

Graduation Speech 2013

I'm convinced that the seniors choose me to be their graduation speaker because they want to get back at me for all the days that I made them write in my English class. So, for them, I wrote a story featuring the graduates of 2013 with many allusions to our shared memories. Class of 2013, this story is for you.

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Once upon a time in the magical town of Wichitaw lived a group of nobles that were close to each other like family. And just like a family, there were intermittent discords and bickering and tears. They sometimes argued about honor: "Creon is far nobler than Antigone for thinking about his kingdom; No, Antigone is for honoring her brother!"; they sometimes argued over ethics: "No, you shouldn't keep Bill Gates's wallet if you found it on the street; of course you should send it to him intact - you might get a huge reward for it!"; they sometimes argued over sensory perception: "Lin's got to be mafia! I felt him move in the middle of the night, and I could see his shadows moving behind my closed eyelids!" But at the end of the day, they always knew that they could count on each other in their time of need. And on this frightful day, they needed each other most.

"Guys, guys!" Naive Ji Yun came screaming to the rest of the group, out of breath, struggling for air. "Something terrible has happened! Sofi's been, um, kidnapped!"

"What?!" they all turned to respond in unison. "What happened?"

"I don't know - we were just talking about our plans for the summer and when I came back from taking a break, she was gone and now it's been like nine months! We've got to go find her!"

"Okay, this isn't the time to panic - guys, let's think this through logically. Who could have taken her away in our town of Wichitaw? We only have three options, right?" Ryan of Reason questioned.

"The mafia, the bionic man, or the one we never mention by name," Michael the Pirate responded with suspense, flapping his arms and flaring his nostrils like that of the frightful dragon that is rumored to be cruel, callous, carnivorous and cunning.

"Oh, no... Not the what's-its-name... Uh, 답답해, this is so stressful, I can't breathe" Innocent Jennifer lamented.

"아, 진짜," responded Valen the cross-fit master, flexing his biceps. "We can do this, guys - we'll get what's-its-name once and for all and go rescue our splendid Sofi! We got muscles!"

"Esteemed nobles and distinguished friends, while the idea is honorable, how will we get to its lair?" asked diplomatic Annie.

"We'll put out an SOS on the radio, uh oh, on the radio," suggested harmonious Elsa.

"We don't have time to gather others; it's gotta be us. We'll use my Little Dutch House to fly us there," Bassist Brunno offered. "Don't worry - I have a bigger version that can fit us all."

With their transportation plan in tow, they started talking about their attack plans. "Let's split into two teams, Black and Camo, and ascendancy will be ours. Our dexterity will catch him by stupefaction and our affray will yield us his acquiescence!"

"Jung Mok," the crew groaned. "No more SAT words, please!"

"Ok. Let's attack and win!" Word Master Jungmok rephrased. The crowd was excited, ready to show up this dragon like a boss. Caring Claire put on her sweater jacket - wait, sweater hoodie, er... sweater *vest* and brought one for each person along with two bagfuls of bubble tea to ensure no one went cold or hungry during battle. Sagacious Julie made sure there was enough money in their treasury to ensure this war wouldn't bankrupt their kingdom. Doctor Lin now up-to-date on this current event packed his black bag, ready to stitch up any and all injuries. High-jumping Henry, no longer a little boy, packed his basketballs to throw at the dragon and math formulas to confound it with confusion just in case his basketball aims failed. Ahlala Marguerite packed her pocket full of zip ties to slow down the dragon by tying up all his supply bags. Fierce with determination, ready for blood, these nobles got ready to hop on the Little Dutch House when from underneath their feet came reverberations, first gentle, then stronger and stronger and stronger.

THUMP. THUMP. THUMP.

When the group turned their heads toward the noise now coming from the woods, they saw the head of the dragon standing tall above all the trees in the forest. They stood immobilized by fear staring up at the cruel, callous, carnivorous and cunning dragon, now real before their eyes. One of them, who'd come late to the battle planning, took out his saxophone and began to play.

"Dong Min, what are you doing?!"

"Well, if I'm gonna die, I'm gonna go doing the thing I love most," the sax prodigy replied. "I'll do what I believe in, and my heart tells me that it's this."

The crowd looked at Dong Min, then back at the dragon, then back at Dong Min, mesmerized by the angelic sound of his music. They one by one began to follow suit with doing what they each loved and desired most, and the I Believe Sestet artists Ye Eun, Nah Young, Lisa, Seo Young,

Annie, and Ji began to create a mural of this scene, to be left as a legacy on the walls of Wichitaw for generations to see that their ancestors died doing the very thing they loved most.

Engrossed in their trade, amazed by each other's talents as they looked or listened on to each other, the nobles took a long time to realize that the dragon hadn't attacked. It sat, it watched, it breathed, it lived, but it did not harm them.

In that moment, the nobles' hearts called out to them and they had an unspoken understanding in unison. The cruel, callous, carnivorous and cunning dragon exists inside of them in the form of their worst fears. When they either hide from it or hastily and violently try to kill it, they'll only become overcome by it. But when they recognize that the dragon exists, no matter how massive, they can overcome it in the blessed company of each other when together they don't let each other become immobilized by their fears, losing sight of their heart's greatest desires.

"Wait... where is Sofi? How do we find her?" With this question, they all turned to see that Sofi hadn't been lost at all all along nor had she been harmed by the dragon; she was far away in physical distance over forces beyond her control but her heart was always with them, just as they were about to realize in the next few days as they too had outgrown Wichitaw and would have to find their next place to call home.

Rumor has it that the mural still exists in this magical town of Wichitaw that tells the story of what these great nobles lived on to accomplish. No one has yet seen it to tell the story of what became of each one, but my heart tells me that it must be the most beautiful mural in all the universe.

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Graduates, look to each other and look to us who are here for you tonight who love you, trust you, and believe in you. Your fears are real, but don't let them devour you or paralyze you

keeping you away from what you love. Life awaits you with her adventures and though she may give you scratches, bruises, and sometimes even broken bones, she'll offer you Humility and Growth in the healing process. Embrace her.

On behalf of all of your teachers here at SIS, congratulations Class of 2013! You did it!