

Pedro Reyes-Flores  
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Prof. Alain-Philippe Durand

### Creative Project

I will write a stream of consciousness short story related to *A Brief Stay with the Living* by Marie Darrieussecq. In my short story, I will write about how the events in my everyday life make me feel and what thoughts they cause me to think. My goal is to write a short story that will be similar to the thoughts of Nore as she goes through her day of school, appointments, dates, and interactions with family.

#### **College life, double rainbows, and sleepy-time fog**

I am a student. If the world ends in 2012, I would have wasted all my life in school. Or so they say. 1/3 of that time was spent sleeping. Roughly. Now when I wake up it turns out I am in college. Enrolled in an institution of higher learning. So far this has been my first year. Earning a degree at the University of Arizona. In what? Not totally sure. I have a general idea. Geography. Creative Writing. Philosophy. Linguistics. Religious Studies. Spanish. And I have to get to graduate school. Somehow, someday. I would do well in any of those. I bet I would. Trouble is I am indecisive. Very indecisive. Oh well. Always reminded it's too far away to worry. Always. Explore. Take classes that interest you. All who wander are not lost. All that glitters is not gold. Tolkien wrote that in a poem. Oh, but glitter is very sparkly.

The UofA happens to be a land grant institution. Agricultural education is important. So is community outreach. Good opportunities overall. Not many people know that. When I found out, it wasn't exactly a life changing experience. Still unsure what opportunities to take, where to get involved. Concerned mostly with academics. And responsibilities. Obligations. Freedom of college remains irrelevant. It is true I can choose what classes to take.

Now, when I think about college, it's a life paralyzing experience. I am the first. First generation. I am also the oldest. Looking back, I'm not even supposed to be here. Not yet at least. Graduated early and whatnot. I can go back if I want. Back in time. But only in memories. What good would that be? So I must move on. Always. Or so I am told. No time to stop. Sleep when dead. If you stop to rest you get left behind. Swept away. No, trampled. No time to reflect. No time to think. No time to be free. Free to resolve issues. Tie up loose ends. Too many things to worry about. Too many things to pile on my plate. Too many things and my plate has disappeared. Someone forgot to wash it. Maybe it's still in the dish washer. Or drying on the rack. Or on the table, dirty. Pick up your plate. I remember. I have no plate. No need for one lately. Only paper plates. Plastic utensils. Less fuss. Easier to use. Not as good for environment. Being sustainable? Maybe later.

And what can I say about sleep? Sometimes drowsy, sometimes groggy, sometimes almost sleepwalking even. Like in a field of sleepy time fog. Life is a waking dream, like walking through sleepy-time fog. Or so they say. And always get a good night's rest. And don't let the beg bugs bite. And make sure there are no monsters under your bed. If there is, no need to be afraid. You just won't get any sleep—staying up all night, playing monster games with your new friend. None of that is really important in college. Most people sleep when they can, where they can. College should give students units for good sleeping habits. I try to have a pretty routine sleep schedule. Sometimes I oversleep though. And mostly I sleep less than I should. Oh, and once I pulled an all-nighter. It was the first. Stayed up doing homework, lame I know. No coffee, no energy drinks. I have no idea how I did it. But I did.

That's college. College life. Classes. Lectures. Professor's rambling. Sometimes interesting. Vary in size, and teacher to student ratio. 800:1. 500:1. 15:1. 25:1. 200:1. Not counting TAs of course. Then there's work. A job. Employment. Part-time. Earning Money. Acquire Currency, Disregard females. Or so they say. To pay expenses. Help out at home. For food. Foodstuffs. Mostly cheap food. Pizza. Snacks. Drink Water. At restaurants, ask for complimentary water and lemon slice and sugar. Instant lemonade. Attend events, just for the food. Maybe make friends there. Make friends with whom to attend events for free food. Look for specials. Three dollar Wednesdays. Eat a variety. Fruit. Veggies. Water. On a rainy day, stick out your tongue. Catch the raindrops. Same with snowflakes. But no chance of snow in the valley. We do have Eegees however. Oh, but it snows in Mt. Lemmon. Snow. Cold. Vista—Tucson below. Didn't visit this year. Maybe next year. Next year is too far away.

Maybe I can teleport to then and there by spinning. Spinning in circles. Fun-time. Play time. Recess. Not much of that lately, but sometimes during TRIO workshops. Amazing race. Blindfolded soccer. Have fun. I try. And try, try again. If at first you don't succeed try, try again. Moving on.

Social activities. Parties. Not for me. Hanging out with friends? Yes. Well sometimes. Difficult at times, with conflicting schedules, and me preferring to be a loner. Prefer to walk through life. Walking around. Strolling. Promenading. Going nowhere specifically. Wanderlust, but at home like a traveler. Thoreau said that. How can it be done? Books, films, talking to people.

College. Freedom?. Maybe. Maybe not. Responsibilities? Obligations? Yes.

Let's talk about homework. School assignments. Papers. Essays. Readings. Math problems. Pointless worksheets. Exams. Deadlines. Menacing deadlines. Horrifying deadlines. Some are cute. Some are absurd. Like due at midnight. Due at noon the day before. No remorse for late assignments. Well sometimes. But it depends on a student's commitment. And the professor's leniency/kindness. That's good because complications always arise.

So much. How can it be possible? How indeed. How? Juggling. One, two, three, four, or five balls. Unlimited balls. It's over nine thousand! Not even the main circus attraction. Not even that amusing. Clowns, on the other hand are funny—not at all scary. They make you laugh. Preposterous antics. Pie throwing. Fruit Pies. Cream Pies. Nut Pies. Meat Pies. I bet you can't name thirty types of pie. Raspberry. Blueberry. Apple. Peach. Pumpkin. Almond. Rhubarb. Lemon Meringue. Coconut. Chocolate. Pudding Pie. Pot Pie. Custard. Boston Cream. Ice cream pizza. Whatever. And so on. Ice cream pizza. Pizza. Stereotypical college meal. Back to clowns. Pie throwing. Pieing. Usually just whipped cream, in a pie bottom, or more often in a tin pie container. Is that still a pie? Does it matter if as long as it makes people laugh? Laugh and laugh often. Make sure to laugh at yourself. Laugh at yourself in the company of others. Humility can ensure a greater enjoyment of life. All in good measure of course. Also, make sure to express all of your emotions, in a healthy way. Love. Anger. Sadness. Happiness. And so on.

The show must go on. The ringmaster tells you what to do. A nice ringmaster leaves you alone. An even nicer ringmaster is a mentor to you. The UofA has many ringmasters. Some of them are professors. Some of them are also mentors. They can share valuable skills. To survive in college. To enjoy yourself on the path to a degree. So

you don't burn out; and then drop out. Personally thinking about dropping out. Too stressed. Or at the very least take a semester off. But can't risk losing scholarships. So I must stay, but not still, always walking, finding, discovering, exploring my surroundings, preparing for a confrontation with my responsibilities upon my return. To do battle using some of those skills I have begun to learn.

Perhaps the most important skill for me is time management. In a planner, filling out my schedule. Planning. Scheduling what exactly? Well, classes, deadlines, meetings, time for fun, time for exercise, and so on. Looking through my planner, scheduling the upcoming weeks. It all ends soon. Then summer. Summer. A season. Context: Global climate change. Sonoran Desert. Rain. Monsoons. But still heat, still hot. Oh, and on rainy days, chances of seeing a rainbow. Double rainbows. All the way across the sky? Maybe. I saw one last summer, so maybe this time as well. Who knows.

What will you do this summer? Constant question. No, but not nagging. Just repeating. Not annoying. No, just there. But what will I do? Let's talk about that now. Don't think I haven't thought about it, I really have. But like I said, I am very indecisive. I have a long list of possibilities. Here are my options: Internship, find a job and work. Take summer classes. Go on a vacation at a place somewhat like a nature retreat. Sleep, for sure. Or maybe do nothing, just relax. Spend time doing things not related to my college career. That would be fun. None of these options are concrete as of yet though. I should get started on that soon. Opportunities are better than no opportunities. Or so they say. I guess I will know soon enough. For now, just hold on, hang in there. It's almost over, the first year of college. Once it passes right on by, you can go back, but only in memories. Mementos. Like this one. Cute deadlines? Why did I include that?