

College Application Essay Examples 1000 Words

“Then Cain said to the Lord, “My punishment is greater than I can bear. I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth and whoever finds me will kill me.” - Genesis 4:13

Here is a secret that no one in my family knows: I shot my brother when I was six. Luckily, it was a BB gun. But to this day, my older brother Jonathan does not know who shot him. And I have finally promised myself to confess this eleven-year-old secret to him after I write this essay.

The truth is, I was always jealous of my brother. Our grandparents, with whom we lived as children in Daegu, a rural city in South Korea, showered my brother with endless accolades: he was bright, athletic, and charismatic.

“Why can’t you be more like Jon?” my grandmother used to nag, pointing at me with a carrot stick. To me, Jon was just cocky. He would scoff at me when he would beat me in basketball, and when he brought home his painting of Bambi with the teacher’s sticker “Awesome!” on top, he would make several copies of it and showcase them on the refrigerator door. But I retreated to my desk where a pile of “Please draw this again and bring it to me tomorrow” papers lay, desperate for immediate treatment. Later, I even refused to attend the same elementary school and wouldn’t even eat meals with him.

Deep down I knew I had to get the chip off my shoulder. But I didn’t know how.

That is, until March 11th, 2001.

That day around six o’clock, juvenile combatants appeared in Kyung Mountain for their weekly battle, with cheeks smeared in mud and empty BB guns in their hands. The Korean War game was simple: to kill your opponent you had to shout “pow!” before he did. Once we situated ourselves, our captain blew the pinkie whistle and the war began. My friend Min-young and I hid behind a willow tree, eagerly awaiting our orders.

Beside us, our comrades were dying, each falling to the ground crying in “agony,” their hands clasping their “wounds.” Suddenly a wish for heroism surged within me: I grabbed Min-young’s arms and rushed towards the enemies’ headquarters, disobeying our orders to remain sentry duty. To tip the tide of the war, I had to kill their captain. We infiltrated the enemy lines, narrowly dodging each attack. We then cleared the pillars of asparagus ferns until the Captain’s lair came into view. I quickly pulled my clueless friend back into the bush.

Hearing us, the alarmed captain turned around: It was my brother.

He saw Min-young’s right arm sticking out from the bush and hurled a “grenade,” (a rock), bruising his arm.

“That’s not fair!” I roared in the loudest and most unrecognizable voice I could manage.

Startled, the Captain and his generals abandoned their post. Vengeance replaced my wish for heroism and I took off after the fleeing perpetrator. Streams of sweat ran down my face and I pursued him for several minutes until suddenly I was arrested by a small, yellow sign that read in Korean: DO NOT TRESPASS: Boar Traps Ahead. (Two summers ago, my five-year-old cousin, who insisted on joining the ranks, had wandered off-course during the battle; we found him at the bottom of a 20 ft deep pit with a deep gash in his forehead and shirt soaked in blood) “Hey, stop!” I shouted, heart pounding. “STOP!” My mind froze. My eyes just gazed at the fleeing object; what should I do?

I looked on as my shivering hand reached for the canister of BBs. The next second, I heard two shots followed by a cry. I opened my eyes just enough to see two village men carrying my brother away from the warning sign. I turned around, hurled my BB gun into the nearby Kyung Creek and ran home as fast as I could.

Days passed. My brother and I did not talk about the incident.

‘Maybe he knew it was me,’ I thought in fear as I tried to eavesdrop on his conversation with grandpa one day. When the door suddenly opened, I blurted, “Is anything wrong?”

“Nothing,” he said pushing past me, “Just a rough sleep.”

But in the next few weeks, something was happening inside me.

All the jealousy and anger I’d once felt had been replaced by a new feeling: guilt.

That night when my brother was gone, I went to a local store and bought a piece of chocolate taffy, his favorite. I returned home and placed it on my brother’s bed with a note attached: “Love, Grandma.”

Several days later, I secretly went into his room and folded his unkempt pajamas.

Then, other things began to change. We began sharing clothes (something we had never done), started watching Pokémon episodes together, and then, on his ninth birthday, I did something with Jon that I hadn’t done in six years: I ate dinner with him. I even ate fishcakes, which he loved but I hated. And I didn’t complain.

Today, my brother is one of my closest friends. Every week I accompany him to Carlson Hospital where he receives treatment for his obsessive-compulsive disorder and schizophrenia. While in the waiting room, we play a noisy game of Zegna, comment on the Lakers’ performance or listen to the radio on the registrar’s desk.

Then, the door to the doctor’s office opens.

“Jonathan Lee, please come in.”

I tap his shoulder and whisper, "Rock it, bro."

After he leaves, I take out my notebook and begin writing where I left off.

Beside me, the receptionist's fingers hover over the radio in search of a new station, eventually settling on one. I hear LeAnn Rimes singing "Amazing Grace." Her voice slowly rises over the noise of the bustling room.

"Taws Grace that taught my heart to fear. And Grace, my fears relieved..."

Smiling, I open Jon's Jan sport backpack and neatly place this essay inside and a chocolate taffy with a note attached.

Twenty minutes have passed when the door abruptly opens.

"Guess what the doctor just said?" my brother cries, unable to hide his exhilaration.

I look up and I smile too.