

“Everyone must learn before they die, what they are running from, what they’re running to, and why.”

—James Thurber

Teacher’s Note:

Inside this chapbook are the reactions to images that I posted on a whiteboard in the classroom. On the back of each image (Most of the images I cutout of *The New Yorker* magazine.) is a set of directions that are mostly suggestions or writing exercises, but I encourage them to own their stories.

They were given twenty minutes to write these stories—a feat in itself. So these stories aren’t perfect. Once the twenty minutes was up, each student read their story out loud. Then they typed them, so they appear here as they were typed by them. I have *not* edited them.

Some of the pictures on the board get more attention than others, which is a study in itself. Most are very creative with much insight. They possess judgment. Sure, slightly skewed at times. It’s offbeat and quirky. But hopefully this exercise taught them to think about their decisions in life. The good must continue and the bad must be dealt with, in spite of the consequences. This is my hope.

—Robert Stofel, Teacher

MØCHA BY JASMINÈ



I am a kitten, and my name is Mocha. I had a great family. I am black, white, and gray. My best friend was a black mouse, and his name was Clown. His name was Clown because he was so funny. Nobody knew that he was in the house. He only came out at night when everyone was asleep. Well, one night the butler came in

the living room, and he saw Clown and me playing and joking around. The butler killed him, and then he kicked and hit me. Well, this is the third year without him, and I still look back at time when I used to splash him with mud. I sometimes forgot and I didn't wash my paws. I tracked mud through the mansion, and they thought it was an alley cat.

MY SECRET BY JESSICA



Hey, my name is Cody. My sister name is Jessica. My brother Cody is keeping my secret from mom and dad. My secret is that I had a boy come over. My brother found out because he came in my room to find Tevin and me sitting on my bed talking. He ran out. So I ran out after him to make sure that he didn't go tell mom and dad because I dint want to get into trouble. So now, I'm talking to my brother about Tevin and me. I'm trying to let him know that we are nothing but friends. That way he may know what I'm talking about a little more. Because he just a little boy and he don't really understand as much as I do. So now, I feel bad because he has to help me keep my secret from mom and dad. I know it's wrong but I care to tell them because I don't know what they my do. I don't want my family looking at me like I'm bad person or something because I know I not. So know it's the end of the week and I can't do it any more so I told my mom and dad because I'm tired of keeping secret from my family so know they are mad at me for not tell them when it first happen. But mom told me that it would be ok. But I was grounded.

THE SECRET BY JESSICA O



Its Friday I plan on doing something really fun. I told three of my friends to come & we came up with something to do. Well my mother approved of them coming over. That night we was talking about things we did that no one else did and we had to do it. Well my little brother James was listening which I didn't have any idea. Well one girl said something about sneaking out and going to a club so we all got dressed we looked ghetto fabulous. Even the white girl acted ghetto. She was walking out my door and caught y little brother by the door I told him to keep quit shut. We all headed to the club RTL. We all ended something not planned 2 went to jail and me and abby woke up because on a bench the next morning because of number 5 my mother was happening to drive by and she stopped and I jumped in abby chose to walk I felt so bad and told her she said average teen stuff.

Love through Text Messasins By Debbie



There was this girl named Anna that lived in the forest with no one or nothing except her cell phone. All she had on her cell phone was texting and nothing. For many months now she had been texting this guy named Eric and they had fell in love through text messaging. They had never spoken to each other at all. The only way they talked was texting. One day Anna was walking through the forest and tripped and fell sending her phone flying through the air."Oh no," she cried."I can't find my phone. How will I talk to my prince charming Eric?"she exclaimed. She roamed the forest and refused to go home until she found her phone. In the late evening, she was getting ready to give up and go home. When she turned around to go home, she bumped into her prince charming Eric. He was holding Anna's phone. When he handed her phone to her, she began texting him and explaining to him what had happened.

WHY DID HE DO IT JESSICA O.



Day by day, a tear shed from his face. He knew it was over with because he knew he was wrong. He knew he was going to be found guilty for rape. He feel bad for it he knew it was wrong but the feeling was telling him something

else. It's been 20 long days. He's crying for my forgiveness wishing he never had done it. He realizes he has not only hurt one person but he also hurt his soon to be girl friend jasmine. His lies toward her and turning her against me....now she not my friend no more.....the court date has came up I'm sitting in the court room the judge is looking at me and he turn his head to the door opening he walk in crying and hoping I forgive him but I just can't I can't take no more punches that people are putting on me it my time to shine they give him 20 to life he turns and looks at me one more time and tell me he sorry but yet I been raped to many times for this.....

Then I wake up to realize I was dreaming the whole time. I don't have the guts in the world to report anybody for the way they treat me, so I suffer deep down inside maybe this will be that last time hopefully three is my lucky number.

TIREK BY DANIEL



I am a tiger I weigh total a 900 pounds. My paws are the size of a computer screen. I have large razor sharp teeth. My name is Tirek. I am a vegetarian. My owner hates that I'm the only tiger who doesn't like meat. He is a good master. He is just confused and doesn't know how to handle the fact that I'm a vegetarian. He puts me in a cage with nothing in it except a bowl of water and a pile of pork. He thinks after so long I will become a carnivore. He is correct. The first time I tried it the taste just blew my mind. I ate so much that I up chucked it all out. After that, I somehow managed to realize what I was missing out on. So now, I'm a meat lover. THE END

The Big Green Blob

by Jessica



Hey, my name is E.T. I'm a big green blob I am somewhat a mean blob. I like to take people were they've never been before. I sometimes love to scare them because they don't know where they're going.

My name is Billy Bob Joe. I'm the man driving the car. I saw this blob walking and I thought to myself, *Should I help him or what?*

Yes, I know what you all may be thinking, is he going to help that blob? Well, you're wrong. So I stopped to give him a ride and he told me where he needed to go. The name of the road is Dead Man Road.

So I say, "Ok I'll take you there as long as it isn't too far away from where I'm going."

"It's not," said E.T. "Well, we're here."

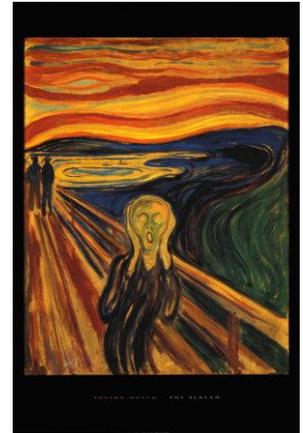
"Thanks for the ride," said E.T.

"You're so welcome," said Billy Bob Joe.

So Billy Bob Joe went home to his family and friends and lived happily from there on out.

ESCAPE BY STEPHANIE

Running as fast as I can. Squirk! I slide as I turn the corner and run to a room I've never seen before. The gigantic house has cracked windows dead trees and a cemetery. I look as though it should have lightning behind it. Stupid! Why the heck did you go in the house? From the second I entered the house I've been looking for an exit as I ran from the man that said he was my dad. He had a piece of wood in one hand and a mask on his face. He laughed as he saw the terror in my eyes. I ran as fast as I could. My heart feels like it is about to burst but I can't stop running. What will happen? Will I die? Will I ever see my friends again? Please someone give me an answer.



Fates Tricks By Stephanie

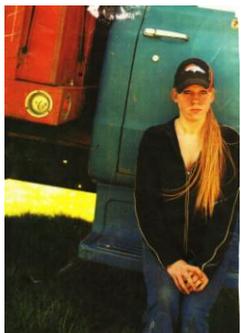


Swish Swash Swish Swash!
The waves gently rock the gigantic black ship as I admired the moon from the crow's nest. It was a full moon tonight. Sitting in the crow's nest about a hundred feet in the air a star caught my eye as it fell through the sky and landed in the water. A ripple of waves bombarded the boat and shook the boat. As the first wave hit the boat, I lost my balance and nearly fell out of the crow's nest. Luckily, I had been holding on to a piece of rope finally the waves faded and I thought to myself about the star that had fallen. It made me think how just as the star had fallen from the sky never to shine again we would all die and never see the people we love again. A tear slowly ran down my face as I thought that I had nearly fallen to my death but for some reason fate had chosen me to live instead. But why? Why am I so important that I should have the chance to live when at that moment I should've died?

Wild Horses By Debbie



On a foggy cloudy night in mid October a black stallion named Henry was running wild through the woods. Henry was looking for a companion because he was tired of being alone all the time. Henry thought to himself "I'll never find a companion out here in the dark foggy forest maybe I should just give up." About the time, he finished his thought he came up on an open field. Henry didn't see any other horses out there, so he decided he would lie down and take a rest and look some more in a little while. As soon as Henry closed his eyes, he heard movement out in the field but he didn't get up to see he thought it was an animal roaming around no chance of another horse. Henry heard it getting closer to him and when he opened eyes, he opened them to see a light brown and gold horse named Isabella. Isabella was looking for a companion as well because she was tired of being alone to. Isabella lay down beside him and after a few minutes, Henry and Isabella fell in love and never parted from each other after that night.



I ran away from home with 10 thousand dollars from my bank account my boyfriend begged me not to go I told him I can't deal with my family anymore and on that I'm three months I'm three months pregnant by you Teontea. Jessica I'm not letting you go by yourself I go get some money and well leave at midnight meet me at holiday inn. Till then I'm sitting here with a lot on my mind I want back home

to drop off a letter that said

"I'm gone and out of ya'll life's be good & don't let the bed bugs bite.....lol don't worry I'm safe I promise see you when I see you.

I made it there and I see Teontea car. I jump in and he ask where we going to go I said ATL we talked about how we gonna deal with the things on own we gonna get a one room apartment until the baby come I'm get a babysitting job and you work for a factory since you 18 and technically you didn't run away.

6 months later comes we have twin a boy named Anthony Teontae Jamar Ray and a girl named Promise Miracle Ray. I attend job core become a CSI Teontea join the military I'm depressed free I'm glad I ran from my problems so I could solve my life.

Wisdom And Sapphire By Rodney



One day there came a tiger who was locked up in a cage. He was very lonely but one day another tiger came along to cage. They male tiger's name was

Wisdom and the female's name was Sapphire. Wisdom was mesmerized by Sapphire's beauty. He knew he fell for at love at first sight. Their love at first sight had spread quickly, but they hated where they was at. People starring at us in fright like we were crazy animals. But one day Sapphire fell hard for Wisdom and the same happened for Wisdom as well but then one day they tried to separate and it hurt them really bad and Wisdom was so emotional about leaving Sapphire. Even though Wisdom hated the cage he'd risk one last night with her, but it was too late Wisdom had to leave...Sapphire cried and so did Wisdom and they have parted from each other knowing they had broken hearts and shed tears...

ESCAPE BY DAN



I am a turtle I'm three hundred years old and I have successfully escaped from a ship. The reason of my escape was the fact that the people on the ship were trying to make a meal of me. I

just didn't like that to much so I booked it out of there as fast as I could. I'm planning on hanging around this island for while. Eat and build my strength up so I can have well enough energy for the long journey back home in panama. It's been three days now and I'm fat and ready to leave. I have made a raft for protection from sharks. It's been four days now and I can see the panama shore. I happy to be able to see my family again. Will my family be as happy to see me as I am them. Find out later. lol

THE DARKNESS

BY CODY

I look into my reflection in the water dripping downward thinking about my life and how life drips



downward and then i see my dark side looking back at me grinning so evil and to think i was once

something like that and can turn back into that that thing that i see it cant be real it just cant how evil it looks how scary it is to think i could be that as i move closer i can feel myself changing the water pulsing and felling as it reaches out for me then the water turns into darkness and hatred and i try to resist it but the creatures gaze lures me in no as i splash as the darkness grabs me and pulls me in i resist but its gaze is just to powerful then as i sit in a room the floor is so cold and so quiet then i hear a voice i cant understand it at first but when i do it is the darkness saying your mine now.....

THE DOOR BY CODY



I see myself walking down this long hallway as if it never ends then as of a split second it does end then I am surrounded by a million doors but then out of all these doors one is luring me

in calling me in like isn't just calling my name but calling my soul and tugging at my soul I try to resist but the more I pull the more the enriching sound pulls me in and as I fight and scream my way loose it is as a never-ending battle and im losing and when the door opens and pulls me in and I hear that final shut of that door I sit in a dark space all alone with no one going crazy and hearing nothing but my mind talking to me come to me come to me come to me then the rest of me goes dark.....

TOM AND JERRY BY JESSICA D.



Hey my name is Tom I'm the cat. I'm Jerry the mouse. Tom and me are not friends. Tom loves to make me sad and is always running after me, and I just don't know what to do. So one day I ran across the room to where Tom was sleeping and I scared him and ran back in my hole. It made Tom mad and he tried to get me to come out so he could eat me, but I wouldn't do it because I knew what he was trying to do. So one day I was with my friend Bob and Tom seen us, so Tom chased us. But he was too slow. So the next day he saw me getting something to eat, and he came over and talked to me.

"I'm sorry," said Tom.

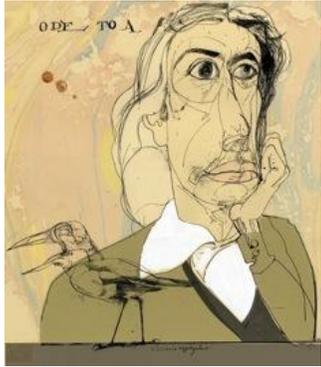
THE RATMAN BY DANIEL



My name is Alberto. Every night I sleep in the sewer lines because I have no where else to go. I awaken every night to find myself covered in rats. Who are trying to eat me alive. The weird part is that when I yell they do nothing but when I tell them to do something, they do it. They call me Ratman. The rats do what ever I tell them to do. Because when they eat parts of me, I heal quickly. So I am basically their food source well as there boss. I protect New York from the evil doings of Fat Woman. She tries to eat up every thing at night and it's my job to keep my rats from letting her make everyone else starve. Together we protect New York City.

The Raven Man By

Jessica D.



Hey, my name is bill. The man's name is Brandon. It seems like ever were I go he is right there. Sometimes I thank to myself is he real or just in my mine. I see you "said", Brandon. I look around to find no one there. I see you Brandon said one more time. I looked the other way and still no

one is there to be found. Then I hear him say you're nobody. You're no good. Why are you here go a way no one want you. But what I want to know is why are you following me. What do you want? How do you know I walk into a door? What do you want from me? Just tell me and I'll go get it for you. Just tell me. I see someone but can't see him or her too good. He tells me that he wants \$10,000. So I said I'd go get it. Just give me time to go get it, and I'll be back. So I come back with \$10,000, and he said, "I'll still see you when no one else will."

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