THE MORTALS 2024

## HOTDOG-EATING CONTEST & VERMONT'S DEVASTATING FLOODS

## Timmy Zhang

From a well-seasoned steak steaming deliciously to the indigenous Chinese dish with sizzling fried tofu coated and a golden layer of pumpkin pulp to even the Lays classics chips, a perfect blend of saltiness and crunchiness, I love them all, indulging them in real life and pleasant dreams.

Then, Nathan's Hot Dog Eating Contest champion, Mr. Clark, goes against taste buds when voraciously gobbling hotdogs almost as swiftly as a grizzly bear. Is this "foodie-approved?"

It's fine. The competition is a testament to the winners' endurance and, according to the article, a "stomach-centric" American legacy from the 1970s. We all don't eat food just for the sake of surviving. Food could be rewarding for an empty stomach after a hard day's work, the special burrito or peking duck as our cultural legacies and identities, the Mona Lisa elaborated with the skills of a master chief. As we get embroiled in controversies and conflicts - bring everyone a heartening meal so we sit down and talk peacefully. These purposes mix, intertwine, but are what we are made up of.

A bottle of instant-full elixir pleases only huntergathers. Food is not overrated in any way, and it will forever resonate in our memories, belly-wise, flavorwise, and other-wise.

Blindfolded and immersed in his headphones' sweet rhythm, a man strolls forward. As he walks, he detects some bustling sounds, then some distant cries, but he presses on, undeterred. Without warning, he is thrust violently into the air, his body distorted by the car slamming into him.

We are that man. Climate change is the car.

Once in Lincoln, Vermont, couples lounged on armchairs, savoring ice-cold beers. Youngsters swiped

through tiny phone screens while playfully dropping "LMAOO" on the comment section of their 97th Youtube Video of the day. On Sunday, the morning looked great. On Monday, grinning people asked, "How was your day?" Tuesday, houses and roads and tree trunks were submerged under up to nine inches of water. A storm struck this capital on July 13th, 2023.

I was struck with unpleasant feelings and thoughts while reading this news in the New York Times. I used to brush off deforestation and melting icebergs while naively searching for "100 reasons why climate change isn't dangerous." But reality shattered my dreams. In my hometown, virtually no one ventures outside to experience the scorching heat. The sky above me has become visibly grayer and grimmer. A relative of mine suffered from a heat stroke for the first time. It's undeniable—things are happening.

The clock is ticking. Embrace eco-friendly transport, team up with local environmental protectors, and opt for fans over ACs. Go green now!