

Smith Skjolaas
Montfort College
Age: 16 years old

Moving Forward

I usually sit by my kitchen's window and stare at the waving bamboo branches as the wind blows, hoping I could just sway like that for a day. Little did I know that I already have something in common with them. I am moving in loops just like how the trees waver. Those loops are called daily routines.

My mom always wakes me up in the morning to go to school, even when I do not want to. She said that if I was diligent, I would be living with comfort in the future. I think she was right, so I keep repeating those routines, thinking that one day I would become successful in life. Since then, I have been forcing myself to wake up early every morning and study at my best in hope to achieve my dreams.

Despite what I have done, I could not even find a single guarantee of success from going to school. Most of my life lessons are learned in the real society which is nothing like theories you learn at school. I admit I will most likely get a job people find honorable if I at least graduate from high school. But what if all the fatigue I am going through leads to more pain in the future? To have a job I do not like for the rest of my life, for instance. I am questioning my looping life.

As time passes by, I start to think more and more about my future. I think my life might have been a waste of time repeating the same thing every day. Thus, I decide try new things I never did, in hope it would inspire me and bring me out of this cyclic life somehow. Everything seems so exciting. But why do I feel so empty on the inside?

I am so mad at myself for not knowing what to do next, so I decide to go home to calm myself down and completely stop thinking about everything. I sit by the kitchen's window as usual and look outside. The bamboo trees are still wavering, just

that I do not envy them anymore. I stare at them for a while and decide to walk, without thinking, towards the messy bamboo jungle during a winter's evening.

I hear birds chirping beyond tree tops as I stopped in front of those thin trees. I consider that quite soothing for an absent-minded person. All I want to think about is my wonderful childhood, my best happiness in life. Why did I even grow up to live a harder life?

I stay to listen to the beautiful melody the birds compose for a while. I start to feel much better, and for a moment, I really think there is still hope in life. I smile to them and turn around to get back home. As I am breathing through the winter's foggy atmosphere and stumbling on grass wetted by condensed fog. I see something that I never thought would teach me such an important lesson. I see earthworms.

I am taught from my teachers at school that earthworms barely live without moisture on their skin, so it is hard for them to survive during winter since the weather is cold and dry. However, even if they survive from the dramatic weather, they could still easily die from scarce of food. But the picture I am seeing tells me how much they are struggling to try to survive even when there seems to be no hope left for them.

I start to feel guilty for blaming other things around me instead of myself. I start to regret not knowing what I could have been doing in life together with learning. It was actually all my bad for not organizing my time well enough.

Having learnt so many things for the day, I head home immediately to have some rest and prepare to start a new adventure of my lifetime.

I wake up in the morning by myself with a strange feeling. Strange, but in a good way. I feel enthusiastic to live my life and do not really care, either if will have to learn or luckily have the chance to explore new things.

I stop thinking about what my future plans would be, too seriously. I am so lucky to understand that to move forward is not to worry about the future. Moving forward is about doing your present at your best. Thanks to the birds, they taught me that I should enjoy the time I am really living instead of being stuck to the past, or else I might miss many precious moments in life. And thanks to the worms for teaching me that the most important that I should be concerned about is to make sure I spend my

present time as fruitfully as possible so that I will surely not regret it later. And finally, thanks to me for finally growing up, trying to organize my time, and realizing how important time is. Thank you everything indeed for helping me learn how to live and for encouraging me to move forward.