

☐ Middle School (Grades 6-8)

☐ High School (Grades 9-12)

I understand that THIS FORM IS FOR the Literature Arts Category (Check ONE only) *

☒ Literature

Title of Artwork (REQUIRED) *

The Great Fire of Mice

DETAILS Include word count for literature. Describe technology/platforms used in the creation process, including any generative elements. *

Short story written in Google Docs, exported as a PDF.

Word count - 1935

Artist Statement (REQUIRED) In 10 to 100 words, describe your work and how it relates to the theme. (Please DO NOT exceed 100 words.) *

Six mice, one giant fire. Terrance, Luna, Severus, Minerva, Theo, and Charlotte must embrace the changes in a short amount of time. Osborne McMorse tries to destroy his childhood home. But why? The six mice flee the city, but will they be back? "The only thing important right now is family" The six mice will say this a lot, but they stick to it every time. "Keep moving towards the sun" a family saying they shall keep using, forever and ever. But what is the meaning of this saying, well, you'll figure that out along the way.

The Great Fire of Mice

Part I

A short story By Katherine Cummings

Chapter 1: The Fire Rising

Smoke was rising, citizens were crying. Six mice were fleeing the city, horrified by the explosion. The smoke was a big net, trying to encompass everything in its path. "BOOM" went the city and CRASH! The city was a very small country and it was very dry. If anything or anyone messed up the balance of dryness, a fire would break out, and that's what happened that day. The city was the mice's home for forever. Grandma and Grandpa Mouse lived there their entire lives. It was sad to go, but they must. The mice folded a small newspaper and made a boat. They gathered lots of food and water. The eldest mouse, Terrance, and second eldest mouse Luna, packed up their things and put them in the boat. Severus and Minerva packed up their books and maps and loaded them on the boat. Nine year old Theo packed up his cars and boxed them up. Charlotte, who was six, grabbed her dolls and pet ladybug and ran to the ship.

Chapter Two: The Last Goodbyes

While Luna and Terrance were packing everything onto the boat, Severus, Minerva, Theo, and Charlotte said goodbye to everything and everyone they could find. Earlier that day, Charlotte was playing with her friend Melva. Theo had a Mouse Ball game. Mouse Ball is basically soccer, but with mice instead of humans. Luna was studying with her BMF, best mouse forever, Stella. Terrance was watching Theo's Mouse Ball game. Severus and Minerva were reading their favorite book. Severus and Minerva were already on the 21st chapter when the fire broke out. Theo had already scored twice and the score was 3-1. Theo was at the 6-yard box ready for a cross into the middle. Over here called Theo. His best friend passed him the ball and once Theo had touched the ball, SCREECH! The horrible sound startled Theo and he passed the ball to the other team's goalkeeper by accident. The goalkeeper picked up the ball and punted it. The other team's main striker settled the ball and got ready to score. Luckily Theo's friend Thomas up the field and stole the ball from the other team. Thomas passed the ball to Theo, who crossed the ball to his teammate and he scored! "GOAL!!!" said the announcer. The crowd went wild! The final score ended up as 4-1. After the teams shook hands and the coaches hugged, Theo's team ate surprise cupcakes Luna had made the night before. Terrance said that Luna wanted to tell Theo good luck and I hope you win. Terrance went on. "Luna wanted to apologize that she could not make it to the game. She has a very important test on Monday," said Terrance. "It is 45% of her final grade. It determines whether she passes the grade or fails." "It's okay," said Theo. "She probably would not want to see me mess up." Said Theo in a joking voice. "Well, she still wanted to make you cupcakes because her teacher said she needs to work on her baking skills," said Terrance. "Do you know what that loud sound was earlier?" asked Theo more seriously. "Nope, I have no idea what it was." replied Terrance, sounding suddenly unhappy. "We should ask Minerva and Severus. They always know what is happening." said Theo.

Chapter 3: Osborne McMorse

Osborne McMorse was a curious and ambitious young mouse and he was rather eerie. He loved books and mysteries and was always head of class in school. Then, at age 11, he just vanished. No one saw him again until August 29th, the year the mice fled the city. Everyone welcomed him as if he was a brother to them all. Osborne said he was heading to the valley to breathe in some fresh air. He had said it had been years since he had done so. Everyone in the city was amazed that he was back, none of them had known what Osborne was about to do to the city. Osborne had loathed his time as a kid. Everyone his age teased him and called him a nerd. Osborne was okay with that. But whenever they would describe a nerd they would always imagine a mouse wearing black glasses, long, tight, pants that are brown, and a blue dress shirt tucked in tightly in the pants and holding a calculator and scratch paper. Osborne was so enraged about his childhood, he decided to harm the people living there by building a mob of clones and making the city catch on fire. Osborne had his minions build him a castle at the top of the biggest peak in the city, Pinnacle Porstanfaning, named after the first president the city had, Argus Porstanfaning back in 1879. After the castle was built, Osborne turned into a dictator, and became domineering. He told his minions to set everything below Pinnacle Porstanfaning on fire. They did it. It was a terrible day. First, the fire took out all of the hundred year old trees in the forest. Then it took down a billion houses and schools and forests. All of the damage was devastating. Homes and roads and stores were destroyed in this tragedy. But unfortunately, this was just the beginning. People in the city had no idea what was going on. No one guessed that it was Osborne.

Chapter 4: Departing the City

Earlier...

When Theo and Terrance got home, they found Minerva and Severus doing calculations and trying to figure out who or what caused the loud noises. "Quiet boys, we are trying to work." said

Minerva, not even looking up to see who was there. "Cross out earthquake. There was no shaking and there is no damage on the roads." said Minerva. "What else do you have on the list?" asked Theo. "The only thing we have left is construction." said Severus, sounding disappointed. "What is wrong with that?" asked Theo. "Well, there is not supposed to be any more construction for a few years." said Severus. Sounding sadder in every syllable he said. "Plus, from my calculations, the construction is coming from Pinnacle Porstanfaning. It is illegal to build there. That is where Argus Porstanfaning is buried. It is a cenotaph." added Minerva, sounding worried. There was a knock at the door and it startled everyone. "Hello? Anyone home?" asked the voice. "Can you let me in? I left my house key in my room. Melva's mom just dropped me off." Said the voice. "Phew, I am pleased it is just Luna" said Severus, sounding relieved. "Just a second!" yelled Minerva. Minerva let Luna in and asked her if she heard the loud noises as well. She did. "The noises were very loud and it was hard to study. That is why I had to come home early." said Luna.***

"You woke me up!" said a small and mad child at the doorway. "Sorry Charlotte, but I am glad you are awake. We need you to listen and see if you hear any beeping and tell us where it is coming from. We think there might be some construction up on Pinnacle Porstanfaning." said Minerva in a calm voice. "Isn't it illegal to build up there?" asked Charlotte. "Yes it is. That is why we want you to listen for any commotion." said Terrance, finally talking again. Charlotte piped up and said "be quiet! I hear something! A beep, and a BOOM. I hear noise coming from that way." Charlotte pointed toward the window and to the pinnacle. Finally, they could see it. There was an outline of a man on the mountain. Then came an outline of a house. Then a mansion. "Guys, look at this!" said Theo pointing at the window with Charlotte. There is a man building a mansion! He's breaking the rules!" "That is not a mansion. See, it is growing. It is probably a big building or something like that." said Terrance, observing the horizon. "We need to go look at what is happening." said Minerva, hurriedly. A few moments later, everyone ran to their room to change into different clothes. Soon, everyone was ready to go***

They sprinted their way to the edge of the mountain and waited for the next trolley up. Luckily, they only had to wait ten minutes. When they got up the mountain, there was a huge, and I mean HUGE surprise just waiting for them. Over and under the horizon they went, listening for any noises. Then, at last, they heard it. BEEP, BEEP, BEEP. A truck was backing up. Or was it little robots trying to sing? No one knows. Finally, the mice got over the horizon and saw it. A brobdingnagian (Brob·ding·nag·i·an) castle. "What is it?" asked Charlotte, fearfully. "It is an alcazar. A castle. A brobdingnagian alcazar." Said Minerva. "What does brobdingnagian mean?" asked Charlotte, still frightened. "Brobdingnagian means giant." said Minerva. Charlotte's face was very pale. She was looking right across for the alcazar. She squeaked. When Charlotte squeaks, you know there is something bad in sight. Luna looked over to where Charlotte was looking and saw the outline of a man. A tall and skinny man. Immediately, Severus knew who this was. Osborne McMorse. Severus had always wondered where Osborne went. "Guys, I know who that man is." said Severus, in a terrified voice. "Who is it?" asked Terrance, now looking at Severus. "It's..." "Now minions, set this city on fire!" said an unknown voice who interrupted Severus. "Yes, Master Osborne McMorse." said the minions in unison. All of the mice except Severus looked at each other in a horrified face. "But I thought Osborne McMorse was a myth." said Minerva, just as horrified as the others. "RUN!!" yelled Theo, getting a head start. "GET BACK HOME AS SOON AS YOU CAN!!" yelled Luna, half stunned, half sad. Either way, they needed to get away from the mountain ASAP! "

The city was the mice's home for forever. Grandma and Grandpa Mouse lived there their entire lives. It was sad to go, but they must. The mice folded a small newspaper and made a boat. They gathered lots of food and water. The eldest mouse, Terrance, and second eldest mouse Luna, packed up their things and put them in the boat. Severus and Minerva packed up their books and maps and loaded them on the boat. Nine year old Theo packed up his cars and boxed them up. Charlotte, who was six, grabbed her dolls and pet ladybug and ran to the ship.

So when everything was packed, the mice boarded the ship and said goodbye to everyone and everything. Finally, they were ready to go. Terrance and Theo pulled up the anchor while Severus and Minerva were doing calculations of the water current, Luna and Charlotte fed Floweretta. Once that was done, Luna and Charlotte helped Theo and Terrance row the ship. Everything was calm after an hour at sea. Then, just as everyone stopped rowing, a dark cloud approached them. It was darker than the night with no power and no stars. The ship rolled around, stomachs dropped, hearts beated. Then, right in the nick of time, Luna shouted, "KEEP MOVING TOWARDS THE SUN!" This means to always look for a bright side to things. A family saying that will be never forgotten, has risen to the moment.***

The story continues in Part II.