peluche.
- Narrateur Après un long combat contre l'ours en peluche et les animaux, l'ours en peluche tombe finalement au sol...
- Peluche Vous avez gagné, vous avez gagné ! Vous êtes trop forts pour moi. J'abandonne !
- Gabriel Nous voulons te laisser partir MAIS tu dois d'abord présenter tes excuses à ces pauvres animaux en peluche à qui tu as fait du mal.
- Peluche Ok, ok ! Je vais faire ça !
- Narrateur Après que l'ours en peluche ait dit « désolé », les amis de Violet et Gabriel sont allés à leur maison. Violet et Gabriel sont retournés chez leur propriétaire. Et la nuit suivante, l'ours en peluche a aidé Violet et Gabriel à battre un méchant monstre. Ainsi, l'ours en peluche est devenu un très gentil ours. Le chat, le chien, l'ours en peluche et les amis ont passé de très bons moments ensemble, et sont devenus de très bons amis.

La fin !



Une biographie à propos de Mario Lemieux



SCHOOL: St. Joseph
TEACHER: Melanie Lacquaniti
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Natacha Couillard
UNIT: Peterborough, Victoria, Northumberland and Clarington
UNIT PRESIDENT: Bart Scollard

ELEMENTARY - GRADES 5-6 / NONFICTION
by **Annabelle Chiasson**

Mario Lemieux, aussi connu sous le nom de Mr. 66 ou Le Magnifique, est né le 5 octobre 1965 à Montréal, Québec. Il a joué 17 saisons avec les Penguins de Pittsburgh et il est devenu propriétaire de la franchise en 1999. Il a gagné le prix de meilleur marqueur de la LNH six fois, la coupe Stanley deux fois, et le prix de MVP trois fois ! Mario Lemieux est un joueur de hockey extraordinaire !

Au début de sa carrière (1984-1985), il a été choisi premier dans la sélection de LNH. Lors de ses premières années en LNH, Lemieux a gagné le trophée de recrue de l'année. Mario a aussi gagné le trophée Conn Smythe, Art Ross, Hart Memorial et bien plus. C'est beaucoup de trophées pour le début de sa carrière ! Mr. 66 a marqué 100 points dans ses premières années. Pas mal pour un garçon de 19 ans !

Au milieu de sa carrière, Mario a joué pour l'équipe nationale du Canada dans le tournoi de 1983, IIHF World Junior Championship, où il a marqué 10 points. Mais le 12 janvier 1993, il a annoncé qu'il souffrait de la maladie de Hodgkin, c'est-à-dire un cancer qui affecte le système immunitaire. À 27 ans, Mario doit prendre sa retraite pour se battre contre le cancer. Sept ans plus tard, le 11 décembre 2000, Mario Lemieux a dit au monde du hockey qu'il avait vaincu le cancer ! Beau travail Mario !

Mario est issu d'une mère au foyer nommée Pierrette et d'un père ingénieur appelé Jean-Guy Lemieux. Alain et Richard sont ses frères aînés et aiment beaucoup le hockey. Leur père a construit une aréna dans leur arrière court et quand il faisait trop sombre dehors, la famille Lemieux mettait de la neige dans leur salon !

Maintenant, Mario Lemieux est le propriétaire principal et le Président du conseil d'administration des Penguins de Pittsburgh. J'espère que vous en avez appris un petit peu à propos de Mario Lemieux !



Panique sous l'eau



SCHOOL: St. Joseph the Worker
TEACHER: Selina Garofalo
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Pamela Mariano
UNIT: York
UNIT PRESIDENT: Mike Totten

ELEMENTARY - GRADES 7-8 / SHORT STORY
by **Carmella Ava Greco**

Minuit. Ça fait 3 heures que Larise et Ashley sont coincées en dessous de la couverture de la piscine publique. Elles commencent lentement à manquer d'oxygène. « Il semble que nous allons manquer d'air », halète Larise. « Oui, c'est prouvé qu'une fois réchauffées, les particules d'eau se dilatent, ce qui cause la montée d'eau après une longue période », répond Ashley. Les filles cherchent de l'air, car il n'y a qu'environ 2 cm d'air entre la couverture rigide de la piscine et l'eau.

Larise et Ashley sont amies depuis toute leur vie. Elles sont deux filles uniques, alors elles disent qu'elles sont inséparables et elles se considèrent comme des sœurs. Larise, qui est une nageuse olympique, avait prévu cette journée pour pratiquer la natation. Et Ashley, son amie danseuse, avait décidé de l'accompagner. Le rêve de Larise est de participer aux Jeux olympiques à Los Angeles, sa ville natale. Les deux filles étaient allées nager, comme d'habitude. Elles étaient toutes les deux tellement concentrées sur leurs courses sous-marines, qu'elles n'avaient même pas remarqué que la couverture de la piscine se refermait automatiquement parce qu'il faisait nuit. « Quoi ? » réfléchit Larise. Ashley est soudainement sortie de l'eau elle aussi, et a presque cogné sa tête. Les deux ont commencé à paniquer, mais Larise essayait de rassurer Ashley malgré sa propre panique. 2 heures sont passées. Elles se demandaient si des membres de leur famille s'inquiétaient pour elles. Ashley s'ennuyait et a mis ses lunettes de natation. Elle a regardé en bas et s'est rendu compte qu'il y avait un poids au fond de la piscine. « Oh mon dieu » s'exclame Ashley en se émergeant de la piscine.

« Qu'est-ce qui ne va pas ? » réplique Larise, inquiète. « Il y a un poids au fond de la piscine ! Si je le prends, et casse la couverture, nous pouvons survivre ! Oh là là ! »

« Qu'est-ce que tu fais à flotter ici ? Vas-y, attrape-le ! » Ashley a pris le poids et essayé de casser la couverture de piscine. « Oh » s'exclame Ashley. « C'est d'accord. Ne nous inquiétons pas ! Nous nous en sortirons d'une manière ou d'une autre » explique Larise, qui commence à être claustrophobe et à manquer d'air.

La situation n'était pas bonne. Les deux filles perdaient de l'air, alors que l'eau montait. En raison du niveau de l'air si bas, elles ont toutes les deux placé leur visage contre la couverture. Elles se sont promis de ne pas se parler, sauf en cas d'urgence, pour garder leur énergie. Elles ont commencé à se demander si elles survivraient. Soudain, elles entendent quelqu'un marcher. Elles se regardent, hochant la tête, puis se mettent à crier. Personne n'a entendu les filles. Elles ont supposé que cette personne avait des écouteurs ou elles l'ont effrayée avec leurs cris d'on ne sait où. Elles ont pensé que c'était la fin.



Elles commençaient à apercevoir une lumière vive au-dessus de la couverture. Elles supposaient que c'était le jour. Avec l'espoir que quelqu'un vienne ouvrir la piscine publique. Elles ont entendu le sifflement d'une personne et ont immédiatement commencé à crier. C'était épuisant d'entendre des gens passer sans que personne ne les aide. Mais pas cette fois-ci ! Cette fois, quelqu'un a entendu leurs cris.

Elles ont parlé à cette personne à la voix masculine. « Heum, bonjour ? » dit l'homme. « OUI ! Bonjour ! Nous avons besoin d'assistance, s'il vous plaît ! » s'exclame Larise. « Oui, bien sûr, mais comment en êtes-vous arrivées à cette situation ? » déclare l'homme. Toutes deux lui ont expliqué la situation avant qu'il ne les aide à sortir de la piscine. Lorsqu'elles sont sorties de la piscine, leur corps étaient bleu et elles tremblaient toutes les deux. « Merci beaucoup ! » disaient les deux filles. « Bien sûr, avec plaisir, mais vous savez, la piscine est normalement fermée aujourd'hui. Je viens d'essayer de trouver un endroit pour me reposer, car j'ai... erm ... de la difficulté. Vous étiez très chanceuses d'en être sorties vivantes. » « Oh là là, alors un autre grand merci de notre part », annonce Ashley. Les deux jeunes filles ont regardé l'homme et se sont rendues compte qu'il était sans abri. « Que pouvons-nous faire pour vous aider ? » demande Larise. « Je n'ai pas grand chose, mais je ne pourrais pas vous dire », soupira l'homme. « Ne vous inquiétez pas », rassure Ashley. « Nous allons vous aider ».

Les deux filles ont commencé à parler à l'homme. Elles ont découvert que son prénom était Alain. « Si vous pouviez aller dans un restaurant, n'importe où, juste une fois dans votre vie, où iriez-vous ? » questionne Larise. « Oh, enfin, je ne sais pas ! Mais j'ai entendu parler de ce beau restaurant proche d'ici qui s'appelle Santorini », mentionne Alain. « Aujourd'hui est votre jour de chance, parce qu'on y va maintenant, Monsieur Alain ! » crie Ashley. Les filles et Monsieur Alain ont sauté dans la voiture pour le conduire. Soudainement, Larise a pris un virage serré. « Oh mon dieu Larise ! Tu nous as presque tués ! » proclame Ashley. « Désolée mais j'ai une bonne idée ! » dit Larise avec le sourire. Ils sont allés au Walmart. Elles lui ont acheté plus de 500 \$ de vêtements, et les essentiels pour l'aider à trouver un emploi. Après être arrivés au restaurant, semblant très posh tous les trois, ils ont mangé un repas extraordinaire.

« Waouh, merci beaucoup ! Je ne sais pas comment je peux vous retourner la faveur », disait Alain en faisant la moue. « Ne vous inquiétez pas, nous vous demandons seulement de prendre soin de vous-même, et ça c'est mieux que n'importe quelle faveur », répondent Larise et Ashley en synchronie.

Une année plus tard, Larise a vu Monsieur Alain marcher au Rodéo Boulevard. Ils se sont tous les deux arrêtés soudainement. « Attends... Heum... C'est bien Larise ? » dit Alain.

« Oh ! Comme c'est surprenant ! Oui, Larise. Et vous êtes Alain ! Comment allez-vous ? ».

« Vous ne devinerez jamais ! Je viens d'emménager dans ma première maison, et j'ai un emploi ! » explique Alain avec bonheur. « Vous savez, je n'aurais jamais pu faire ça sans vous et votre amie...

Ashley ! ». « Vous ne savez pas à quel point je suis heureuse pour vous ! Bon, je vais y aller maintenant ! ».

« Quoi ? Non ! Je voudrais vous acheter un café, allons-y ! » a déclaré Alain en s'éloignant. Après le temps passé avec Alain et Larise, tout le monde s'est bien amusé.

« Nous devons rester en contact » suggère Larise. « Bien sûr, peut-être qu'un jour nous pourrons aller à la natation ! Peut-être en évitant de se retrouver à nouveau coincés dans la piscine ! » dit Alain en riant. « J'aimerais ça ! ».



Quand je vais à l'école



SCHOOL: St. Leo
TEACHER: Mariah Dubeau
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Steve Squeo
UNIT: Brant Haldimand Norfolk
UNIT PRESIDENT: Tom Laracy

ELEMENTARY - GRADES 7-8 / POEM
by **Levi Hunks**

Quand je vais à l'école, le stress prend le contrôle de moi.

À chaque fois que je fais du travail, c'est difficile pour moi, car je ne travaille pas de la même façon que mes amis.

Quand je fais les quiz je me demande : Pourquoi est-ce que les personnes sont plus intelligentes que moi ?

Je pense que Drayden est le plus intelligent dans la classe. Il fait tout. Il a fait presque tout le travail dans notre cours de français pour notre publicité sur la drogue.

Je pense que Violet est très intelligente aussi. Elle fait tout. Elle fait les annonces au matin devant toute l'école. Elle doit vite lire le script avec Mme Szokes et elle parle clairement — plus clairement que moi.

Je pense que Capri est plus intelligente que moi. Capri est tellement créative. Elle a fait les posters sur les relations qui était tellement beaux.

Je pense que Jacob est plus intelligent que moi. Car il est drôle. Il parle durant notre leçon et ça fait toujours rire Mme Dubeau.

Je pense que Cam est plus intelligent que moi. Il est bon en art et en religion.

L'école c'est comme une petite ville parce que l'école a beaucoup de gens. L'école c'est comme une deuxième maison pour moi, mais parfois c'est difficile pour moi car je suis tellement différent des autres élèves.

Je demande à Drayden « Pourquoi je suis dans une bonne classe ? » et il répond que je travaille plus fort que les autres personnes dans la classe.



Je demande à Violet « Pourquoi je suis dans une bonne classe ? » et elle répond que je trouve toujours différentes façons d'apprendre. Que je mérite d'être dans ces classes parce que j'ai beaucoup de qualités et de différentes manières de voir les choses.

Je demande à Jacob « Pourquoi je suis dans une bonne classe ? » et il répond que je suis très drôle, gentil, et que je dessine toujours un sourire sur les visages.

Je demande à Cam « Pourquoi je suis dans une bonne classe ? » et il répond que je suis bon en mathématique. Et que c'est facile pour moi de comprendre, car ça prend plus longtemps pour lui.

Je demande à Capri « Pourquoi je suis dans une bonne classe ? » et elle répond que j'ai beaucoup de bonnes idées créatives, comme pour décorer la salle de classe pour célébrer la fête de Harry Styles.

L'école n'est pas un mauvais endroit.



Lionel et Cristiano



SCHOOL: Madonna della Libera
TEACHER: Matt Dovsek
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Daniel Gouthro
UNIT: Brant Haldimand Norfolk
UNIT PRESIDENT: Tom Laracy

SECONDARY - GRADES 7-8 / PLAY
by **Garcia Pucci**

Roi : R

Serviteur : S

Narrateur : N

R : Oh ! Finalement ma nouvelle robe est arrivée !

S : Voilà mon roi, votre robe.

R : La prochaine fois, tu dois être plus rapide ! Tu es le serviteur le plus lent que j'ai jamais eu.

S : Mon roi, je ne veux pas être irrespectueux, mais ce n'est pas ma faute si votre robe était en retard.

R : Oui c'est ta faute !

S : Désolé mon roi.

N : Quelques heures plus tard, le roi veut son déjeuner. Il appelle Lionel, son serviteur.

S : Oui roi Cristiano, qu'avez-vous besoin ?

R : Je veux mon déjeuner tout de suite !

N : « Je vais revenir dans une minute », lui explique Lionel.

S : Mon roi, voici votre déjeuner.

N : Après quelques minutes, le roi appelle Lionel une fois de plus.

R : Ma nourriture est froide ! Donne-moi un nouveau plat !

S : Oui mon roi, mais ce n'est pas ma faute.

R : Tout est ta faute ! Pars d'ici immédiatement !

N : Le roi Cristiano continue d'être méchant envers Lionel pour tout la reste de la journée. Mais pendant la nuit, des choses suspicieuses se passent.

N : « Lionel ! », chuchote le roi.

R : Je pense qu'il y a un intrus dans le château. Qu'est-ce qu'on va faire ?

S : On ? Cette fois c'est cent pour cent pas ma faute. Appelez la sécurité ! Et au revoir.

N : Le roi est seul dans le château uniquement avec l'intrus. Il pense que s'il avait été plus gentil avec Lionel, il serait resté avec lui.

N : Trois mois après l'intrusion, Cristiano est pauvre car toutes ses possessions étaient détruites. Maintenant, il doit travailler comme un serviteur pour le nouveau roi... Lionel !



Le Garçon et le Poisson



SCHOOL: St. Theresa of Lisieux

TEACHER: Claudia Sabatini

SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Deborah Todde and Rocky Savoia

UNIT: York

UNIT PRESIDENT: Mike Totten

SECONDARY - GRADES 9-10 / SHORT STORY

by **Tanya Joulaei**

Dans la ville sereine de l'île, où le temps semblait s'attarder dans les rues pavées, se trouvait un banc sans prétention, sous l'ombre réconfortante d'un saule, un ancien arbre. Les citoyens y passaient régulièrement, jetant à peine un coup d'œil aux lattes altérées sur lesquelles le garçon était souvent assis.

Dès sa naissance, le garçon s'est démarqué, un sourire perpétuel gravé sur son visage. Ce concept était étranger à tous les autres citoyens de la ville, car ils ne savaient tous que froncer les sourcils. Par conséquent, le sourire radieux du garçon le distinguait et il était mal vu par les gens. Au fil des années, le garçon s'est retrouvé dans un cocon d'isolement, son sourire autrefois éclatant s'estompant jusqu'à disparaître complètement. La perte de son sourire a jeté une ombre sur la ville, en la voilant de ténèbres, en glaçant les vents et faisant basculer l'océan dans la violence.

Un jour, accablé par le poids du monde, le garçon remplit ses poches de pierres et se promena pensivement vers l'océan. L'eau touchait à peine ses chevilles pendant qu'il errait vers les pierres, sans esprit. C'est au cours de cette promenade solitaire qu'il aperçut un poisson, se débattant à sa manière sur un petit rocher, tentant de sortir de l'eau pour des raisons proches des siennes.

L'empathie s'est réveillée en lui, incitant le garçon à tendre la main au poisson qui luttait contre les limites de son monde. Dans un geste de véritable compassion, le garçon sortit un petit sac en plastique de sa poche, le remplit avec de l'eau de mer et y berça doucement le poisson. Il rentra chez lui, la lourdeur de son nouvel ami dans le sac ne soulageant que légèrement la douleur qui lui serrait le cœur.

Cependant, le destin, aussi imprévisible que la mer, elle-même, avait d'autres projets. Le sac en plastique s'est déchiré sur le chemin de sa maison, laissant le garçon dans un état de panique précipitée. Dans un élan de désespoir, il se précipita chez lui, trouvant du réconfort dans une humble cafetière remplie d'eau. Un soupir de soulagement lui échappa alors qu'il plaçait le poisson dans l'eau, en assurant sa sécurité. Mais cette mission de sauvetage clandestine n'échappa pas au regard vigilant de sa mère qui se tenait derrière lui. Une expression confuse était affichée sur son visage, déconcertée par les actions de son fils.

Pour détourner son attention, le garçon déchaîna son sourire unique, et elle retourna à ses affaires. Cette nuit-là, il reposa son poisson dans la cafetière posée délicatement sur sa table de chevet.



Le garçon a nourri le poisson avec les maigres offrandes de son garde-manger. Il a eu besoin de manger moins pour le dîner qu'il ne l'aurait fait normalement pour subvenir aux besoins de l'autre. Et une fois que tout fut fait, le garçon et le poisson sombrèrent dans un sommeil paisible.

Le lendemain matin, une surprise s'est produite : le poisson avait subi une transformation pendant la nuit, grossissant et étant désormais à l'étroit dans les limites de la cafetière. La panique s'installa une fois de plus et le garçon, avec un sentiment d'urgence, se dépêcha pour trouver une maison plus convenable pour son ami à nageoires. Cependant, ses moyens limités l'ont laissé désespéré jusqu'à ce qu'il aperçoive un jeune garçon avec un sac à dos en plastique transparent, marchant vers l'école.

Dans un état de panique alimenté par la nécessité, le garçon a offert l'équivalent d'une journée de sa maigre réserve de nourriture en échange d'un sac à dos. Le jeune garçon compatissant a accepté son offre. Le sac en plastique transparent est devenu le nouveau refuge du poisson, lui permettant de nager librement.

Ce jour-là, le garçon s'est lancé dans une mission à explorer les merveilles de l'île dont le poisson n'avait jamais été témoin auparavant. Leur voyage les a emmenés à travers des montagnes, des terres verdoyantes et des marchés animés. Chaque endroit lui a offert un nouveau paysage pour leurs expériences partagées. Le garçon, dans sa simplicité, a dansé à travers l'île, moments de joie inexprimée avec son compagnon aquatique. L'île, avec ses rues pavées résonnant de leurs rires, est devenue la toile de leurs aventures communes.

À la tombée de la nuit, le garçon et le poisson retournèrent à leur maison modeste, le sac transparent rempli des aventures de la journée. Le garçon s'endormit avec contentement tandis que le poisson le regardait calmement. Pourtant, sur les écrans de télévision, une vidéo dévoile le sort de son espèce de poisson. Les dernières nouvelles sont apparues à l'écran, déclarant le besoin urgent d'un nouvel habitat pour sa race de poisson. Ils étaient destinés à migrer bientôt vers une autre partie de la mer. Désespéré de communiquer, le poisson s'efforça de réveiller le garçon, usant de toute sa puissance aquatique. Hélas, n'étant qu'un poisson, il lui manquait les moyens de produire du son. Malgré ses efforts frénétiques, le garçon resta profondément endormi, inconscient du message urgent qui se déroulait dans le royaume aquatique.

Le lendemain matin, un autre défi s'est présenté : le poisson, désormais à l'étroit dans le sac transparent, a provoqué une nouvelle ruée de panique. Le garçon, selon une routine familière, cherchait un récipient plus grand pour son compagnon aquatique. Un grand chariot transparent rempli d'eau devint la nouvelle demeure et leur journée continua. La journée s'est déroulée comme un livre d'histoires vivant, avec chaque chapitre gravé dans les teintes vibrantes des épiceries animées, des centres commerciaux dynamiques et des boulangeries aromatiques. Ensemble, ils naviguaient dans les allées, les étals et les vitrines, les poissons observant le kaléidoscope de couleurs et de senteurs qui les entourait.

Alors que leur odysée exploratoire se poursuivait, le duo se retrouva dans un café confortable niché au milieu des rues pavées. Les bavardages ambiants des clients et le tintement réconfortant des



tasses créaient une toile de fond harmonieuse. Absorbé par le charme du café, le garçon est d'abord resté inconscient de la nouvelle qui se déroulait. Cependant, l'atmosphère chaleureuse a pris une autre tournure lorsque la télévision fixée au mur s'est animée, diffusant les dernières nouvelles sur la migration de la race de poisson vers une autre mer.

Le garçon, en proie au déni, avait du mal à accepter la sombre réalité qui se déroulait sur l'écran de télévision. Le poisson, compagnon fidèle des moments partagés et des repas partagés, est devenu partie intégrante de son univers. Ils avaient grandi ensemble, non seulement physiquement mais aussi mentalement, forgeant un rapport qui semblait incassable. Cependant, une vérité lourde restait en suspens : la place légitime du poisson était dans la mer.

Incertain et déchiré entre attachement et responsabilité, le garçon errait dans les rues pavées avec le chariot et le poisson. Le temps, insaisissable dans son passage, s'écoulait tandis que les secondes se fondaient en minutes, puis s'étiraient en heures apparemment interminables. Inconscient de la taille croissante du poisson et des limites de plus en plus exigües du chariot, le garçon restait piégé dans la toile de ses émotions contradictoires.

À mesure que le poisson se dilatait, les parois vitrées du chariot se sont tendues sous la pression. Un craquement retentissant retentit et le verre céda, laissant l'eau couler en cascade sur le trottoir. Le poisson, désormais échoué sur la terre ferme, luttait dans son élément aquatique. La panique s'empara du garçon et le regret lui transperça le cœur alors qu'il se lamentait de ne pas avoir mis le poisson à l'eau plus tôt.

Accablé par le poids de ses erreurs, les larmes montèrent aux yeux du garçon. Cette compagnie autrefois joyeuse l'avait mené vers une tragédie involontaire : la disparition imminente du poisson sur le trottoir impitoyable, conséquence de l'égoïsme involontaire du garçon.

Pourtant, au milieu du désespoir, une lueur d'espoir a émergé. Les habitants, témoins de la tragédie qui se déroulait, se sont rassemblés autour du poisson. Au début, leurs efforts semblaient vains, mais à mesure que le nombre de mains bienveillantes se multipliait, l'impossible est devenu réalisable. Deux sont devenus cinq, cinq sont devenus huit et huit se sont transformés en une force collective de seize individus déterminés à soulever le poisson du sol. L'île, une communauté liée par des circonstances imprévues, a uni ses forces pour ramener le poisson à son habitat légitime. Alors qu'ils arrivaient près de leur destination, le garçon regarda le poisson dans les yeux et murmura « Nage librement dans la mer, là où tu appartiens vraiment », avant de le pousser doucement dans l'eau. Une fois immergé dans l'océan, le poisson dégageait un sentiment de soulagement, en nageant vers la mer lointaine aux côtés de ses compagnons.

Alors que le poisson trouvait son bonheur et son foyer, une transformation a balayé l'île. Le nuage renfrogné qui persistait au-dessus de la terre se dissipa, remplacé par une nouvelle chaleur. Des sourires maladroits ornaient les visages des habitants, y compris celui du garçon, qui, malgré le poids persistant de ses erreurs, a choisi de se lancer dans un nouveau voyage. La curiosité s'est enflammée en lui, le poussant à explorer les merveilles qui l'attendaient dans le monde autour de lui.



Un doux murmure



SCHOOL: St. Augustine
TEACHER: Julie Buljan
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Michael Oyston
UNIT: York
UNIT PRESIDENT: Mike Totten

SECONDARY - GRADES 9-10 / POEM
by **Marcia Wong**

Une forêt d'arbres et d'animaux
Devenue une forêt d'édifices et de gens

L'odeur de l'air frais
Polluée par le monoxyde de carbone et l'ozone

Des pommes fraîchement cueillies sur les arbres
Traitées et emballées en jus de pomme

L'herbe sur laquelle je marchais pieds nus
Recouverte d'une couche de béton

Le chant des oiseaux
Remplacé par le rugissement du trafic

Mais dans tout ce vacarme
J'entends un doux murmure de la Terre Mère

Protège-moi
Restaure-moi
Elle crie



La Fin du monde



SCHOOL: St. Theresa of Lisieux
TEACHER: Claudia Sabatini
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE:
Deborah Todde and Rocky Savoia
UNIT: York
UNIT PRESIDENT: Mike Totten

SECONDARY - GRADES 9-10 / PLAY
by **Joyee Shi, Anson Liang, and
Tanya Joulaei**

Personnages :

Pierre : un garçon de 20 ans qui rencontre un thérapeute pour améliorer sa santé mentale.

Martin : un étudiant de 20 ans qui est toujours stressé à cause de l'école.

Dr. Moreau : un thérapeute de 45 ans qui cherche à aider les autres.

Réceptionniste : une employée du Dr. Moreau.

Pierre lève les yeux vers le bâtiment devant lui, un gratte-ciel imposant perçant les nuages. Les fenêtres réfléchissent suffisamment de lumière pour que ses yeux lui fassent mal. Pierre est secoué jusqu'aux os.

PIERRE : Waouh. J'aimerais pouvoir travailler un jour dans un bâtiment comme celui-ci.

Pierre regarde son bloc-notes.

PIERRE : Consultation du Dr. Moreau, salle 1 au 45ème étage... Je ne peux même pas imaginer à quel point cela coûterait cher de posséder une chambre au rez-de-chaussée de cet immeuble, encore moins au 45ème étage !

Pierre entre dans le bâtiment, puis entre dans l'ascenseur.

PIERRE : D'accord, son bureau est au 45ème étage, ce qui veut dire... Oh mon dieu ! Il n'y a pas de boutons au-delà de 45. Il est au dernier étage ?

Il appuie sur le 45ème bouton. Alors que l'ascenseur monte, Pierre regarde à travers les murs transparents, voyant la ville se dérouler sous lui. Une fois arrivé au 45ème étage, il entre dans le bureau du Dr. Moreau et commence à chuchoter avec admiration.

PIERRE : Oh là là, cet endroit est incroyable. Pas un grain de poussière en vue... et le mobilier est tellement moderne qu'il doit coûter très cher ! Le Dr. Moreau doit avoir beaucoup de succès.

RÉCEPTIONNISTE : Pierre Blanchet ?

PIERRE : Oui, c'est moi.

RÉCEPTIONNISTE : Très bien, veuillez vous diriger vers la chambre numéro 4. Le Dr. Moreau est prêt à vous voir.



PIERRE : D'accord. Merci beaucoup !

Pierre se dirige vers la chambre numéro 4 en admirant chaque partie du couloir. Il ferme la porte derrière lui et rencontre un homme avec un air sympathique.

DR. MOREAU : Pierre ! Ai-je raison ?

PIERRE : Oui, ravi de vous rencontrer Dr. Moreau.

DR. MOREAU : C'est un plaisir de vous rencontrer aussi ! S'il vous plaît, asseyez-vous.

Le Dr Moreau indique un fauteuil en cuir ou il peut s'asseoir. Pierre s'assoit tandis que le Dr. Moreau sort un bloc-notes et un stylo.

DR. MOREAU : Alors Pierre, je sais que ce n'est que notre première rencontre, alors commençons par une introduction. Pourriez-vous m'expliquer brièvement pourquoi vous êtes ici aujourd'hui ? Il n'est pas nécessaire que ce soit très détaillé. Mais s'il vous plaît, partagez-moi certaines de vos plus grandes luttes et ce que vous souhaitez atteindre après notre visite aujourd'hui.

PIERRE : Docteur, ces derniers mois ont été horribles pour moi. J'ai commencé à sortir avec une fille, il y a quatre ans et elle était l'amour de ma vie. Nous avons passé chaque seconde de chaque journée ensemble. Je l'ai vraiment aimée et je l'aime toujours de tout mon cœur. Je pensais que ce serait elle que j'épouserai... Je voulais passer le reste de ma vie avec elle. Mais soudainement, il y a quelques mois, elle... elle a rompu avec moi. Au début, je n'y croyais pas vraiment. Mais ensuite, j'ai découvert qu'elle était tombée amoureuse d'un autre homme et qu'elle ne voulait plus avoir de relation avec moi.

DR. MOREAU : Je comprends, les relations peuvent être difficiles. Qu'avez-vous ressenti après sa décision ?

PIERRE : Eh bien, évidemment, je me suis senti mal. Mais plus précisément, ça m'a fait ressentir... n'avoir aucune valeur... ? Elle était la personne la plus importante de ma vie, mais je n'étais qu'une page de son livre. C'était si facile pour elle de m'abandonner. Cette situation m'a fait aussi sentir tellement perdu. Il semble que chaque personne sait exactement ce qu'elle veut faire dans ce monde. Ils ont toute leur vie planifiée du début à la fin, des relations d'amour et leurs carrières. Mais je sens ne rien avoir. Aucun projet d'avenir, aucune stabilité financière et aucune personne sur qui compter. Je sens que j'ai touché le fond, comme si mon monde était fini.

Le Dr. Moreau pose son bloc-notes et son stylo sur sa table d'appoint puis pousse un soupir empathique.

DR. MOREAU : Je comprends vos sentiments Pierre. Et je veux vous aider, bien sûr. Je pense... Vous savez quoi ? Suivez-moi.

Le Dr. Moreau se lève, Pierre le suit. Le Dr. Moreau amène Pierre dans la direction de l'ascenseur.

DR. MOREAU : Montez dans l'ascenseur, puis allez au 46ème étage. Je pense vraiment que cela vous sera bénéfique.



Pierre se dirige vers l'ascenseur, une pointe de nervosité teintant chacun de ses pas. Il s'arrête juste avant d'entrer.

PIERRE : Attendez, il n'y a pas que 45 étages ?

Pierre se retourne pour interroger le Docteur, pour se retrouver face au couloir vide.

PIERRE : C'est bizarre, où est-il allé ? Je suppose que je vais juste vérifier à nouveau les boutons.

Pierre continue, regardant une fois de plus avec admiration la vue sous ses pieds.

PIERRE : Ah ! Il y a un 46ème étage ! J'aurais juré que ce bouton n'était pas là auparavant...

Pierre appuie sur le bouton avec plein d'impatience. L'ascenseur monte et il sort.

PIERRE : À quoi... le 46ème étage ressemble... à un amphithéâtre universitaire ? Oh ? Il y a un garçon là-bas ! Qu'est-ce que c'est dans le-

MARTIN : Oh mon Dieu, j'ai tellement de choses à faire. Un projet de biologie à rendre demain, mon examen de français mardi, mon examen de mathématiques mercredi. Zut ! Ma présentation en anglais a été reportée à lundi ? Qu'est-ce que je vais faire ?! Je ferais mieux de commencer à étudier...

Martin écrit frénétiquement ses notes de classes tout en se murmurant.

MARTIN : La troisième règle est que la lumière se reflète à travers le sommet, le plan Schlieffen a été créé par les Allemands, n'oublie pas les verbes irréguliers du conditionnel présent...

Pierre approche l'élève qui se trouve dans la salle.

PIERRE : Hé, mec, ça va ?

Martin lève brièvement les yeux, avant d'écarter la présence de Pierre et de se tourner immédiatement vers ses papiers.

MARTIN : $f(x)=a(x-h)^2+k$, Roméo et Juliette, c'est une question de destin... Oh mon Dieu, j'ai un 43% en cours de chimie, je suis condamné !

PIERRE : Salut ? Peux-tu, même, m'entendre ?

Pierre agite les mains devant l'étudiant anxieux. Martin lève les yeux, cette fois, en les roulant.

MARTIN : Oui, je t'ai vu la première fois, tu as besoin de quelque chose ?

PIERRE : Waouh waouh, calme-toi. Je ne veux pas me disputer avec toi. Je veux juste savoir pourquoi tu t'énerves autant. Tu sembles vraiment stressé.

MARTIN : Tu ne comprends pas ! Ma vie est un désastre ! J'échoue à mes cours de chimie, de mathématiques et d'anglais. Et je réussis à peine à tous mes autres cours et tout ce que je fais, c'est



étudier. J'étudie, j'étudie et j'étudie, et je ne m'améliore jamais ! Je sais que je comprends tout le matériel, mais dès que je commence une évaluation, mon esprit se vide ! J'oublie tout ! Ma vie est un désastre !

PIERRE : Du calme !

Pierre jette un coup d'œil aux papiers de Martin à la recherche de son nom. Et en quelques secondes, il réussit à le trouver.

PIERRE : Attends, tu t'appelles Martin Moreau ? Comme le Dr. Martin Moreau au 45ème étage ?! Oh mon Dieu ! Qu'est-ce qui se passe ?! Est-ce que je vois vraiment la version plus jeune du Dr. Moreau. Ceci est incroyable ! Mais bon, nous sommes au 46ème étage... Un étage inexistant. Attends, Martin, pourquoi es-tu si stressé maintenant ? Tu sais que tu vas devenir un médecin à succès. Je veux que tu me croies quand je dis que ce n'est pas la fin du monde. Tout ce que tu dois faire est de demander de l'aide, au lieu de cacher tous tes problèmes. Tu es la personne la plus accomplie de la ville ! Je veux dire, tu n'as que 20 ans ! Il peut sembler que tu es voué à l'échec à cause de tes notes académiques, mais crois-moi, ce n'est pas la fin du monde. Tout ce que tu dois faire c'est demander de l'aide.

Martin devient soudainement tranquille et lève lentement les yeux vers Pierre.

MARTIN : Tu parles ?! Est-ce que tu suis tes propres conseils ?

Une vague de prise de conscience frappe Pierre immédiatement.

PIERRE : Oh... Je n'ai jamais... Je n'ai jamais pensé à ma vie comme ça. J'ai laissé une petite partie de ma vie déterminer mon avenir. Tu as raison. Même s'il semble que mon monde touche à sa fin, ce ne sera pas le cas. Je ne suis pas prêt à échouer.

Pierre retourne à l'ascenseur, appuie sur le bouton du 45ème étage, pour chercher Dr. Moreau.

PIERRE : Bonjour, je suis ici de nouveau pour parler avec le Dr. Moreau.

La réceptionniste, qui était en train de parler à un autre client, semble confuse.

RÉCEPTIONNISTE : M. Pierre Blanchet ? Votre rendez-vous s'est terminé il y a des heures. Je peux vous fixer un rendez-vous pour la semaine prochaine si vous le souhaitez ?

PIERRE : Oh, je n'ai pas besoin d'en réserver un. Pourriez-vous dire au Dr. Moreau que je le remercie pour toute son aide.



Les téléphones cellulaires à l'école : utiles ou nocifs ?



SCHOOL: St. Theresa of Lisieux

TEACHER: Claudia Sabatini

SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Deborah Todde and Rocky Savoia

UNIT: York

UNIT PRESIDENT: Mike Totten

SECONDARY - GRADES 9-10 / NONFICTION

by **Anna Li**

Les cellulaires sont un outil qui est utilisé partout dans le monde. On peut les trouver dans les maisons, sur les lieux de travail et dans les écoles. Les téléphones portables sont généralement utilisés pour communiquer avec les autres au moyen des courriels, d'appels et de SMS (service de messages courts). À l'école, les étudiants utilisent les téléphones mobiles pour faire des recherches et collaborer sur les projets. Cependant, ces cellulaires permettent aussi aux étudiants de s'éloigner de l'apprentissage parce qu'ils leur donnent l'accès aux jeux vidéo, à participer sur les réseaux médias, ainsi qu'à regarder des films, des émissions et des vidéos. Alors, qu'est-ce qui se passerait si l'usage de cet outil était interdit dans les écoles ?

L'interdiction des cellulaires n'est pas un nouveau concept. En 2018, la France a interdit l'usage des cellulaires dans les écoles pour les étudiants qui avaient moins de 15 ans. Par ailleurs, en 2021, la Chine a prohibé l'usage des cellulaires pour protéger la vue des jeunes enfants. En Ontario, l'interdiction des téléphones portables commence aussi à être débattue. Le gouvernement actuel de l'Ontario a déclaré que chaque conseil scolaire est responsable d'assurer que les étudiants n'utilisent pas les cellulaires sans la permission de leur professeur pendant la classe. Les enseignants et administrateurs sont aussi responsables de trouver une punition pour les étudiants qui ne suivent pas ces règles.

Récemment, le 31 décembre 2023, le Québec a annoncé l'interdiction des téléphones portables dans les salles de classe. L'interdiction était pour les écoles élémentaires et secondaires. Le but était d'enlever les grandes distractions pour que les étudiants puissent mieux se concentrer sur les études. Même si de nombreuses personnes étaient satisfaites de cette décision, d'autres ne l'étaient pas.

Mazzy Cant et Anya Singh sont deux élèves qui habitent au Québec. Les deux jeunes pensent que l'interdiction n'est pas nécessaire. Mazzy dit qu'avant l'interdiction n'ait été établie, la majorité des étudiants n'utilisait pas leurs cellulaires. Et après l'interdiction, les étudiants qui utilisaient les cellulaires avant, les utilisent encore, mais maintenant ils les cachent loin de la vue des enseignants. Quand les enseignants remarquent cette tromperie, ils choisissent de l'ignorer pour concentrer leur énergie sur les étudiants qui veulent apprendre. Il continue en disant que de nombreux étudiants dans son école sont encore distraits et manquent de sérieux, même sans les cellulaires.

Anya Singh est aussi d'accord avec Mazzy et ajoute que les étudiants cachent leurs cellulaires sous leurs pupitres pour qu'ils puissent continuer à les utiliser malgré cette nouvelle loi. Pour ces raisons, Mazzy Cant et Anya Singh pensent que l'interdiction des cellulaires ne va pas rectifier ce problème. Les



étudiants vont encore être distraits, avec ou sans les téléphones. Alors, à leur avis, l'interdiction est inefficace.

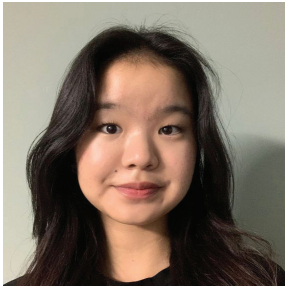
D'un autre côté, beaucoup de professeurs et de parents encouragent l'interdiction des téléphones cellulaires dans les salles de classe. À cause de la pandémie, les jeunes sont devenus beaucoup plus inattentifs. Donc, cette loi donne une chance aux étudiants de faire plus attention à l'école et de plus s'appliquer. Ils auront plus envie de participer, travailler en groupes et poser plus de questions. Sachin Maharaj, un professeur adjoint à l'université d'Ottawa dit que les téléphones cellulaires et les réseaux sociaux font du tort au développement des études, en société et sur le plan émotif des enfants. Par conséquent, la décision de Québec d'interdire ces cellulaires est utile. En outre, Étienne Bergeron, un enseignant à l'École secondaire Monique-Proulx au Québec pense que l'interdiction des cellulaires n'est pas assez sévère. Il aimerait voir l'usage des cellulaires interdit dans les corridors, bibliothèques et cafétérias. Bergeron ajoute aussi, « La technologie devrait être utilisée pour améliorer la créativité des enfants et pas pour surfer sur l'internet sans but. »

Joel Westheimer, un professeur à l'université d'Ottawa dit que cette loi est avantageuse parce que les cellulaires, avec les réseaux sociaux, sont nuisibles pour les jeunes. Il dit que la majorité de 90 % des adolescents qui apportent un cellulaire à l'école ne l'utilise pas pour l'éducation, mais pour aller sur les réseaux sociaux (Tiktok, Instagram, Youtube, Twitter, Pinterest, Facebook). D'autre part, il y a des statistiques qui montrent que l'internet, notamment les réseaux sociaux fournissent des informations utiles pour les jeunes avec leurs devoirs. En effet, un sondage fait par The Mobile Shop, dit que deux tiers des Canadiens sont d'accord avec le fait que les téléphones cellulaires sont bénéfiques à récoler parce que les étudiants peuvent les utiliser pour rechercher les sujets, consolider leurs arguments et pour s'inspirer.

Après cette interdiction des cellulaires au Québec, il est apparent que les réactions à propos de cela sont scindées. Beaucoup de professeurs et parents pensent que l'interdiction des cellulaires à l'école est une bonne idée parce que les étudiants peuvent mieux se concentrer sur les études, améliorer leur développement social et leur bien-être. Quant aux étudiants, ils pensent que cette interdiction est inutile à cause du fait que leur comportement va maintenir le statut quo. C'est-à-dire, les étudiants qui utilisent rarement leurs téléphones mobiles à l'école vont continuer à s'abstenir. Cependant, ceux qui dépendent de leurs cellulaires vont continuer à trouver de nouvelles façons et ou remplacements pour ces téléphones portables. Par conséquent, sans aucun doute, l'usage des téléphones cellulaires à l'école est un outil à double tranchant. Donc, les cellulaires sont-ils utiles ou nocifs ?



Une mangue mûre



SCHOOL: St. Theresa of Lisieux

TEACHER: Raimondo Puopolo

SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Deborah Todde and Rocky Savoia

UNIT: York

UNIT PRESIDENT: Mike Totten

SECONDARY - GRADES 11-12 / SHORT STORY

by **Alyssa Park**

Vingt-trois appels manqués de ma mère. Au milieu des rythmes assourdissants de la musique dans la boîte de nuit bondée, j'ai choisi d'éteindre mon téléphone pour oublier notre récente dispute. Je me suis promis de la rappeler plus tard, en sachant que si je répondais maintenant, elle me rappellerait de rentrer à la maison à une heure raisonnable, comme toujours. Cela me frustrait. Malgré le fait d'être une adolescente mature, elle persistait à imposer un couvre-feu.

En choisissant de profiter de ma soirée, j'ai mis de côté tous mes soucis concernant ma relation avec ma mère. Plusieurs heures plus tard, je me suis dépêchée de rentrer chez moi. En conduisant, je n'ai pas cessé de regarder l'heure sur le tableau de bord de ma voiture. Il était déjà 2h30 du matin. J'ai essayé de lui téléphoner, mais sans réponse, j'ai supposé qu'elle dormait. Soudain, un appel de mon oncle a percé le silence de cette heure tardive. Avec appréhension, j'ai répondu et à partir de ce moment, le monde autour de moi s'est floué dans le chaos.

Alors que mon oncle me racontait tout ce qui s'était passé, mon cœur battait fort, me poussant à appuyer plus fort sur l'accélérateur en me précipitant vers l'hôpital. Sur le chemin, je marmonnais silencieusement une prière, espérant désespérément qu'elle irait bien. À mon arrivée, la réalité m'a frappé — c'était trop tard. Le long bip du moniteur cardiaque ne signifiait qu'une chose. C'était entièrement de ma faute. J'aurais dû rester à la maison à ses côtés et régler nos problèmes ou répondre à ses appels au lieu d'ignorer. J'étais rempli de culpabilité et d'un million de regrets face à l'indéniable vérité : elle était partie.

De retour à la maison, le vide résonnait dans le silence. En montant jusqu'à ma chambre, mes yeux se sont remplis de larmes en découvrant une tasse de thé froid et une assiette de fruits coupés, avec mes fruits préférés, les mangues. C'était un signe poignant, ce plat était sa façon de s'excuser pour notre dispute qui me semble maintenant petite et insignifiante.

En regardant les mangues parmi les autres fruits du supermarché, je me suis rappelé la douleur de ce jour fatal il y a quinze ans. Aujourd'hui, elle aurait eu 60 ans. En essayant de retenir mes larmes, un homme plus âgé, aux yeux et au sourire doux, qui travaillait là, s'est approché de moi et m'a demandé si quelque chose n'allait pas avec les fruits. J'ai raconté l'histoire de ce jour-là et il a écouté avec toute son attention. Après un moment de réflexion, il a répondu : « Ah oui, mais la signification des fruits est beaucoup plus que vous ne pensez. Dans la culture asiatique, couper des fruits est un langage universel d'amour. C'est l'expression la plus pure et la plus commune de l'amour d'une mère asiatique. Moi aussi, je me souviens de l'avoir tenu pour acquis quand j'avais ton âge, mais on ne peut



pas toujours s'attarder sur le passé. »

« Oui, mais vous ne comprenez pas toutes les choses que j'aurais pu faire différemment, tous les regrets que j'ai et combien elle me manque », ai-je répondu.

« Malheureusement, jeune fille, on ne peut pas changer le passé. C'est la vie. Mais la façon dont vous choisissez d'apprendre et de grandir à partir de ce passé, c'est ce qui est important. »

Il me demande alors : « Si tu avais un vœu, quel serait-il ? »

J'ai répondu sans hésitation : « Je souhaite voir ma mère une dernière fois. »

Il me dit alors de fermer les yeux et il claque des doigts.

En un instant, nous nous sommes retrouvés à l'hôpital, où ma grand-mère tenait un bébé dans ses bras avec des yeux pleins d'amour, ma mère. Nous avons vu des moments où ma mère rentrait de l'école pour retrouver sa mère et une collation de l'après-midi, une assiette de fruits coupés. Nous l'avons vue devenir une femme ambitieuse en travaillant dur dans sa carrière et sacrifier la vie qu'elle connaissait et aimait pour immigrer dans un pays étranger.

Me tenant dans ses bras, un bébé qui pleurait, elle luttait contre les incertitudes de la maternité. En voyant cela, je me suis rendu compte que ma mère était la fille précieuse de quelqu'un d'autre, découvrant la vie et naviguant à travers les défis de la maternité pour la première fois. J'ai conclu que l'amour d'une mère pour ses enfants ne ressemble à rien d'autre au monde. Rien n'est plus puissant, il transcende toute mesure ou description. Il est infini et inconditionnel.

J'ai rouvert les yeux pour me retrouver dans le supermarché. Reconnaisant, j'ai remercié l'homme de m'avoir montré la beauté de l'amour d'une mère et de m'avoir transmis ces leçons inestimables.

Je comprends enfin ce qu'elle a ressenti en tant que mère. Me voilà, en train de faire exactement la même chose qu'elle a faite pour moi. L'amour se présente sous différentes formes et, dans notre famille, c'est par une assiette de fruits coupés que nous disons « je t'aime ». En épluchant les mangues, j'ai entendu le léger bruit de ses petits pas s'approchant du seuil. Ouvrant la porte, je l'ai serrée dans mes bras — elle m'avait beaucoup manqué. Je ne réalisais pas à quel point six heures pouvaient paraître longues.

Assises l'une en face de l'autre à la table de la cuisine, la curiosité m'envahit. Je lui ai demandé comment s'était passée sa journée à l'école et elle m'a raconté tout ce qu'elle avait appris, avec qui elle avait déjeuné et à quels jeux elle avait joué pendant la récréation. Après avoir mangé une bouchée des mangues que je lui ai coupées, elle lève ses grands yeux bruns et s'exclame : « Maman, ces mangues sont vraiment mûres. Elles sont délicieuses, merci ». En souriant, j'ai répondu : « Elles sont le symbole de l'amour que je te porte ».



L'Ouvreur de portes



SCHOOL: Resurrection
TEACHER: Mary-Beth Smith
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Aaron Stemmler
UNIT: Waterloo
UNIT PRESIDENT: Patrick Etmanski

SECONDARY - GRADES 11-12 / POEM
by **Amelia Ell**

Est-ce égoïste d'aspirer à mener une vie ordinaire ?
Ou de se dire qu'on voit notre rêve, clair et bon,
son cours qui ne prend qu'une moitié de notre esprit
et le reste n'appartient à personne ?
Pour qui est-ce qu'on a donné notre vie jusqu'ici
et pour qui était-elle consacré s'il n'a plus le besoin ?
Quand suffit-il de regarder le chemin brun et chéri,
un éclat dans sa simplicité pavée en couronne,
et se dire après tout, On a réussi ?

Est-ce trop tôt pour se regarder en bas ?
On voit nos orteils,
inutilisés depuis si longtemps
que nos chaussures stagnées
s'enfoncent dans la terre résistante
alors on sourit aux fleurs qui poussent pour les cacher.

Est-ce paresseux de déceler les étoiles filantes et les observer
d'un champ envahi par les herbes d'admiration ?
Ou est-ce qu'il faut tout tailler
pour voir nos propres empreintes faites sans dévotion ?
Si on s'arrête, on va geler
et puis ceux qui nous voient en pierre
n'aperçoivent que leur propre reflet illuminé
à moins qu'ils ne regardent derrière
après s'être envolé.



Est-ce égoïste d'aspirer à mener une vie ordinaire ?
Lorsque vous pensez au panneau routier de votre vie,
qu'est-ce que vous voyez là, stationnaire ?
Dit-il l'argent, le prestige, le crédit ?
Quand avez-vous compris que vous avez abouti à tout
pas l'argent, le prestige, ni la célébrité
mais l'élève qui découvre sa propre signification de la route
et le suit donc au fond de l'allée.
On regarde leur crépitement s'éloigne vers les rayons
afin qu'un jour, il regarde en arrière
et ne dit à personne :
Je suis extraordinaire.



Un monologue prononcé par Constance Bonacieux des Trois Mousquetaires par Alexandre Dumas



SCHOOL: Resurrection
TEACHER: Mary-Beth Smith
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Aaron Stemmler
UNIT: Waterloo
UNIT PRESIDENT: Patrick Etmanski

SECONDARY - GRADES 11-12 / PLAY
by **Kalena Scheifele**

Oh mon Dieu. Ce n'est pas possible. Non... Je...
Je suis morte, non, non, d'Artagnan va m'aider ! Le vin était empoisonné ! C'est la même mort que mon frère, François ! Il a été empoisonné par notre père, qui n'était pas un bon père. Mais notre mère était parfaite. Elle nous aimait. Mais elle est morte aussi. Qui suis-je si ma famille n'est plus ici ? Si ma famille n'est plus vivante ? Je suis Constance Bonacieux, mais les Bonacieux sont morts. Alors ce n'est pas si mal si je meurs. Je verrais ma famille. Mais je suis trop jeune ! Je dois avoir ma propre famille. Des enfants. Une fille qui s'appelle Marie, comme ma mère. Si j'étais vieille, cette situation ne serait pas horrible, parce que j'aurais une mort héroïque. Mais j'ai seulement environ vingt ans. Ce n'est pas une mort honorable, c'est triste ! Et d'Artagnan, mon cher, cher d'Artagnan. Je sais que tu n'es pas parfait, mais tu es parfait pour moi. Et maintenant, je t'abandonne. Mais s'il vous plaît, combattez pour moi. Laissez ma mort être une source d'inspiration, pas de colère. Le vin, la raison de ma mort, devient meilleur avec l'âge, mais je suppose que ce n'est pas de même pour moi. Je suis juste humaine. Et toi... Toi qui m'as tué, tu es incroyable. C'est très intelligent, d'avoir caché le poison dans ta bague. J'admire ça. Je pense que je suis folle, à parler comme si tu n'étais pas un personnage horrible. Ah, mais c'est probablement juste un symptôme du poison. Ou de la mort. Ou peut-être les deux. En tout cas, je pense que je vais mourir bientôt. Eh, bien. Je l'accepte. Je peux me sentir glisser.
Maman !
François !
Ah, la vie n'est pas mal, mais ce... C'est incroyable ! Au revoir, d'Artagnan, et les mousquetaires. Au revoir à la reine, et le roi, et cette femme qui m'a tué.
Au revoir, et merci, à tout le monde.



La rafle des années 60 et l'assimilation des peuples indigènes au Canada



SCHOOL: St. Peter, Peterborough
TEACHER: Caroline Céré
SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVE: Dyanne McDonald
UNIT: Peterborough, Victoria, Northumberland and Clarington
UNIT PRESIDENT: Bart Scollard

SECONDARY - GRADES 11-12 / NONFICTION
by **Georgia Claydon**

Le Canada a une histoire sinistre, durant laquelle les peuples indigènes ont été persécutés afin de les assimiler en éradiquant leur culture native. Le pape Francis a récemment présenté les excuses de l'église catholique en disant : « Je me suis excusé, j'ai demandé pardon pour cette activité, qui était un génocide. J'ai condamné le fait d'enlever des enfants et d'essayer de changer leur culture, leur esprit, leurs traditions, une race, une culture entière » (Pullella). Grâce aux efforts pour la réconciliation et réparations avec les peuples indigènes, presque tout le monde au Canada sait ce qui s'est passé dans les écoles résidentielles. Mais il existait un autre système en place pour essayer d'assimiler la culture des enfants autochtones : la rafle des années soixante. En 1951, un changement à la Loi sur les Indiens a donné aux systèmes provinciaux de Protection des Enfants le droit de prendre contrôle de la santé et des soins des enfants indigènes. Mais à cause des décennies d'oppression systémique au Canada, beaucoup de communautés autochtones étaient endémiques avec « la pauvreté... un taux de mortalité élevé et... des sérieux obstacles socio-économiques » (Niigaanwewidam and Dainard). Les bureaux gouvernementaux utilisaient ces raisons pour enlever les enfants indigènes de leurs familles, leurs cultures et histoires pour les envoyer vivre dans des familles blanches quelque part au Canada, ou même dans d'autres pays. Pendant 30 années, cette assimilation des enfants continuait, et il est estimé qu'au moins 20 000 étaient enlevés de leurs maisons (Niigaanwewidam and Dainard). La rafle des années soixante a laissé la culture des premières nations au Canada à risque d'être assimilé à cause des restrictions sur leur culture, les déplacements dans d'autres pays, et l'abus.

À travers la colonisation, les peuples indigènes ont été forcés d'avoir un territoire et des carrières pires que les gens blancs s'ils voulaient rester sur les réserves et près de leur culture. Ces règlements ont été créés par le gouvernement et ils étaient un exemple de l'oppression systémique. Le système a forcé les individus des Premières Nations à changer et s'adapter aux nouvelles restrictions de leur culture pour les générations futures. Cela est démontré à travers la rafle des années 60 parce que les enfants étaient pris trop jeunes pour se souvenir des croyances traditionnelles. Le processus de séparer les enfants de leurs familles a fait vivre aux enfants l'expérience d'avoir « des années de perte linguistique, spirituelle et juridique » (Hubbard). La distance entre la culture indigène et les enfants qui ont été pris était souvent trop grande pour que les individus la redécouvrent une fois adultes.



Ce processus d'assimilation a créé des sentiments négatifs aux individus qui étaient enlevés de leurs familles et, en même temps, a encore réduit les connaissances culturelles.

Les enfants qui ont été pris dans la rafle des années 60 ont été endoctriné au système et la culture eurocentrique. À cause de cela, leurs vies et traditions étaient très différentes des autres individus indigènes qui sont restés avec leurs parents et pratiquaient leurs cultures et leurs croyances. La rafle des années 60 a aussi impacté les enfants en provoquant des sentiments de honte, de solitude, et la confusion à propos de leur vraie identité. Ces enfants ont été pris de leurs familles et ont grandi éloignés de leurs cultures, mais ils ont aussi été déshumanisés par les organisations qui les ont pris.

Partout dans le monde, historiquement, les individus ont été déshumanisés et la même chose s'est passée au Canada dans les années soixante pour les enfants indigènes du Canada. Plusieurs des enfants pris étaient sujet d'annonces dans les journaux pour être adoptés par des familles blanches. Une de ces victimes de la rafle des années 60, Tauni Sheldon, a découvert qu'elle était dans une de ces annonces, et elle a dit que l'article était comme si on vendait une automobile (Watts). Cela démontre comment les organisations de protection d'enfance n'ont pas protégé les enfants qu'ils ont pris. Cet article déshumanisant expose la vérité cachée derrière des décisions que le gouvernement a prises envers les enfants indigènes, et comment c'était, en vérité, un acte d'assimilation. Dans l'histoire de l'assimilation des peuples indigènes au Canada, la déshumanisation et la séparation physique de leur culture sont tous les deux des exemples de l'assimilation.

Physiquement, le déplacement des enfants indigènes était difficile parce que, la plupart du temps, les enfants ont été pris sur de très longues distances, d'où leurs familles et réserve indigène étaient. Pour ces enfants, ils étaient véritablement coincés avec leur famille adoptive, parce qu'ils ne pouvaient pas s'échapper et retourner avec leurs parents. Une de ces enfants qui a été déplacée au Canada, Colleen Cardinal, est née à la Saddle Creek Cree Nation, près d'Edmonton et a été adoptée par une famille abusive à Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario (Rosano). Elle a échappé à sa famille adoptive, car elle était avec ses sœurs. Si elle était seule, elle n'aurait probablement pas eu l'opportunité de s'échapper de cette situation abusive. Ceci est la vérité pour tant d'enfants déplacés lors de la rafle des années 60. La séparation des enfants de leurs familles est un acte d'assimilation des peuples indigènes parce que la distance entre les enfants et leurs parents était si grande que les enfants ne pouvaient pas chercher l'aide des personnes qui les aimaient. Quand les enfants ne peuvent pas être avec ceux qui les aiment et prennent soin d'eux, c'est une tragédie et un cauchemar pour les enfants. Ceci est ce que les enfants indigènes ont subi pendant les années 60.

Les enfants indigènes n'étaient pas seulement envoyés dans différentes parties du Canada. Un grand nombre d'enfants indigènes étaient forcés de quitter le pays, pour vivre dans d'autres pays ou continents que leurs parents. Plus souvent qu'on ne le pense, les enfants du Canada étaient adoptés aux États-Unis ou, parfois, sur différents continents. D'autres pays où les enfants des Premières Nations ont été envoyés sont l'Allemagne, l'Inde et même la Nouvelle-Zélande (Hanson). Pour les individus qui ont été déplacés dans la province ou quelque part d'autre au Canada, découvrir leur identité culturelle et leur famille pouvait être difficile, mais pour les enfants qui devaient quitter le pays qu'ils



connaissaient c'était presque impossible. En outre, les enfants qui ont été élevés dans d'autres pays ont probablement adopté les croyances de leur nouveau pays, et il y a une chance qu'ils ne sachent pas ou qu'ils n'étudient pas leurs origines culturelles indigènes. Le déplacement des enfants indigènes était une tactique d'assimilation parce que ça sert à réduire le nombre des peuples indigènes dans le pays. Les organisations de protection d'enfance ont déplacé ces enfants pour être le problème d'un autre pays.

Finalement, la preuve la plus puissante que la rafle des années 60 était un génocide et une assimilation des peuples indigènes est que les enfants indigènes ont été abusés physiquement et mentalement. L'abus physique était quelque chose que les jeunes filles et les jeunes garçons ont vécu quand ils ont été placés dans des familles d'accueil. Une survivante a écrit son histoire, et elle dit que « mon frère et moi avons été emmenés dans le sous-sol de la maison et violés l'un devant l'autre par les fils [biologiques de la famille d'accueil] tous les jours, ou chaque fois qu'ils en avaient l'occasion » (Strong). À cause de l'abus qu'elle subissait de ses frères adoptés, la survivante, Strong a commencé à mutiler ses jambes. L'abus physique et sexuel que les enfants ont vécu a créé d'autres risques de santé physique parce qu'il n'y avait pas d'aide. Ceci explique pourquoi la rafle des années 60 a participé à l'assimilation des jeunes indigènes. À cause de la séparation de leurs familles, les enfants n'ont pas eu le support et soin de leurs parents et ils ont vécu des abus horribles dont les enfants ne savaient pas comment survivre. Ce type d'abus n'était pas rare dans les foyers d'accueil, et la fréquence de l'abus à un âge tellement jeune a non seulement créé des problèmes de santé physique, mais a aussi créé tant des problèmes de santé mentale chez les enfants de la rafle des années 60.

Les problèmes de santé mentale sont encore quelque chose qui impacte les enfants au 21ème siècle, mais c'était spécifiquement un problème pour les enfants qui ont été pris dans la rafle des années 60. Parce que ces enfants ont subi de nombreuses expériences traumatisantes, beaucoup des enfants qui ont été enlevés ont eu des problèmes de santé mentale.

Peut-être à cause des expériences ou pour soulager des sentiments négatifs, certains se sont tournés vers les drogues. Pour les enfants qui ont vécu l'abus verbal, physique ou sexuel, ces événements ont créé des sentiments négatifs à propos de leur place dans le monde et dans leurs familles adoptives et pour arrêter ses pensées, les drogues et autres substances ont aidé. Plusieurs des enfants indigènes ont trouvé la tension d'être séparé de leurs familles trop difficile et ils ont dû « s'engager dans des comportements destructifs et nuisibles à eux-mêmes, leur famille adoptive et leur environnement... pour plusieurs adoptés les tensions ont conduit à l'incarcération [et] l'abus des substances » (Sinclair 73). La rafle des années 60 a causé beaucoup d'impacts profonds sur les groupes indigènes, mais une des plus grandes était l'épidémie d'abus des substances qui est devenue un grand problème avec les jeunes indigènes. C'était une forme d'assimilation que le gouvernement n'a pas faite directement. Les adolescents, qui ont été mis soit dans les pensionnats soit dans les foyers d'accueil, ont survécu à des expériences terribles à un jeune âge, et puis ils se sont tournés vers des drogues dangereuses au risque de se tuer. Cette forme d'assimilation était une forme d'autodestruction que les jeunes des Premières Nations ont utilisée pour échapper à leur situation terrible. Pour cette raison



importante, l'épidémie des drogues parmi les peuples indigènes est un grand outil dans l'assimilation et le génocide des peuples indigènes.

Au Canada lors du 20^{ème} siècle, les peuples indigènes ont été persécutés de plusieurs façons. Les plus tristement célèbres sont les pensionnats, mais le génocide des peuples indigènes inclut aussi la rafle des années 60. Les enfants qui ont été arrachés de leurs territoires, cultures et familles ont dû survivre dans un monde où ils avaient peu d'aide parce que le gouvernement canadien voulait les contrôler et cesser la prévalence de la culture indigène. Ils l'ont fait en premier en séparant les enfants de leurs cultures et en les enlevant de leurs maisons et de leurs familles. En faisant cela, les enfants ont manqué des années d'éducation et d'expériences à propos de leurs cultures et ont créé une déconnexion entre la nouvelle génération des enfants et leurs héritages et cultures. Deuxièmement, le déplacement des enfants partout au Canada et dans d'autres pays s'est ajouté à l'assimilation parce que les enfants qui savaient qu'ils étaient adoptés ne pouvaient pas s'échapper pour vivre avec leurs familles. Et les enfants qui ne savaient pas qu'ils venaient du Canada ou avaient d'autres parents ne savaient pas de tout à propos de leur vraie héritage et culture. Finalement, les différents types d'abus auxquels les enfants ont été exposés quand ils étaient jeunes ont négativement impacté la santé mentale des adolescents indigènes.

L'abus a forcé les adolescents à utiliser les drogues et à faire de l'automutilation et ceci était une forme d'auto-assimilation, déclenchée par le gouvernement et la rafle des années 60. En résumé, les enfants sont le futur de n'importe quelle race ou culture, alors c'est très important de les protéger et donner aux enfants la possibilité de parvenir au succès dans la vie. Les organisations de protection d'enfance des rafles des années 60 ont fait l'opposé de ce que la société doit faire pour les enfants et c'est pourquoi la population des jeunes indigènes était très proche d'être assimilée totalement.

Œuvres citées

Baswan, Meera, and Sena Yenilmez. "The Sixties Scoop - The Indigenous Foundation."

The Indigenous Foundation, 13 May 2022,

<https://www.theindigenousfoundation.org/articles/the-sixties-scoop> (accessed 5 June 2023)

Hansen, Erin. "The Sixties Scoop & Aboriginal child welfare." Indigenous Foundations,

https://indigenousfoundations.arts.ubc.ca/sixties_scoop (accessed 5 June 2023)

Hubbard, Tasha. "Qu'est-ce que la rafle des années 60 ?" Etablissement.Org, 17 December 2021,

<https://etablissement.org/ontario/immigration-et-citoyennete/citoyennete/premieres-nations-inuits-et-metis/qu-est-ce-que-la-rafle-des-annees-60> (accessed 5 June 2023)



"Loi sur les Indiens (résumé en langage simple)." The Canadian Encyclopedia,
<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/fr/article/loi-sur-les-indiens-resume-en-termes-simples>
(accessed 5 June 2023)

Pullella, Philip. "Pope says genocide took place at Church schools in Canada for indigenous children."
Reuters, 30 July 2022,
<https://www.reuters.com/world/pope-says-genocide-took-place-church-schools-canada-indigenous-children-2022-07-30> (accessed 5 June 2023)

Rosano, Michela. "Interview: Mapping the displacement of 60s Scoop adoptees." Canadian Geographic,
29 November 2017,
<https://canadiangeographic.ca/articles/interview-mapping-the-displacement-of-60s-scoop-adoptees>
(accessed 7 June 2023)

Sinclair, Raven. "Identity lost and found: Lessons from the sixties scoop."
First Peoples Child & Family Review, vol. 3, no. 1, 2007, p. 73. Google Scholar,
<https://www.erudit.org/en/journals/fpcfr/1900-v1-n1-fpcfr05299/1069527ar/abstract>

"The Sixties Scoop: A Loss of Culture and Identity - Emily Hanson." Edusites!,
<https://edusites.uregina.ca/emilyhanson/the-sixties-scoop-a-loss-of-culture-and-identity>
(accessed 5 June 2023)

Strong, Lisa. "Sold as salvation, Sixties Scoop placed children in abusive system."
CBC, 1 October 2016,
<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/sixties-scoop-commentary-1.3786757>
(accessed 7 June 2023)

Watts, Rachel. "Sixties Scoop survivor reconnects with birth mom and identity after decades of separation." CBC, 6 January 2023,
<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/sixties-scoop-survivor-reconnects-with-birth-mom-discovers-her-culture-decades-after-separation-1.6672484> (accessed 5 June 2023)

a

m

b

h

l

c

d

f

e

C

G

H

A

K

F

D

B

H