

THE COURIER

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Kavanaugh? More Like KavaNO

By Sophia Alexandrou

In the highest court in the land, sits yet another privileged white man whose appointment to that position proves another misstep in our country’s government. His name is Brett Kavanaugh. Besides his outdated support for the second amendment, backwards view on Roe v. Wade, and inability to answer a question, Dr. Christine Blasey Ford also accused him of sexual assault. However, this accusation did not conclude his nomination. He continued with it throughout the hearing, the botched FBI investigation, and eventually to the appointment to the Supreme Court.

On September 27, 2018, Dr. Ford gave a compelling opening statement about one of the worst times in her life. She opened up in front of the entire country about her experience with being over-powered and physically silenced by two boys while one of them was sitting feet away listening to it 36 years later. In her opening statement Ford says, “I am here today not because I want to be. I am terrified. I am here because I believe it is my civic duty to tell you what happened to me while Brett Kavanaugh and I were in high school.” She recalls the event taking place at a party during the summer between her freshmen and sophomore years of high school and the culprits being Brett Kavanaugh and his friend Mark Judge. The details she gives about the assault are extremely heinous and graphic. She says, “I don’t have all the answers, and I don’t remember as much as I would like to. However, the details about that night that bring me here today are ones I will never forget. They have been seared into my memory and have haunted me episodically as an adult.” To be able to stand in front of the entire country and recall an experience that has caused so much trauma in your life for so long while confronting the man that is responsible for that is truly an incredible act of bravery. Throughout the hearing, Ford stayed calm, collected, and professional.

On the other hand, we have Kavanaugh getting noticeably emotional about calendars he kept in high school and working out with his friend Tobin in his opening statement. Kavanaugh brings up the fact that one of Dr. Ford’s longtime friend, Ms. Keyser, does not remember ever meeting him or being at any party with him. However, we do not know if Keyser was at the party that the entire hearing was centered around. Therefore, it is very possible that Keyser never met Kavanaugh at all, or that he was just another face that

she forgot the next day as they went to different schools. Not to mention, Keyser says she believes Ford’s allegation. Kavanaugh also claimed he is part of a conspiracy that as he says, “has destroyed my family and my good name.” No. Your family and good name were destroyed when you decided it was below you to not sexually assault people. Dr. Ford first opened up to what happened to her to her therapist in 2012, so she is clearly not making you the subject of some conspiracy. In addition, while he was not tearing up about lifting weights with Tobin, he was getting somewhat hostile at the questions being asked. When asked if he’d ever drank so much beer that he did not remember what had happened that night the next morning he responded with, “I don’t know. Have you?” This answer is not only off topic, but extremely disrespectful. Additionally, if anyone answers a question with “I don’t know. Have you?”, they obviously did it. I hate to say it, but I think men might be too emotional for politics.

One week and one botched FBI investigation later, Kavanaugh was found “innocent” of the charge. Still, the limited investigation should not and doesn’t tell us much. The very fact that neither Ford nor Kavanaugh were questioned during it should be a sign that this investigation is not the most credible.

In today’s society, a man’s well being is put above a woman’s. People are always talking about how these allegations can ruin his life while disregarding how it has already ruined hers. They are so quick to tell a woman she is lying but are so quick to believe a man saying he did not do it. According to nsvrc.org and multiple studies, between only two and ten percent of accusations are found false. Therefore, there is between a 90 and 98 percent chance that a woman, or any person for that matter, is telling the truth. Those who release false accusations are part of the reason why many do not believe the real ones. As for me, I believe Dr. Ford. I believe the nineteen accusers that accused President Trump of sexual assault. I believe any woman that is willing to risk everything they have to make sure the person that sexually assaulted them is given their rightful punishment and will not do the same to others. When Ford saw that Kavanaugh was a nominee for the Supreme Court, she risked everything to make sure that a sexual offender was not in the highest court in the US. I believe women, and you should too.

Tree of Life Synagogue Shooting

By Nadav Widogsky

On October 27th at about 10 a.m., a man entered the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh and shot at the people who were praying. Eleven people were killed. The alleged shooter posted the following on Twitter: “HIAS likes to bring invaders in that kill our people. I can’t sit by and watch my people get slaughtered. Screw your optics, I’m going in.” HIAS is an acronym for the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society. It was founded in 1881 to help Jewish refugees from Russia. It is the oldest refugee and immigration aid society in the world. Recently, the focus is on helping refugees from places such as Syria, Afghanistan, Somalia, Kenya and Ecuador.

Judah Samet, a Holocaust survivor, was 4 minutes late to services at the Tree of Life Synagogue on Saturday. He was in Bergen-Belsen, a Nazi concentration camp for 10 months. He would have ended up in Auschwitz, one of the most notorious camps, had his train not stopped. Judah Samet

said that he always arrives on time. He had been talking with his housekeeper that day. He arrived at the parking lot “around 9:49 a.m.,” he said. Then a man knocked on his window, who stated that there was a shooting in his synagogue. “All of a sudden, I see this guy who was a detective hiding behind a wall but popping his head out. He had a pistol and was shooting,” said Mr. Samet. He looked out the window and the shooter started shooting his gun at him. The bullets were very close – the line of fire was “only maybe 1 to 2 feet.”

There have been attacks on places of worship before. In 2017, a gunman shot 9 people in a church in Charleston. In 1963, 4 girls were killed, and 22 others were injured when a church in Birmingham was bombed. In 2017, 40 shooters killed 311 people and injured at least 122 at a mosque in Egypt. The question we must pose to ourselves is this: Will we take measures to prevent history from repeating itself?

Veterans Day and the World War I Armistice Centennial

By Nadav Wigodsky

This year was the centennial or 100th anniversary, of the signing of the armistice of World War I.

World War I was one of the deadliest wars in history, with the number of casualties amounting to around 40 million. It is known for new military technologies being incorporated into the war, such as poison gas, trench warfare, recoil-operated machine guns, submarines, tanks, grenades and airplanes. The effects of poison gas were so devastating, that after the war there needed to be a convention where countries would sign an international agreement that stated that chemical weapons would be prohibited in war. In fact, there was a dog called Sgt. Stubby who saved soldiers from gas attacks. Because it was so important to avoid a gas attack, he, as an animal, reached the rank of Sergeant.

One of the events that led to the war was conflict in Europe. In 1870, France lost the Franco-Prussian War with Germany. France then made a pact with Russia and Great Britain that they would be allies. Germany, Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire had a similar agreement. This led to European countries becoming nationalistic. Nationalism is a strong belief in one’s country and its superiority to others. (U.S. History: American Stories National Geographic Learning, A Cengage Learning Company, 2019.) In the early 1900s, Austria-Hungary



and Serbia both wanted to own the Balkan Peninsula. Serbia wanted to own the Balkan Peninsula to make it into a Slavic state. Then, Austria-Hungary took over cities in Serbia. Later, in 1914, a Serbian Nationalist shot the Archduke of Austria. This caused the turmoil between European nations to escalate. Soon thereafter, war broke out in Europe. The war grew and the First World War had started.

On the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918, the armistice between powers of World War I, or the Great War, as it was known, was signed. It was a significant achievement because it meant that the fighting between countries was no more. Soon, a treaty would be signed to formally end the war. In a congressional act approved in 1938, the anniversary of the signing of the armistice was established as Armistice Day. In 1945, a World War II veteran suggested that it should honor all soldiers who served, not just soldiers that served in World War I. In 1954, that became law and Veterans Day replaced Armistice Day.

HIGHLANDS

MIX IT UP DAY

By Matthew Selinger

Mix it up day was so fun, I was able to sit and converse with people I don't normally see in school or in my classes and it was really fun. At my table we talked about the lunch and one person even got two because someone didn't want theirs. Now I am going to talk about some of the planning ahead before mix it up day and a little about the work that Student Organization did. First off the original planning team for planning Mix it up day in the S.O. was two seventh grader, Lucas Rhode and I Matthew Selinger. First we had to find out

what we would do to sort the students into tables so we decided to use color wristbands to do it. Then Lucas and I had to find which wristbands would be the better buy and what type of wristbands. The next thing we had to do was figure out what activities to do for mix it up day. Then we created a poster with our ideas and what we should do and we did some revisions and we decided on everything. Finally we got the materials, broke them up, put them in enveloped, labeled them, and gave them to the office.



Walk/Bike to School Day

By; Sophia Interligi

Walk/Bike to School Day was a cold day but that did not stop everyone from having a great morning! Waking up might have been hard for most but the people who came pulled through and did not regret going. There were some times when it got a bit more difficult for the bikers because they would have to make it up hills while avoiding hitting the walkers or going into the streets. It was also very exciting to see some parts of White Plains that some people might have not seen before

and might go back to see the parks and the shops there in the future. Walk/Bike to School Day also helps by not using gas and polluting our earth because we use bikes and our feet. Many people that do not live close to the school have no choice not to go on the bus or drive, but they took a morning to walk or bike. It is important to get exercise and walking and biking are some easy ways to do just that. Next year you can participate and join the fun!



7th Graders Hike Through Bear Mountain

By Colleen Cave

On the 5th of October the entire 7th Grade went on a trip to Bear Mountain in Peekskill. The goal of this trip was to give us a chance to learn about history, our environment's link to science, and to get to know each other better. During the trip, the 7th grade visited many animals and learned about their adaptations that helped them survive in their environment. They also visited small one room museums that showcased the history of Bear Mountain and the surrounding land in terms of un-man settlements and the mining of coal

and other resources. Based on the activities and the feedback from students, I'd say we achieved that goal. Students have called the trip fun, exciting, and informative. And though not all students loved the trip calling it 'boring' it's safe to say from the amount of positive reactions I received from asking about this trip, that the majority of the student body enjoyed the excursion. Overall this trip was a success, so next year's 7th grade should definitely be given this experience.

Author Visits Highlands

By Grace Hricay

If you take equal parts of perseverance, creativity and conviction, mix them all together, and sprinkle on a lot of enthusiasm, you would find that you have created the recipe for Mr. Daniel Jose Older, author of Dactyl Hill Squad. Mr. Older recently visited Highlands Middle School, not just to share the story of his book with the students but also to deliver an inspiring message to all of the students. Mr. Older's message was that you should trust your instincts and dreams and not let other people change them. Mr. Older explained that he went to several publishing companies to see if they were interested in making his book become a reality. One of the publishers suggested that the protagonist of Dactyl Hill Squad should not be Latino, however this was not what Mr. Older had in mind. Instead of giving in just to get his book published, Mr. Older chose to seek a different publishing company who appreciated and shared his vision. Mr. Older shared this anecdote with the Highlands student body in order for us to understand that we must stay true to who we are. Giving in to pressures or taking an easy way out just to reach an end goal that we didn't really want is never the answer we should take. Mr. Older's enthusiasm and dedication to his dream was inspiring. After Mr. Older's presentation, seventh grader Bianca Contrina said, "I really liked what Mr. Older said because I've always wanted to be an author and he really inspired me by what he said." Clearly this shows that what Mr. Older said had a very heavy impact on some of the students.



HAPPENINGS

SPIRIT WEEK

By Matthew Selinger

Before spirit week: I can't wait until spirit week. It's going to be so fun. I feel like the best day will be pajama day and I will probably just fall asleep in every class. I also can't wait to see what the teachers wear to pajama day even if some people don't wear pajamas it definitely will still be fun. Also another day which is Tuesday that will be fun because it is crazy hair/ meme day. I can't wait to see memes people pick out. Wednesday will be colors day each team will be assigned a color and they will wear that color all of these days are for both eight and seventh grade by the way. Thursday is throwback Thursday where we wear clothes from our favorite decade I am probably going to wear disco clothes from the 70's which is going to be both fun and awkward but mostly fun. Friday is squad day which is where you dress up the same as some of your friends. Spirit week is going to be really fun and amazing and I can't wait.

After spirit week: Monday was pajama day and it was a fun and comfortable day. I really liked seeing what everyone wore even though only about half of the students wore them. I wore all blue pajamas. It was hard not falling asleep during lunch because everything I was wearing was just that comfortable. A student named Lucas Rhode said that "I wasn't a big fan of pajama day." But what's not to love about it. People were all comfy in their classes and I can't wait for next year's pajama day. Also I feel bad for the people who

had P.E. and were all sweaty on pajama day. The day after Pajama day was meme and crazy hair day. On Tuesday lots of people had crazy hair and some had memes or became the memes. I saw some people with crazy hair and some people with really crazy hair. I saw a kid who's hair was standing straight up and other people with their hair in a bunch of hair ties. Wednesday was black and orange day and a lot of people wore orange and black clothing. I myself wore a black sweatshirt with black sweatpants and the eastview shirt. I saw other people wear different stuff. Some people even wore black and orange pajamas. I would say about one eighth of the students wore highlands spirit wear for black and orange day. The next day was Throwback Thursday and many people had good costumes. I particularly liked the World War II costume that one person had. I'm surprised he kept it on and together for the whole day. I wore clothes from the 80's and it was fun. The final day was squad day and probably the funniest because there were three people walking around with Logan Paul on their shirts asking "Hello, would you like to become a logangster also I saw a group of people who were wearing red white and blue there were also another group of people who each had a letter taped to their shirt and had rainbow colors on their shirts and the letters spelled our R A N D O M. Over all spirit week was fun and I look forward to it next year.



THE COURIER

White Plains Middle School

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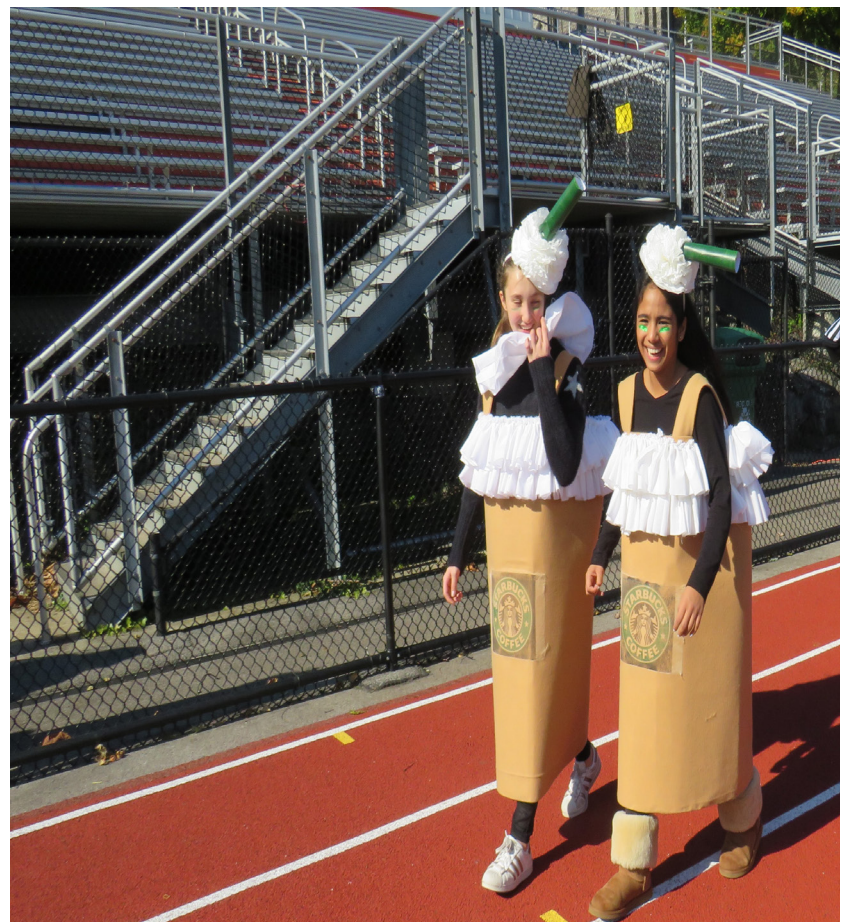
Clare Smith

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THE FRED GRESSLER MEMORIAL



HALLOWEEN WALK-A-THON



Ana Mora Orzuna
E.L.A
Nov. 13th 2018

My experience



“Have you ever wondered what it feels like to be in so much pain? What it feels like to be in an accident? Well let me tell you it’s horrible! I have had many painful experiences, like cutting my finger with a knife and falling off the stairs, but getting my leg run over by a car is something I’ll never forget, trust me. “Always be careful” is what my grandma always says to me all the time. After getting my leg run over by a car, I learned to be more careful when I’m crossing the streets, to always look left and right and to always pay attention.”

I chose to share this part of my essay because it shows the theme of my story, to always be careful with what you do. It also grabs the readers attention to keep reading and to learn how I felt and how it affected other.



This is where the accident took place in Mexico

PIC•COLLAGE

Hello everybody , Today I will be introducing to you an excerpt from the narrative titled , “The Unexpected “ written by Norlenes Salazar. I will begin with my favorite part which is the introduction part of my narrative.

When i was ten years old, I went to Dominican Republic. I always thought that Dominican Republic would be like Miami, Florida it would be beautiful and fresh. In Miami i would think the palm trees are waving at people in a graceful manner , the blue water would look like gods a tower up in the sky. And the huge mansions up the hills. Yet , my prediction was wrong!!!!

I chose this excerpt because it showcases well written figurative language and proves my audience with interesting stories . I also think that it sets the scene and uses great detail. Through my personal narrative the audience is able to see a sneak peak of what my narrative is about. I hope you like it and VOTE FOR ME!!!!

Expectation



Reality

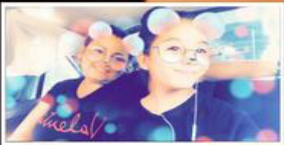


PIC•COLLAGE

Won't be long until I see you again

By: Brianna Osorio

Five years without seeing someone you extremely care about hurts more than getting kicked in the shins. But when the day comes to finally see them again, all that pain goes away and all you can say is...I'm finally here. When I talked to my mom I felt like I could tell her ANYTHING. She was like my diary. She would make me laugh, she would laugh at me but I would only end up laughing with her. Life seemed so much easier when I was with her. At that moment, I couldn't believe anything or anyone could hurt me with my mom by my side. The reason why I chose this part is because this is really important to me and also because this shows how being far apart from someone you really care about or is supposed to be in your life, can really impact you in many ways



7 hour drive and I introduced Snapchat to my family and they loved it!



Me, my mom, my younger brother and my step dad went to see the biggest rock in the world. "La piedra del peñol"



My little brother



My older brother

PIC•COLLAGE

The Accident
Coral A. Chestnut

This is an excerpt of my personal narrative “The Accident” written by Coral Chestnut. After this my dad was in his way to work. He grabbed his smooth white and blue biker jacket and walked out into the sunny light. He started and hopped on his metallic royal blue bike, so royal you could see the seas and hear the seagulls chirp, the white in his bike was as crisp as snow and you could hear the crunch agents your boot when you walk on the fluffy snow. He started to drift off our dead end , at least he’s not dead we all said. He popped a wheelie and came down, then another his back wheel going crazy , causing the bike to loose control and causing the moment to go in slow motion giving his life a blink second to think. My mom heading upstairs hearing a. Crash like a gunshot. She dashed downstairs getting to the street. She broke her heels so she was fee able to run running towards my father. Her heels hitting the concrete creating blisters below. My fathers back on was fire scorching hot like the sun miles away beaming on us. The ambulance sirens coming down the block. Neighbors screaming, mouths wide open in shock. Half the bike in the window the wheel spinning like our heads. The seat and other wheel flown somewhere across the driveway. My father laying there pledging to take off his helmet “Ikiyan keep on the helmet, we don’t know how bad this is” my mother exclaimed. I’m in the house wondering what has happened. I chose this excerpt because it is my most suspenseful part and it goes into detail of how “it” happened. How my life changed. I hope it teaches my audience to spend time with loved ones and cherish time. Don’t take a second for granted because everything could be gone.



PIC•COLLAGE

Vote for Your Favorite

In Ms.Federico and Dr.Delanoy’s 7th grade ELA classes, the students all wrote personal narratives and each voted on the best one from their class. They were left with the top ten from all the students. Now it’s your turn to vote! Go onto the Highlands webpage and click on the link that says “Courier Vote” to vote for the personal narrative you like best! The full narrative will be published in the next issue of The Courier. We wish all the authors good luck!

The URL is: <https://tinyurl.com/CourierVote2018>

Should I, Should I Not?
By: Denisse Tajonar

“As I looked in the mirror I saw a different person, the true me... For me, my hair describes my personality that I want to show others, goofy, funny, nice, very happy and many other things that make me, me. I learned that little features can say a lot about a person like your face, hair, body and clothes. And for myself I learned that my hair could say a lot and change a lot about myself and my life.”



PIC•COLLAGE



Katerina Trantos 11/13/18 ELA 2 “New Girl in Town”

Hello everybody, today I will be introducing to you and excerpt from the narrative titled, New Girl In Town written by myself. I will begin with my favorite part which is the lead part of my narrative.

Have you ever felt like you do not belong? Well, when I was ten years old, I had to switch schools from a parochial school in New York to Eastview Middle School in White Plains. This made me feel very stressed because I had been going to a small Greek-American dual language school since I was 4 years old. The size of my old school could not begin to compare to White Plains Middle Schools because they look like castles. My first cousin and I had been in the same school and in the same class for seven years, since Pre-K. Then, we went our separate ways when she moved and started middle school in Somers. Most of my fifth- grade class also moved, which left us all heartbroken because we knew how much we would miss each other. We also knew that we would get to see each other because some of the girls from my fifth grade class continued to play basketball for our parish.

I chose this experience because it showcases the difficult transition for me. It also proves how different my previous experiences were. Through my narrative the audience is able to see the loss that I felt leaving behind all of my elementary school friends. I hope that you like it and vote for me.



Section From Essay

It all started the night I brought home a big project board which tuned into a pain in the butt Hebrew school project. The assignment was to find out about your heritage, where you came from and those who came before you. Oh, how I hated that project. I thought it was the most pointless and annoying project ever. After several nights of complaining, and many persuasion attempts from my mom, I decided to complete the project... the night before it was due. Was that the best idea? Probably not, but good thing I did, because I learned so much that night without even realizing. That “waste of a night” was actually a very important one. What did I learn? What exactly happened? After several long phone calls with family members I didn’t even know I had, I learned that there was an evil man named Adolf Hitler. Maybe evil isn’t the best word to describe him. A more fitting phrase would be cold, sick excuse of a human. Hitler was very powerful in his home country of Germany. He didn’t like people like my great grandparents, Jews. A lot of people in his country agreed with him, except for, of course, the Jews. Jews covered the globe, and Hitler’s goal was to take over the world and extinguish the fire, in his eyes, that was the Jews. He wanted them all dead. So, he started off by invading countries in Europe. Unfortunately, my great grandparents, Zelman and Adela were caught in the midst of all this, as their home country Poland, was invaded. The Germans took everything that they had and sent them and their families to concentration camp. They were very run down and just not the best places to live. These were not the best places to be. Jews were kept here before they were sent to death camps, where Jews were put into gas chambers. The chambers were filled with poisonous gasses. Most people who were put in those chambers didn’t make it. However, my great grandparents were lucky. They were able to get out of the camps and with their parents blessing, fled to Russia. That is where they had my grandmother, Nadine. They then went to Paris. There, they had my great aunt, Bella. After that they got a visa to America. Before you knew it, they were on the way to St. Louis to start a new life. That was where my uncle Morris was born. However, this was after losing several family members in the camps. They started over again, but their lives would never be the same.

Aidan Schmieder “The Holocaust and My Grandparents”

I chose this section from my narrative because it showcases what happened to my great grandparents and their family. It gives a summary of what happened to them is very important to me. Vote for me!





HELLO EVERYBODY. TODAY I WILL BE INTRODUCING TO YOU AN EXCERPT FROM THE NARRATIVE TITLED, STARTING SWIMMING WRITTEN BY KARA HA. I WILL BEGIN WITH MY FAVORITE PART WHICH IS THE INCIDENT PART OF MY NARRATIVE. “IT ALL STARTED WHEN I WAS 8 YEARS OLD. I JOINED A SWIM TEAM. WHEN I FIRST WENT INTO THE POOL AREA, IT SMELLED LIKE CHLORINE. IT WAS A VERY STRONG SMELL. I THOUGHT THE POOL WAS HUGE. THERE WAS ALSO A BABY AREA WITH A YELLOW LOOKING MUSHROOM AND LANE LINES WHICH DIVIDED EACH LANE. WHEN I FIRST GOT INTO THE POOL, IT WAS FREEZING LIKE ICED WATER. I STARTED TO SWIM AND THEN ALL OF THE SUDDEN, I FELT I FOUND MY HOBBY.” I CHOSE THIS EXCERPT BECAUSE IT SHOWCASES SENSORY DETAILS AND PROVIDES MY AUDIENCE WHAT I SAW AND FELT. IT ALSO SETS THE SCENE AND THE MOOD. I HOPE YOU LIKED IT AND VOTE FOR ME!



PIC•COLLAGE



MOVING

Anna Lonski

In my narrative I wrote about moving. I explained how you don't know how much you miss something until it's gone. I also wrote about how sometimes letting go is for the better. Sometimes we need to overcome things, no matter how much you want to hold them close.

"I wake up to the warmth of a summer morning. Boxes of clothes, toys, and much more were scattered around my room. Today, I am moving. I thought to myself, I am picking up all my things, and leaving. Leaving my house, my memories, my life. At 4:00pm my whole life changes. Leaving behind my old life to enter my new one. Although this made me want to cry, I knew it was time. I was ready for the change. Today, I am moving. Moving from 216 church street to my new home on Oxford Road. The only questions was, was I **READY**?"

I choose this part to share with you because I believe it has a good hook. I get straight to how I'm moving and how I may not be ready. I explain how it was more than just moving into. I also use good sensory details to explain what it was like to wake up that specific morning.





New house

PIC•COLLAGE

My Language Problem


Aria Mukhopadhyay

'As we made our way off the plane and I took a step onto the street of Bangalore where my relatives were anticipating my return, I got hit by a waft of air. The air of India is not all that pleasant, composed of sweat, gasoline, and garbage. When I visit my relatives I know I could have lived in India and be used to the scent - and the language. Would it have been better that way? When my mother and I found our relatives, everyone minus me started to talk in what sounded like a string of melodic gibberish. "Why isn't Aria akka speaking?" asked my cousin Meenakshi. The truth was that I would be bubbling with things to tell them if I could speak Tamil, their language. I couldn't, so I watched beggars and family argue nonstop. I just watched and didn't argue with them, because I couldn't. What were they even arguing about?'



["akka" is a Tamil word that means "older sister" but is also used when addressing older, female cousins.]

I chose this part because it brings out the conflict of the story: me against my "language" issue. It shows me struggling with my family and understanding them because of the cultural differences. It also brings out my message that one should learn as many languages as they can, as in this excerpt I am wishing that I understood the languages of India.



PIC•COLLAGE

Winter Word Jumble

By: Colleen Cave

ncoksafewl	_____
itmste	_____
wnriet	_____
zbrlzdai	_____
coesr khbola	_____
sldegidn	_____
jctaek	_____
asnowlfl	_____
tccs npogkia	_____
wersetsa	_____
sanowmn	_____
npogkia	_____
toobngga	_____
tahel hotcooc	_____
olyhadsi	_____
loiog	_____
asnowllb	_____
osbto	_____
kansgti	_____
sigkni	_____
nwnsiaodborg	_____

WITHIN

By: Sophie Ginsberg

the desire for freedom
shared between us
coming from within
which lies closer than we know

the dove flying above
shaking its head
for we are the restrictions
contradicting oneself

For ease is only found
When limitations crumble
And awareness
Comes from within

End of the World

By: Lucas Rhode

I didn’t know how I got here. I didn’t believe the world was flat, but yet it is. Here I am at the end of the world or what they call it, the neutral zone. It was a place in between heaven or hell, a place where they decide who gets to go where, a place where it’s everywhere and nowhere at the same time, place where decisions are made. It was just a few minutes ago that security found my crew and I. Besides that all I remember is leading my ship as the captain showing no mercy to my crew. And now here I am in front an all-knowing judge of the afterlife. “Okay let’s get started, so this is a tough case, since no one human has really made it here without dying first,” the judge said with his surprisingly low-pitched voice. “Judge, if you could just send me and my crew back to Earth so we can return to our normal lives,” I said. “First of all, please call me Jimothy. Judge is my father’s name. Second of all we can’t just send you back to Earth without wiping your memories of the neutral zone or else it would corrupt your motivation of being good or bad, so we wouldn’t know if we should send you to heaven or hell.” The room was silent, I didn’t know what to say and nor did my ship crew, as we were all very confused. “Okay I’ve decided my ruling I will wipe your memories and send you guys back to Earth,” the judge ruled. “That’s great,” I responded. “Oh no, everyone except you.” “What why,” I gasped. “Because you have spent your entire life enslaving others and caring only about making money,” the

judge responded. “Does it make it better if they were lower than me?,” I blurted. “I think you know it doesn’t,” the judge said. “You,” the judge pointed at a tall man dressed all in black. “Take him to the inferum.” The tall man grabbed me by my shoulder and pulled me out of the room into a very long hallway. “Who are you?” I asked. “Oh, you can call me a demon. I mean it is a bit racist, but it’s okay. My name is Raymond,” the demon groaned, as if he has said that too many times. “Where are you taking me?” I yelled. “The inferum, or what you humans call it hell.” “Raymond, Raymond, I’m begging you take me back to Earth. Please,” I kept repeating as we continued walking down the hallway. “Look uhh, what’s your name?” Raymond responded. “Max,” I responded. “I would love to let a few people go back to Earth. I mean it’s been 200 years and I’m only halfway through finishing NCIS,” Raymond said. “Oh that’s a TV show from the future, but I can’t let you go because you’re just the worst,” he answered. “The worst, I’m a captain,” I responded. “Really, really I don’t care,” he smirked. After walking down that hallway we finally came to a stop. In front of me and Raymond was a gigantic door. “Okay off to eternal damnnation,” he said. “Wait, what if I return to Earth and become a better person? Return me to Earth and I’ll become better. I pleaded. “Fine, but It’ll be hard especially since I’ll have to do it in secret. I’ll return you to Earth.

Why Violins are the Best

By Lucas Rhode

We all know that violins are the best string instrument, but some people disagree with that. I believe that violins are better than all other string instruments and I’m about to set that straight. There are many reason why I believe violins are a better string instrument than any other, but the main reason why I believe that is because they have the highest notes. Violins are the highest instrument of all the string instruments, both in pitch and in rank. Another reason for my opinion on this matter is because in an orchestra the violin is always the concertmaster. A concertmaster is the leading first-violin player in some orchestras. The violin is also always the soloist who stands up, while the rest of the orchestra sits down. According to the article, “10 Most Difficult Musical Instruments to Learn (Ranked)”, “The violin which is the smallest high pitched string instrument is also known as a fiddle. The violin is not only difficult to hold in the perfect position when you are playing it, but it also lacks frets to guide your fingers on the surface. This musical instrument requires precision to produce the proper tone. The violin requires you to be very precise.” This highlights the fact that violins are a very hard instrument to learn, as you need to be very precise and careful as you play. An article called, “What Are the Benefits of Playing the Violin? You Might be Surprised!” they say that, “Many studies have been conducted on the benefits of playing the violin or some

other musical instrument. A recent study by the McMaster University’s Institute for Music and the Mind found that musical training, even one year’s worth, positively impacts the memory and attention span.” This is very beneficial as having a long memory and attention span can help you with everyday things, like memorizing your schedule or studying for a test. In December 2014, the Journal of American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry released Dr. James Hudziak’s findings on enhanced brain development, and how playing a violin can help children battle psychological disorders. This means that playing the violin can improve your thinking. According to the same article, “The benefits of playing the violin are also social. Not only does it provide a conversational point, but young children gain self-discipline from repeated practice. There is also amazing benefits from having something in their lives that they can control. Learning to play violin can build self-reliance, self-esteem, and self-awareness - qualities which make them well-liked and well-adjusted.” In conclusion, I believe that violins are the best string instruments, because they are challenging yet they are also very beneficial as they can improve your memory and is better for your mental function and health. I urge you if you are picking a string instrument to learn, pick the violin, unless you already know it.

Book Reviews

By Lucas Rhode

Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy (Series) Douglas Adams
The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy series is a laugh. It has many adventures and it is hilarious. I won’t reveal any spoilers, but I will tell you that it is fantastic. In fact the very first thing said in the second book is, “In the beginning the Universe was created. This has made a lot of people very angry and been widely regarded as a bad move.” Another great and funny quote in the Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy series is, “For a moment, nothing happened. Then, after a second or so, nothing continued to happen.” This just shows that the Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy series is hilarious and you should go read it now.

Harry Potter (Series) by J.K Rowling
The Harry Potter series is a favorite among many and the series contains a lot of symbolism. The Harry Potter books are one of the most detailed books I’ve ever read. The books are very inspiring, imaginative and clever. I highly recommend the books, as the last Harry Potter book is my favorite novel.

What If?: Serious Scientific Answers to Absurd Hypothetical Questions by Randall Munroe
I highly recommended this book, as it is very informative and is a great page-turner. This books is hilarious and has informative answers to questions you probably never thought to ask yourself. Some question the book asks are, “What if I took a swim in a spent-nuclear-fuel pool,” and, “Are fire tornadoes possible?” If you love science, math, or you think of interesting questions like those, then you should definitely read this book.

Percy Jackson (Series) by Rick Riordan
The Percy Jackson series is about a demigod named Percy Jackson and is hilarious, clever and adventurous. It informs a lot about Greek Mythology and it tells a lot about Greek myths. Rick Riordan also wrote other books like *The Trials of Apollo* and *The Kane Chronicles*.