

The Title Will Be The Last Thing I'll Write

PORTFOLIO

Email: Rayyan_Fayyad@hotmail.com

Phone Number: +961 70 625 559

1.

Let's Begin

I have a degree in computer engineering that I keep in my sock drawer.

It cost me six years, blood, sweat, and tears, and tore my mental health to shreds, but it was worth it.

I had never been anything less than an exemplary student. School was a breeze and math was fun. I enjoyed problem-solving and a blind man could see that I had the makings of an engineer. I got in on the first application I submitted to the first prestigious school I applied for using SAT scores I never bothered studying for.

So, what the hell went wrong?

Grades don't matter is a tricky motto.

While I admire my seventeen-year-old self's desire to look beyond the numbers, I think he was using it as an excuse for his below-standard performance— anything short of a B.

It took him a while to realize that his old ways were not serving him like they used to and that things needed to change. But instead of buckling down and greasing his elbows, he lowered his standards and decided not to beat himself up over it.

beat himself up over it. He was too critical of himself and believed that the lesson to be learned was to give himself some slack when no one else would. In fact, he gave himself so much of it that he eventually became something he despised— average. But remember, grades don't define potential, so he gave himself so many breaks that he dozed off driving past the point of no return.

I like to call it the halfway point.

3.

Though, it wasn't really halfway as it ended up taking up two more years than it should have. But it was then when young Ray toyed with the question:

Am I in the wrong place...?

Maybe. But where would he go? His options were either to transfer to a similar major or start over, none of which were viable. Besides, it would mean he admitted defeat and quit halfway through, something his ego refused to humor; after all, he was full of untapped potential. So, he found some like-minded friends who shared his love for wasting time and pulling through at the last minute. He picked up smoking and sleepless nights as his coping mechanism and soon enough, every time he dodged a bullet, every time he managed to pass an at-risk course, he reinforced his belief that he had been keeping his potential at bay.

But put your money where your mouth is.

4.

Email: Rayyan_Fayyad@hotmail.com

Phone Number: +961 70 625 559

The first time he failed to graduate was no big deal. He had been fully loading his semesters from the start trying to finish early, so, technically it didn't impede him. Things changed when the importance of grades was no longer a matter of personal opinion. You can't graduate if you don't have the grades, that's just the way it works. It was finally time to get down to business and take things seriously. He did, but to no avail. Hard work wasn't paying off, matter of fact, at times it seemed like it was doing the opposite.

Which begged the question— *Was he deluded?*

5.

The chicken or the egg.

**Young Ray knew two things
for certain; he did not like his
major, and he was bad at it.**

Eventually, he learned that it didn't matter which caused which, but for the remainder of his time at the university, he believed the latter did. To a self-critical person like young Ray, a person who refused to do anything he didn't think he could excel at, it meant that he was headed towards a life lacking enjoyment and success. One would have been enough to sustain him, but he couldn't fathom a life without either. From there on out it was a downward spiral. He spent his days wondering why he went to sleep every night praying morning wouldn't come.

It didn't make sense why he was so unhappy and angry all the time. He was surrounded by good people, his parents were supportive, and he could literally do whatever he wanted. But that only proved his inadequacy to find happiness in a life of his choosing where all the requirements of happiness were there.

He'd vow again and again to make a change only to end up justifying his lack of follow-through. ***Accept that which you cannot change***, right? Something had to give.

If adversity has no face, then it must be my own.

This is when the protagonist takes a hard look in the mirror and decides he doesn't like what he sees. Help was expensive and thus was short-lived, but things did get better for a while. Confidence, drive, and motivation. He had a taste of what he had forgotten. He'd shut his eyes grinning then wake up ready to grab the day by the...neck. To put it simply, life was good. But soon he would find that he was merely getting in fighting shape for what was to come.

7.

Parents, protests, and pandemics.

Shortly after his parent's divorce in the summer of 2019, protesters lined the street one fateful night as he was driving his mother to the hospital. They had their suspicions as to what was ailing her but received the official diagnosis that night, small-cell lung cancer. He had no choice but to remain optimistic. Classes, friends, his country, and himself all had to take a back seat. The lockdown was a blessing in disguise, but blessings in disguise are often trades done in secret. But it meant an open road every time they rushed her to the emergency room. Online classes meant he could stay by her side. Less people visited due to safety measures, and everything was always sanitized. They did everything by the book, but she wasn't getting better. Six months into her treatment, she lost sensation in her leg. Days later she lost sensation in her entire lower body. The doctor gave them three months.

“If believing in the 0.1% makes me an idiot, then call me the dumbest person to ever live,” he had said..

Belief is what people do when they don't have the time to think, and time flies when everyone is on autopilot. Days and nights blend and trips to the ER become part of the routine. A hospital bed enters the living room, and the family becomes a nursing staff. Every waking and sleeping second is consumed by the illness, and it's all anyone talks about, if they ever talked. He was running on pure make-believe. It was a strong front, but the end-of-life signs were there no matter how the doctors tried to spin it.

Breathes four seconds apart, low blood pressure, low oxygen levels. Prioritize pain relief, last words and confessions, sign the do not resuscitate form, prepare the body, deliver it to its final resting place, bury the body, accept condolences, honor traditions, play nice and put on a brave face, and then find meaning. Live in solitude, push everyone and everything away, hoard feelings and call it moving on. Endure the last

semester, graduate, then hit a wall. You would expect him to shatter on impact, but he didn't. Back up, reassess, change directions, and go again only to hit another wall. Realize that no matter how you turn, you are surrounded. So, keep slamming, punching, screaming, until you shatter. And after you've picked up the pieces, that hole you've been digging all this time, that's your way out.

I didn't want to tear down walls, I owed them for all the years they kept me safe. I knew I was blessed and I'm not the ungrateful type. So, all those years hitting rock

bottom and then sinking lower was my way of tunneling out.

Self-sabotage. Call it what you want, but I couldn't possibly sit idly by and watch young Ray throw away his potential. He needed to see that he was headed down the wrong road, in a vehicle that didn't suit him, making stops at all the wrong places. And since he wouldn't listen to anyone but himself, it was up to me to crash that car. I didn't know what my true nature was until I fought it, and it was one hell of a fight, but in the end, we

were both spent. We owed each other a lot of favors and it was time to pay up. He had promised me it would all be worth it, and he was true to his word, because sometimes it's enough to learn what something is not in order to learn what it is. It's time I put things behind me and make a new promise to whomever I become next.

So, in the end, to answer the first question, in hindsight nothing went

wrong. I could've made a fine engineer, truth is, I had the makings for a variety of different things, but I didn't know it. And even if I did, even if I manage to send a message across time and space to my seventeen-year-old self, I know he'd ignore me. The lesson was never finding a place I best suited, it was finding a place that best suited me.

I haven't written a new story here; I am but one example of many and more to come. I'm also not the only one to do something about it. But just like those before me, I'm here to carry on the message, in the best way I know how— **writing**.

S

The Things I Never Say

If you bite your tongue long enough, your lip starts to quiver
It's both unwise, unjustified, to say I'm not a giver
Though lately, I have noticed I've been keeping to myself
When giving out the honest truth, a dozen short of twelve
Been going on for I while, I cannot blind the eye
I feel my twitching lip, with all the words inside
To shield you from the venom that has dipped the things I say
To swallow down the poison, and find a better way
But the words keep on rushing and burning out my veins
They're searching for a path to reveal the truth contained
So, the next time that you see me, punching down the walls
Know that it's a sacrifice, not to burn you all
I'd rather break my both wrists keeping words at bay
To take the toll of twitching lips in things I'll never say

m

e

o

p

Wasn't It Nice?

'It was nice meeting you.'
'The pleasure is mine.'
'It was nice knowing you.'
'So, this is goodbye.'
'It was nice hearing from you.'
'From time to time.'
'It was nice seeing you.'
'Yeah, it's been a while.'
'We didn't go far, and ...'
'It was a hell of a ride.'
'We crashed the car.'
'But wasn't it nice?'

The Things We Love

We keep the things we love
as close to us as possible for as long as we can love them.

We keep the things we love
away from all the terrors for as long as we're above them.

We keep the things we love
from leaving when we keep a piece inside them.

We keep the things we love
in memory when they're keeping us behind them.

We keep the things that matter, and it matters how we keep them
In jest and harmless banter, we can vow to never need them
The twisted and the toxic ways we know would keep a loved one
And all the perfect things to say or use to load a handgun
It's allowed to break a vow when love's the one who makes it
To justify crossing lines and hating that we hate it

Before you know it, comes the day, in quiet desperation
You block out all the things you say, and gaze at your creation
There's no villain or a culprit, but take a look around
They gather by the hundreds, and they barely make a sound
They hold you to a loaded gun, they too can break their vow
To keep you as a loved one, it doesn't matter how

Forgetting Is A Blessing

Forgetting is a blessing

It's a blessing we forget

I say it's nice to meet you though it's likely that we've met

A while ago, before a show, we shared a cigarette

A clever joke, between the smoke, exchanging alphabets

I didn't know how fun it was to change the pace a bit

Or whether I should justify my quirky etiquette

It all went well, as I could tell, but if memory serves correct

A large amount of alcohol was the third that broke the set

We syllabized, unstabilized, like tired old cassettes

Toxic old relationships, and ships that never set

You dared me to swim naked, and I think I won the bet

But the devil in the water was our uninvited guest

We said things in the moment, and we said them with regret

The more I try to place them, the farther that they get...

I say it's nice to meet you though it's likely that we've met

Forgetting is a blessing

It's a blessing we forget.

A Father's Day

The meaning of a father
Is a secret that they keep
A treasure with a lock on
It's often buried deep
Searching makes it harder
To say what's on our hearts
So, from every son and daughter
To every morning star
To all the single mothers
You carry twice your size
To all my mourning brothers
The pride's inside your eyes
To fathers who have lost
You're forever a dad

To stepfathers and figures
You more than fill a gap
As to all the rest
You do know what they say
Though we say it once a year
Happy fathers' day.

Short Poems

Embrace

Can is can't when once it could
Why not is why when understood
Dos and don'ts have no disputes
You looks good in shiny suits

Birds Of A Feather

If the wine is your desire,
Don't drink what you can't swallow
If it's the crystal you admire,
You can hand it back tomorrow
If you want me, the company,
Then lead a toast that I can follow.

Impressions

Que the laughter, the stage is set
Break a leg with no regrets
But careful not to break a sweat
Beware the things that they forget.

16.

Short Stories

Email: Rayyan_Fayyad@hotmail.com

Phone Number: +961 70 625 559

That Makes Two Of Us

Before the final boarding call to a flight going nowhere, Robert takes a chance on a tortured young man he encounters while waiting. “There is nothing anyone can give me that I can’t give myself,” Robert challenges, and the young man takes the bait. Their conversation turns out to be not what either man expected.

<https://1drv.ms/b/s!AvgPf4Hc-50D8QX-LaoNFOk6nyyb?e=2ZtctA>

17.

On A Good DAY

After an incident that leaves Stuart in shame, he goes about his day contemplating his life as an immigrant in the house of an old woman. Things aren't always what they seem, and Stuart learns the truth the hard way.

<https://1drv.ms/b/s!AvgPf4Hc-50D8QIZHsU0i6ZYapy7?e=CqOKRM>

18.

Email: Rayyan_Fayyad@hotmail.com

Phone Number: +961 70 625 559

Rejoice

The word works in magical ways for those searching for wonder. Desperation is often key; just ask Edna, the retired fortune teller who has sworn off the practice. As for Joyce, she just wants to live. But it's not up to either how the world spins its webs.

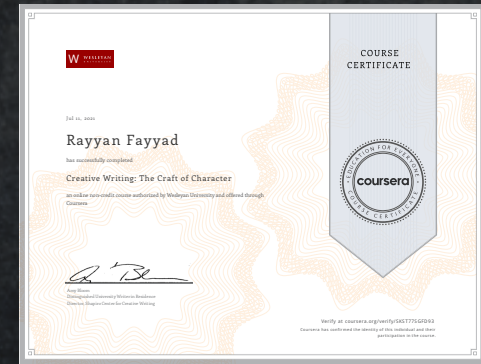
<https://1drv.ms/b/s!AvgPf4Hc-50D8QQZW1Ad1cSZslz?e=Hru9li>

19.

Certificates



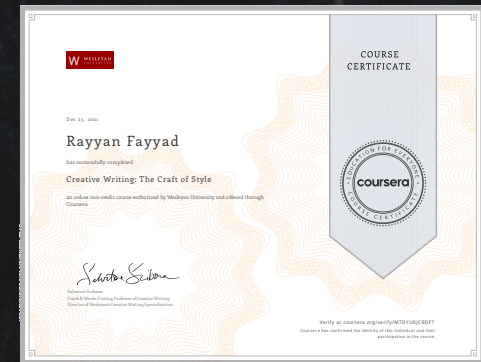
The Craft Of Plot



The Craft Of Character



The Craft Of Setting And
Description



The Craft Of Style



5 Courses

- Creative Writing: The Craft of Plot
- Creative Writing: The Craft of Character
- Creative Writing: The Craft of Setting and Description
- Creative Writing: The Craft of Style
- Capstone: Your Story

Oct 10, 2022

Rayyan Fayyad
has successfully completed the online, non-credit Specialization

Creative Writing

This Specialization covers the distinct literary characteristics of the genres short story, lyric essay and memoir. You utilized the techniques good writers use to create a great story by addressing composition, revision, rewriting and crafting descriptive language. Additionally, you analyzed and constructively evaluated peer writing. The Specialization concluded with a Capstone project: developing and completing a work of prose in the genre of your choosing.

Salvatore Scibona,
Frank B. Weeks Visiting
Professor of English
Amy Bloom,
Distinguished University
Writer in Residence
Brando Skyhorse,
Visiting Assistant
Professor of Creative
Writing
Amity Gaige, Visiting
Scholar in Creative
Writing

The online specialization named in this certificate may draw on material from courses taught on-campus, but the included courses are not equivalent to on-campus courses. Participation in this online specialization does not constitute enrollment at this university. This certificate does not confer a University grade, course credit or degree, and it does not verify the identity of the learner.

Verify this certificate at:
<https://coursera.org/verify/specialization/4Y5T1GNZHSV3>

Creative Writing Specialization

Email: Rayyan_Fayyad@hotmail.com

Phone Number: +961 70 625 559



To Be Continued...