

### The Day It Lived and Died in My Heart

The sun had just risen, without a cloud in the sky. Of course, the child did not know this at the time; he was still fast asleep in his bed. A few hours later, he awoke to the crisp sounds of bacon in the kitchen. The daily routine ensued. The child ate his breakfast over an unimportant conversation with his mother. Shortly afterwards, he was taken to the local kindergarten, where he would learn new things and enjoy it.

On a particular day, the child was pleasantly surprised by the symbols on the board. They were not the usual scribbles that he knew you could combine and make new ones; they seemed more... complicated. As the instructor progressed through the lesson, the child, like many of the others in the classroom, stared in awe. These glyphs stood together, side by side, worked as a team to deliver ideas:

*C      A      T*

*CAT*

*D      O      G*

*DOG*

They echoed through the room, using the children as mediums to move freely in the air. Over many weeks, the child learned how the teams combined into organized units, allowing them to take on greater tasks of communication:

*The cow jumped over the moon*

And, surely enough, the day arrived when he had to create his own units. With pencil in hand and paper below, his imagination ran wild. The child transformed his thoughts into words, and the creative process sparked an inner desire. Word by word, sentence by sentence, his stories and thoughts knew much abundance.

*i love mom and dad*

The sun shined brightly.

...

The English teacher sat in the far corner of the room, reading a book while the timer counted down. The subtle sound of graphite raged about as students finished their works. Among them, the boy wrote away, with the same enthusiasm he had kept over the years. His current endeavor, like those that came before, offered him a world of his own creation, a world of protection, a world of safety. Where words of the mouth would fail him among his peers, words of the hand would never betray him:

*... The sand crept between his feet as he walked along the shore. The night sky welcomed his presence with twinkling starlight, and the water washed his worries away...*

DING!

Time was up. One by one, the papers were collected. The boy turned in his masterpiece and went about the rest of his day. On the following day, his work returned to him, with marks of applause and satisfaction. His creativity had rewarded him another good grade, and with a certain reassurance that what he wrote was worth writing. And why wouldn't it be? After all, they were free to write anything they wanted, so long as they inserted proper metaphors, similes, and personifications.

The sun had reached its apex, joining a small group of creeping clouds.

...

This time, it was different. He stared at his paper, then back at the prompt. The forcefulness of the task at hand left his mind in a maze. *That approach won't work... no, that doesn't match the prompt... no... no... What the hell...*

The sun had fallen behind the clouds, and more were incoming.

...

*"But why does that matter?"*

"Well, for starters, you need to give readers a reason to read your piece. The intricate techniques that you're learning are critical to give meaning to your work."

*"No, I mean, why does hiding the meaning matter?"*

"... I'm not sure I understand. The entire point of Literature is to convey a message to an audience, and to properly express those ideas, you need to incorporate the literary techniques we have already mentioned."

*"You see, that's the thing; if you want to say something to an audience, why would you go through the trouble of hiding it? If you wrap a meaning with a metaphor within narrative and then scatter that narrative randomly, how can you expect a reader to understand exactly what you mean?"*

"It's not like that; Literature is an art, and using those artful skills inspires critical thinking, and then critical analysis on the reader's part."

*"... But those two statements now contradict each other, how can you expect..."*

"Look, I'm done arguing. This is the way things are, and BLAH BLAH BLAH BLAH."

“...”

“BLAH BLAH BLAH BLAH BLAH BLAH?”

“*Yeah.*”

“*BLAH BLAH BLAH*”

“*Okay. Thanks.*”

The sun was now setting behind the horizon, not that you could tell by the cloudy sky.