



“True Colors” by Sia Chatterjee
3rd Place, Short Story 10-12

True Colors

Once there was a small town called Plainsville. Plainsville was no ordinary little town, for everything was black and white. The cars, building, food, and even people were black and white. But there was something special about the people of Plainsville; every time someone spoke with emotion, the person would become a color. For instance, if a man was angry because tax prices went up, he would turn a bright shade of red. Or if the baker on 5th street was selling treats to a new customer, she would turn a pastel yellow. But there was one little girl who had always been black and white. She couldn't speak but still tried to every day. The little girl would sit next to a big window in her house and watch people walk to stores, parks, and libraries. As she watched people she practiced and practiced trying to talk hoping one day she would say something, anything that would make her colorful even just for a minute. One day she decided to take a walk, which she rarely did. She walked around Plainsville and visited random places starting with the park. At the park 2 girls were playing. The little girl went up to watch them.

"Hello! Would you like to play with us?" said the younger girl of the two. The little girl smiled and shook her head in awe as the other girl lit up with color. The older girl walked up to them and snatched the younger girls hand glaring at the little girl. She whispered to the younger girl. The younger girl clamped her hands over her mouth, sympathy lacing her eyes.

"You shouldn't play with people you don't know!" the older girl hissed venom tracing her voice. She dragged the younger girl away and left the little girl standing alone. The little girl

then walked to the bakery hoping her mother, the baker was there. She walked in and found a note and a tart left on the counter.

Left you a snack, will be back later- Mom

The little girl appreciated the gesture, knowing a snack would make her feel better. After eating the tart, she went to the library looking for a book that could help teach her to it talk. The kind librarian smiled at the little girl.

"Looking for a book about talking again?" the librarian inquired. The little girl nodded happily watching the librarian turn magenta, passionate. The librarian took the book and checked it out to her. The little girl decided to go to the market and buy some crayons and paper. She enjoyed drawing, even though its in black in white. The sales man was standing at the cash register. His head rested on one hand and his eyes stared out to the flower shop next door.

"Oh, hello miss." The sales man said turning a light pink. The little girl giggled knowing the sales man was in love with the florist next door. She laid crayons and paper on the desk and took out some change to pay for them. "That's okay love, this ones on me" the sales man said his gaze laying back on the flower shop. Abruptly, the little girl had an idea. She walked to the bench outside the florists and wrote a letter to the florist with her crayons and paper. She walked in and handed the letter to the florist. The florist lit up with color turning a bright pink and awkwardly glancing towards the sales man shop. She read the letter and smiled turning to give a hug to the little girl.

"Here, take these tulips. I heard they look lovely this time of year" The florist kindly said while turning a light yellow and handing them to the little girl. The little girl smiled and left the shop. The next stop, and the final stop was the fountain in the middle of Plainsville.

Usually, the fountain was surrounded by people. Kids would laugh and play until their mothers called them to come home. Women would gossip on the benches near the fountain. And men would talk about politics while golfing on the nearby golf course. But today something was off. There were no kids playing. There were no women gossiping. There were no men golfing. There was just a little boy sitting on the edge of the fountain throwing coins in. His hair was short and well kept, while his shirt was untucked, and shorts were dirty. He also had a small messenger bag. But there was something strange about him; every time he made a wish, he and threw a coin didn't say anything. He just closed his eyes, kept a serene look on his countenance, and threw the coin. After a few minutes, the little boy noticed the little girl. Without saying anything he waved. The little girl blushed, embarrassed after realizing she was staring awkwardly at him. The little boy went to his bag and pulled out 2 crayons and some paper. He started writing:

Sorry, I can't talk. My names George, what's yours?

The little girl read the note and took a crayon.

I can't talk either. My names Emily.

George smiled after reading the note and handed her a coin.

Emily took the coin and closed her eyes making a wish.

I wish...

Emily suddenly threw the coin into the pond and quickly walked to George, sitting down next to him. She understood why he was sadly throwing coins into the pond. She leaned over to him and whispered.

"I've been there"

George looked at her with wide eyes. Emily clasped her hands over her mouth in shock and joy. She looked at her hands and saw herself turning all sorts of colors and shades. Emily looked around her and saw, everything was turning colorful. The water in the fountain turned bright shades of blue. The grass turned green and vibrant. Her mother's bakery turned cream colored and yellow. George got up and grabbed Emily's hand.

"Look!" George said taking her around town. As Emily walked, she saw not only color, but emotions swimming threw the air. The sales man had proposed to the florist and they were all different colors, not just pink. The two girls were playing happily, and they were fully colored! They had rosy cheeks and brown hair. Even their dresses were all different colors! As Emily and George circled back to the fountain, Emily realized something.

All she had to do was show her True Colors.