

Jae Waggoner
English 10 H
Narrative essay

A Lesson I Learned In Trade For A Moth's Life

I never liked bugs. Anything that flew, had antennae, or multiple little legs: it was my automatic enemy. Fly in my room? Kill with a shoe. Bee in the cupboard? Close it and let the bee suffocate. Moth in the bathroom? Call my dad and hope he's not sleeping. No I never liked bugs, but my whole opinion changed when I encountered Gerry the moth.

It's almost midnight. I decide to go to the bathroom before I go to sleep, and as I'm standing up from the toilet seat and I hear a flutter on the window. I look up, and I see him fly in from the small frosted window above the throne. The moth is cream coloured. With very light, subtly brown spots speckling its wings, it is enough to make me squeal. I quickly flush the toilet, run to the other side of the bathroom, open the door and call for my dad.

"Dad help me! There's another moth in the bathroom!" I scream. I see my mum appear at their bedroom door and shush me, "but the moth! What do I do?"

"Kill it yourself! Dad's asleep!" She says. She turns around and goes back into her room, shutting the door behind her.

Guess tonight's marks my death. It'll say on my tombstone: Here lies Jae, who was too terrified to kill a moth on her own. May she lie in shame filled peace.

I go back into the bathroom, ready to meet my doom: but as I turn around I realize that the moth has found his way into the sink! Here is my chance! I quickly run to the sink and turn on the water. Instead of drowning and going down the drain like I think he will, the moth does something that my english teacher would describe as irony. He clings on to the side of the sink, sitting in the middle of a puddle of water. We sit there like that for what seems like ages, but he doesn't move and neither do I. That darn moth just sits there, alive!

Suddenly I feel remorse for this moth. He probably has a life of his own, a family, maybe some larvae at home. I couldn't let this be the end of him!

Moving swiftly, I turn the running water off and I can see the relief in his body. He starts crawling up the side of the sink, trying to get away from the wet porcelain. I put one of my fingers beside him, and he crawls right onto it.

Maybe he is kind of cute... I think to myself.

But the moment doesn't last, as I realize that's he's in a great deal of fatal pain. His right wing, torn in two, is starting to stick to the left one, and most of the colour is gone from them both. I quickly go on my phone, looking up what happens if a moth is stuck unable to fly.

Jae Waggoner
English 10 H
Narrative essay

All of the websites say the same thing: if it can't fly, it won't be long before the poor thing dies. So I sit there on the bathroom counter for a moment, with this little injured moth in my hand, thinking about my next move. I know I can't save him, his wing is damaged beyond repair. I could try and fix it, but who knows how much more pain that will put him through and whether it would actually work. I decide that since I know I can't save him, I should make his death as peaceful and comfortable as possible.

I take out my phone again, this time to look up what moths like to eat. It says that nectar is a part of their primary diet, but they also eat fruits and flowers. I go into my kitchen, the moth -- who by now I had decided was to be named Gerry -- still on my hand. I unfortunately don't have any nectar, so I think of an alternative. I get this giant plastic bear full of honey and a cup of water, mix it together in a little dish, and put a dab where Gerry was on my hand. I figure he's still traumatized by the water, because he runs away from the drop of liquid on my hand. I try to put another drop in another place in my palm, but the same thing happens. I can feel all of his little feet pitter patter around on my hand, and it doesn't bother me anymore.

The first idea was a bust, but the websites said that they liked fruit too, so I get out a pepper, cut off a little piece, and migrate back into the bathroom.

Back in the place where the little friendship between Gerry and I began, I set to make him a lovely little space in a cupboard by the mirror lights. I turn a little teacup upside down so he can have a jungle gym, I put his pepper on the bottom of the cupboard, and I make sure to leave the bathroom lights on because I know how much moths love the light. I put my little friend Gerry into the cupboard, and he almost looks at me with gratitude. I feel bad because it was my fault he was like this, but I know that at least he'll die comfortable and on a full stomach.

In the morning when I wake up, I go straight into the bathroom, and discover that someone from my family had turned the light off and closed the cupboard door. So I open the door again, and there, sitting on his pepper like the almighty king, is a peaceful Gerry the moth, in an infinite slumber. I take him and his pepper, and I flush him down the toilet. Funny how our friendship started and ended with water.

Though I couldn't save Gerry the moth, I still think of him whenever I save a little bug: because they're no longer my enemies. Gerry made me see that every life, no matter how small, has a meaning, a purpose. Because of him, I am determined to save any bug I encounter, and to try to never kill another one again.

Unless it's a wasp. Then it can go die in hell.