

My interpretation of the theme goals and Dreams follows a story of someone striving to overcome dyslexia.

Throughout this story I am not going to describe what the character looks like, I'm not going to tell you their gender, most of the characters will not have names. This is because their appearance, gender and name will not help you get to know the character, on the contrary it may distract you from the topic of Dyslexia.

I chose to write this story as I want to highlight what people dealing with Dyslexia may feel like. I feel that even in this year of 2016 not enough teachers, students, parents, children and the public are recognising what Dyslexia is and how it can impact on your life.

This writing is made up of true experiences, some are my own and others are my classmates. There is no age limit to dyslexia so we do not get to see if the character is 5 or 15. There is no gender or distinguishing features to the main character as I am not trying to represent one person but many children, teenagers or adults, struggling with Dyslexia. There are many different ways Dyslexia can impact on someone, I therefore have introduced more than one character with Dyslexia both with very different personalities.

My hope for this short story is to make teachers and students aware of the impact they have on people whether good or bad, and to raise awareness of what dyslexia is.

Thank you

Rebecca Constable

## Impact

~~I am confident~~

I have no confidence

~~I can do this~~

I will fail

~~I work hard~~

I am lazy

Words blacker than night drilled into my head, consuming me, overpowering me, describing me. I am a failure. I am dumb. I will never get this right.

~~I am special~~

I have a disability.

~~I am dyslexia~~

I am stupid

~~I am not alone~~

I am alone

I'm sitting in a hard plastic chair. Four walls two windows and one door. Twenty four students surrounding me, one teacher and twenty-five books. Nothing but the occasional scrape of chairs, and the flicker of pages; but not mine. My book lay open in front of me, page 15 and chapter two. ~~I'm doing well.~~ I am behind.

'I reached that page on my first day' they sniggers; ~~the strangers.~~ My friends.

My eyes tingle with the threat of tears, the words smear together, like rain drops on a window. A lump appears in my throat. ~~Everyone will see.~~ I let my hair fall, like a Curtin around me face and I sink into the chair like its quicksand. I am invisible.

'It is pathetic to cry over a book' they say. ~~The students.~~ The teachers. I am pathetic.

I glue my eyes to the clock, praying for the minutes to tick faster, but they ignore my wishes mocking me as they move lazily by.

A tear escapes from the corner of my eyes sprinting down my cheek, and I beg my body to turn translucent, became nothing but air partials, evaporate like the last drops of water trapped in the desert.

But it doesn't work.

'BILLIE!' I jump. Pain shoots up my legs as they collide with the hard wooden table, and laughter is ringing in my ears. Miss Read the ~~malicious monster~~ teacher approaches. I lift my head ever so slightly shaking my hair off a sliver on my face; all eyes are on me. Red paint drips from my face as she towers over me, waving a piece of paper like a flag in a parade. 'Two hours you sat there and you only answered two questions! This is not good enough' she slams the papers down -head swelling like a balloon- reliving half answered questions in untidy writing.

My untidy writing, my wrong answers.

I stuff my face into my hair, shoving the test out of site. A low rumble disturbs the silence as they laugh. My blood is replaced by fire, my heart pumping nothing but pure adrenalin. I want to run, I want to storm out of this prison and never come back; but I can't, I won't, draw more attention to myself.

I bit my lip so hard I taste blood, my eyes marry the clock and I being to wish the minutes away all over again.

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Ice. Like words is both dangerous and beautiful; however unlike words, I only see the beauty in it.

I am free, I can skate and guide and jump. The students aren't strangers but friends. The coaches, help us learn, giving us physical examples not written ones.

Out here I don't mind the stares, I don't want to evaporate, I can fit in and I can stand out; I decide. I know what I am doing, one toe loop, three crossover, five back spins, one spiral and two twizzles.

Routines and dancers, forcing my body to balance; shifting my weight, and bending my limbs until every muscle aches. The pain is oddly comforting. It means I'm doing this right, I am pushing myself and I'm succeeding.

~~I don't know left from right.~~

I look down at my hands, one black glove and one white one. No left or right, just black and white, it's laughable how simple the solution is.

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I'm ~~hiding~~ sitting at the back of the class. Merging with the same plastic chairs, staring at the same four walls, two windows and one door, and watching the same plastic white clock to tick idly by.

My hands shake as I try to take the spelling test in front of me. I force myself to take deep breaths but it feels like ice water in my lungs, my blood is nothing but ice, showing no signs of melting.

I am frozen in time; trapped in this moment with no escape.

Toxic words echo at the back of my head, rotting my brain. 'You only answered *two* questions in *two* hours, *two* questions' 'I bet you couldn't even get those *two* questions right' 'why are you so *stupid*?' 'Why don't you just pay attention?'

Tiredness fogs my brains as the words start to merge, like carriages on a train locking onto one another- *Concentrate*

~~Different, bifferent, b d b bifferant, diffaront~~

I can feel Miss Read's eyes boring into my back, as she stares over my shoulder. Clipboard in hand and pen scarring the paper with crosses.

Tears burn my eyes once more, sliding down the back of my throat and I carry onto the next word.

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My hands construct a perfectly accurate outline. Two eyes, two eye brows and two ears, one nose, one mouth and several dark hairs trapped in a messy knot at the nape of her neck. Rose's blossom on her cheeks, fire outlines her blood red lips and the ocean is held in her deep blue eyes. Her sun kissed skin is creasing around her twinkling eyes and faint dimples pull on her cheeks. She perfect, confident, beautiful and friendly. ~~Everything I'm not.~~

This is my escape. Sketching, painting, and printing. Colour, texture, and pattern. No need to think or contract. Just draw, image, feel.

Fine art, creative art, photography, textiles, graphics.

~~The best subjects~~

The easy subjects

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Which, witch, which

One has a T and One without, simple.

But which which does the T belong to? How do you remember to replace it with the H? And then move the T along one letter? Which which is the right which?

I sit in a yellow room four hours a week. The square windows are tinted with twilight, and a round wooden desk is stationed in front of me. Two cards both say which, both spell which, both sound like which; but both have different meanings, different spellings. So which which is the right which?

‘A witch, as in a wicked witch, is spelt like this’ he touches the card to his right. David. Not Sir or MR but David, he’s a teacher, my teacher, but he doesn’t shout or get frustrated, he’s kind and understanding. Comparing my work to my previous work and not to others.

I look at the card hidden slightly by his figure tips; witch, the one with the T. Before I try to explain yet again that it’s not that easy to remember, he slides the paper towards him fishing a pen from his trouser pocket.

‘This is how I remember them.’ He tilts his head to the side looking for a new angle and awkwardly bends his arm around the paper trying not to block my view. I watch him draw a smooth line across the t and then join them up at the top forming a soft spike.

And it clicks

‘The top of the t is a witch’s hat, which a wicked witch would wear.’ I stare at the paper, grinning like an idiot. I’ve seen this drawing before but never understood it. Never actually saw it being drawn out in front of me, just the finished result.

The t in witch is a hat, a wicked witch’s hat. The o’s in look are eyes, you look at something with your eyes. The i in their is a person, it’s their toy.

Countless teachers have shown me these drawings some more patient than others but in the end they give up. But David didn’t, he took his time and explained with pictures, drawing each line in front of me. Just a simple drawing just a simple idea and a patient teacher.

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‘Where we’re you last night?’

The teachers late, I’m sat in this rectangular prison in my usual seat, at my usual desk, with my usual ~~stranger’s~~ friends, and the teacher is late! There nothing else to focus on, and no one to stop the questions.

'What?'

'Where we're you?'

'Err at home?'

Her eyes light up and her lips twist into a slow smile 'I saw you running back into school.'

My heart skips a beat and a cotton ball is wedged in my throat. 'I- I don't know w- what - '

'Your gonna them extra classes for thick people.'

Laughter erupts, bouncing off the four walls, out the door down the corridors and echoing around the school. Rose petals metal from my cheeks and rain stains my eyes.

A hundred years pass before the teacher marches into the room, demanding attention.



It's the last lesson of the day, and the last day of the week.

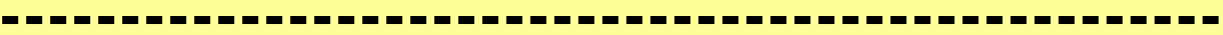
Were separated into groups and ready of battle. The task is to create a poster. The best poster. My mind is swimming with ideas, we could make the tile from tools, making the words become the art. But no one is listening. ~~They never do.~~

They give me one job, draw the hammer.

'Were do you want me to draw it?'

They all look at me as if I've suddenly grown two heads. A short harsh laugh cuts through me; I spin around, and want nothing more than to die. Miss Read standing there hands on hips, and her shoulders shaking like someone is holding a tazer to them.

'Well done, that may just be the stupidest questions I've ever heard.' The whole class is listing, some in slight fits of laughter not bothering to hide it. 'Were do think you draw it' it's not a questions 'on the paper.' she marches off stealing the last bit of confidence I own. Laughter fills the room, but mine does not join it.



The darkness outside seems to soak up the glow of my lamp and rain slams into my bedroom window in heavy sheets, threatening to smash the glass. I lay in bed trying to shut out the roar of wind and cackles of thunder, suffocating myself deep within the warmth of my pillows. Attempting the drift into a dreamless sleep, but it doesn't work; it never does. Toxic words wrap around my brain like a snake slowly tightening – suffocating- me until I can ignore them no longer.

*'It's pathetic to cry over a book' 'you only answered two questions in two hours' 'why are you so stupid' 'Your gonna classes for thick people' I am pathetic ' that may be the stupidest question I've ever heard.'* *'Why don't you listen?' I am pathetic. Laughter fills the room, because I am pathetic.*

A hurricane of emotion bubbles up inside me anger, hurt, embarrassment, swirling, mingling like a tornado with no were to go.

I don't listen

I am stupid

I am dumb

Every breath feels like fire in my lungs, I don't want it amore, I don't want the air, the food that grounds on this deceased planet, and the water that hides the earth's wounds. This world is poison, atmosphere is broken, and the people are toxic...

And I don't want to be part of it anymore.

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My legs shake as they try to support me and my teeth slam together so hard I feel it vibrate through my bones. My heart pumps nothing to fiery adrenaline, but yet I feel ice could.

Its test day.

Head down, back hunched, arms shielding my chest, I slip into the classroom like a ghost. I guild to my usual seat at the back of the room, but my names not there. Instead sitting in my spot is Claire Tomson's name printed in bold lettering.

My eyes scan the hall laying on each individual desk is a name tag. I shuffle to the 5<sup>th</sup> row, but my names not there, 4<sup>th</sup> nope, 3<sup>rd</sup> my heart is in my mouth, 2<sup>nd</sup> my blood is replaced with fire. 1<sup>st</sup> my brain stops working, refusing to read my name printed out in the same bold writing.

I risk a glance around the room, everyone is taking their seats making sad faces when they are separated from there friend groups and cheering when there not.

My head spins and I collapse into the hard plastic chair. The desks are shaking, the chairs are shaking, the floor is shaking, the whole world is shaking, crumbling, failing. Breathe!

Heels click in the back of my head, a clock ticks and papers shuffle. The teacher calls for order and the test starts. My heart beat is the only sound in the school, the only sound in the world. But is it?

A faint murmur drifts through the room, a whisper caught in the air currents, unable to break free.

'Why does he get help?'

'Yeah!'

'What makes him so Special'

'That's unfair'

'He's cheating'

I cringe as the up roar begins, a boy I don't recognize sits across from me with an elderly woman at his side reading the text, piecing this foreign language together and making it recognizable.

'Why don't we get help?'

'Yeah help us?'

'Why is he the favourite?'

The class goes into a wild madness which not even Miss Read can control. Their voices clash together like claps of thunder, and the teacher's storm around the room like rhinos on a rampage.

Final one voice can be heard over the kayos, one harsh stressed voice, which silences these animals and sends a chill shattering down my spine. Four words.

'BECAUSE HE CAN'T READ!'

My heart forgets to pump, my lungs forget to take in oxygen, and for a split second there's not a breath in the air, everyone is a perfect statue, nothing but a photograph.

'Damn Miss I like to make an introduction but most people start with my name'

A flash of silence and then laughter, shoulders shaking, stomach aching laughter. For a split second I'm ashamed to find my own laugh mingling with the others. But then I see the new boys shoulders are shaking just as much as mine and relax, were laughing with him not at him.

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When he said 'I like to make an introduction' he wasn't kidding.

'THAT'S IT GO SIT ON THE NAURGHY TOOLS!' He roars like a madman, with his arms flapping in the air like a bird trying to take off.

A fit of uncontrollable giggles erupt from behind me.

'Clearly you have no respect for the art of drama' he laughs 'I was in the zone.'

'Well maybe you should get out of the zone and pay attention to the script, its stool not tools.'

'What!' he presses the script to his nose examining it 'aww man someone moved the S again!'

Laughter follows his words like a rat looking for food.

That's Charlie; the new boy. Confident, funny, loved and dyslexic. I wonder how he does it, how he's so relaxed about *everything* and how he can joke about *anything*. He's never embarrassed, or shy. He reads out loud, he laughs at mistakes, he's friends with everyone, people laugh with him, respect him, except him.

I want that, I *will* have that; because this time I have hope. I have living breathing proof that things can be different, because I ~~can~~ will make them different.

I will be confident, relaxed, respected, dyslexic and successful.

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*'I lie there unmoved, my body weight crushing the soft snow flakes hidden under me.*

*I don't know how long I've been here. A day? A month? A year? Probably longer. Time doesn't seem to exist here. It's like nothing is moving forward. It's like I'm frozen here, in this exact moment. But time must be passing, right? I'm older, bigger, stronger- no, not stronger. I think I was nine when it took me, clawed me right from my bed like I was some sort of prize in a grabber machine. Stole my life right from under me and trapped me in this hell. They want my locket it said – the shadow- it holds some sort of power I don't fully understand.'*

I grip the book tighter heart racing, blood pumping. It's so descriptive, so emotional, like a movie playing in my head, but instead of watching the characters on a screen I become the character, I am sucked into this fantasy world, I feel their fear and love, I

laugh at their jokes and cry at their loses. This is my escape from reality, something no one can destroy.

The pages wont turns fast enough, my brain won't focus long enough, I am pushing myself more than any teacher ever did and I don't even realise.

I am slowly learning this foreign laugh, it is becoming familiar almost recognizable.

~~I always loose what line I'm on~~

My figure keeps me on the right track

~~The words are too hard for me~~

I let some words swim over my head

~~The description is too much for me~~

I let myself get lost in the description

~~Reading is torcher~~

Reading is leisure

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I am sat in the centre of the ~~prison~~ class room, books and papers spread out across my desk, laughing so hard my ribs hurt.

~~The strangers~~ my friends are surrounding me dubbed over laughing at ~~me~~ with me.

I wonder when I stopped caring; stopped fighting them, stopped hating them, when I stopped being the depressed victim and started being part of them.

I told them how I felt, that I was dyslexic and learnt I was not alone. There are six people in this room who felt the same as I did, and sometimes still do. But instead of tearing each other down, laughing out of relief that some else made the mistake or got caught having extra class, we help each other, correct each over and learn from each other.

All it took was one voice to stand out from the crowd, to speak the truth for others and stop lying to yourself. One voice to give others inspiration and confidence. One voice, my voice to change my future.

~~I have no confidence~~

I am more confident

~~I can't do this~~

I will do this

~~I am lazy~~

I need help

~~I have a disability~~

I think differently

~~I am stupid~~

I am dyslexia

~~I am alone~~

I am not alone

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Disbelief fills my frozen body. I heard my mum scream before I recreated the end of the page, but I still don't believe it. I am dreaming, hallucinating.

My brain wont function, won't read the sheet balanced in my numb hands. My blood is replaced with water, then fire, then ice.

I don't understand. My head is spinning, my mum is screaming and I don't understand.

<b>Graphics</b>	B
<b>Art</b>	Distinction
<b>Science</b>	Distinction
<b>Maths</b>	C
<b>Resistant materials</b>	B
<b>English</b>	A
<b>Performing arts</b>	Distinction

I passed?

My heart pumps faster, my blood replaced with adrenalin.

'I passed' I hear my voice saying the words but they feel unfamiliar in my mouth.

'I PASSED!' my head stops spinning but I don't understand what I'm saying.

I look around the room full of students collecting there exam results, celebrating or crying I can tell. My brain won't distinguish between tears of joy or sadness.

A

English A

A English

Pass

I half expect someone to rip the paper out my hands and shout April foulds, but no one does.

I look for someone to take the paper back saying someone made a mistake that these aren't my results. But there it is my name printed in bold clear writing at the top of the page.

*My name*

*My results*

*My success*

*My A*

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Congratulations! Your place to study at Nottingham Trent University has been confirmed.

We look forward to meeting you on the 25<sup>th</sup> September 2015.