

# Candidate 7

PE4/11

## Get to Heaven Fables

### *The Snail*

A boy is walking down a street and he hears a loud crunch. He stops. He has two options. The first: he keeps on walking. He keeps on walking and forever lives in the fear that he may have killed a snail. That fear, that nagging doubt could grow to consume him, define him, destroy him. Or he could pick option two. He could look back. He could look back and find an inanimate object; a leaf, a plastic wrapper, a discarded receipt. Or he could look back and find a dead snail. He would be sad that he killed the snail. Devastated, even. But at least he'd know.

My crunch came in the form of Marshall Applewhite. He told me that our bodies are just shells like the shells of a snail, and we are trapped in them. He told me that killing myself wouldn't really be killing myself, it would be destroying my shell and setting myself free. I said "I don't believe you; I believed that dying is dying and that is that." He said "Do you want to go on living in the fear that you're right?"

That was the crunch. I could leave, keep walking, live a life as meaningless as a snail's; leaving a glistening trail of fear and doubt and constantly wondering if I was trapped in my shell. Or I could kill myself. I could die in the purest sense of the word: I could simply cease to be. Or I could get to heaven. But at least I'd know.

### *The Horse and the Cow*

I often consider the aftermath of my death, and how people would have reacted. I imagine my old friends saying "O, what a shame! She was so beautiful! So bright!" People say this a lot. This means that it is less of a shame when ugly and stupid people die.

Picture this. A young girl, a beautiful princess, is deciding what she will have for dinner. She rings her bell and her chef comes running in, offering her her heart's desires. After a moment's thought, she demands the most delicious steak in all the land, and the chef runs away immediately to fulfil her wish. That evening he returns with her request. The steak is huge, almost twice the princess's size, but she devours the whole thing as, after all, it's the greatest steak in the world. Once she has finished, she wipes her mouth, sits back on her throne, and with a wide grin asks the chef how he managed to make such an incredible dish. The chef says he takes no credit. He says a good steak is not in the cooking, but in the meat, and that's why he used the palace's finest horse. The princess starts to cry. She cries because horses are pretty and cows are ugly and therefore eating a horse is horrible while eating a cow is fine. That's just the truth. There's no way around it.

Beauty was a concept I had almost forgotten about leading up to my death. Marshall didn't agree with it and therefore neither did we. If our bodies were simply the vehicles in which our spirits travelled on earth, why should their appearance matter? I was so beautiful. Or rather, my shell was. But now it floats about as little bits of dust in the wind, and gets stuck under the nails of strangers or swept to the side of the street. I was so bright. But now, now I'm **enlightened**.

PF4/2.

### *The Old Lady's Cat*

In this story, a house catches fire and inside the house there is an old lady and a cat. A single brave firefighter bursts into the house and there he finds them both, passed out but not dead. He knows he can only save one, so he asks himself a ridiculous question: What's sadder, an eighty year old woman dying, or her pet cat dying? Only a minute later, he emerges from the smoking building holding the cat.

Humans get to decide how sad a death is. They have that right. Firefighters and little girls watching the news and neighbours who describe you as 'a little past your prime' get to give your life its final value. That's what happened to the old lady in this story. Her life was given value below that of her cat. This is quite simply because she had passed what I like to call the human-to-cat-death-sadness-equilibrium-age and what other people like to call sixty. Anyone below sixty dying is sadder than their cat dying, if you happen to be sixty exactly then it's equal, but on your sixty-first birthday you better accept that from here on out your cat holds precedence. And that's not coming from a lack of sympathy. On the contrary; we cannot sympathise with the dead, only the people left behind, so when an old lady's cat dies, that's when we finally, truly sympathise with the lady. I was three years away from the human to cat death sadness equilibrium age. I was 57. And I didn't have a cat. So I doubt anybody was particularly sad.

### *The Lost Shepherd*

"The Lord is my shepherd. He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." –Psalm 23

God created one of every kind of animal. One horse, one mouse, one sheep, one everything. And then he felt their loneliness and created another. The horse became horses, the mouse became mice, but the sheep remained sheep. And as they bred and multiplied and expanded in numbers they forever stayed nothing but sheep. God did this to show us that it doesn't matter how many sheep there are, sheep are one. What matters is the shepherd. For the sheep, god created the shepherd. And then shepherd became shepherds.

That was me and Marshall. We were the shepherds. People called us Bo and Peep. I was peep because Bo was too similar to my real name, or rather my shell's real name, and we chose to erase all connection to such things. We were Bo and Peep and though our sheep would both dwindle and rise in numbers we would lead on and they would follow.

A group of sheep is generally called a flock or a herd. A large group of sheep is called a mob. There's something unsettling about the word mob. It is crucial never to forget the power of connotations. They are the government and the newspaper's strongest weapon, like global warming and 'climate change'. A pleasant flock of sheep becomes a violent mob. A harmless religious group becomes an unhinged, psychopathic cult.

Cult, *noun*

a system of religious veneration and devotion directed towards a particular figure or object.

PF4/3 .

We were not a cult. We were never a cult. But we were relentlessly slandered and defamed as one. We were spoken of as a threat to society. As if we'd ever planned on killing anyone other than ourselves.

### *The Whisper of the Snake*

It is a common misconception that snakes hiss. The fact is they whisper, only much too quietly to be intelligible. In fact, a little known statistic is that 94% percent of deaths by snake bites occur when foolish travellers lean in to hear what a snake is whispering about. They want to know what it could possibly be saying that's so important and secretive, and as a consequence they die. But they always die with a smile on their face, because they finally know the truth.

About four months before the alignment I went to see a doctor. The doctor told me I had about four months left to live. I was always destined to die at the alignment. On that day, on that hour, at that instant. And that had been proven to me now. And now that I knew, knew for sure, that I would get to heaven, I no longer had to live in fear and doubt and suddenly I didn't want to die. It was at that moment that I realised that Marshall Applewhite was a serpent and I had crunched on the apple he tempted me with and now I was to be punished and it was most likely too late for me to do anything about it. I had leaned in too close so that I could hear what he was whispering and he bit me and his venom was what had shown up in the scan when the doctor diagnosed me with stage four liver cancer. I finally knew the truth. I didn't want to die, but I knew I would, as all who know the truth do. My only consolation was that when I did, I would arrive at Heaven's Gate with a smile on my face.

Word Count: 1501