

### Story Telling Assignment

“Asked for her story:

Aravis immediately began, sitting quite still and using a rather different tone and style from her usual one.

For in Calormen, story-telling (whether the stories are true or made up) is a thing you're taught, just as English boys and girls are taught essay writing. The difference is that people want to hear the stories, whereas I never heard of anyone who wanted to read the essays.”

C.S. Lewis, *The Horse and His Boy*

### WHY DO PEOPLE TELL STORIES?

1. for fun
2. to organize information
3. to remember things/preserve history
  - a. before there was writing people told stories so that the oral history could be passed from one generation to another
  - b. you can remember a lot more through stories
4. to persuade or teach
  - a. morals – most fairy tales
  - b. opinions – many great works that critique society

### WHY DO (GREAT) LAWYERS TELL STORIES

1. people want to listen to them
2. people remember them
3. people will want the correct ending to a story
  - a. The beautiful princess will (after some turmoil) live happily ever after
  - b. The horrible ogre will be punished or reformed.
4. NOT TO CREATE LIES –YOUR STORY REFLECTS TRUTH BUT IS ORGANIZED SO FOLKS CAN REMEMBER IT
5. stories help us to recognize gaps in our cases – stories demand causal relations – this happened *because of* X,Y, Z and help us to get back to our clients to understand WHY things happened

### WHAT'S MAKES A STORY

1. characters – hero, villain, victim, sidekick (characters can be animate or inanimate, human or not)
2. plot – story has beginning, middle, end (but may use flashbacks)
3. theme or moral – very important organizing point
4. language used deliberately and beautifully

Student Stories as Self-Reflection

Workshop May 9, 2009

Lynn Capuano and Babe Howell

5. all or most senses engaged – a story generally will set a scene and you may be able to feel the cold breeze, smell the thawing earth, hear birds chirping or the soft drizzle of rain

**Assignment –**

1. **Review chapter 13 in Lawyering Essentials.**
2. **Write a story which you will perform or deliver in our next class. You will also submit the story by email to me prior to class.**
  - a. **Your story will be based on one of your cases but need not be the story you would tell a jury.**
  - b. **You should choose a perspective – a character involved in your case (client, complainant, friend, judge, jury, police, prosecutor, ADA) or even an inanimate object.**
  - c. **The story should be between 5 and 10 minutes long when delivered or performed.**

Story by Taryn Shechter

Yes I am old we all know that. I was feeling pretty bad about myself and how I looked, but then four years ago some people tried to help me. This young couple, the Clarks were going to be my new owners and they said they were going to fix me! I needed a total makeover, they would basically have to start from scratch. The thing is, the place where I live, Middleton they make sure houses like me meet certain standards. I live in a historical town so there is a lot to worry about. Luckily, one day they brought this nice man to my house, he said he would fix me right up! His name was Mr. Jones and he had lots of exciting plans for me. As soon as he said that he would help me, he had to bring all these different people to the house to meet me and take my picture. They analyzed my every nook and cranny but I guess it paid off because the people from Middleton said Mr. Jones could fix me! I was so happy when I heard this news, Mr. Jones had big plans for me and wanted to make sure everything was perfect.

A couple of days after Mr. Jones started his work on me, some important looking people came to the house and stapled a sign on me! Not only did it hurt but the sign said that Mr. Jones had to stop his work! I couldn't believe it but apparently, since I'm so old they thought I had something called asbestos. I had a friend who had asbestos and he had trouble breathing, but not me so I knew this couldn't be right. Mr. Jones had some people come look inside to check for asbestos. Everything turned out to be ok! Mr. Jones continued doing his work again. Then one night when everyone was gone some kids were walking by, they being rowdy so I was a little nervous. Then all of the sudden two of them starting kicking down the fence that was protecting me. I was scared but they just ran away after they did that. Then to top it off, the next day those important

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Workshop May 9, 2009  
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looking people came back and stapled another sign to me! This time Mr. Jones had to fix the fence those annoying kids had knocked down. Of course he fixed it and then he started work again.

This is where my story gets really sad. One day Mr. Jones didn't show up for work, I was worried and with good reason. I found out that he had been in a car accident! I guess he was pretty hurt because he had to hire these other people to come work on me. I did not like those new people they didn't seem to care about me, they barely even did any work on me. I know this didn't just upset me, my owners were getting very upset too. I could hear them yelling at night, they wanted me to be fixed just as much as I wanted it.

Eventually those bad workers left and some new people came and did a pretty good job making me look better. But there is still a lot to be done, I still feel kind of empty inside, I think it's because I'm missing furniture. I am grateful for the partial new makeover I got but I wish it was complete. I wonder whatever happened to that nice man Mr. Jones.

Babe Howell  
Criminal Justice Clinic  
Story Assignment - Due 11/10/08  
Daniel Satterfield

His eyes were beginning to sting from the smoke. The ash tray needed dumping, but neither of them made a move to empty it. The last thing he wanted to do was cry in front of her. Or talk to her. Or look at her. Instead, he saw that the table had a coffee stain that was dried and sticky. An overhead light was out, and it gave the room an eerie, off-kilter look.

His attention kept getting drawn to the cigarettes on the table. Newports. One thing they had in common, at least. Once he started high school, she'd let him sneak one every now and then. But when she was in one of her preachy moods, which he couldn't help but notice were more frequent when money was tight, she'd smack his hand away from the box and give him a lecture about how in her day they didn't know any better but he didn't have any good excuse.

He'd fume quietly and watch the white cancer stick do a jig from the corner of her mouth, like watching a jerky tap dance set to the wrong music. When the filter began to smolder, he knew the lecture was almost over. A travesty of responsible parenting crossed over with a no-smoking ad. "This is your brain on drugs," he thought, replaced by, "This is your mother on too much Oprah." Half the pleasure he got out of buying his own cigarettes, he attributed to the escape from those half-assed, sham attempts at mother-son talks.

His hands didn't reach for the box today, though they wanted to. He kept them folded on the table in front of him and forced his eyes to follow the crease in the box. The box was half-smashed from being crammed between her thigh and pelvis when she sat down. He knew the cigarettes inside would all inherit the same defect, and each would have the same diagonal crease in the exact same spot.

It wasn't all bad between him and his mother. Every once in a great while, she'd come home smiling. They'd go get an ice cream sundae or go to a Mets game, and for a moment, they'd almost be like mother and son. Those times almost made up for all the shitty ones.

They'd get in a fight before they got home. Usually during the car ride home, but sometimes they wouldn't even make it out of the parking lot. It was a rite of passage;

Student Stories as Self-Reflection  
Workshop May 9, 2009  
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a ritual that had to be completed before they could go home. Sometimes, he imagined that if they didn't fight, they'd just keep driving, past the building, out of the city, away from their shitty apartment with a picture of Jesus hanging from a cracked walls serenely looking on.

After she cried, it'd usually end with him feeling guilty, though less and less in recent years. "It's not you" he wanted to tell her. "I just wish dad were back. I wish it could've been him who took me." Instead, he'd just accuse her, "I wish dad were back."

Things were better with his smart, wonderful sister. She was perfect. If he had to choose, he'd have liked his sister over him, too. She had a job she liked, a husband and two kids. She remembered birthdays and holidays. She called everyone up to get together for Christmas and Thanksgiving. She told everyone what everyone else wanted for presents and where to get them. "How much are you going to spend?" she'd ask. "Then get her the pink bedroom slippers at Target. I'll show you a picture of which ones." She was his surrogate mother. She was his mother's surrogate mother too, technically making her his sister, his surrogate mother and his surrogate grandmother. Try putting that on a family tree. He was born in Brooklyn, but his family tree looked like something out of "The Deliverance". It was like he was adopted, except his birth mother lived with them. One acted like his mother but wasn't. The other acted like she wasn't but was. He lived with a charlatan and a ghost.

He didn't know why he was so different. He was born a baby, just as helpless and dependent as everyone else. From infancy, he was sung to, goo-goo and gushed over. He was told stories of getting a piece of the American Pie, and given fancy visions of unlimited happiness and wealth. And for a while he believed it.

But life's a war. He started out with a father and mother, a sister and friends, marching out together. And one by one, they were gone. They fled or were cut down, incarcerated or changed until he couldn't recognize them anymore and was surrounded by strangers; was a stranger himself. He wanted happiness, a piece of that American Pie, and when it didn't come as expected, he took it wherever he could, in whatever form it came in. He craved love, and when it wasn't given, he tried to train himself not to want it anymore, and that didn't come without costs.

His teachers told him he was stupid and didn't know. In fact, he knew more than they did. He knew what they

wanted was for him to love them, to listen to them, to care about what they taught. They wanted him to fit in or go away. But he'd been through a war. He had been trained not to love. So when he couldn't love them, they called him a trouble-maker. When he couldn't make them love him, they called him stupid. He wasn't expelled because he wasn't smart enough or because he was violent, but because they didn't know what he knew. They didn't know that war changes a person. Some people had two parents to go to war in their place. He had a sister, a surrogate mother, and a surrogate grandmother, too busy with her own battles to help him with his.

His friends were the right fit. They knew about the war, bore battle scars of their own. He didn't know how to make them like or trust him any more than he could the teachers at school, but they didn't expect him to.

So he imitated the things he liked about them. He went where they went; did what they did; said what they said. They were his brothers-in-arms. They did what they had to do to survive, to be happy and to find love. They knew about the war.

They had been lied to, as well. Told they could do everything, achieve anything, be anyone. Like being taken to a candy store and told you could have anything in it, only to learn later that there's a five cent limit. Like learning there's no Santa Clause, except now you're being told there's no bright future, only a slow death.

His brothers gave him a name. They call him Science because one time when he was smocking a crack rock, someone said he looked like the "Mad Scientist." He had pretended to be angry, but secretly he was pleased. After four years of high school, he could claim no higher than a C in biology, but his brothers had given him an honorary doctorate. And with it, a name, an identity, and a future.

But try explaining that to the police who caught him with a joint in his box of Newports. Try telling that to the self-righteous judge and the bitchy DA and the bored public defender who drones on and tells him what he already knows.

He's back in the principal's office all over again. He's standing in front of his teacher, looking at his shoes. He's glaring at his mother through a fog of smoke, wishing his father was there, to hug him or to beat him in equal measure.

They ask him a question. He knows what they want him to say. He knows what they want. They want him to fit in,

or go away. They want him to reach for the cigarettes. They want him to accept the ice cream cone and forgive what they've done to him. They want him to say he's sorry, so they can forgive him. They want him to smoke the joint, take his piece of the American Pie, and say he's wrong for wanting to be loved.

They ask him again, angry now for making them wait. For being stupid. For not accepting their shitty bargain. For not making them feel better.

They embarrass him, and he's their son. He's their son, and he's ashamed. He hung his head, and gave up his spirit.

*"Later, knowing that all was now completed, and so that the Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said "I am thirsty." A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus' lips. When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit." - John 19: 28-30*

Viviane Dussek  
CJC – Creative Writing  
11/10/08

### **A Petit Larceny?**

My life first started when I came from a tree  
Who thought life as a box would be the one for me?  
They shipped me and my friends to a downtown factory  
They shoved my insides with tapes, DVDs, and a CD  
On to the store I went  
They placed me on a shelf that was slightly bent  
I sat and I waited and waited some more  
One time someone even knocked me to the storeroom floor  
Finally, my time had come  
I was the big prize to be won  
I was selected carefully by Ms. Susan Fusco  
In to her home I thought I would go  
But to my dismay, I didn't go in to play  
In the fancy Volvo was where I was going to stay  
The doors did not lock  
Which put me in great shock  
I lived in a state of fear  
I didn't know who would pry or peer  
Before I knew, darkness grew near  
And footsteps were the only sound I could hear  
One step, two step, three step, four  
Then someone opened the Volvo door  
A big guy was all I could see  
But I'm pretty sure he was the only one after me  
"Ouch," I thought when he grabbed me from the seat  
I guess tonight I was his big illegal treat  
"Hello," I heard the big guy say  
"Come pick me up on Princeton Fairway"  
Then I heard a shriek to my right  
A woman yelling out in the middle of the night  
"Get away from there I said"  
"Or else I'll be forced to kick in your head"  
I moved to the left and moved to the right  
I hoped that there wasn't going to be a big fight  
Just then a red car came into sight  
I couldn't imagine what would happen at the end of the night  
With shuffling and bustling and a slam of the trunk  
All I could wonder was how I got in this funk  
As the wheels of the car turned  
My final destination would soon be learned

Slow and steady we were on our way  
This definitely was not my day  
A tear began to form and drop  
When finally the car came to a full stop  
The engine stopped humming  
And I just knew that trouble was coming  
Minutes later sirens blared in the air  
I didn't move an inch, I just wouldn't dare  
Muffled sounds were all I could hear  
The driver's response wasn't too clear  
Doors opened and shut  
I got a strange feeling in the base of my gut  
The trunk latch made a sound  
When it opened cops were standing around  
"Put your hands behind your back" I heard one grunt  
"Don't even try to pull another stunt"  
One guy, two guys, three  
All shuffled in front of me  
Amidst all the commotion a car slowly rolled by  
With the window cracked just a bit, all I could see was an eye  
"That's him!" I heard the voice behind the eye say  
"Okay" said another. "Let's lock him up and call it a day."