

Creative Non-Fiction

Mister Gates' Cruellest Joke

It's one of life's beautiful moments. After several long, tedious weeks wasted typing out an essay, I am finally finished. I sit back, read over it one final time, and sigh.

Three weeks ago, my teacher decided it was a good idea to take advantage of what they called "the wonders of modern technology," and created an online assessment submission page. Looking at the clock, I see that I have ten minutes to upload my essay. Plenty of time.

Unfortunately for me, it is at that moment that a loud ding heralds the arrival of my despicable nemesis: the demon of mandatory computer updates.

This had better be quick, for both my sake and the computer's. If I miss this deadline, Windows 8 is going to learn the meaning of the word "defenestration".

A fitting way for it to go, really.

The updates begin and the download bar edges forward in a futile race against time, like an octogenarian attempting to outrun Usain Bolt.

Snails circumnavigate the globe. Stars form and live out their lives, cooling to become red dwarves and then finally exploding in magnificent supernovas, scattering their energy back into the universe.

Meanwhile, the update has almost hit 50%.

If I don't hand this in on time, I wonder how my teacher will react. Maybe they will transform into a horrifying behemoth, verbal abuse cascading from their mouth, ready to make a phone call to my parents. The only thing worse than that would be the total opposite, a silent disappointment peppered with sighs and frowns, the signs that a teacher is ready to give up.

I check the download bar. There's only five percent left to go, and about two minutes before my hard work is awarded with a non-attempt.

The ticking of the clock above me is ear-shattering. With each movement of the hands, reality falls away around me. The download picks up speed. The next minute seems like forever, the tense seconds grating by like a crate full of elephants being dragged up a sandpaper hill.

Then, finally, the ordeal is over. The download is complete, and there are still thirty seconds on the clock.

I click 'submit' and the cursor swirls, around and around, while my heart thumps against my ribcage.

It was just as I breathed a sigh of relief and my face, which had frowned for so many weeks, began to smile again, that the browser crashed.

Megalomania in Verse

There once was an orange from New York
Who thought that he could skilfully talk.
This was a misconception,
But he won the election
And the world said, "I'd prefer an orc".

A dictator counting up his nukes,
Threatening with clumsy rebukes.
At war with the South,
An intellectual drought,
Kim wants to deploy his troops.

Ruling, shirtless, from a horse,
And hacking elections, of course.
This man is a snake,
His democracy fake,
Deftly controlling Russia's thoughts.

A president becomes dictator,
In a bid to make his power greater.
Engaged in a trade war,
With those whom he abhors,
His rule will end very much later.

With enemies they coexisted
And every mistake, they admitted
This ruler was pure
And made the country secure,
But unfortunately, never existed.

Dictator

There's something about world leaders these days. Is idiocy the latest leadership trend or is it just globalisation allowing them to communicate more "effectively" with the masses? At what point did being a leader change from a respectable profession to being open to all comers, be they bright orange, nuclear-obsessed or shirtless, riding on a horse (I'm looking at you, Vladimir).

But, of course, they were elected (usually by themselves) to run their countries, and that's a big responsibility. We should respect our leaders. After all, no one's perfect... although they seem to think they are.

Russia, North Korea, and now the USA are all victims of *imbecilius leaderus*, but they aren't the only ones. Be it China, with their recently-never-ending presidential terms, or Thailand, where even the leader seems to think that a cardboard cut-out of himself would be more competent at answering the questions of the press; stupid people are everywhere.

The idiocy and incompetence of these people is funny. It really is. It gives us something to laugh at in this crazy, messed-up world of ours.

That is, until you realise that they are in control of the largest nuclear weapons stockpiles in the world, that these are people who can't afford to be idiots.

That these are the kinds of people who made everything crazy in the first place.

It's too late now, though. They're in power. Some of them may never go away, others only have a term to go. But the timeframe doesn't really matter. The damage has been done.

One Tweet away from nuclear devastation. One ego away from a world at war.

There's not much that can be done, however. We're just going to have to wait this one out.

So grab your popcorn and retreat to that nuclear bunker, because we're about to see one *hell* of a show.