Young Authors 2021

**From the High Five! Camp - Writing Instructor Monica Michell**

**Sarah M., Author**

**These are from Sarah M., entering 9th grade in the fall. The haiku poem goes with the collage. She also added music when she shared this piece in class. It was stunning!**

**HAIKU**

A bird spreads its wings...

Swoosh! Into the great beyond

A new beginning.

**DIAMONTE ANTONYM POEM**

Kindness

passionate, thoughtful

appreciate, admire, affect

compassion, benevolence, affection, encouragement

wrecking, impulsing, captivating

heartless, relentless

Cruelty

**Brynn G., Author**

**Brynn G. is entering the 8th grade in the fall. She chose to submit this short story inspired by the backstory she wrote for Miss Muffet, after we read and discussed the nursery rhyme in class.**

**SHORT STORY**

(Little Miss Muffet

Sat on a tuffet,

Eating her curds and whey;

Along came a spider,

Who sat down beside her,

And frightened Miss Muffet away.)

            The country was certainly a change. Uninterrupted stars illuminated a sky she never had seen so much of, and… were those actual crickets? “Hah!” she whispered in amazement. Eighty years. Eighty years of unperturbed and domestic life had led her places like this scarcely, and usually on nights when nary a star could be seen, but now everything would change.

            No more Miss Muffet of Muffet manor, the strange not-quite-widow. No more Miss Muffet, the businessman's pathetic, useless daughter. No more Miss Muffet, the richest old woman in town who hoards her money like a dragon, never helping, barely showing.

            And, as much as the cool night air made her want to deny it, say she would have a tearful reunion if she was to return to that city, she would not be missed.

            Well, soon she wouldn’t even be a *Miss!* She chuckled, still in a state of shock, at her own… what was it called, pun? She believed so.

            She bounced a bit in the backseat of the carriage, the horse hooves clopping surely ahead as they continued on. The road seemed neverending, like a tape that just kept playing over and over again.

            However, as one should know, the good thing about things ‘seeming’ one way is it is rarely so, and long before forever the road ended at a small farm, something of a paradise in an ever-stretching field. .

            “This is where you’re going Ma’am?” asked the carriage driver, a hint of caution in his tone, which made Miss Muffet flash a prideful smile at the home.

            “Yes indeed. Thank you very much, I have left the payment in the backseat. Might be enough to buy you some new shoes.” Yes, that was perhaps rude to say, but she had paid him generously and frankly wanted him to leave as soon as possible. Hopefully, the extra money would not only buy him shoes but also keep him quiet about the wealthiest not-quite-a-widow getting dropped off at a random little farm.

            The carriage driver picked up the bag of payment cautiously, peeking inside and gasping, before waving cheerfully at her and driving away.

            What he didn’t see as he sped was the man emerging from the darkness of the cabin, who reached out and hugged Miss Muffet for a very long time before leading her inside.

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            The house was rustic and cozy, atop a small hill and next to a pond. It was also a place Miss Muffet had been before, though in secret and under the cover of the night. The darkness outside right now was not a conscious choice, but rather a result of the long period of time it took her to pack up her most important things, knowing of the limited space in this place, which was like a birdhouse compared to the lavish circumstances she had grown accustomed to.

            Something was different this time, however. The loft had a sheet covering it, why was that? What was… why would…

            She climbed the stairs, grasping to the rail for dear life, preventing her knees from giving way. The white sheets billowed gently from the air coming through the window she had seen the last time she had visited this place.

            The makeshift curtains flew open, Miss Muffet pushing them aside, gasping a moment later. She had expected another woman, or some gross animal pushed up here for her benefit, or perhaps a nuclear weapon or something, but not this.

            A bedroom was set up, the moonlight pouring through the windows onto the dresser and… where had he gotten a dresser that nice? She sobbed, just a bit, out of joy or surprise she didn’t know. Who did this man think he was, making her feel so confused like this?

            *Your future husband,* a voice reminded her.

            She grumbled back at the voice.

            And a hand was on her shoulder, asking how she liked it, and tears were in her eyes because it was perfect, everything was perfect, after so long of feeling desperately like it should feel perfect when it didn’t.

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            “Grab here and.. Nope!” He moved her hand to the proper place, making sure not to hurt the cow. “You pull here. You’re trying to milk it, remember? Not just aggravate it?”

            She sighed, let go, and folded over on herself, her arms hitting the tuffet she was sitting on.

            Matthew sighed in synch. “Okay, okay,” He said chuckling, his white hair swaying in the wind. “You want some curds and whey?”

            “No.”

            “Eat some curds and whey.”

            She took a spoonful and glared at him, before stuffing it in her mouth and swallowing quickly. “I would like you to know that I am a very wealthy woman, and if I was not *ridiculously*in love with you, you would *not*be able to boss me around, good sir.”

            He smirked. “But you *are*in love with me, so I can do what I want.”

            She stared at him for a long five seconds, before flinging a spoonful of curds at him, the wind carrying it over until it hit the cow.

            Childish? Yes. However, that was the magic of this place. She was no longer Miss Muffet, the not-quite-a-widow, with a boyfriend half her life who passed, who was a dragon, hoarding her wealth, shielding it and herself from view. She was now the married Ms. Muffet, of a small farm far away, with a husband with a smile bright as the sun and oh so truthful, and her words held truth and her heart light.

            “Don’t look down.”

            “Wha… Ahhh!” She jumped up, throwing her hands in the air, her whole body flailing away from the spider.

            Matthew laughed a hearty chuckle as he reached down and swatted away the arachnid.

            Ms. Muffet glared at him with what should have been fury, but she supposed the midday autumn breeze must’ve blown that away as well. Her grey hair was pulled sloppily into a loose bun. How unacceptable might that have been, a simple three months ago, when the world was still full of boringly familiar smells mixed with tired and sad memories, a simple three months ago when the breeze did not sing to her as it did now

            And she chuckled once again, and the sound was lost in the breeze, but the meaning was not, as it never would be.

            *Little Ms. Muffet was home.*

**Rhea G., Author**

**Rhea G. will be a 6th grader this school year. Her keen insight and her love of the natural world are revealed in both her poetry and her short story featured here.**

**SHORT STORY**

**Wolves Vs. Human**

Sometimes life can be a rollercoaster. But what if that roller coaster takes you somewhere else? Perhaps it takes you on a little trip down a never-ending alley. Hi, my name is Annalise and I’m fourteen years old. I’m just a normal kid, except for one crucial fact. I’m not human.

It’s hard to describe exactly what I am. I look like a human, I sound like a human, but I don’t think like a human. By that, I mean, our minds are different. We know things humans don’t...which makes us wonder what we are. For example, when Newton discovered gravity, our species laughed. We discovered it centuries ago. Actually, ‘discovered’ isn’t the right term. We always had it in the back of our minds. It’s hard to describe, but once the subject is brought up, I say, “Oh yeah, I already knew that, you didn’t?”

We live on the same planet, Earth, but humans haven’t discovered us yet. We could be anywhere, really. Maybe one of your best friends. As you might’ve guessed, I aced school. By the age I talked and walked, I knew everything you needed to know about life. So, I’m retired now. I can’t exactly decide if being too smart is a good thing. There’s nothing to learn. I always found it rather interesting when someone had a, shall we say, a lightbulb moment.

Today I was walking down a sloppy road alone, the bleak, frigid night air stinging my face. I was thinking, which I usually don’t do. You may be wondering: what's the point of education? The point of thinking for me? There’s something I’ve always wondered, and that’s how our minds work. Data shows our minds like humans’, but we know that’s not true. I guess you could say we have an inner eye; a sixth sense. While musing on this sudden, but complicated thought, I heard a deep growl beside me. Whirling around, I was side to side with a full-grown wolf. It leered at me,

supposedly in a taunting manner. It was a Eurasian wolf, which is the most dangerous species in the world. He looked devilish, his glazing brown eyes hinted with red, piercing through me. His thick fur was mangled and sprouting, disoriented. We were standing on a patch of grassy land, and it was deserted, except for a couple of shacks tucked around the corner. The wolf edged closer, showing off his gnarly teeth. Frozen in horror, I could do nothing but gape. That’s when he pounced, and that’s when I ran.

“HELLP!” I screeched, but no sound was heard but the crickets chirping a somber melody.

Knowing the shortcuts, I bolted off into the darkness. Right after I left, the wolf let out a mournful howl, perhaps to call his pack. Just a little farther… I urged myself. I caught a fleeting glimpse of the wolf pack at my heels. They were probably going to outrun me. I could hear the clacking of their paws hitting the road. I boosted my running speed. Then, my mind wandered. In a good way, I mean. What are wolves afraid of?

I came to an abrupt halt and stood there. The wolves backed away, then advanced slowly toward me, as though afraid. They growled at me, ferociously. I growled louder, raised my hands into a claw at them, and then rose my full height, and started whacking the crisp air.

“GO AWAY!” I shouted.

As though paralyzed, the wolves darted into the wilderness. I smiled. Maybe not being normal wasn’t such a bad thing

**From Killeen ISD's Young Writers Camp  -  Writing Instructor Tracy Kriese**

**Calleigh, Author**

**Calleigh attends Killeen Middle School.**

**POEM**

Just because I’m 12
Doesn’t mean I’m irresponsible
Doesn’t mean I’m not smart
Doesn’t mean I’m immature

I know what I’m doing.

**From Taylor ISD's Young Writers Camp  -  Writing Instructor Tracy Kriese**

**Lisa, Author**

**Lisa attends Taylor Middle School.**

Empty chairs waiting to be filled
The library smells of books on books

The sounds of footsteps echo in the bare halls
So alone with my pencil in my hand

Taylor Middle School is like a blank canvas
Waiting to be painted on by teens and their stories

Oh the adventures just waiting to be unlocked