To Our Readers,

This issue of Accents, PCCC’s online magazine, showcases ESL students' outstanding written and artistic work. Many of the submissions were inspired by novels that the students read like *Freak the Mighty*, by Rodman Philbrick, and *The Giver*, by Lois Lowry. Our students’ responses to the readings were so impressive that one of the authors, Lois Lowry, replied to their letters, as you can see in the section dedicated to *The Giver*. The entire college community can be proud of what our ESL students have accomplished.

In an effort to acknowledge top writers, submissions for each issue are juried by a committee of full-time faculty. Awards are given in the following categories:

- Best Narrative
- Best Non-Narrative
- Best Fiction
- Best Poem
- Best Art Composition

Helena Holmes
Editor-in-Chief/Layout & Design

Margaret Holland
& Ana Paula Lawrence
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GO TO PAGE 43 FOR SUBMISSION GUIDELINES
Thank you to ...

Fall 2007 Selection Committee
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Passaic County Community College ESL Department & PCCC’S contributing writers and artists
The Authors

Narrative

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*My Origin*, Teresa Rodriguez, pgs. 7-10

*Receiving an Unusual Gift*, Krystyna Sak, pgs. 11-12

*My Favorite Place in My Heart*, Krystyna Sak, pg. 13

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Cristian Rodriguz, pg. 17
_Freak the Mighty_ character drawings and descriptions:
Jorge Luis Estrella, pgs. 32, 33, 38, 41
Ana Morato, pgs. 34, 37, 39, 40
Adriana Raymundo, pgs. 35, 36, 38, 39
Flowers to my Mother

The most important thing that I have bought is flowers for my mother Eunice. I’ve always given something to my mother on Mother’s Day with my father’s money, but in 1999, I wanted to save money to buy a gift for her. I had been saving money for almost 2 months. The day before Mother’s Day, I bought artificial flowers with the money that I had saved and I gave them to my mother on Mother’s Day. I can remember the happy face that my mother had this day and the feeling of pride when my father told her that I had bought the flowers with my own money. I felt happy that day I saw my mother’s eyes shine like a sun. She kept the flowers for almost a year until my nephew threw them on the floor and broke them. I like to give things to my mother, but this gift is the most important to me because I bought it with my own money.
My Origin

I would like to share the story of my life. I was born in a small town in the Dominican Republic named Yabanal. My mother was a single mother with three children. She fell in love with my father, who was married at that time to another woman. He was the type of man who liked to mess around with a lot of women at the same time. When my mother informed my father that she was pregnant, he suggested an abortion because he couldn’t take the responsibility of having a baby out of marriage, not even to buy the necessary supplies for a baby like formula, diapers, clothes, medicine, etc.

After my birth, my mother was devastated. She did not have enough resources to support and raise me. The house where we were living was too small, did not have electricity and that was one of the biggest problems in our town. It was also hard to find a job and get money to buy food. There were times when her neighbors brought her eggs, avocados and bananas that grew in their backyards. That situation was really difficult for her. She couldn’t afford to send me to school and that wasn’t the life that she wanted for me. At this point she was thinking about giving me away, but the neighbors told her that a child is a blessing from heaven and can be raised with water and a piece of bread.

My mother looked for a person who wanted a new baby who could give me a better life. Finally, my father told my birthmother about his sister who already had a boy, and the doctor just told her that she wasn’t able to have another baby. My father’s sister wanted to have a girl, and she knew that my birthmother was giving me away. A couple of days later I was with my father’s sister, who took me in when I was three months old. She became a new mother to me. My new mother became so excited because she finally had the daughter she always wanted. She ran to the store and bought me a lot of clothes, toys and all things that I needed. I was the primary attention of everyone in the family. Everybody was fighting for me because I was the little girl that was missing in their house. My brother was happy because he always asked his mother for a little sister who he could play with. She always took care of me like a diamond; she never wanted anything to happen to me. She didn’t trust anybody; she always protected me and gave me the love that she would give a real daughter. There was no difference between me and my brother to her. After seven years living with my mother she decided to move to the United States for a better future for me and my brother. My mother brought my brother with her and left me with her sister who became my third mother.

(Continued on next page)
Seven years after living with my second mother, I moved to her sister’s house. She already had five children. They were a poor family. They lived a simple life without luxury but they were happy. The husband of my mother’s sister died when her last child was born. Her husband died while he was crossing a dangerous street. A truck hit him and he died instantly. After that my mother’s sister became very depressed. She didn’t want to continue her life. However, my five step brothers and I gave her the strength to live on. After that she decided to sell Dominican food, like empanadas, shakes etc. She sold them every night in front of our house. I felt proud of her for the strength that she had to move on.

I didn’t know the story of my life until I was ten years old. When I was fifteen years old, my birthmother had cancer and died. I went to the funeral and everyone from her family was crying. I was only the one who wasn’t because to me she was like a stranger and I didn’t feel it in my heart to care about her. I remember one of my relatives came and started yelling at me saying that I didn’t have feelings about what was happening. However, I was really disappointed from the bottom of my heart. I felt bad even though I didn’t grow up with my birthmother. I could feel her death because I wouldn’t be in this world if she didn’t give birth to me.

When I was sixteen years old, I was the kind of girl who was alone most of the time. I never felt the love of a father. I never got the security that a father could give me because he was never there with me. In school when all the girls were talking about their fathers, I always tried to change the conversation because I never had anything to say about my father. Now that I’m old enough, I understand how important it is to have a father. When I get married and have my own babies I want to make sure that their father will always be with them. As my father left my mother when she got pregnant, I always had the fear of falling in love with someone. I always feel afraid that the same situation could happen to me.

In my teenage life lots of things happened to me such as an accident, danger and someone almost tried to rape me when I was nine years old. I was a girl that never wanted to stay in the house; I always wanted to go out with my friends. However, I couldn’t go anywhere because my sister’s mother was very strict. One day I asked permission to visit my older sister. My mother told me, “Okay, just for two days”. I remember my cousin and I went to the yard to pull down some cherries from the tree. I went to the back of the house to get a stick for the tree. While I was crossing the house, the housekeeper threw some hot water in the back of the house and, the hot water fell on my body. I felt like my whole body was shrinking and burning. I couldn’t think of anything, and I ran to my older sister crying. When my sister saw my body was totally red, she called a taxi. She took me to the hospital where the doctor put some lotion on the burned area. The next day the burn became worse. I couldn’t even wear clothes. The weather in my country is always hot, so the burn made me feel uncomfortable. I still have the scar on my body. I will never forget this moment. When I was eighteen years old, I was still living in the Dominican Republic, in 10th grade in high school. One day I received a brown paper from immigration. It was a letter from The United States saying that I had a permanent visa. It was a surprise for me because I was desperate to come to this country.

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I arrived in the United States and I was very emotional because everything looked beautiful and perfect. However, after a couple of months I realized how hard life is here. When I started looking for a job, all the jobs that I found required English and I didn’t get hired. After few months, I finally found a job in a factory and I remember the salary they gave me was $5.15 per hour. I started working with people from different countries, but everyone’s language was Spanish. My job there was making wooden blackboards and every twenty minutes my supervisor was telling me that I was “working slow, you need to work faster”. Each day I worked like an animal as other people did in the job. Every day I came to my house tired. At the end of the week it was the pay day. My salary was 163.15 dollars every weekend. I had to pay 30 dollars every week for transportation because I didn’t have a car or a drivers license. I also had to give to my mother 50.00 dollars for rent and food. As you can see, my paychecks were 83.00 dollars every week. I was at this job for one year. At the end of the year they gave me a .10 cent raise. I was very disappointed with my job and I didn’t want to continue working there anymore. I spoke with my mother. I told her that I needed to find another job and she told me, “My daughter, but how? You don’t speak English. You won’t find another job. Stay there until you find something”. I told her, “No I won’t come back. I quit”.

Five weeks later a friend of mine said her husband was a manager at Walgreens. I spoke with her and told her that I was looking for a job. She told me she would speak with her husband, and then the next day she called my cell phone saying that I already had a job. She said that her husband spoke with his boss he asked him if I could come in the next day. I spoke with her husband and I told him that I didn’t speak enough English. He told me not to worry, that I would learn. This Walgreens was located in a city where most of the customers are Italian, Polish and other Caucasian groups and there are no Hispanic people at all. One day later, I started working at the main register answering the phone. Every five minutes the phone rang and I couldn’t understand what the customers were asking me. I thought that I would lose the job. I was afraid, nervous and despaired. Every costumer came in the store asking me a lot of questions like what aisle the items were in. I always sent the customers to the wrong aisle because I didn’t understand what they meant. Every single day I came to my job thinking someone might complain about me. When I started working for this job I was very stressed out. It is really hard to be in a place where you don’t understand the language. It makes you feel stupid. I was thinking about leaving the job because I couldn’t handle the work. However, I told myself don’t give up, that I must stay here because this place is my best opportunity. After eight months, the supervisor asked me if I wanted to work in the photo lab. I told her, “Of course, why not”. I really didn’t want to go there because I did not understand enough English. My job there became worse than the main register. When customers came to drop off their film I was having trouble spelling words on the computer and explaining why the pictures weren’t ready yet. I really didn’t want to go back to a factory again. I didn’t want to continue to live like this, in this country without learning the language.

One of the best decisions that I have ever made in my life is to go to PCCC to learn English and make my life a little easier. For me, the most important reason is to be independent from needing help understanding English. When I started at PCCC, I started every level from the beginning. I didn’t know how to write one sentence in English and it was difficult for me. I thought I would never learn but I told myself to be patient, you will learn and it doesn’t matter how long it takes you. I remember my first teacher from Writing 001. I told her that I couldn’t handle the writing because I did not have the vocabulary or grammar and then she told me, “Don’t give up”. I memorized in my mind “don’t give up” and at the most difficult moments in my life I always think about these words.
Now I’m three semesters at PCCC and I can compare the difference from before and after. How I have improved myself! Most of the time I understand when I speak with customers in my job, doctor, making appointment, etc.

After five years of working in my job now I’m working in pharmacy taking care of the customers. I’m working there because I told my boss that I wanted to move up in the company and I would like to be manager. He told I must work at each department because the policy of the store is if you don’t have a college degree you need to know all the departments. I was always afraid to speak with people because I didn’t have people skills but I’m not like that anymore. I need to improve myself and I have to improve my lifestyle. If I continue to think like that I know I will be successful in this world.

I promised myself that I will finish ESL classes no matter how difficult they are. I will be a manager in my job and I will be someone important in this world, no matter what the circumstances. I recommend people who don’t speak English to go to PCCC to learn English as I did. You won’t regret it!!
Receiving an Unusual Gift

By Krystyna Sak

Poland

It was my birthday party on July the 3rd 20 years ago, a very special day for me. I received a very unusual gift. That fact made this personal event really amazing. My party took place in Olkusz, Poland, in my apartment. Like every year, I passionately prepared a party for my close friends from Jagiellonian University, the place where I was studying. Almost everybody was on time in the party, except two of them who arrived at my apartment late and brought an unusual gift. When I saw it, I was surprised, embarrassed, and at the same moment, happy too. It was an amazing and unexpected situation.

First, I invited many of my close friends come to my house to share the surprise that I had prepared for them. Most of them arrived on time, making a lot of noise with their presence. I asked my guests to come in and I told them that I was having a supper surprise at my home. I noticed that there were two of them were still absent, but I knew that they usually come late to different events.

Therefore, in the meantime everyone there sang the Birthday song and gave me a lot of wonderful presents. There were CD’s with my favorite music, videos and books too. We hugged and kissed each other, and then, everybody started to eat and drink. My guests ate a special pizza, which consisted of mozzarella cheese, tomato sauce, tuna, olive and mayonnaise. They also tried spinach pizza with feta cheese and oregano. We were having a nice and wonderful time, but I was still worried about my two friends who were absent.

Finally these two last guests arrived bringing an unusual gift for me. Actually, they arrived at my home without gift. One of them told me, “We have a beautiful gift for you, but it is outside.” When the rest people were informed about that, they stopped eating and drinking. Everybody went out to see what kind of gift it was. We got shocked because close to my building in the parking lot stood a very old Polish car named Syrena. That car was a very popular car in my country but 10 years before my birthday. My amazing gift was just not only old; it had no documents and no plates. Nevertheless, it was not broken. The car was an antique Polish vehicle.

(Continued on next page)
My guests changed their feelings. Those feelings turned into an endless general laughing. At that moment, I realized that the situation was really hilarious. I was a little confused because I did not what to do with that special gift.

Later on, even though I had troubles because of the illegal car, I felt glad that I would remember my gift many years. Based on this particular experience, I would advise all you are preparing a birthday party to get ready to receive an unusual gift like mine. In this way a situation like this won’t shock you.
My Favorite Place in My Heart

By Krystyna Sak

Poland

This is amazing! I have Polish heart and I like to be in the United States, but my favorite place is in Taipei, Taiwan. The exact place is a very famous temple on He Nan Lu Street in the capital of Taiwan. I am sure that everyone who has seen the temple even once gets impressed and interested in this peaceful place. I saw the temple the first time in my life during my last vacation and since that time I very often think about it. My unusual temple has been the memorial to the particular gods of different religions from all over the world. The warm and unforgettable atmosphere in this place, surprises everyone who has peace in the heart and who is a tolerant humanitarian. The temple is a perfect place for my spirit and my clean soul.

When I am thinking about my beloved temple, I see a multicolor building with exotic flowers around it. I know it is impossible to overlook this place because it has a specific Asian architecture. However, the most important thing is that inside of the temple the gods from the whole world coexist harmoniously. As a result, the temple emanates an amazing calm over the whole city.

In Taiwan, people believe six different religions. There are Buddhists, Confucians, Christians, Jews and Muslims. In this marvelous temple, all the gods are together and people from all over the world come to venerate and love them all. At the center of the temple, there is a statue of Buddha who never argues with Jesus or Allah. The temple is really paradise and a perfect place for only good feelings. People come to pray to their own gods while respecting the others. A mantra melody fills the whole temple with a deep mystical atmosphere. Incense fragrances make me feel emotionally impacted by the presence of such holy divinities. The multicolor flowers, the fruit for these gods help me enjoy the temple’s climate full of peace and tolerance.

My visit in this unique place was the most inspirational and spiritual event in my life. Since last summer I have understood how important good feelings and friendly connections with others are in my life, regardless, whether they are white, or black or yellow. In that temple I understood that the most important thing is having an elevated spirit, which will lead me to know how to be a good human being.

I will keep the temple and its climate in my heart forever. One day I will return to Taipei, to my favorite place, which has a special charm for many people. It is a place where all people get spiritual comfort and happiness by keeping an intense connection with their gods. I never have experienced such spiritual serenity and peacefulness as when I was in that temple. This is the main reason that the temple at He Nan Lu Street in Taipei, Taiwan is my favorite place in the world and takes the most important place in my heart.
What Would I Like to Change in my Life?

Viviana Camacho  
Colombia  
ESLW 003

Every person wants to express how much he cares about his family. Some people can not show their love; others can simply do it in a easy way. In my case, I would like to show my love to my family by being more affectionate. I have a wonderful family, but I don't express my feelings for them that way. I would like to change this because I want to knock down the wall that I have up, and I want them to know how much I adore them.

The first reason that I want to improve my ability to demonstrate my feelings through affection is that I feel uncomfortable when I don't do it. I feel very bad because of my emotional block. I think that I'm not capable of hugging someone. It's like I have a wall that doesn't let me express what my heart feels. In others words, what my heart feels and what my mind allows me are in conflict. As a result, my feelings are bottled up inside me.

Another reason that I want to change my way of showing my love to my family is that I really want them to know how much I care about them. For instance, last week my sister was very sad and needed my help. Even though I'm very close to her, I couldn't hug her. She knows that she can count on me for everything, but I would have liked to hug her. I know I should express my feelings to her and my other relatives because they need it and I need it too. In short, when somebody needs your help, sometimes it's better to hug than just say a few words to them.

Now that I have these reasons for wanting to change, I have got to follow some steps. First of all, I have to face up to what I feel. In addition, I need to push myself because I know this change will be good for me. Second, I should start to spend more time with my family because I need to for my own good. If I try to share moments with them more often, it would be easier to show my feelings by being affectionate. These things would greatly help me to improve our relationship.

In conclusion, I have enough reasons for making this change, and I'm ready to make it. Also, I have some steps to follow. Therefore, I know can and will make this change, and it will be great for me and my relatives. I know I can do it because I really love them and I want to show them this love. Moreover, I want to feel good about myself showing them how much they mean to me.
When someone lives a hard life and struggles to get something, that person wants his achievements to be passed to the next generation so they can have better opportunities and go even further in life. That is how immigrants think, and they are right. The generation that comes after them will have a lot of opportunities and advantages that their parents didn’t have. For instance, those second generation immigrants will have the benefit of being bilingual, having a richer culture, and having more opportunities than the generation before them.

One of the things that second generation Americans have in common, which is an advantage, is that they are bilingual. When they go to school they learn English, and when they go home they learn whatever language their parents speak at home. In the end, they grow up knowing two languages. This provides them with a skill that is very attractive to employers because they are less limited by a language barrier. For example, let’s say a Dominican couple comes to live in the US and they have a child here. This child grows up in a Spanish-English environment. With the large population of people who only speak English or the other part who only speak Spanish, this child will not be limited by either of them. He or she will become a bridge between two worlds, and this skill is very useful to have within our society.

Another good thing about being a second generation immigrant is that it is possible to have a richer cultural experience. Traditions from two different places end up merging together in one person. This is both a unique and special trait that makes the person more open-minded and, as a result, more open to learning from other cultures. Because second generation immigrants have the best of both worlds, their lives are more enjoyable. This dual culture is richer than having only one culture.

The most important advantage that second generation immigrants have is access and exposure to more opportunities in life compared to the first generation. This is why immigrants have their children in the US, so they can have a better life. For example, while the first generation struggles to get any jobs just to support their children, the second generation will have the chance to get better jobs than the first generation and will get them more easily. This happens because it is easier to get jobs in the US if the applicant had his education in this country. Second generation immigrants can find more gratifying positions that have more to do with their career interests than first generation immigrants.

In summary, the second generation will have a lot more chances than the first because of their bilingual skills, richer culture and the opportunities their parents give them. I consider myself a first generation immigrant and I will do all that I can so that my children (when I have them) have better opportunities than I have. This way, they will have the best of both worlds and will become a bridge between their/my native country and the one they are living in.
My Opinion about Whether the Government has the Right to View Everyone’s Electronic Correspondence

I believe that everyone has the right to keep his or her information in private. For instance, when I send an email to my brother, I expect that my brother and I are the only ones who are reading that particular email. Honestly, I would not feel pleased, if I found that someone is viewing my electronic correspondence or e-mail. My opinion differs when I think about if the government has the right to view everyone’s electronic correspondence. I am a foreigner who is not involved in suspicious activities and I am not afraid if the government reads my e-mails. However, I know that many people are involved in suspicious activities and they are the ones who must be worried and afraid. These people send information to others about their plans through e-mails and I am very sure that the government will read those emails.

I want to believe that the Government views people’s emails for security purposes. For the government, viewing citizen’s e-mails is one of the most effective ways to catch predators, gang members, terrorists and other people whose intentions are to commit horrible crimes in this wonderful land. These people must be scared to send emails because the government will definitely catch them. In addition, I know that the government will use these people’s own e-mails as a proof to penalize them.

In one way, if the government is viewing my e-mail, I feel that I do not have privacy. On the other hand, I feel secure because I know that this government is doing the best in trying to keep all its nation safe of danger. If I have to surrender my privacy, I would definitely do it, but only for security goals. One of my wishes is that this wonderful country can be one of the best countries in the world in security matters.
Dear Professor Holland:

Please let your students know how much I appreciated their thoughtful letters about "The Giver." It is always a pleasure for an author to know that a book has touched its audience in special ways. And of course your students are a very special audience with so many challenges in front of them, and with such courage and industriousness.

Tell them that they will find Jonas at the very end of "Gathering Blue" if they look hard.

I send my very best wishes to each of them: Ismaulis, Dalvin, Eduardo, Maribel, Cristian, Maribell, Jose, Hector, Maybeline, Lilian, Roxanna, Wendy, Teresa, Odila, Beatriz, Maria, Robert, Javier, Yamil, and Joanathan.

Lois Lowry
Dear Ms Lowry,

My name is Eduardo and I'm a 17 year old Peruvian man. I came to The U.S.A 8 months ago.

I entered in PCCC College to study ESL and in my reading class we read The Giver.

I loved your book because it made me think about things that, to be honest with you, I never thought about.

It made me think about how lucky we are to have feelings and colors and experiences like the warmth of the family. I don’t understand why people feel sad or angry about this life if we have all of these things, feelings and abilities (like seeing colors). I know that sometimes it’s hard to overcome the bad times in life, but feeling these bad times are how we are going to appreciate more the good ones.

I hope to receive an answer from you telling me what you think about this short letter and also telling me if Jonas and Gabe died? Or they just found their happiness?

Eduardo Morales
Dear Ms Lowry,

I’d like to congratulate you and at the same time let you know how impressed I am and how much I admire the way you express your feelings in writing. My name is Ismaulis Hernandez, and I’m a student at Passaic County Community College in Paterson New Jersey, I’m one of the students in the reading class 03 reading your book “The Giver”.

Let me tell you, at first I was kind of surprised by the way Jonas was feeling about the aircraft but as the story develops I noticed how interesting it was. This made me read more. I have been reading lots of books but the only one that caught my attention, I would have to say, was The Giver.

I loved every little thing about the story from the way you describe how Jonas’s sister was feeling to the way Jonas escapes from the community to save the little one.

I also loved the way you express your feeling about the war and how sad you were with the death of your son, which motivated me to stay in college instead of go to the army like I was planning to do.

I hope you have enough time to read my quiet but interesting letter which would make me so happy, because I’m really one of your fans.

Sincerely,

Ismailis Hernandez
Dear Lois Lowry,

My name is Maribell Ribeiro; I am taking reading class in the evening. At the beginning of the semester our teacher assigned us to read two books The Giver and The Gathering Blue. In class we have just finished reading the book The Giver and I liked it a lot. I love all the work you have done, all the great ideas. You should be proud of yourself for being a good author.

Since I began to read the book I got fascinated about the context of the novel. It is the first time I finished reading a book in English as a student of ESL. I had never finished them.

After this experience, I am very anxious to read the second book Gathering Blue. In addition, I am sure it will be as beautiful as the Giver and I will enjoy reading the next one because I have learned many new vocabularies.

The end of the Giver was not what I expected. Even though, I like most of the reading.

Sincerely
Maribell Ribeiro
12/03/07
Dear Lois:

My name is Maribel Payano, I am a student in ESLR 003, (English as Second Language, Reading level 3), at Passaic County Community College, Paterson N.J.

It is a wonderful pleasure for me to contact you. I just want to let you know how helpful and interesting I found your book. After three attempts to read a book in English I felt frustrated. However, I started with The Giver and there was no way to stop. I've been reading all my life in Spanish, but never in your native language, and now finally I can say to myself “I finished a book”.

I've been living in this country for five years, and there are two things that make me feel proud. “I'm a Naturalize Citizen” and finally “I understood an English book”.

I would like to add, that the way you describe each chapter takes me so deep into reading, that for a moment I feel connected with Rosemary, Jonas and Gabriel as one of your great characters.

There was a moment when I thought to come back to my country, Dominican Republic. It was almost impossible for me to communicate. But as you did, I found courage to go forward to what I want. I have not done this completely yet, but I know as you do that there is Elsewhere waiting for us.

Sincerely,

Maribel Payano S.
Dear Ms. Lowry,

My name is Cristian Rodriguez and I'm an ESL student. I just read your book *The Giver* and I think that it's a wonderful book. I enjoyed each chapter of it. I couldn't wait to read the next chapter to know what was going to happen in that community and in Jonas's life. I think it would be difficult to live like the community in *The Giver* because nobody wants other people to choose their future or make their decisions. The story touched my heart, because I have friends that were living like the community in *The Giver* and some of them have family living like that still and I feel bad about that. I don't think that anybody can live without feelings and without memories. They are part of life and nobody wants to be controlled. I'm going to read *Gathering Blue* the rest of the semester and I think that it's going to be a great story also. I never read a book before and I didn't like to do it but now I love reading books, especially the ones you wrote. I identify with your books, I feel like they are about my life because of the themes I have lived already.

Well, I hope that everything is great for you and I'm waiting to hear about a new book from you.

Sincerely,

Cristian Rodriguez
Christmas Eve is really quiet, but any joke Freak says makes Grim smile. Freak and Gwen have supper with us, and everybody is happy. We eat the delicious food that Gram cooks. After that, we sit next to the Christmas tree until the time to open presents comes. Gwen is wearing a silky red dress that makes her look beautiful. Freak is wearing a brown suit.

At midnight, we give the presents to each other. Everybody is happy with their presents, especially me because Freak gives me a dictionary that will help me a lot.

Gwen and Freak go home and we go to sleep. Tonight is really a white Christmas. It is snowing. The best present that I receive is when I see my father come back home. He was innocent of all the charges against him.

Freak and I are very very excited because the day for Freak's operation is very close.

First, we have a beautiful birthday party for Freak. Gram and Gwen cook and make the cake. All our friends are here to celebrate. Freak is so happy with all the presents, especially with the computer that his mother gives him. With the computer, Freak can teach me more. We set up everything and start to play cards.

Finally, the next day Freak will have his operation. I am too excited to sleep. In the morning Gwen and Freak go to the hospital where Dr. Spivak is waiting for Freak. I am scared, but at the same time happy for Freak. Later Gram and Grim come to the hospital to stay with Gwen. We pray for Freak. After a long time, Dr. Spivak comes to us and gives us the good news. She says to me, “Don’t worry, Max. Everything is going to be okay.”

We go to see Freak for a little while. He is sleeping as a result of the surgery. Like the doctor said, everything is fine. In a couple days, Freak will be out of the hospital and we can play again. This time he will ride his bike that he will receive for his next birthday.

My father moves into the next house and he invites me to live with him, but I’m not sure. I do not want Grim and Gram to be alone, but I say, “Only walls will separate me from you.” Gram and Grim say, “We are going to be okay.”

Freak comes home from the hospital, but he has to go back to the hospital for some therapy until he gets adapted to his new body.

Summertime! I do not have to carry Freak on my shoulders this time. He can walk perfectly. We ride bicycles, run and climb trees. Gwen and my father go to register us for a soccer team. You are not going to believe how good Freak is at soccer! He makes our team win the championship.

It’s time to go back to school. We go to the mall to shop for all we need for school. It is my first time alone with Freak in a shopping mall. Sometimes I do not believe that Freak is walking next to me.

Everybody likes Freak, but no one likes him more than me. I like him like a brother.

Next year my father and Gwen get married. Now we live in the same house and Gram and Grim live in the next house. I visit them every day. Finally we are happy!
Gwen and Max planned a surprise birthday party for Freak. Although Freak was very intelligent, he never suspected the party. It was Sunday night; Freak was in Maxwell’s basement playing with Max. In the meantime, Gwen was decorating the house for the party.

When Freak arrived at his house, he got the biggest surprise of his life since it was the first surprise birthday party of his life. He started to cry from happiness when Max hugged him.

The next day, Gram was in Maxwell’s room when Max woke up. Gram hugged him and told Max that Freak was very sick in the hospital. Max made himself like crazy and he ran to the hospital. Everybody thought that Freak was going to die. Nobody knew that he was in the operating room.

Freak’s dream was becoming a reality. He was getting a new bionic body that would let him grow up and have a normal life. It was a surprise for everybody because it was the first operation like this. The operation was a success so that Freak could live for many years.

Gwen and Max were happy about the news that Freak was OK. At the beginning, they couldn’t believe it, but it was true. Freak stayed in the hospital for three weeks. After that, he arrived home happy.

One day Gwen met a man in her job, she fell in love with him and she decided to get married. Freak was very happy because he was going to have a new father. Max became an intelligent teenager and nobody mocked him anymore. Freak and Max lived happily ever after, and Max decided to write a book called: *We are “Freak the Mighty”*
The Return of Freak the Mighty
(Another ending)

By Trendalina Zuna Level 2

The next day I got up early and went to the hospital. When I arrived there, the lobby was empty. I keep looking for someone who could give me a information about Freak. Suddenly I saw Dr. Spivak coming out of her office. She looked tired, but I saw a light in her eyes. She smiled.

“Good news,” she said. Freak was so weak all night, but I just got excellent news. A green light is open for Freak. All this time I got the opinions of the other doctors in the world. Fortunately a specialist in France found a medicine to help bones to grow. He can help Freak in this case.

I screamed, but this time from joy. I hugged her without thinking about what rotten lies the hugs are. In that moment I thought how wonderful life is and how important it is.

“Let’s run to Freak,” she said. She was so happy like me. We went to Freak's room. He was very weak when the doctor gave him the news.

“I would rather have a robot body,” Freak said. His voice was so weak and faint, but I saw how hopeful his eyes were. Then he looked at me and said, “Don't forget the book moron.”

In that moment, magically my brain started to think. I left the hospital and went back home quickly. I pulled the pyramid box from under the bed, and got my empty book. I started to write words and I couldn't believe it. My brain had images of all our adventures. All the Freak the Mighty stories were in my brain like someone wrote them.

Freak had to stay in the hospital for long time. I visited him every day after the school. Every day his body grew more and my brain learned more about Freak's dictionary. A while later I learned to use his dictionary too. Also Freak taught me to use and the computer.

It was winter when Dr. Spivak told Freak to leave the hospital. One night before that, I wrote the last page of my book. The next day I took the book and with Fair Gwen we went to Freak. It was amazing to see how Freak could walk without crutches. I gave him the book.

“What did you write?” he asked.

“All the truth,” I said. “All about Freak the Mighty. I wrote how I borrowed your brain for a while. This is the truth, the unvanquished truth.”

Two days later when he read the book, he said, “You got your brain now and I got my body too, but we are always going to be Freak the Mighty.”
Kenneth David Kane has been released from prison. He had been locked for eight long years, time he used to think about his life. Now he is a free man and the only thing in his mind is to conquer the missing piece in his life “MAXWELL.” The crime he committed was horrendous but he is a new person. He is on parole with the right to visit his son if supervised.

The first visit was the worst day in Max’s life, even worse than the first day of school, but David Kane understood. He showed love for his son and patience with him. The second visit was not better than the first, but he was there for his son. It took time for Max to become close to his father. Gram and Grim were scared to death just thinking that Max was alone with this criminal. Max however asked for an unsupervised visit. When they were on their own David Kane confessed to Max his crime and all the sorrow he has felt all this time Max told him everything about his life and about his best friend Kevin. What nobody knew was that David Kane, in those eight years in jail, became a born again Christian and now he is Reverend Kane.

Reverend Kane is a man of love and peace. He wants to do something for all those people to who he caused a lot a pain. He started building a Church with the help of his old friend Iggi. They worked hard to rebuild the building that was once part of the New Testament. When they were finished, they had a beautiful Church. He named this church The Real New Testament. It was not easy to bring people in, but all human beings always are looking for some kind of hope and sooner than later this Church was full of parishioners. Reverend Kane knew how to touch people’s heart and day after day, more people joined the Church. What a surprise it was for the neighbors to see Iggi dressed in suit and tie playing the guitar in the choir. Who would think that this man, once long ago, was the boss of the Panheads.
On a beautiful Sunday morning Lorreta and Iggi got married. Lorreta looked beautiful with a long dress matching the blue of her eyes and her hair falling to her shoulders. Tony D. was there also. He was member of the Church. There was no more dope fiend at the Testament. Everybody was walking high. Grim and Gram were sitting in the back of the Church and even though they were not too close to Reverend Kane, they forgave him because they know he is a different person, and Max is happy. Gram is far away from the bride, so she is squinting to see Lorreta. Max and Kevin are part of the choir. The Gwen was in Church too, and since Reverend Kane is like a father to Kevin, they get along pretty well. Rumors are they are engaged.

Today is the wedding, but Max is not extremely happy. Kevin is in the hospital and things don’t look too good. Everybody else in the neighborhood is having a good time. People are happy for the new family. Reverend Kenneth David Kane strikes again and Max and Kevin are now officially brothers. After the party in the Testament was over, the Kanes left to go to the hospital, but on the way there something terrible happened. There was a car accident and Max was really in bad condition. He was rushed to the same hospital where Kevin is. Max is in the operating room. He damaged his brain and needs a transplant or he will die. In the other room Kevin is in his last minute. It is 3.00 PM, when Kevin dies his brain goes to Max.

Today is the first wedding anniversary of the Kanes and it is the day when Max is coming home from the hospital. He does not remember anything. He looks different, brilliant and smart. Gram and Grim are so happy seeing Max talking like never before. Gram makes a fuss.

After a little while Max went to the room he shared with Kevin and started using the computer. When he opened Kevin’s file, this is what Max read “I WAS BORN FOR A REASON, TO GIVE SOMETHING TO MY BROTHER.” That’s the truth, the whole truth. “The UNVANQUISHED TRUTH.”

KEVIN.

Max started crying silently.
Freak's words all the time were
Robot that has a bionic body and
Edification is education in their dictionaries,
Archetype was in Max's dream,
Knight rhymes with bright and fight and night

THE

Midget is a person that has a small mind
Incandescent comes when they are in trouble,
Goon is a bad mood in their dictionary
Hieroglyphics is the handwriting Max has,
Time Machine was their imagination and
Yonder a place they always wanted because it always lies over the next horizon.
I never had a brain
Until Freak came
To let me borrow his
That's what Max said always
When his classmates yell
It gives a little chance to use
My fists and my feet.

We slay dragons
Always like King Arthur did
But I think this robot boy did
Better than King Arthur.

Hey, Maxwell come from the
Down under again.
Don't be afraid.
We are Freak the Mighty, YES!

My fuel cells are depleted
That's what Freak said.
The supper is great
Better if Fair Gwen made it.

Oh! Another quest!
Warp speed, Freak is kicking me,
Grabbing my hair.
He said, "Go straight!"
I'm a horse and
He's the knight.
The dynamic duo
Freak the Mighty strikes again.

I thought about him And his robot body.
"This is an invention"
Hr lies, he lies, but really
It is not a lie.
It is something to hope,
To hope for in life.

He taught me
He made me wake up
From the down under,
To open my eyes and see the
Light, the light of the brain.

The Pyramid box from
Under my bed
Made me talk, write and
Learn and see how beautiful
My life can be

My problems were nothing
Until I met Freak.
Thanks Freak, you gave me
A new life

His big heart growing
And growing in the sky
Never is going to die
Because Freak the Mighty
 Strikes again!
A Long time ago Max said
“Freak is a person who is a friend”
Who no matter what
Will accept me for who
And what am I

“Freak is a person who is a friend”
Who will be there for me
No matter how near or how far am I

“Freak is a person who is a friend”
Who
When I’m feeling down
And sad
He’ll do whatever it takes him
To make me glad

Whether it’s telling me a story
Or making me laugh
Just to see the smile
On my face
He’ll know
The rest of our day
Won’t be so bad

“Freak is a person who is a friend”
Freak will stick by my side
When the going gets rough
Freak is not going to
Turn away and say,
“I’ve had enough”

Freak will be by my side
Through thick and thin
Now that’s what I think is a friendship
That will never end
That’s what I think a friend is for
This big guy is one of the principal characters of "Freak the Mighty." His name is Maxwell Adler and he is negative andwofful.
This little guy is freak. He is one of the most important characters in the history. He has physical problem by that reason he uses crutch because he can work well.
Freak

He is a small child who has a problem in his legs. Freak is very smart for his age. Freak has black hair and big eyes. He loves to play different games like kickboxing, kick knees and kick faces. Freak uses crutches to walk. He showed up one day with these shiny braces strapped to his crooked metal tubes right up to his hips. He likes that everybody sees him as a robot.
Max and Kevin together.
Ian and his mother
Gram

Gram is a little over weight person who has a white hair. Gram every time she is going to eat gives thanks to God. Gram like's to give good advice to Max. Gram love's to love her Grandson.

Grim

Grim is a tall person who has black eyes, black and white hair. He looks skinny. Grim like's to smoke. He has Grandson which he is very protective with him. He has a son who is on jail. Grim's son is on jail because he kill his Wife.
Kenny

Kenny is an over weight person that is not too friendly because Kenny is always in a bad mood. His voice is very deep. Kenny was in jail for couple years because he killed his Wife. He is considerate a very bad person.
Loretta Lee

Loretta is a woman that has tired eyes and she is always nervous. Loretta talks very loud. And she smokes. She lives in a building that is locate in a bad area. Loretta used to have her hair of color yellow, the way she use blurry red lipstick.

Iggy

Iggy is very tall. His voice is unpleasant. Iggy’s hands are very big enough to cover the tattoos in his own body. Iggy has a red beard and he look not older than beard 35 years old.
Submission Guidelines

Requirements ...

- All writers must be ESL students enrolled in a 2-year community college.
- All submissions MUST be original work.
- All submissions must be submitted electronically.
- Writers may submit a maximum of one piece of work in each genre: Fiction, Non-Fiction, Narrative, Reaction, Poetry, Art, Photography.
- All work MUST be submitted as MS Word files. Art and Photography submissions must be submitted as JPEG files.
- Submissions MUST be typed, double-spaced in a 12 pt. font and shouldn’t exceed 2000 words.

Contact Information ...

Please send all submissions to:

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NEXT DEADLINE FOR SPRING ISSUE — May 1st, 2008