

# TANGO

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Journal of creative and critical thought

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# Editorial

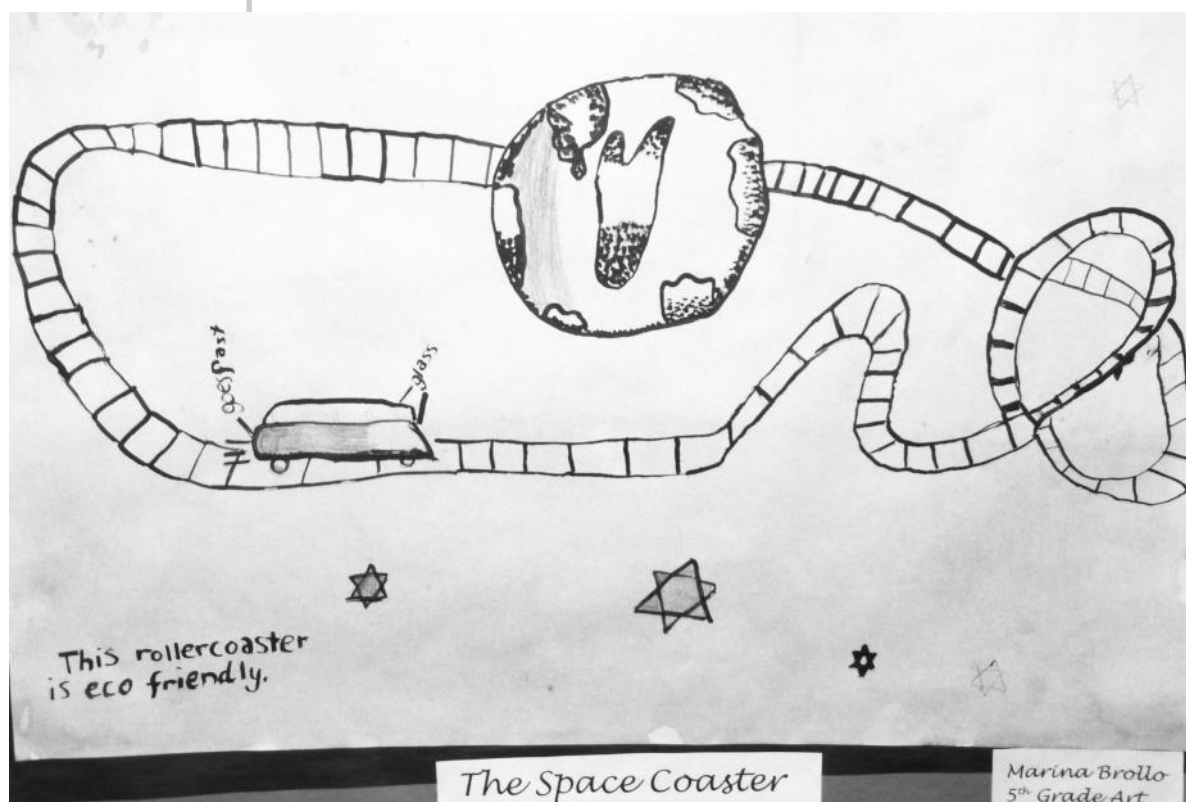
What an eloquent statement of a particular global perspective! The drawing below is from Grade 5 student, Marina Brollo.

Of course, Marina's work is a bit of fun. Based on Leonardo da Vinci's illustrations and inventions, students were encouraged to let imaginations run wild. The underlying intention was to explore 'where we are in space and time'. But it can be seen as a visual metaphor; the kind that political cartoonists make all the time.

We are on the roller coaster, trusting that things aren't as precarious as they seem. We talk about the planet. We see it from all sides, but, in the end, we are only observers. Detached. It is dizzying. Ups and downs. Going round in circles. But it is just a ride — an entertainment. It is good to know, as we are told by Marina, that the rollercoaster is eco-friendly!

It seems to me that the school mission statement is asking students to get off the roller coaster. Get involved. Once that happens, things can change.

Nowhere is that better seen than in the work of Grade 7 students. They are financing individuals in other countries through a program known as *Kiva*. It is micro financing. Students don't need to have a lot of money to get involved. But a small amount can make a dramatic difference to the real lives of people



in other countries. You can read about their involvement in this edition.

The editorial group of *Tango* will also be taking up the Kiva project. Money raised from the first edition will be used. We will report on the progress of the funding by *Tango* and the Class of 2015 in future editions.

Kiva is one way. Other writing encourages us to explore what is around us and to be aware of cultural differences. Arie Moriguchi looks at a Japanese institution, *Rakugo* or 'sit down comedy'. She explores it through the eyes of a westerner, but with a clear intention to get to the heart of it. It was impressive that she did the leg work and got out and interviewed a performer rather than simply read about it.

Our mission states that we educate our students to become:  
"Informed, Caring, Creative Individuals Contributing to a Global  
Community"

Razan Rosli looks at the plight of the Penan tribe in Malaysia. It is a story that is repeated throughout the world as local and global directions clash. Ultimately it is a question of priorities and values in a world economy. Kenny Fujita backs Razan's poems with a brief summary of pro and cons of the kind of globalization that has led to the Penan's traditional ways being threatened.

Another aim of *Tango*, this time, has been to involve younger students. You'll see artwork from students as young as Grade 2. The cover design is from a Grade 4 student, Mia Lewis. There is also more writing from the middle years. We had an informal policy of not highlighting the age of contributors. The thinking is that if it is good work, it is irrelevant how old the contributor is. That is true to a certain degree, but there is something to be said for appreciating such good work from such young people.

It is pleasing to see names of writers reappearing and we appreciate reports from groups such as the Science Club. Regular contributors are the life blood of any magazine. Finally, I hope you enjoy the fresh perspectives of our fiction writers. Kho Roberts, Sofina Bassett and Shuzo Tani write about very different things, but what they have in common is an unexpected way of seeing and describing.

They also have the ability to put themselves into the shoes of others. And that, getting back to the mission statement, is what it is all about!

Paul Sommer

Editor

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# News: KIVA

## Grade 7



### About KIVA by Lara Taniguchi

On a trip to East Africa in 2004, Matt Flannery [pictured above] and Jessica Jackley saw many people in poverty and realized the true power of micro-financing. They recognized that \$100 could support small businesses which in turn would help a family. Matt Flannery filmed interviews with small business entrepreneurs, while Jessica Jackley conducted impact evaluations. In the end, they discovered three major concepts. They found that we are more connected than we realize, the poor are entrepreneurial, and stories connect people in powerful ways. They came back to the United States with a question hovering in their minds, "How can we lend to a rural African entrepreneur?" Then, in October 2005, Kiva, the first peer-to-peer micro-lending website, was announced to the world.

### Micro-financing by Arthur Bolognesi

Kiva is based in San Francisco. How do they know when someone in another country wants to start a new business? How do you know if the person you're lending the money to can be trusted? Kiva has some field partners in those countries, and they are trusted, so when you lend your money it passes through a local micro-financing institution and then it goes to the person you choose to lend the money to. You have a 97.87% chance that you will get your money back.

### O/S Involvement by Masaki Kondo

Though Kiva, lenders like us, the class of 2015, lend money to the entrepreneurs in poverty. Kiva uses field partners all around the world to distribute micro-loans. Unlike the normal loan companies, Kiva does not take any interest. The money that we are lending the entrepreneurs is mostly from profits from a cookie store in Grade 5 and the student festival in Grade 6. Our former art teacher, Ms. Shiffman, used her credit card to pay Kiva to give a loan to the entrepreneurs half way around the world.

### Meet the people we are

#### supporting by Jamie Bassett

We are lending money to four people. Bahodur lives in Tajikistan with his wife and three children. We lent him \$75 to start a food market. He has a big family so it must be hard, without much money, to afford clothes, blankets, and food. We lent Sandra, from Nicaragua, \$125 to start a DVD shop. She's 42 years old and is a single mother to six children. We lent Chim, from Cambodia, \$325 to begin farming. She is 43 years old and earns \$5 a day, while her husband earns \$7 a day. They have five children. Tit Meas, from Cambodia, is 38 years old. While his wife looks after their five children, he works as a mason. He is hoping to buy a \$1000 motorbike to ride to work every day since taxis are expensive.



We tend to sponsor people who are trying to start efficient businesses, such as selling medicine. We also look at how much progress they have made so far, and their family sizes. Another important thing was how much people earn. Most families earn from \$10 to \$15 a day.

## How it fits into our studies

by Eugenie Shin

Wonder why we're involved? This project is part of our IB MYP Community and Service, which is one of the Areas of Learning. Community and Service is about helping out in your community, and having the responsibility to contribute to your world. That is why we are helping the less fortunate by loaning small amounts of money. Also, our school motto is for students to be "Informed, Caring, and Creative individuals contributing to the world."

IB states a similar opinion about students. By doing Kiva we are being caring, and definitely contributing to the world. This money that we will keep loaning to different entrepreneurs until we are seniors will go to our senior trip on Service. Loaning money to entrepreneurs is a useful way of storing our money until our trip. Although some students may not be here for the trip, it is still an educational and meaningful thing to loan on Kiva.

More information at: [www.kiv.org](http://www.kiv.org)



**The editorial staff of *Tango* will join the Kiva project with funds from the sale of the first *Tango*.**

**We will keep readers updated on progress.**



**Kiva headquarters photo by Harry Kikstra**



# Rakugo

## Sit-down comedy

**Rakugo is one of the most traditional entertainments in Japanese society.**

Dating back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the word “Rakugo” in its simplest form means “story telling.” Similar to the *Western* “stand-up” comedian, the story teller, or *hanashika*, performs a humorous solo act that may last for hours. The set consists of a pillow-seat for the hanashika to kneel on and a simple backdrop.



Because the hanashika regularly sits throughout the whole performance, Rakugo is recognized by Westerners as a “sit-down” comedy. The stories are traditional and prescribed, leaving little space for the hanashika to improvise during an act. Years of apprenticeship are endured to develop the skill of quickly switching from one character to another because most of the script is made up of dialogue, rather than narration. The speaker is also limited in space and movement, making expression a difficult task for the hanashika. All these aspects of the Rakugo performance reflect a simplicity and intricacy which embody Japanese culture.

Because of the similarities between Rakugo and Japanese society, the comedy involved would be difficult to understand without an understanding of Japanese culture. Specific traditions and rituals that hanashika tend to follow before, during, and after their performance make direct links to a type of etiquette that is unique to Japanese people. Furthermore, the techniques which hanashika use to show their versatility draw on the concepts of *Honne* and *Tatemae* – a Japanese social ideology which has greatly helped to stabilize debates and casual communication. The use of impressions in the set, as well as in the hanashika’s physical movement, suggests a type of beauty that has been admired by Japanese for centuries. We can even see parallels drawn between the role of Rakugo props and symbolism in Japanese kanji.

My research involved exploring these similarities through reading about the fundamentals of Rakugo, attending live performances, and experiencing Japanese society for six years. I was further able to interview a young hanashika who provided insight from the perspective of the performer.

**Honne** and **Tatemae** are key concepts that govern Japanese manners. They are behind the way Japanese people tend to avoid debate to reach a quicker and more peaceful consensus. The two form a balanced concept.

## Sensitivity to the audience

Being constantly aware of the audience is a central factor for both Rakugo and Japanese society. In Rakugo, specific techniques indicate such sensitivity. One aspect of Rakugo which highlights this sensitivity is the structure of the performance. The means by which one prepares for a performance has specific guidelines that a hanashika must follow to make a successful impression on their audience.

Two cultural aspects of Rakugo— *Honne* and *Tatemae*— determine how the hanashika pampers an audience. Japanese citizens are usually just as cautious of their attitude and actions when interacting with other people. Without an understanding of proper etiquette in Japan, foreigners viewing Rakugo may find the level of sensitivity overwhelming or disregard its significance as entertainment completely.

## The Rakugo structure

The structure of a Rakugo performance is a means by which the hanashika can provide the best service for an audience. It is composed of three sections, the *makura* (pillow), the *bondai* (main) and the final *ochi* (punch line)

*Makura* (まくら.) When watching my first Rakugo performance at a school festival, I was surprised and somewhat confused to discover that the hanashika began his performance by speaking in a casual tone, referring to his life and experiences as a young performer. As a foreigner, new to Rakugo, it seemed even more peculiar because the audience of the performance consisted of his peers and friends of the student body who were familiar with his past. Later in my research, however, I discovered that the introduction was a fundamental part of Rakugo performances all throughout Japan. The beginning section, titled *makura* (pillow), is in fact what the name itself implies – a means by which the audience can “soften up” to the story-teller. The talk is usually very light-hearted and even at times personal to release any tension between the hanashika and the audience. Similarly, elsewhere in Japanese society, Japanese *shakai-jin* (salary men) are usually known to have friendly gatherings at *izakaya* (Japanese pub) with their co-workers to make important decisions about the company. Like a Rakugo *makura*, the gathering at a pub is a way for workers to feel comfortable before discussing conflicting matters in their business. The need for a comfortable atmosphere is a vital part of communicating in Japanese society and Rakugo. At a second professional Rakugo performance, three performers brought familiarity through the *makura* by citing updates of a local baseball game that was being played at the same time as the performance. Although I was aware of the purpose of this “first act” of the Rakugo drama, as a foreigner I had felt that this *makura* deviated from the main purpose of the show. However, after I learnt about why it has its particular function within the

*Honne* represents one's true inner feeling and is one part of human thought that is hidden from others.

*Tatemae* represents one's outer presentation and is used specifically for the purpose of pleasing the other.

Whenever the question, “How are you?” is asked, the response is always, “I'm fine.” This response is expected regardless of the responder's true feelings or their relationship with the asker. Despite the fact that the person may feel otherwise internally (*honne*), the reply given outwardly (*tatemae*) differs so that the listener will not feel concern for them.



act, I came to appreciate the *makura* as an interesting insight to Japanese culture. Without understanding why the *makura* was included into the Rakugo performance, it could be difficult for foreigners to completely understand its purpose and meaning in the performance.

*Hondai* (ほんだい.) Once the *makura* is completed, the hanashika will deliver the *bondai* (main section). This part of the performance consists of the Rakugo story, the core of entertainment of the show. This section also includes clear instances where the hanashika shows sensitivity to the audience. For example, the main verbal techniques used to tell the story depict Japanese respect for personal distance. The word “distance” implies a physical *and* verbal (when communicating) space. For example, most Japanese people are used to calling others by their last name unless the person prefers otherwise. To call a new acquaintance suddenly by their first name is disrespectful and often times rude. In schools, it is normal for teachers and coaches to call their students by their last name. Despite six years of experience in Japan, I am still having trouble using the last name when meeting new people. This subtle part of Japanese society expresses how people are sensitive not only to physical space, but a communicative distance as well.

In Rakugo, parallels can be drawn between the concept of distance and the style in which the *bondai* is narrated. Because the story is primarily made up of conversation, the hanashika must act out each character that is speaking. The ability to switch from one character to another is the key to determining the skill and flexibility of a hanashika. He or she uses his body positioning, voice, or posture to signify different characters. The most difficult type of transition occurs from character to narration. Most would expect the actor to speak directly to the audience with omniscient narration because the act is done solo. However, the style of Rakugo turns the performance into a primarily third person act. The result of this effect is a subtle distance between the viewer and speaker. Sometimes, when the conversation consists of a lengthy dialogue between two characters, the hanashika can prove his or her skill by using a technique called *denwa-ma* (telephone-pause). Hanshika Kazuaki Takeda describes *denwa-ma* as “nodding to what another person is saying or repeating the important words/phrases of that person as if you’re actually having a conversation with somebody over the phone.” To imply what is being stated in the pause, the hanashika uses facial reactions or hand gestures. For example, in the first Rakugo show I attended, there was a scene in which a man wearing a tiger suit listens to a boy speaking about him [translated]:

Whoa, this boy looks really bad. *pause*

Wait, what is he saying? Huh? *pause*

He says he’s going to throw a stone at me! *pause*

*Denwa-ma* is a unique style of acting that gives the audience a chance to create what might be stated in the pause. It further provides variety to the performance, while continuing to preserve a distance between the hanashika and the viewers. If a Rakugo is acting as a drunken *shakai-jin* (salary man), no offence will be taken to the salary man sitting in the audience because he or she is not being directly

spoken to.

However, Western comedy tends to take the complete opposite approach; much of foreign entertainment springs from directly attacking a stereotype – at times addressing those who are present in the audience or on stage. From this perspective, a foreigner may be able to enjoy the *bondai* of a performance, but not in the same way as a Japanese person. While a foreigner may consider the performance like a theatrical performance that one simply views, a Japanese person may feel very involved with the show. Therefore, a foreigner will not be able to have as much interaction with the performance as a Japanese person unless they understand the distance of communication in Japanese society.

## Rakugo entrance

Similar to a Western stand-up comedian, the hanashika has a series of performances memorized, and decides which story (or anecdote) of the memorized repertoire to present before appearing on stage. However, the hanashika take extra measures in order to select the most entertaining story for their audiences. Some Rakugo houses in Tokyo include a board that describes any unique people in the audience. If there happens to be a foreigner in the audience or a person of exceptional wealth, the hanashika will take note of this and select a piece that will not offend the person. Sometimes, hanashika will change their performance to one that they have not prepared as well for the sake of the audience.

It is customary for hanashika to signify their entrance by bowing to the audience once they reach their post center-stage. They will then place their fan horizontally between themselves and their audience, creating an imaginary line between themselves and the listeners. This movement on stage represents two different examples of Japanese society and respect for their guests or listeners.

First, bowing itself is a customary act that is done regularly to show respect to the one who is receiving the bow. In supermarkets, the cash register workers often bow to those who purchase items; in businesses, bowing is expected from those of lower rank to their employers; in families, bowing is a way to acknowledge the elderly. The general process is so that ‘inferior’ persons give their respect to those ‘superior’ to them. In the same way, hanashika are giving their services to their audience. When asked whether appeasing the audience or expressing individual style was more important, Hanashika Kazuaki Takeda firmly prioritized entertaining the audience. He believes that “between the hanashika and the audience, the audience has a higher stance.” To most foreigners, the act of bowing itself is strange and unfamiliar. Almost all my international peers have commented on this Japanese etiquette. By beginning the performance with a bow, some foreign viewers may label the style of drama as something “Japanese” and unfamiliar to them.

The placement of the fan portrays a different way of respecting the audience. A line created by the fan marks a separation between the speaker and listener to help the audience settle and understand that the hanashika has no intentions to offend. In one of the professional performances I watched, the hanashika purposefully moved the fan from a vertical position to a horizontal position. This

indicated a personal distance and separation similar to how the hanashika speak mainly in third person for a figurative distance. Because of *bonne* and *tatema*, the traditional audience might not be comfortable with free expression, whether verbal or physical. Since a Rakugo story consists of many punch lines that relate to one's *bonne*, it can be slightly intimidating for an audience member. In this way, the hanashika can attack personal issues while still being respectable, through a verbal and visual separation.

## Impressions

The Japanese sense of beauty has developed over centuries into a cultural aspect unique to its country. Traditionally, the Japanese believed that true beauty can only be contained in moments. This mentality comes from a Buddhist influence which Japan has embodied; that humans do not deserve to enjoy pleasures for long periods of time. This ideology, named *ukiyo*, became central to Japanese culture during the Tokugawa Genroku Period. According to Pyle, "One writer in this period defined *ukiyo* as 'living for the moment, gazing at the moon, slow, blossoms, and autumn leaves, enjoying wine, women, and song, and in general, drifting with the current of life.' " For example, the Japanese national tree is commonly known for its delicate cherry blossoms which only bloom for one week. This short-lived season is celebrated as a common outing, called *Hanami*, where people picnic under these trees to appreciate the flowers in full bloom. The same kind of pleasure is reflected in Rakugo through its limited props and bare set. The whole act is made up of impressions, where the hanashika can only use two props and subtle actions to depict the setting of the story.

## Props

The objects which hanashika can handle in their performance consist of two main props: a folded handkerchief and a fan. At the professional performance, a small wooden table was also placed in front of the hanashika, but not specifically used as a prop. The main reason the props are so limited is that the art of Rakugo is based purely on the oral register. One can argue that



another reason for the scarcity of props is to enhance the Japanese love of impressions and context.

A comparison with Japanese written characters, *Kanji*, might be appropriate. Both means of communication have one object or character that symbolizes a variety of meanings depending on how it is presented. For example, the handkerchief in a Rakugo performance can be utilized as a gift box, an important document, or a note pad if the hanashika can effectively portray its purpose. When the hanashika presents a certificate, he will hold out the handkerchief, read its contents, and hand it horizontally to the receiver – exactly how such proceedings are conducted in normal Japanese society. In kanji, a simple character, 木, which means “tree,” can be manipulated to form more complex meanings. The kanji 森, which means “forest,” is a representation of a gathering of trees. The kanji 休, which means “to take a break,” depicts a human (left) resting underneath a tree (right). More advanced interpretations of the same character include 機, 囊, 麻, and 葉. In Rakugo, the hanakshika could change the meaning of his handkerchief from a letter to a pile of money to a cigarette pouch in just one scene. Both systems accept that one form can represent a multitude of meanings.

## *Set*

The staging and set of Rakugo have a simplicity that reflects the Japanese desire for a “moment” or “glance” of beauty. Generally, the Rakugo stage is made up of any monotone backdrop which does not draw attention to itself and a Japanese pillow placed center stage for the hanashika to kneel on. In modern performances, a microphone is placed in front of the hanashika. The stage area is typically small, giving enough space for the speaker to walk comfortably to center stage, and then off stage after the performance.

For the audience, the bare set holds the same purpose as simplistic props. The main entertainment of the performance is to be focused on the content of the story. For the hanashika, however, the setting and blocking on stage is a limitation to the amount of movement they can make during their performance. Usually, the hanashika stays seated for the whole performance. The empty set further enhances this custom by giving the hanashika no definite point to move towards or away from. Similarly, the lighting is designed so that the whole stage is lit equally, without any specific point of reference.

In most forms of acting, this limitation of motion would be difficult to cope with. Western stand-up comedians make use of the space they are given. For example, in one of Ellen DeGeneres’ performances, movement over the whole stage was used to act out a person riding a moving sidewalk. Perhaps the reason the hanashika can perform with so many limitations is because Japanese society has, for centuries, appreciated the beauty that is simple and fleeting.

## Conclusion

Rakugo fits subtly with the unique way of perceiving beauty, called *ukiyo*. Based on the teachings of Buddhism, its original function in society was to help people understand that all humans face trials and disappointment, and that the only way to relieve oneself of the pain is to train oneself to have no desires or wishes. Pyle states, “Originally *ukiyo* was a Buddhist term referring to the sad impermanence of all earthly things.” In this way, to have happiness or an impression of beautiful objects should be considered the most realistic and true beauty. Japanese haiku also depicts this impressionistic type of beauty because the poet must express his full thought in 3 lines of 17 characters. Haiku and Rakugo are closely linked because they are both limited by many restrictions. The beauty of having limitations is so that that every audience member can interpret the context differently in their own minds. For example, the following translated Haiku poem depicts a rainy day:

Afternoon shower...  
Walking and talking  
in the street:  
Umbrella and raincoat!

(Yayu)

Because of the strict regulations to the structure of the poem, the writer can only use short or fragmented sentences to illustrate the feeling of walking in the rain. A hanashika might use fragmented movements and poses in order to act out a similar scene and to show the movement of walking, the hanashika might shift the weight on his/her knees from one to the other to recreate the action.

The Rakugo performance reflects many important and unique parts of Japanese society. Both the comedic show and Japanese culture emphasize the importance of the audience. Specifically, we can examine how the hanashika emphasizes the concepts of *Honne* and *Tatemae* through the theatrical techniques used in the delivery of the performance. The means of entering a Rakugo show, and the placements of props during the performance indicate the precautions Japanese people take to make sure everyone is given a respectable space, or distance both verbally and physically. Rakugo and Japanese society also share similarities in how symbolism is used to express beauty and meaning.

Core to the entertainment of Rakugo is the need for the audience to continuously use their imagination while watching the show. This is mainly due to the fact that the hanashika depends only on a few props and limited pantomime in order to portray the setting of a scene. A comparison of this simplistic style of drama with Japan and its society draws many bold and clear links. Rakugo is not just a product of Japanese culture. It embodies it.

Arie's study of Rakugo was her Extended Essay for the IB Diploma.

It has been slightly edited for publication here.

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The *YouTube* references will be particularly helpful in giving a sense of the performance of Rakugo.

# Fragments

## Fragments ~ In the bedroom

The pitch-blackness covering the whole room  
Only one shaft of light sharply stepping in like a bolt of lightning  
in a darkened sky  
A piercing sound of squeaking from the bed as I roll over  
The quilt and the blanket rustling together as I kick them.

A warm gentle breeze stroking my cheek and hair as it swishes in  
through the half-opened window  
A full moon, looking just like the sun, giving a dim but fine light  
A strong scent of bath soap from my half-dried hair  
Absolutely no sound apart from the squeaking bed.

*Chisa Uehara*

## Fragments ~ In the city

Bird chirping, dogs barking at each other  
Ambulance sirens endlessly sounding  
Cars honking, engines roaring  
Wine red, pitch black, cobalt blue, milky-white, shining-silver  
Trains go clickety-clack

People doing stretches  
A dirty lake  
The faint smell of nature.

*Arisa Usui*



Drawing by  
*Jung Hwa  
Shim*  
(Grade 2)



by *Chisa Uehara, Arisa Usui & Razan Rosli*



Watercolor  
and Ink  
by  
*Megumi  
Matsumoto*

### *A thread and a needle*

A shoe can't manage  
Without its laces.

What's a scissor  
Without a paper?

A ring  
Meaningless  
Without her hand.

Aren't we all a needle and thread  
One living  
With another?

*Razan Rosli*

# Grafting

by Nur Zawanah Zabidi

In this  
June- August  
report:

What is  
grafting ?

Introduction to  
grafting

Experiment  
trials on  
grafting

FunFact!

Further  
references

## What is Grafting ?

According to dictionary.com the term 'grafting' is the action of inserting a scion of a plant into a slit or a groove of another plant.

(*Scion* is another term for *twig*.)

In other words, it is like combining two plants to become one.



## Introduction to Grafting ...

Grafting is used globally in agriculture and horticulture mainly to increase a plant's commercial value and its quality, enabling it to be traded and exported to other countries.

Grafting is also practiced by gardeners for the attraction and uniqueness it brings. However, grafting will not work for all plants. For instance, it is impossible to graft a rose with a lily or an orchid.

Grafting will only work with plants that are categorized under the same genus. It can still work even though they are of different species. For example, if you want to graft a *Hibiscus*, you can graft a Swamp Rosemallow (*Hibiscus grandiflorus*) with a Cotton Rosemallow (*Hibiscus mutabilis*).

Anyone  
interested in  
joining the  
Science Club  
can contact  
Joon Hyun Paik

Joonhyun92  
@yahoo.com



Swamp Rosemallow (*Hibiscus grandiflorus*)



Cotton Rosemallow (*Hibiscus mutabilis*)

A scion from a Swamp Rosemallow can be inserted into a slit of a Cotton Rosemallow or vice versa. As a result, the plant will show features from both flowers such as having flowers of one species while its other structures are of the other species.



We had our first trial of experiment in grafting plants in June 2009 in the Biology Lab after school. We decided to graft a common flower in Asia, a hibiscus (*Hibiscus syriacus*). We bought three hibiscus flowers which were of different colours: orange, red and yellow.

We tried to graft at least three pairs which consisted of each color with another different color. We used a technique called 'Saddle Graft' to carry out the experiment since it is the easiest technique and most suitable for this type of plant.

What follows is the other materials we used and the procedure we went through to carry out the experiment.

## Materials

1. Three hibiscus flowers (which are already planted into three different flower pots)
2. Knife
3. Grafting Wax / Sealant (or another type of glue specialized for plants)
4. String
5. Scissors

## Procedure

1. Cut a 'V'-shaped slit from a stem of a hibiscus of a different color.
2. Cut an **upside down** 'V'-shaped slit from a twig of another hibiscus of a different color.
3. Slowly insert the twig cut into the stem cut in Procedure Number 1. They should fit into each other. Try to avoid space between the slits.
4. Cut a piece of long string and tie it around the cut. This is to avoid the stem and twig falling apart.
5. Seal the spaces in between the string with grafting wax. Allow the grafting wax to dry.
6. Place the plant somewhere shady and start watering it after a day. Continue watering it and wait for a few months to see the results.



If you have any questions on the experiment we did feel free to ask:

Dr. Nannes,

Nur Zawanah  
Zabidi

Razan Rosli

Joon Hyun Paik

Dong Jun Yoo,

## Final Results

Since we did the experiment near summer vacation, one of us took the plants home to take care of them. However, two of the three pairs of grafts we made died. We concluded that it was either because of lack of water or that the way we cut the plants was not right from the start. Therefore, one of us tried a second trial on it with a slightly different way of grafting.

# Grafting Experiment ~ Trial 2

## Material

1. Three hibiscus flowers (already planted into three different flower pots)
  2. Knife
  3. Thin String
  5. Scissors
  6. Plastic (small in size and transparent)
- (Take note that the grafting wax was **NOT** used for this trial.)

"The best scientist is open to experience and begins with romance — the idea that anything is possible"

RAY BRADBURY, *Los Angeles Times*, Aug. 9, 1976

## Procedure

(We repeated Procedures 1 - 4 from Trial 1)

5. Cover the area grafted with a plastic and tie it. Make sure that when you tie up the plastic, it does not cover the area grafted. (The plastic helps prevent too much water from hitting the grafted area.)
6. Start watering it and place it in a sunny area.
7. After about 2 weeks, you can take the plastic from the plant. Water the plant as usual and see the results a few months later.



## Results

The plant grew well but by the end of August, it seemed like it was about to die. From the way it looked, it seemed that it was attacked by an insect. We tried to use an anti-insect spray on it but it did not work.

## Final conclusion

Comparing Trial 1 and Trial 2, it was more effective using methods from Trial 2 than Trial 1. Other reasons that could have affected the final results were the time we did the grafting. For Trial 1, we grafted the plants after school when it was hot outside. As for Trial 2, we grafted the plants in the early morning so that it was ready for watering before afternoon. It is probably more suitable to do grafting when it is not so hot outside. However, the best choice of time to produce a successful result from grafting is during the winter. This is so that the results may show in spring when the weather is neither hot or cold. Even though we failed to carry out a successful experiment, we definitely gained a lot of experience and knowledge and enjoyed the whole time we worked on it.



# DID YOU KNOW !?!?

*by Nur Zawanah Zabidi*

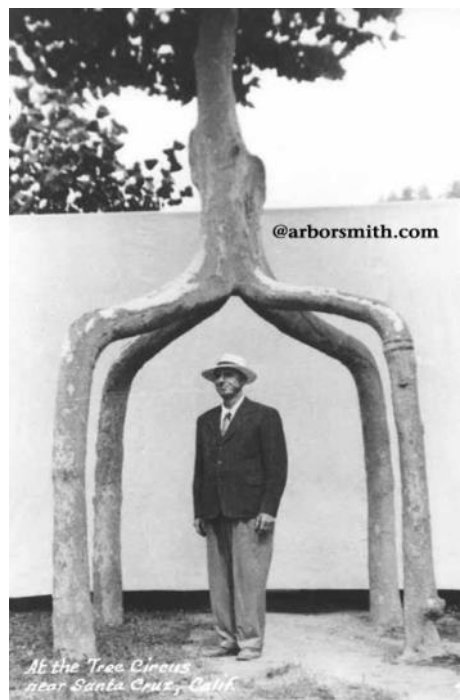
Grafting is also a form of art since it is widely used in Arborsculpture. Arborsculpture is the art and technique of growing and shaping trunks, branches and roots of trees so that they form a unique shape. One of the most famous people who practiced arborsculpture was an American farmer, Axel Erlandson. He opened 'The Tree Circus', a horticultural attraction in 1947. Some of his creations are among the most magnificent trees in the world. One of his most famous is 'The Basket Tree'. [Photo right]



## For further information ...

Do feel free to visit the following websites:

1. Grafting and Budding Nursery Crop Plants :  
<http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/hort/hil/grafting.html>
2. Arborsmith Studios - Axel Erlandson Tree Circus : <http://www.arborsmith.com/treecircus.html>
3. Arborsculpture : <http://www.arborsculpture.blogspot.com/>
4. Ten Most Magnificent Trees in the World :  
<http://www.neatorama.com/2007/03/21/10-most-magnificent-trees-in-the-world/>



# The Penan People

## "MY PEOPLE ARE DYING"

*Ministry says logging is OK but people say they're suffering*



The Penan people are nomads who live in the rainforest of Sarawak, Malaysia. Although many of them have modernized, there are about 300 Penan still living nomadically in the forests. They live in a community but rely on the forest and its natural resources.

Since the 1970s the tribes of Sarawak suffered from land taken away for logging, dam construction and palm oil plantations. The government said that the Penan have no rights to land at all until they "settle down" or start farming.

Their biggest problem is the logging of their forests.

The Malaysian State of Sarawak is undergoing one of the highest rates of logging on earth. It is this destruction that threatens the lives of the Penan and other tribes of Borneo.

A month after a protest against a logging company in 2007, members of the Penan tribe rebuilt their barricade. The Penan had blockaded a road to stop the logging of one of the last areas of virgin rainforest in Sarawak. They told the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (Suhakam) that they would continue to block the road in order to protect ancestral land.

## Penan ~ us and them

Three  
Original poems  
by  
*Razan Rosli*

We don't just live by hunting in the jungle,  
We depend on it,  
A leaf, even the smallest,  
Could save a man dying from a snakebite.

People say we are violent.  
People say we are naive.  
But who are they to decide,  
Who are they to cut down and destroy our home?

We love, just like they do.  
We marry like them.  
We have family, we have traditions,  
We kill, we eat to survive,  
Don't they do that too?

Today one of our men came back with dinner,  
A boar,

Razan and  
Kenny  
[Page 23]  
wrote these  
as part of a year  
level project  
investigating  
aspects of  
globalization.

## by Razan Rosli

Deserved a big festival  
To thank the spirits for being so generous to us,  
Something they could never understand.

As I watch my children play  
I would think who Chikada and Tele would grow up to be one day.  
As a father, and a leader I too  
Want modernization for them  
But we have our traditions  
Ancestors, spirits, something we should never forget.  
I know there will be no more of us  
One day  
So I will choose to be proud of being a Penan  
Now

.....

I guess we are not the only ones who need trees.  
We are not the only ones who need shelter  
But our great forests don't deserve  
To be taken and turned into cheap packages  
And wasted paper.

The future generations,  
Won't they ever realize how much  
A tree is life?  
If a dead tree is important to them  
Can they not even imagine  
How much a live one is for us?  
For us all?

When they come  
Why do they think it so easy  
To cut down the forest  
Flow them down our sacred streams  
And leave to come another day.  
Have they any idea  
They have caused the death of thousands of fish  
And threatened the lives of animals in the forest  
In search of water?

They have ruined the cycle.  
They have made it hard for all of us.  
Can't you see?  
They didn't just cut down our food  
But also our medicines.





People are sick..  
People are dying.  
This is more selfish.  
This has claimed lives.

.....

Let them live.  
Let them continue the traditions.  
Their ways.  
What harm have they done to us?  
Have they taken our homes?  
Have they polluted our environment?

These people,  
They need the forest.  
They depend on it.  
They worship it.  
Shouldn't we support them?  
Why can't we get past thinking of them as poor?  
Have you any idea  
What they have learnt and created  
The secrets of the forest?

Who says they are not civilized?  
Not modernized?  
They have their leaders and their rules.  
They know how to make poison darts  
That could kill a boar or a deer within minutes.

Let them choose their ways.  
Let them stay in the forest  
And continue their rituals and beliefs.

Because just like you and me  
They're a community.  
They deserve the respect for  
Penan human rights and land rights.  
But most of all,  
Just like you and me,  
They deserve to be safe.



Globalization is with us and is mainly, very useful and is a positive action for developed countries that are willing to take in foreign culture as a part of its own culture.

The idea of Globalization was used widely in the 1970s as a movement for taking away the borders of people with different nationalities and filling the gaps between countries around the world. Today, the word Globalization is used also as a term for “Using the highly developed transport and communication technology (compared to the age of the Cold War) in order to allow trade throughout the world (expanding areas that allow free trade).” The sign that globalization is proceeding varies, examples are the increase of trade, cultures of foreign countries adapted in other countries, the use of worldwide standards (eg copyright), the worldwide movement of data through the internet.

## Pros

Globalization is considered a positive idea because:

- \* The division of labor through the countries of the world lowers the cost for production and shortens the time needed for the production.
- \* Choosing and using the materials, people, specialists, etc needed for a specific work is available globally.
- \* The chances of war decrease due to connections between other countries.
- \* The production of brand-name goods in foreign countries lowers the costs for shipping and transportation (such as the Honda, Toyota, Nissan, Matsuda cars created in America while it is a Japanese brand car).
- \* People gain a wider variety of choices such as where to work, where to live, what to buy, where to go on a vacation.
- \* Possibilities of effective plans or ideas being presented in international meetings rise as international cooperation increases.
- \* Faster growth of technology is possible due to countries working together and sharing their specialties.

## Cons

During the 1990s, groups that were against Globalization gathered and started demonstrations in order to stand in opposition to the idea of countries holding unregulated political power due to owning large multi-national corporations, and gaining more power through trade agreements.

Globalization is considered a negative idea because:

- \* There are possibilities of cultures of a country being destroyed or changed by the adaption of foreign culture.
- \* The rapid spreading of viruses and diseases increases due to the availability of worldwide transport.
- \* A weak country's economy is in danger of declining or collapsing when global competition intensifies by the increase of cheap imported goods.
- \* There is a risk of the widespread exploitation of workers and degradation of working conditions.

# World Peace



## Poem

by Soratsu Shimada

Let's be nice to each other.  
Don't try to show off  
And don't think you are the only good ones  
And others are always the bad ones.

Think before you act.  
If you are mean to them  
They will be mean to you.  
The hatred will never disappear

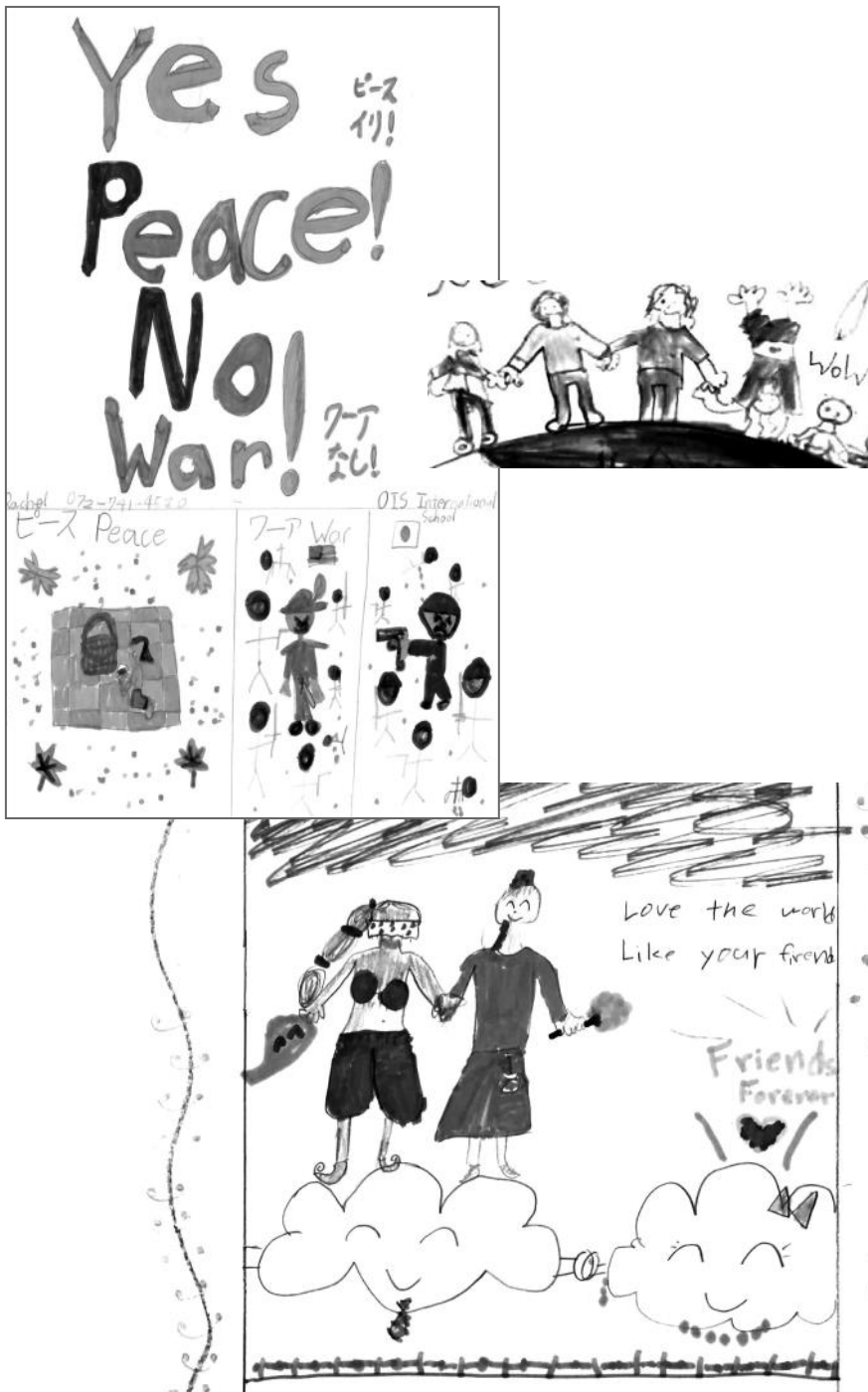
We are all like angels in our hearts.  
We are like one big family  
So we should love each other and live in harmony.  
I'm hoping  
that everyone on earth will be nice and kind.

Last year, Koko Kondo visited Grade 2 OIS students. She came to share her experiences of living through the bombing of Hiroshima. The students made peace posters.

Koko Kondo (born November 20, 1944), birth name Koko Tanimoto, is a prominent Atomic Bomb survivor, and is the daughter of Kiyoshi Tanimoto, a Methodist minister famous for his work for the Hiroshima Maidens. Koko has espoused global peace in such places as Iraq, and speaks frequently at American University in Washington, D.C., her alma mater.

[Wikipedia]

She has visited OIS/SIS on several occasions.



**Featured posters:**  
Ji Soo Kim  
[near left]

Rachel Ninomiya  
[Yes Peace  
No War]

Kentar Honhjo  
[Peace poster  
opposite page]

# Poems

## ... of the fireflies

If I could capture each moment  
Keep it in a glass bottle  
And watch it glow on my bedside table  
Don't give me words  
I'll only waste them away

Do you remember the memories?  
On the whitest beaches under starry nights  
Whispered words that we forget  
Laughter that died away

Each of the memories  
They fly away like fireflies in twilight  
Always out of reach

If I could capture each moment  
Keep it in a glass bottle  
And watch it glow on my bedside table  
Don't give me words  
I'll only waste them away

It was on that summer day  
You left a torn shadow  
Bleeding on my doorsteps  
Don't worry, I'm only lonely

If I could capture each moment  
Keep it in a glass bottle  
And watch it glow on my bedside table  
Don't give me words  
I'll only waste them away

And here I am  
Broken glass at my feet  
Crushing each moment with my fingers  
And watching the fireflies die.

*Sakura Murakami*

## A handful of water

A handful of water, living, moving and breathing  
Right here and now, you can feel its transparent weight.

A handful of water, flashing reflections of the world around  
Right here and now, you can see its silent sparkle.

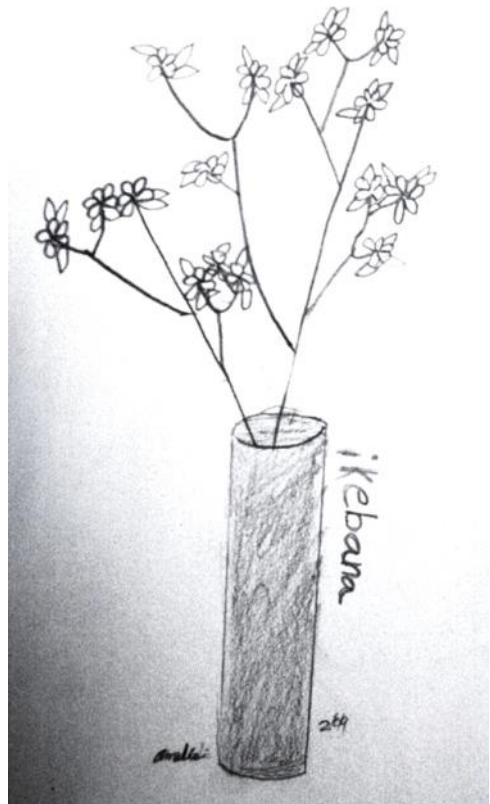
A handful of water, slowly diminishing, drop by drop.  
Right here and now, you can hear its sad sigh.

A handful of water, fading away leaving nothing but memories.  
Right here and now, you can feel its faint flow.

So blue and so important is this handful of water.  
So strange and wonderful is this handful of water.

We should take a look at this handful of water  
Once more,  
This handful of life.

*Shuzo Tani*



Drawing  
by *Amelie Delumeau* Grade 3

# Fish in the Lake

I've been a cab driver for over twenty years and I've seen the changes in New York. Driving a cab was an adventure. Passengers would always have an interesting story to tell. We didn't know each other but they would tell me about their lives. Some amazed me. They made me laugh, sometimes cry. But as the years passed, I no longer encountered those kinds of people.

Young men and women come in drunk. Instead of talking to each other, couples are on top of each other making out. I no longer feel welcome in my own cab. It used to be my favorite place to be. The only reason I drove was to support my family. It is definitely not as exciting as it used to be. Then, what happened last week reminded me why I fell in love with cab driving.

The other day I picked up a young man that looked about seventeen. He needed a ride back home. This kid was asking me about the ducks in Central Park. He started asking me where they go when the lake freezes. I mean who cares where the ducks go! Some loony kid, I tell you. He wouldn't stop. He kept going on about the damn ducks. Is that what young people are interested in nowadays? Or was this kid just retarded? I told him the fish just stay frozen in the lake until it gets warm again. I am pretty sure the fish have a tougher time than the ducks.

Damn fish. They can't go anywhere outside the water, can they? What in the world do them fish do anyway? They swim in the water all their lives, then they die. If they live long enough, we eat them. Stupid fish. I swear, I'd rather have had that loony freeze than the fish.

The park reminded me of him every time I drove past it. I had other things to worry about. But I constantly thought about it. In fact, I have spent a lot of time at that park ever since.

The day after the cab ride, I decided to take a walk through Central Park. It was tremendously cold. I went over to the pond to check on the fish. I took a seat on the bench and took out a sandwich that I had been waiting to eat.

This young lady sat next to me and began speaking. I couldn't tell if she was speaking to me though.

"I didn't mean it. Please don't... just give me one more chance."

*The Catcher in the Rye* will be familiar to many readers. As part of the study of the text, Grade 10 students wrote a story from the point of view of a minor character.

Kho created a charming character study. More than that, he picked up on the influence that Holden was having on characters with whom he came in contact.



Assuming she was talking to me, I told her I couldn't make sense of what she was trying to say. I offered her a cigarette. She accepted it and proceeded to talk. She continued saying how she had troubles and she just had to speak to someone. Her boyfriend had left her. Her friends didn't understand. She couldn't talk to her family and she didn't know where to turn.

I listened, and told her what I thought.

She seemed like she could use a ride so I offered her one. She wanted to go home. The whole way she spoke about her relationship and I listened. She was crying when I met her but she left smiling. I guess it's the little things like these that keep us going, just like the ducks on the pond.

Since then, I start conversations with my customers. Not with, "How was your day?" But with, "Have you seen the ducks at Central Park?"

No matter what obstacles you face, it's important to move forward. Even the frozen fish move on.



Artwork by  
Skye Inada  
Grade 2

# “No Ideas but in Things” – William Carlos Williams

“No ideas but in things” was introduced in William Carlos Williams’ poems about Paterson, his home town. It is a good way to explain and describe Williams’ unique poetic technique and use of language. But the main question to be asked is, what does it mean? Even if one reads “no ideas but in things” over and over it just does not make sense. But read some of his poems and, the concept of “no ideas but in things” starts to take shape.



Even though I had read quite a few of Williams’ poems the words never seemed to make sense, but the image would always build in my mind. The poem could

be deciphered because of the simple words he used to describe something or someone, even though the stanza and word structure would be a mystery. By thinking of the concept of “no ideas but in things” while reading Williams’ poetry it gives us more understanding of how he writes the way he does.

There are no poems of Williams (that I have read at least) that begins with a raw idea fresh from the poet’s mind. His poems are always about things he sees, and then the idea either develops into some other idea produced by the original impression or forms into an extended thought about the object or person involved in the poem.

The poems Williams writes are about things he knows well or things he observes; these are the bases to his poems. For example, his poem entitled, “This is just to say” was about something he did so he knew what happened in that moment and was able to create the picture of himself eating the plums in the icebox. From the image of frozen plums, Williams simply describes the plums themselves as “cold” and “sweet”. But you know he is saying, “...they were *so* sweet, and *so* cold.”

A more specific representation of the motto “no ideas but in things” is from the poem, “The Red Wheelbarrow”. The poem perfectly fits the phrase because so much does *actually* depend upon what we see while we are, for example, taking a stroll in the park or performing simple acts such as opening a door. The red wheelbarrow that is glazed with rain water beside the white chickens is purely a simple example of what Williams’ means by taking in everything we see and making meaning of it. His poetry takes whatever Williams sees at that precise moment in time, and makes more meaning of it than it would

have to other people. If a person should walk past a farm and see a red wheelbarrow glazed with rain water next to white chickens that would be all. That person would only be seeing those objects, and not think anymore of it. The thought would end there for them, but what Williams is trying to show through his poetry is that there is always more depth to the simplest objects and the most common scenes or what seems like the most frivolous action.

so much

depends

upon

a red

wheel

barrow

glazed

with rain

water

beside

the white

chickens

“The Lonely Street” is another good example of the motto, but in this case his thoughts flow in different directions after seeing a scene. This scene is about watching a group of school girls walking down the street. However that is not all; Williams states the situation bluntly in two lines, “School is over. It is too hot to walk at ease.” Williams then explains who is there, without having to present their gender; the word “frocks” automatically points to school girls who are walking. He then falls into this daze where he lets his thoughts wander, but Williams still stays on the subject. A line that seems irrelevant to the scene is added in, “They have grown tall,” then he talks about how, “They hold pink flames in their right hand.” Two unrelated observations are squeezed together, their height, and what they are eating. Later in line seven Williams goes back to describing what the girls are wearing, sort of like a jump from thought to thought, then back to reality. All the time seeing what the girls are actually like, describing them with no flourishes.

William Carlos Williams' poems are all about what he sees and what he perceives by just opening his eyes and taking everything in. He writes strictly and literally about what he sees in the beginning, and then allows himself to wander into his perceptions.

To Williams his perceptions are still on the topic; however to the reader it seems like he is rambling on about something completely irrelevant. But all humans do that. They see something, start to think about it, and then something related to that specific incident reminds us of something else. From there, other thought takes us to yet another. We eventually come back to what we were thinking about in the beginning, and maybe, our train of thought has allowed us to see the original in a new way.

Williams presents his vision, and then builds on it, it seems, just as he thought of it. If his thoughts were rambling then his poem would be rambling. If his thoughts were organized then his poem would be organized.

His poems are about simply (except it is not simple) the act of seeing, and then perceiving *things*.

School is over. It is too hot  
to walk at ease. At ease  
in light frocks they walk the streets  
to while the time away.  
They have grown tall. They hold  
pink flames in their right hands.  
In white from head to foot,  
with sidelong, idle look—  
in yellow, floating stuff,  
black sash and stockings—  
touching their avid mouths  
with pink sugar on a stick—  
like a carnation each holds in her  
hand—  
they mount the lonely street.

Poems are from  
*Selected  
Poems :*  
*William Carlos  
Williams*  
(edited by  
Charles Tomlin-  
son)  
New Directions  
Publishing  
Corporation 1985

# The Most Dangerous Game

As part of her study of the short story, "The Most Dangerous Game" by Richard Connell, Sofina wrote an alternative ending.

Rainsford, the protagonist and expert hunter is shipwrecked on an island where he encounters General Zaroff, a Russian aristocrat and hunting aficionado.

Zaroff offers Rainsford an opportunity to hunt, only this time with a difference: Zaroff will be the hunter and Rainsford the hunted. The ending, as written by Sofina, takes place after Rainsford has evaded capture by Zaroff and makes his way back to Zaroff's chateau.

Then he leaped far out into the sea...

Rainsford came up to the surface, gasping for air. The powerful waves came crashing down onto him, dunking his head back into the water. He swam towards the direction of the chateau, but quickly held his breath and went underwater when he saw General Zaroff above him searching the ocean. He could almost feel the general's black eyes burn into him as he waited for him to leave. When he was positive General Zaroff had left, he began his way along the shore. He took off the khaki hunting shirt and his moccasins. The water roared as it crashed down onto large rocks, reminding him of the piercing sound of the hounds barking. His mouth tasted of the salty seawater and it made him want to gag, but he kept on swimming with all the energy that was left of him.

As he got closer to the chateau, the water became less violent, making it easier to swim. "Once I get to the chateau, what will I do?" Rainsford thought to himself. "Zaroff won't let me win. He will kill me."

He swam to shore and soon he was walking on the sand. His eyes darted from side to side as he made sure General Zaroff and the hounds were nowhere in sight. He opened the spiked iron gate and ran up the stone steps. He stopped at the enormous door. Rainsford realized that Zaroff was just as frightening as the gargoyles. He took a deep breath and tried opening the door.

But it wouldn't open.

He tried again but it still would not open. His heart sank as he slumped down to the ground. He felt his eyes get teary. He looked down at the puddle of seawater he had made. His clothes were wet, his feet were covered in sand, and he felt hopeless. He shook the negative thoughts from his head, stood up and went to the back of the chateau.

Rainsford was in the courtyard where the large hounds had been. He remembered the time when he had looked out the window of his room at night and had seen them staring at him with their green eyes. This memory sent a chill down his spine. He looked around the courtyard and his eyes landed on a door that led into the chateau. He sprinted to it and turned the knob. As the door opened he sighed with relief. He was in a dark hallway lit by several dim lights, and the walls were covered in pictures of General Zaroff with dead animals that he had hunted. After awhile of turning corners and opening doors, he was in the dining room where they had talked about hunting.

He opened a door that led to the kitchen and ripped open the refrigerator door. He grabbed whatever he could and stuffed it in his mouth. His ravenous appetite was soon gone after he had eaten. As he made his way out of the kitchen, he found a bottle of Bourgogne Pinot Noir wine. He took the cork out and began to drink furiously from the bottle. His throat was dry with thirst and he wanted to get rid of the salty taste in his mouth.

Outside was beginning to get dark and Rainsford knew that General Zaroff would be coming back soon. He went up the marble steps and began

looking for the general's bedroom. As he opened doors and made his way around each floor, he imagined his head on the wall next to the other heads of animals. His thoughts were disturbed by a loud sound.

The massive door downstairs had opened and someone had stepped inside. Rainsford froze. He quietly moved towards the stairs, but stopped when he heard someone going up them. With his heart pounding, he softly opened the closest door next to him and stepped inside. He closed the door just in time to see General Zaroff walk by, leaving behind a trail of the perfumed cigarette's aroma. As he went passed the door, Rainsford poked his head out into the hallway and saw General Zaroff unlock a door and go in. "That must be his room," Rainsford thought to himself as he stepped out and crept into a different room that was closer to the general's. He pressed his ear against the door and listened. After a moment of silence he heard Zaroff come out of his room, walk down the hall, and go downstairs. Rainsford opened his door and found that the general had left his door open. He looked back to make sure General Zaroff was gone, went inside the room, and awaited Zaroff's return.

"Rainsford!" screamed the general. "How did you get here?"

"Swam," said Rainsford. "I found it quicker than walking through the jungle."

The general sucked in his breath and smiled. "I congratulate you," he said. "You have won the game."

Rainsford did not smile. "I am still a beast at bay," he said, in a low, hoarse voice. "Get ready, General Zaroff."

The general made one of his deepest bows. "I see," he said. "Splendid! One of us is to furnish a repast for the hounds. The other will sleep in this very excellent bed. On guard, Rainsford..."

Rainsford's hand touched something sharp. He looked down and saw that his finger was cut. He saw the hunting knife attached to his belt. But before he could even look up, the general had charged at him and pushed him into a table. Pain shot through Rainsford's body as he fell to the floor. The general stood hovering over him. Rainsford grabbed Zaroff's leg, causing him to fall onto his back. Rainsford snatched a flower vase off a desk and smashed it against the general's head. His stomach tightened when he saw General Zaroff reach into his pocket and pull out a pistol. Rainsford gripped his hunting knife as the general began to raise his arm to shoot. He dove for Zaroff and stabbed him in the chest. Rainsford, breathing hard, stood up and watched the general lie on the floor with the knife in his chest. As a puddle of blood began to form, General Zaroff smiled. "You," he struggled to say, "have d-done well, R-Rainsford."

His eyes smiled as he took his last breath.

Later that night Rainsford took a long, relaxing bath, and slept in what he thought was the finest bed.

# Poems and images

Image:  
**Saki Fumita**

The center is where we grasp the goal that is most appealing to us. Individual lines represent the different ways to obtain them, which is the circular pattern. As the circular pattern comes to an end, it does not mean the end of the journey of our goal. Rather, it suggests that our process of thinking is never ending.



Cold and calm. Feeling light.  
Light and dark. Clarity. Mystery.  
The Flower River, sky and mountain are one.

*Chika Takei*

Morning and night.  
Vigor and play.  
Impossibly colored mountains.  
I can fly, practice magic, do miracles.  
Fantasy is very fantastic.

*Naoka Mikami*

by *Shino Matsuyama, Kokoro Makiguchi, Naoka Mikami,*  
*Chika Takei*

Rainy day mystery.  
Dark sky.  
Strong cold rain.  
No one knows what could happen.

*Shino Matsuyama*

Pink, blue, and yellow show the gentle feeling of spring.  
Cherry blossom petals falling to the river and land.  
Blossoms telling us summer is soon.

*Kokoro Makiguchi*



Image:  
**Jongsu Che**

Beneath the design is a diamond shaped table. I wanted to show that we sit down together to eat and talk. The curvy lines are like children's dreams. The two small lines are like dreams I seek; while the long curling lines show my worry about making my dreams come true. So I am helped by my family who give some advice at the table.



# Ivan and the Tsar

Ivan is a farmer. Every day, he would plough mother Russia's cold and bleak earth, just as his father, his grandfather and those before him had done so. They had all been farmers and they used to farm wheat. But for nearly ten years, Ivan has been growing potatoes. He could no longer afford to buy the seeds of wheat these days.

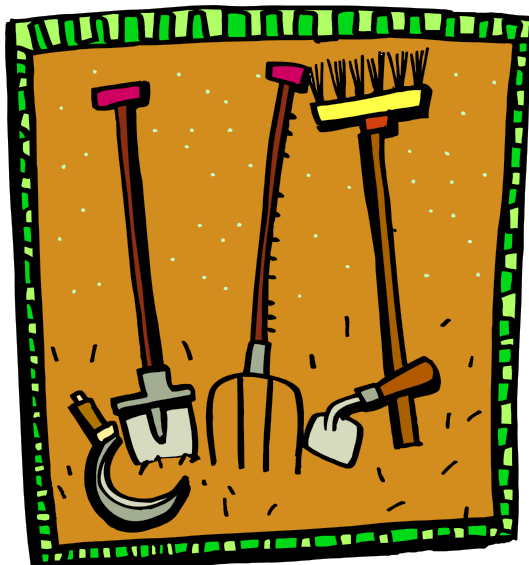
The villages around were poor and the people grumbled that the politics and the Tsar were to blame. But Ivan didn't mind. Politics wasn't his job. The Tsar doesn't plough the field. That was how he thought.

Morning. It was the 21<sup>st</sup> of July, but it meant little to Ivan. He rose from his ancient bed and went to the nearby stream to drink. As he lowered his bucket, the little fish in the stream scattered in all directions but soon resumed their former positions as the splashes calmed. He went back to his hut, took up his spade and went out into the field.

The worn out spade had been in use for as long as he could remember. Its scoop had been shortened by repeated sharpening and blunting. The wooden handle was now the same color as the earth it ploughs. It was impossible to tell what color it originally was. It seemed like it had been like this from the beginning. It mattered little.

Ivan started to plough. He didn't know the proper way to plough. He had watched his father plough and was doing it in the same way. It was an inefficient and tiring way of doing so but he didn't mind. Efficient ways were taught in schools. He had never been a student but he didn't mind. Perhaps there is a better way to plough the fields. There might even be a better tool for ploughing than a spade. He cared not. The spade was the only means for him right now and the only way of using it was how he was using it now.

*Smack smack smack*, the spade slammed into the ground in a rhythmic pace. But another sound was coming. They were the sound of hooves. Ivan looked up, and saw a lone rider



trotting along the lonesome dirt road. The rider was a boy no older than twelve. His clothes were the finest Ivan had ever seen and his mount was nothing like the farm horses that Ivan had known. The rider then came towards Ivan and shouted "Who are you?"

Ivan was bewildered for a moment. Everyone within a mile knew his name and it had been a while since he had last been asked his name.

"I'm Ivan. Who are you?"

"My name is Alexander," the boy said. Up close, the boy's blue eyes were a beautiful contrast to his pale face.

"What are you doing here?" The boy asked. It was as though he was interrogating Ivan.

"Ploughing the field of course."

"What's ploughing?"

Ivan was bewildered yet again. Who was this boy? It was clear that he was the son of some wealthy aristocrat. But why was he here? In the middle of nowhere? Suddenly, Ivan remembered something. The butcher in the town was gossiping about the new dacha for the Tsar that had been recently built. He said

that the Tsar himself was coming to hunt game. The Tsar Nicolai had a son. His name was Alexander.

"The crown prince," Ivan muttered under his breath.

"What's ploughing?" the boy was getting impatient.

Ivan hesitated for a moment and said, "Ploughing is about digging the earth to plant vegetables. After harvesting that, we give them to the Tsar."

"That's a lie. Vegetables are made in the kitchen. They can't be made elsewhere." Ivan couldn't reply to that.

"What are you doing?" Ivan asked in return.

"I don't go out of the palace often so I mostly play by myself. Today, I ran away from the hunt." Ivan tried to picture the prince's daily life. But what did it matter? He changed his mind. He no longer wanted to think of the life of a prince.

The prince seemed interested in ploughing, alighted from his horse and started to question Ivan a lot.

"What's ploughing like? Can I do that too?"

"I do my own work. So you do your own." Ivan's answer was blunt as the spade he used.

"Are you doing this every day?"

"Yah every day."

"Why? Don't you go hunting sometimes?"

"Farming's an everyday thing. That's how it is."

"What do you mean by that?"

As they talked, a carriage and four horsemen approached. Ivan went silent and looked at Alexander. The boy was staring blankly at the carriage. The group stopped in front of Alexander. The door opened and out came an imposing figure.

"Uncle Vladimir!" Alexander shouted

in delight.

Grand Archduke Vladimir gestured but soon stepped back and made a face. Ivan was standing right next to Alexander but the Grand Archduke took no notice. "Don't ever run away like that. We were worried out of our minds."

"I'm sorry."

"I saw you talking with a farmer just now." He was referring to Ivan right next to him but acted as though Ivan wasn't there.

"His name is Ivan."

"His name matters nothing. We are different from them and there is no reason for you to be talking with them, just as we don't talk to cattle and pigs."

"Ivan is ploughing the field. Do cattle and pigs plough?"

"We royals do not plough the fields. Take no notice."

The boy said nothing.

"Let's return to the palace shall we?"

He said as he put his hand on the little boy's shoulders.

"Wait! I have to say good-bye to Ivan."

"There is no need to say good-bye to cattle and pigs."

Then the Grand Archduke gently but firmly pulled Alexander into the carriage. The coachman's whip lashed and the carriage began to move. Alexander poked his head out of the window to say good-bye to Ivan, expecting him to be watching.

However, Ivan had already started ploughing the field with his back to the carriage as if he could no longer see it.

It was exactly the same figure the young prince saw as he first came. As if the boy, the Tsar or everything else except ploughing had never existed.

At last, Alexander fully understood the true meaning of "how things are".

# Those Three Days on the Deserted Island

I sank back into the seat of the bus on my way home and relaxed. I was extremely exhausted and relieved to be back in the real modern world having survived the extraordinary environment that I had just experienced.

Outside of the window, the sun was smiling peacefully, and giving the whole world some warm, fresh beams of light. Shreds of cotton were slowly soaring in the sky on the gentle wind, and the trees and some plants beside the road swayed along with them. I could see some people with their mobile phones in one hand, and a handbag or a briefcase in the other, walking kind of robotically but somewhat lightly by on the pavement. I noticed that all of their faces have something in common. Not that they all physically look the same, but all of their facial expressions naturally insinuate the same kind of feeling inside; an 'unawareness'. Because living in a modern environment full of convenience and protection makes modern people lose their awareness of their lives, whereas in the past, it was impossible to live without being aware of the power of nature.

Watching all those people walking by from the bus, I assumed that they didn't have a clue about the other side of nature, so different to the peaceful climate that they were now enjoying, because of their unawareness caused by modern living.

Before I went to the camp, I would have been in the same situation and mind as them ...being worried or aware of almost nothing, since the modern world was so over-protective and convenient for me. However, I feel so different now, compared to that time. It is like being a butterfly that has just come out of the cocoon, ready for the new world to come. This survival camp I went on was such a precious experience that I will want to cherish what I learnt there forever.

The camp was set on a deserted island named Nonoshima in Tokushima prefecture. The theme of it was "to think again about modern society by living in a place where the modern conveniences do not exist". We were given some vegetables, water, a pan to cook food, and other equipment including a matchbox, a saw, and a knife to survive the camp. Although it seemed very little to survive a whole three days and nights when I was given them, later on I got to know that not much is needed to live through a few days.

Nonoshima was such a beautiful place; there were no marks or signs of habitation, and it was thick with bamboo trees and other kinds of flora. The sea hurled against the rocks continually, and seagulls danced in the sky, singing their songs enthusiastically. From this description it sounds like the survival camp got off to a great start: however, the real situation was a lot harsher.

Until I actually experienced what happened in the end, it was something that I just could not have imagined.

Firstly, the weather was terrible; the howl of the rough wind blew through my whole body, and raindrops hit me as if they held some personal grudge and wanted to attack me. In this weather, cooking and building a tent was not an easy job. Every time I tried to build a fire, the rain would defeat it. I sacrificed all the

A school camp opened Chisa's eyes to things she had simply taken for granted.

It was a survival camp. And Chisa survived!

by Chisa Uehara

power I had to try and start a fire again and again, but the raindrops would extinguish it like they were sneering at my feeble efforts. At first I had some patience and drive, but by the time it was dark I felt like a lost child looking for her mother in the crowd. I had absolutely no idea how to succeed in this. I gave up, defeated, and decided to leave it until the next day. However, without shelter, it would be impossible to survive the night because of the north pole-like weather and climate, which threatened to tear me to pieces.

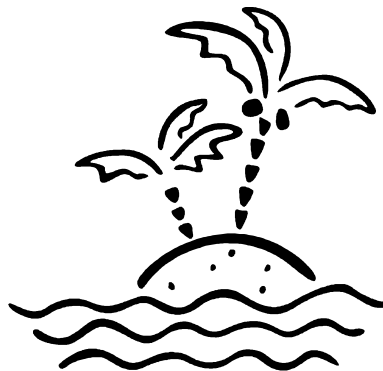
Secondly, no kind of electric facilities were permitted...and this indicated that we would be surviving with no electric lights at night. This was the part I was petrified of the most on this camp. Nights on Nonoshima were endlessly silent and dark. It was like being in outer space, alone. At this point I learnt the real definition of 'being alone'.

In the modern world, it is rare to be alone; you are always looked after by protective forces such as police officers, therefore you are never really lost. Also, you always have someone to be with such as family and friends. On this jungle-like deserted island at night you get nothing but darkness. A pitch-black world surrounded me. Before I came here I couldn't have imagined the fear of being alone like this. In this island world, you have to be aware of everything that is surrounding you, because there is no guarantee that it is completely safe...you are not protected by anyone. You are as protected as a chick in an empty nest, being hunted. Without electricity, modern humans find themselves in a very different, more dangerous place.

Living under these conditions changed my point of view and thoughts towards the way we live in this day and age. I have adopted a new motto, "ordinary life is a miracle"; this is based on all I have experienced on Nonoshima. In the camp, so many things that you could normally do in the modern world are simply not possible. You cannot turn on the gas ring to start a fire. You cannot flick a switch to have some light. You have to do them all by yourself without the help of electricity, and without anyone else to help you. By learning this, I thought that it is necessary to always keep this in mind, so that I will be able to appreciate the environment I find myself in, and to have a more worthy life than the one I had before I went camping.

After sitting on the seat of the bus for another couple of hours, I was back home again...back in the modernized world. Those three days on a deserted island will always be with me though, forever.

**Ordinary  
life  
is a  
Miracle.**



# A taste of fashion



Artwork:  
Erica Otawara

**“We didn’t come to New York to shop for makeup...**

**we came here to solve a case,”**

I said through gritted teeth. Charlie paid me no attention and continued examining the colorful bottles of lip-gloss. Valentine’s Day was in less than two weeks and he had wanted to buy his girlfriend something ever since our plane landed in New York.

I looked outside at the busy traffic. The sidewalks were packed with people rushing home from work, and the sun was gone, making the streets look even colder and more miserable. My watch read 6:15, and I was beginning to get impatient with Charlie. We had to be at the crime scene by 6:40.

Charlie picked up a red lip-gloss with a gold cap and asked, “Do you think ‘Cherry Red’ is too bold for Anna?”

“It’s just lip-gloss. Who cares?” I began tapping my foot.

“It’s not just lip-gloss, it’s *Delicious* by Oscar Benoit lip-gloss,” Charlie countered. “See?” He nodded at the small screen next to the lip-gloss section. An advertisement was playing over and over. It was one of those ads where they show some model (whose face has had plastic surgery several times) saying something in a sultry voice to try to get you to buy whatever the ad is for. But as I watched it play again, I noticed that the model wasn’t so attractive.

Her nose looked fake, her eyes were dull, and she was wearing too much foundation on her skin. I watched as she slowly licked her thin, over-glossed lips and said in her desirable voice, “It even tastes good.” Then the screen read:

*Delicious* by Oscar Benoit: a new line of lip-gloss.

Three teenage girls standing next to me eagerly smothered their lips in the new line of *Delicious* lip-gloss, and licked their lips. "It does taste good," they giggled, as they began tasting the other flavors. I turned to Charlie who was still looking at the bright red gloss.

"We are officially out of here," I said as I grabbed his arm and began pulling him towards the glass doors. He dropped the tube, but he managed to escape from my grip, pick it up, and pay for it at the counter.

I stared out the window at the bare trees and the gray buildings as we sat in the taxi. People held onto their hats as the chilly breeze blew. The city seemed to lack color, I thought, as I looked down at my bright orange trench coat. We passed by an empty park with a frozen pond. It looked so lonely and cold; it was missing the fresh green grass and trees, the innocent children and their pet dogs playing tag, and the happy couples eating ice cream on the benches. I sighed and checked my cell phone for any messages.

"Can you explain exactly what the case is about?" Charlie asked with his eyes closed.

"Cases," I corrected. "There were two murders, and they think they're related. One was at some party yesterday, and the other one occurred today at a fashion show."

For the next ten minutes Charlie and I dozed off in the back of the taxi until the driver woke us because we had arrived. I gave him a crumpled up twenty-dollar bill and stepped out of the taxi. A shiver went up my spine as a gust of wind hit me. We were on Park Avenue and we looked up at the Waldorf-Astoria hotel in front of us. Police cars surrounded the hotel and yellow tape blocked the entrance. I told the closest police officer that I was there to work on the case and he let me through.

"Um, Gabby?" Charlie called after me. I turned and laughed when I saw the officer holding him back from entering.

"Officer, he's okay. He's my assistant," I explained. The officer stared at Charlie's faded jeans and his I-heart-NY shirt showing

underneath his jacket. He let him into the hotel.

The luxurious hotel had chandeliers and large vases with beautiful flowers everywhere. We found the door that seemed to lead into the crime scene. As we approached the door, Charlie stopped in his tracks. His mouth had dropped open in shock and his eyes were wide open. I looked at him, clueless. "What?"

His mouth began to shake. "You never said it was Oscar Benoit's fashion show," he managed to say.

"Oscar who?" I scrunched my eyebrows together.

Charlie covered his mouth with his hand in astonishment. "Gabby, this is Oscar Benoit's fashion show."

I stared at him blankly.

"He's a designer, and that lip-gloss I got Anna is by him, and oh, this is amazing! Wait 'till I tell Anna about this!"

I looked up at the red banner that read Oscar Benoit in gold letters above the marble door. Overwhelmed, Charlie grabbed the gold door handle and pulled open the door.

We stepped into the large room that was crowded with people. Everywhere there were police officers questioning people, guests talking on their phones, models panicking, newscasters and their camera crews, and photographers. In the center of the room there was a silver runway that stretched all the way to the back wall. As I made my way through the people, I came close enough to the runway to see a body lying on it. It was one of the models.

I looked around for Charlie, but it was hard to spot him in the throng. News reporters desperate to hear what some man dressed in black had to say shoved their microphones and cameras in his face as they listened and scribbled notes.

Someone was jumping up and down next to the news reporters, trying to see what they were looking at. I knew it was Charlie.

"Charlie, what are you doing?" I hissed. "We have a dead body in the room and you're..."

"It's Oscar Benoit!" Charlie practically

# A taste of fashion

screamed. I rolled my eyes and pulled him away. We climbed up onto the runway and approached the man kneeling down next to the motionless body. He stood up and introduced himself. "I'm Detective Watson."

Charlie burst out laughing. "Like Sherlock Holmes's assistant?" My cheeks turned red in embarrassment. When no one laughed, he looked down.

"I'm Gabby Apple," I said as I shook Detective Watson's hand. His dark skin was the same color as his chocolate brown coat. He turned towards Charlie, who still had his head down. I poked him.

"Oh, um, I'm Charlie," he mumbled. Detective Watson looked at him. Charlie blushed. "Uh, Charlie... Apple."

Detective Watson looked surprised. "You two are brother and sister?" We nodded. He smiled warmly. "I never would've guessed."

"Yeah, Gabby's the only one with the green eyes. Don't know where that comes from!" Charlie laughed again.

I turned away from the awkward moment and stared down at the body. I recognized the caked makeup and thin lips immediately. It even tastes good...

"Her name's Cora Benoit. Oscar's wife," Watson explained.

Charlie gasped. "What happened?"

"According to the people, she was walking the runway, stopped, and just fell."

Charlie shook his head. "That's awful."

I studied Cora. Her thin, red lips were slightly open, her lifeless eyes stared up at the ceiling, and her sandy blonde hair was scattered across the floor.

Watson explained that the forensics had found arsenic in her saliva after taking a sample. Charlie looked down at the body. "So she was poisoned?"

"Yes, but she could have done it herself," Watson mentioned.

"Most likely not," I said confidently.

After that we were taken backstage. Colorful dresses were found in racks everywhere, and each model had their own space for changing and makeup. Backstage was bright with fluorescent lights, and there were at least sixty mirrors. We were taken to a group of people seated on folding chairs with cups of coffee in their hands. Their worried and melancholy faces looked up as we approached.

There were five people seated. Oscar Benoit was one of them. His thick, coarse eyebrows were the first things I took notice of. He was holding back his tears as a man with bleached blonde hair comforted him by putting an arm around him. Then there was the blonde model, another model with jet-black hair, and another young woman. Watson handed me profiles on each person, which contained what they had said when questioned earlier and any additional information worth knowing.

I cleared my throat and looked at Watson. He nodded.

"I'm Detective Apple, and this here is my assistant." I gestured to Charlie. He smiled and lifted his hand. "We just want to ask you a few questions in a separate room to hear what you know about the tragic murder of..."

"We're not sure if it's a murder," Charlie whispered.

"Fine, the tragic death of Cora Benoit."

The first person we questioned was Oscar Benoit. We went into a separate room and sat down at a table with his profile in front of me. His mournful eyes stared down. After skimming through his profile, the questioning began.

"Mr. Benoit, this must be extremely hard for you, but if you could do your best to answer our questions, it would really help us solve this case." He slowly nodded.

I asked if he knew why Cora was poisoned, if it was possible that she herself could have done it, and if there were any people that may have wanted to hurt her. He had answered no to most of the questions, and it seemed as though he knew nothing. He simply said "Nicole" when we asked if he knew anyone that would have

wanted to hurt his wife.

A tear rolled down his cheek. "I was not a good husband. I was having a secret affair." Charlie instantly began scribbling on his notepad. "Henry. I'm having an affair with Henry. I thought that by buying Cora everything she wanted, it would somehow make up for the it.. I even let her be in my ad and my fashion show. She's not even a model." He struggled to choke back his tears.

After hearing what Oscar had to say, Nicole was next. She rested her pale face on her thin arms and looked at us with her blue eyes. I caught Charlie winking at her, and kicked him under the table.

Before we could ask any questions, she folded her arms, lifted a perfectly shaped eyebrow and began talking.

"First thing you should know is that Cora is a, no wait, *was* a total moron. She didn't love Oscar. She was spoiled and selfish. Oscar didn't love her either. He's having an affair with some guy that just hangs around at fashion shows. Cora and I are, well, lets just say we're not the closest people on earth."

We didn't dare interrupt her. She was spilling her anger, and we needed to know as much as possible.

"Cora isn't a model. She isn't the 'model type'. She's just barely five foot seven, and she isn't thin and slender like models are supposed to be." I shifted uncomfortably in my seat as I looked down at my (what I would consider) normal thighs. "I was supposed to be the model in the *Delicious* commercial. I'm the one with the perfect, full lips. I'm the one with the flawless skin. I'm the one who has had to sacrifice so much to be where I am today. Not her! But of course, being Oscar's wife and all, she somehow managed to replace me with herself in the ad. She even got into being one of the models for the fashion show today.

"And I know that you read about my past years, and I know what you're thinking. I admit that I was naïve and dumb when I tried to commit suicide using arsenic, but that's in the

past. I'm not like that anymore. And in case you're wondering, no, I did not poison Cora Benoit." Nicole stood up and flung her long blonde hair as she turned around to head out the door. She stopped when she reached the door. "Oh, and if you mention my history to any of the newspapers..." She gave us a snotty look. then she went out.

I exhaled deeply. "She was, well, pretty..."

"I know!" Charlie exclaimed.

"I was going to say 'pretty full of herself.'"

Charlie closed his mouth and looked at the next person's profile.

We knew that Cora must have either eaten, drank, tasted, or swallowed something that contained arsenic because the poison was found in her saliva.

Next up was Henry Macintyre who was not related to the case whatsoever, but the police considered him a suspect. His unnatural blonde hair kept getting in the way of his eyes, and he would push it back each time.

"Mr. Macintyre, are you related to Oscar or Cora in anyway?" Watson asked.

"No, I'm just Oscar's friend," he said quietly. I looked at Charlie's notes on what Oscar said. "We were told that you are in a relationship with Oscar."

Henry looked nervous and he began biting on what was left of his nails. "That's true."

"Did you serve any food or anything to Cora today during the fashion show?" I asked. Henry thought for a moment. He lowered his hand from his mouth. "She asked me to get her coffee, so I did." His eyes were red and tired.

"Can you please explain exactly what you did?" He took a deep breath. "I happened to be standing around Cora when she was in hair and makeup. She saw me, and unlike everyone else, I wasn't busy. So she asked me to get her a cup of coffee. So I went to the coffee pot, poured a cup, and gave it to her. I went somewhere else, and that was the last I saw of her."

We asked what he thought of Cora.



# A taste of fashion

"I felt as though she was using Oscar. She was a lot younger than he was, and I never got the impression that she loved him. She would just act very sweet when he bought her what she wanted." He crossed his legs. "Oscar only married her to hide that he was, well, in love with me."

"You mean to hide that he was homosexual?" Charlie blurted out.

"Charlie!" I snapped.

"If you want to put it that way, yes," Henry said in his tiny voice.

The next person, Olivia Iman, was a witness and a model. She said that she was also in hair and makeup next to Cora when she saw Cora get up from her chair with her hand covering her mouth and squeal "Ew!" Olivia had no idea what Cora may have been referring to.

Once Olivia was gone, I pointed out that Cora might have been referring to the coffee, since it was possible that the coffee was poisoned. The last suspect was Sandra White, the makeup artist that had done Cora's hair and makeup.

Before we called her in we looked at her profile and the notes taken by the other officers. There was a pile of items and papers in a box that was found at hair and makeup where Cora had been. I grabbed a folder labeled 'Cora' that contained photos of her from rehearsal, a sketch of the outfits she wore, and a list of makeup that was used on her. I read each makeup product's funny names.

"Why would anyone name their eye shadow color 'Ocean Breeze'?" I said out loud. Charlie shrugged. "Or a lip gloss called 'Pink Bubblegum'? Why not just say 'Pink'?"

Charlie looked at a close-up photo of Cora in rehearsal. "Her lips don't really look like Pink Bubblegum. They're barely pink. More like, 'Really Light Pink Bubblegum'."

Watson put the curling iron he had been looking at back into the box and called Sandra White in. Her glossy brown bob framed her tiny face, and

her apron's pockets were stuffed with brushes and makeup tools. She sat down and took a deep breath.

She explained how she had done Cora's hair and makeup. We asked her about what the witness had said about Cora squealing "Ew!"

"It was the coffee," she said, trying to recall what had happened. "She asked Henry to get her coffee and he brought it to her, then left immediately. She took a sip before I was going to apply the lip-gloss..."

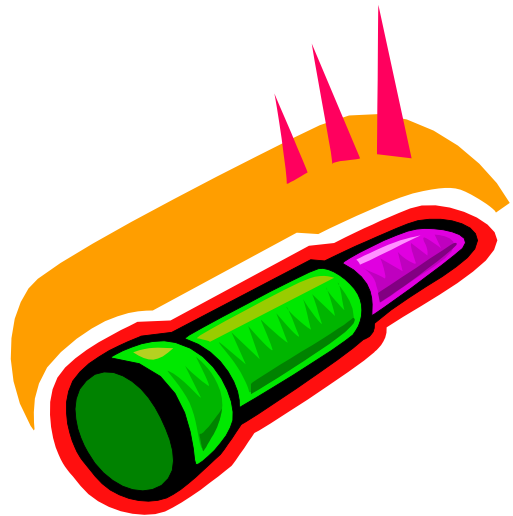
"Pink Bubblegum," Charlie giggled under his breath.

"Yes, Pink Bubblegum." Sandra ran a hand through her hair. "She drank a bit, and quickly stood up from her chair and said 'Ew'. After that she didn't drink from it, and it was her turn on the runway."

We asked if the coffee could have been poisoned and she seemed sure it had been. Charlie made a note to check the coffee for arsenic.

Watson pointed at a folder sticking out of Sandra's large tote bag. "What is that?" Sandra followed his finger. "Oh, these are the photos of Cora on the runway before she, you know, died." I put my hand out and she gave them to me. We looked through her photos, and put them down.

"It says here that you once loved Oscar,"



Watson said in his low voice. Sandra flushed in embarrassment.

"Yes. I did. As soon as I started working for him, I fell in love. I even sent him love letters."

"Did he ever reply?" Charlie asked.

She shook her head in dismay. "I stopped loving him when I found out about Henry. I just want Oscar to be happy with Henry, and if I loved him, I would just get in the way, so I stopped."

The room went quiet. I looked back down at the photos of Cora. Then, something caught my eye. It was something about her lips. They were red.

"Sandra, tell me, what kind of color exactly is 'Pink Bubblegum'?" I asked with my eyes on Cora's lips.

"It's, uh, a sheer pink." The room went silent again. "Why do you ask?"

I held up the close up of Cora's face, and pointed at her lips. "They're red."

"Oh yeah!" Charlie exclaimed, noticing it too. Sandra crossed her legs. "Allow me to explain. She was supposed to wear Pink Bubblegum, but she didn't. You see, because I'm one of Oscar Benoit's makeup artists, I know each of his products very well. So, I made my own lip-gloss called 'Candy Apple' and I thought it was good enough to be part of the Delicious collection. I even made it taste like a candy apple."

"I didn't want to take it straight to the designer himself, so I thought maybe I should try it on someone and see what they think first. So I did, on Cora. That is why her lips were red."

I sat back in my chair. "I see. Did she like it?"

"Very. She even said she would tell Oscar about it."

That night we went out to dinner with Watson.

"I have a bad feeling about Nicole Fisher. She seemed to really hate Cora," I said as I dipped my sushi into soy sauce.

Watson put down his chopsticks. "I was thinking more the boyfriend, Henry." We waited for him to explain. "I know we haven't tested the coffee for poison yet, but I think he poisoned her. If she's out of the way, he can be with Oscar."

Charlie took a sip of his water and added wasabi to his sushi. "You know what gets me?" he said with his mouth full of raw fish and rice. "The *Candy Apple* lip gloss. I mean, why would you try it on someone right before it's their turn on the runway?"

I thought about what Charlie had to say. He was right. It was a bit strange how Sandra changed the makeup on Cora just so she could try out her new lip-gloss.

"But it couldn't have been Sandra White because there's no way she could've poisoned her." I wiped the corners of my mouth with my napkin. "Well, I guess the same applies for Nicole too, unless there's something Cora consumed that we don't know about."

Watson's phone began ringing and he stepped out of the restaurant to answer the call. After a while, he came back and sat down. We waited to hear what the phone call was all about.

"They tested the coffee," he said slowly. "And they didn't find anything."

"Did they check the coffee pot and the actual coffee Cora drank?" He nodded.

After we finished eating, Charlie and I went back to our hotel room.

It was almost 10:30 so I went into the bathroom and started brushing my teeth. As I was doing so, I spotted a tiny plastic bag on the side next to the sink. I opened the bag and peered inside. It was the lip-gloss Charlie had bought for Anna. I got it out of the bag and held it up to the light. It was a light red colored gloss and in gold cursive letters read 'Delicious in Cherry Red'. I spat out the toothpaste that was in my mouth, gargled, and put my toothbrush away.

With the tube in my hands, I looked at myself in the mirror. I had never been much of a girl my whole life. It felt awkward holding a brand new bottle of lip-gloss. I

# A taste of fashion

looked so girly for once. I slowly unscrewed the gold cap. I brought the stick with the tiny brush on the end up to my lips and swiped it on my bottom lip. It tingled. I stared at myself in the mirror. My lips glittered with Cherry Red lip-gloss. I closed my eyes and pictured the ad in my head as I stuck my tongue out and slowly tasted my lower lip like Cora did in the commercial. It tasted like cherries, and it tasted good.

As I opened my eyes, I gasped and dropped the lip-gloss when I saw Charlie behind me. I whipped around.

He looked at the open bag next to the sink. "Is that Anna's present?"

"Charlie, I'm sorry. I guess I just got carried away..." I didn't know what to say.

"Of all people, I would've never expected to see my tomboy sister eating the lip-gloss I bought for my girlfriend."

I could feel my cheeks turn pink. "I wasn't eating it, I was just tasting it. And hey, it tasted pretty good."

And then it hit me. I knew who poisoned Cora. I pushed Charlie out of the way and ran to my cell phone. I called Watson.

"Hello?" he answered.

"Watson, it's me Gabby Apple. I know you're at home, but I have to talk to you."

"Gabby, I'm with my family now..."

"I know who killed Cora. Meet me at the crime scene ay-sap!" and I hung up. "Charlie, get your coat." I grabbed my orange trench coat and my keys and went out the door.

Watson was already at the crime scene, and his face was half buried in his cashmere scarf.

"Watson, I have no time to explain. We need to find Sandra White," I said as I looked around the room still full of people. I asked one of the officers if he knew where Sandra White was.

"You just missed her. She went to the parking lot to her car," he said in his tired voice.

I grabbed Charlie and ran as fast as I could to the parking lot that was located behind the

hotel. Watson was at my heels. I found the door that led to the parking lot and pushed it open.

I found Sandra's car immediately because the lights inside were on. She was rustling around in her garbage can. As we approached the driver's window she quickly rolled it down.

"Um, can I help you?" Sandra tapped her fingers on the steering wheel.

"Miss White, we were wondering if we could take a look at your *Candy Apple* lip-gloss?" I asked.

She hesitated, and then she began searching the inside of her tote bag. After awhile, she looked up at us. "Sorry, I can't find it."

"May we look inside your car?" I asked.

Sandra stared straight ahead. "Sure," she gave us a wobbly smile before stepping out.

Charlie went to the back seat. "What are we looking for?" he asked me.

"*Candy Apple*," I said as I began looking under the seats.

As we looked around the car I explained how Sandra might have killed Cora by poisoning her *Candy Apple* lip-gloss. It made sense how she would have tested it on Cora, and why Cora would squeal "Ew" when the coffee didn't contain arsenic.

Charlie looked up from the floor of the car.

"But Sandra said that Cora liked it."

I rolled my eyes. "Ever heard of lying?"

"Did you call the morgue to take a test on Cora's lips?" Watson asked.

"I already did," I whispered. I was in the front seat looking through the cabinets and Sandra's bag. We hadn't found anything, but yet I was determined we would. When I thought we had searched every part of the car, my eyes landed on the garbage can between the two seats. It was full of used Kleenex and receipts. Even though I was disgusted, I put my hand into it and felt around.

We had to find something. The garbage can was my last chance to prove Sandra White had

poisoned Cora Benoit. If we didn't find anything, we would have no evidence, and she wouldn't be pressed with the charge of murder. I wasn't positive Sandra was the murderer, but of all the suspects, she seemed the most likely. I swept back my brown hair as it got in my face, and felt around some more.

And then my fingers touched a plastic bottle. My heart skipped a beat. I grabbed it with hope and ripped it out of the garbage can.

It was *Candy Apple*.

"You found it!" Charlie cried. I couldn't help but let a giant grin spread across my face. I got out of the car and held up the bottle at Sandra.

"I don't know how that got there," Sandra said with a shaky voice. "Well, excuse me, I have to go now."

I felt my phone vibrate and I answered it as I stepped in the way of Sandra.

"Hello... Yes... Thank you," and then I hung up. I looked at Watson and Charlie. "It was the forensics. They just got the results of Cora's lip-gloss."

"And?" the two demanded in unison.

I smiled. "Positive." I turned to Sandra. Her mouth opened to speak but no words came out. "Which means you're under arrest for homicide."

Watson instantly called the police. "They should be here any moment now."

"Wait a minute," Charlie said, confused. "Gabby, when we first landed in New York, didn't you say there were two murders that were thought to have been related?" I suddenly remembered. We all turned to Sandra, who was in tears.

"We already caught you. Just tell us the rest," I said gently as I softened the grip on her arm.

She let her tears run down her face. "I wasn't sure if the arsenic would work." She gasped for air as she began sobbing. "So I poisoned one of the lip-glosses that were given out at the opening party. I don't even know who was killed."

"Her name was Rebecca Jones. She was eighteen," Watson added. Sandra began crying even louder. Soon the police had arrived, and she was taken away. Charlie put his arm around me. "Gabby, you've

done it again." I smiled.

"I must say, I am impressed," Watson clapped. "I just don't know how you knew it was the lip-gloss."

I smirked. "The proof is in the pudding."





Artwork:  
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