SUNNY STORIES

An Anthology of Student Work, 2014

Sunnybank State High School
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**Sunny Stories: An Anthology of Student Work, 2014**

First edition of an Anthology of short stories, poems and other works by students of Sunnybank State High School, Boorman Street, Sunnybank, QLD, 4109. ©2014

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FOREWORD

Mrs Diane Hicks
Principal

Each year the gifted young writers of Sunnybank State High School craft their thoughts and insights into short stories and poems to share with their readers. The students’ generosity is much appreciated for it provides the reader with the opportunity to gain the young person’s perspective of their experiences of life. It is exciting to share the enthusiasm and energy with which they write and to be able to encourage this through the production of this anthology.

The pieces reproduced here provide the reader with an opportunity to consider the human condition with sensitivity and self-reflection both of which link us in empathy with the authors of each piece. The commonality of emotions, experiences, dreams and fears that are unique to each of us, yet shared across every generation and culture, are highlighted and explored.

May every reader, who pauses to consider the thoughts and ideas in this publication, enjoy and gain insight into the experiences and ideas that have been exposed in each piece.

Thanks to all those who have encouraged and supported students to put their ideas into words. Your motivation and enthusiasm has given students the confidence to courageously share their ideas with our readers.

Thank you also to the proof-readers for your tireless dedication to the production process.

Congratulations to the students who have their work published in this book. Thank you for your willingness to share your deepest thoughts and skills with our school community.

Happy reading!
I swear I can still taste it sometimes; the salty water of the ocean clawing its way through my oesophagus. It burned as it slid down. It was like the ocean, that I’d always hated, had thrust its slimy arm down my throat and was trying to kill me. So when the actual, physical form of a pair of arms connected with my flailing ones and pulled me above water and to shore, I was thankful. *Grudgingly so*, because having to forsake my pride to thank Sora damaged it.

The fact that the stereotypical happy-go-lucky guy saved me, cuts deep into my pride. It makes me squirm around in my mussed bed in anguish. However, focussing on the annoying aspect of who saved me instead of musing over potentially drowning, is a godsend. I’d much rather deliberate over Sora than remember the sensation of salt-water filling my aching lungs.

... And snowmelt.

I’ll admit, getting to know Sora over the last few weeks has taught me not to judge a book by its cover. Over time, I’ve figured out that Sora’s ‘cover’ is quite saccharine. Since I’ve had a burr of a human stuck to my proclaimed ‘prickly side’ for the last few weeks, I’ve seen Sora’s true character. His happiness is a façade to keep others away. However the haphazard way in which we’ve hung out and chatted has slowly cultivated our friendship. We talked about it just the other day. We’re polar opposites when we present ourselves in society; Sora oh-so-nicely defined my mask as ‘kinda cold and pragmatic’ which I can’t really deny. But in retaliation I got to call his ‘a stupidly grinning fool’, though he told me acting light hearted is another way to deceive and hide from people.

There are various ways in which you can conduct yourself in public, like the variety of ways water runs along the Earth’s surface. We agreed, ‘You are what you present to the world.’ I guess the fact that Sora and I agree on that philosophy makes us more alike than we appear to be. I hate to admit it, but he’s my most important friend now.

... And surface runoff.

Wait one moment there. What the *hell* did I just think!? Sora’s my most important friend now? When did I start to cherish him so much? So what, I have a few deep conversations with the guy and suddenly I like him? Do feelings of affection seriously work like this?

"If we suppose that I am not me—"
My alarm clock blares my chosen choice of music into existence. Time to get up and face the day. To face Sora… who I like? Maybe the ocean did more than rattle my body around, it must have done significant damage to my head as well! At what time between getting saved from a saline flavoured death and coffee at Starbucks did I start to like Sora so much?

“—can you say with certainty that you are you?”

Oh shut up alarm clock!

... And condensation.

These uncontrollable feelings for Sora run under my skin and make my heart beat twice as fast as normal. I’ll acknowledge them. I won’t lose and drown in this sea of crazy, new feelings and I won’t admit defeat to a sudden crush on a guy.

Sure, I like Sora. I like him a lot. More than I intended too. But that doesn’t change the reality of our relationship; we’re friends and that’s it. I’ll hold hands with the crazy new me and we’ll walk together from now on.

... And precipitation.

I usually meet up with Sora at Starbucks in the mornings so we can caffeinate ourselves in preparation for the tedium of school. Despite my whole world shifting axis, my morning routine is looking like it’ll stay the same. Walking through the doors of the establishment, the first thing I notice is that Sora’s already there, sitting on the couch we usually occupy, sipping at his spiced pumpkin latte. Another Tall cup is sitting in front of him and I can see steam coming out of the little slit in the lid.

I park my ass on the seat next to him and immediately take a sip from the cup so I don’t have to initiate conversation.

Just play it cool Umi. Pretend like everything is the same. You’re usually petulant and silent in the morning. It’s why you get coffee. He won’t notice anything. It’ll be fine. Just don’t panic.

“Good morning to you to, Umi! You’re definitely looking like you’re in a social mood, with that constipated look on your face!”

The muscles controlling my cheek twitch before I can physically stop it. So he’s gonna be all bright and faux cheery with me. I know he’s as grumpy as I am in the morning. Well, two can play that game.
Twisting my face into the only type of smile I can manage at 8.00am, I chirp in a saccharine tone, “Says you. Who has the Grande sized drink here? You’re consuming approximately 100mls more espresso than I am, so I suppose you’re the one more unprepared for socialising out of the two of us.” Sora shudders and our eyes connect sharply for a moment.

Then we both burst into giggles and set our cups down before one of us experiences an espresso shower.

“Well, you’re painfully blunt as always. Will you at least try being a little nicer? I did pay for that coffee. It wasn’t free. I believe in the standardized ‘Pay for your goods and services’ conformity.” He’s smiling more easily now. His lips aren’t stretching too wide. That’s the fastest way that I know that the smile isn’t sincere. I never will understand why he feels like he has to be overtly happy for society’s sake.

Right… It’s his defence mechanism. Be pleasant to everyone and then no one will be able to harm you. He’s… pleasant with me. In the end, am I part of ‘everyone’? Who’s to say I’m any amount of special? The realisation hits me and I mutter, “You’re friendly to everybody, but the truth is, you’re not interested in anybody, right?”

His laughter dies down but I can’t quite sum up the effort to make eye contact with him again. A tense silence follows. I can feel his eyes on my forehead, but I’m much too weak to glance up at him.

“You know me quite well if you can surmise that of my personality. I… never intended to become such close friends with you. You’re far more observant than I gave you credit for, and now you know me best of all. You’re… my most important person.”

... And subsurface flows.

Most important person… Perhaps I’m also slightly special to him as he is to me? Stifling a grin, I raise my head and murmur, “You’re my most important person too. Platonically!”

We make eye contact, laugh, and life as I know it cycles on.

... And Water Cycles.
NOT ALL CANDLES ARE AS FORTUNATE

By Bree Rautio

the candle glimmered softly in the dark caverns of the room, as to remain unbeknown to the forces that desired to end it. the candle threatened to be extinguished, if not by external forces, by the suffocating darkness of the room.

a double edged blade, a choice for the powerless candle: gradual asphyxiation, or retribution for emitting light. the candle didn't want to be extinguished.

tormented between deafening whispers and raspy snickers the candle chose a third option: a risk.

the candle would open the door.

and as Icarus kissed their foreheads, a wisp of wind blew, opening the entrance, allowing the external light to peer through the crack in the frail shelter.

the door is now open, not completely, but it is open, and yet the candle remains to flicker, slowly, intensely, in euphoric flashes of reds and blues, sheltered between the heart and the soul.