



*“When you enjoy what you don’t  
like”*

*by Sarvinoz Erkinova*

# Reflection

To begin with, this class was great overall. I would say, it was very creative, challenging, and yet fun at the same time. As an option for elective class I was drawn for this class by its name “creative writing.” Throughout my academic journey, I was tired and bored of writing papers and essays that needed research from different various sources, some were required to be peer reviewed, and most of them had no place for our opinion and thoughts. We strictly followed rules to use pertinent and evidence based information and cited every information we found from the internet in order not to be penalized for plagiarism. I was honestly excited for this class because for the first time I felt free and welcomed to write whatever I wanted to write. I usually don’t have time for the things that I like to do due to school and work schedules, but with this class it was a mixture of responsibility and hobby and I actually devoted time for it.

If I compare the beginning of the semester to now, I think I became a better writer and expanded my knowledge about dialogues, style and voice, setting and content, characters, and point of view in any piece of work such as in short stories, memoirs, and plays. I learned and appreciated how a mixture of some or all of these contents in any piece of work would make it really vivid and interesting to the reader, and tried to incorporate in my pieces of work as well. I also learned how to constructively critique my peers’ work and appreciate their work and effort. I really liked all of our assignments from the beginning of the class until the end except for the poetry assignment. Writing poetry was difficult for me and I did not like it because even when I read poetry it was really complicated and always thought it required so many skills such as the use of a certain style and rhythm, and vocabulary. It may not be true, but that’s what all the poetries I read had in common. Also, in my opinion, for a person to write poetry they need to be talented, need to have experienced an event or be inspired by something, and it’s also time consuming because a person needs to know how to pick the right words and put them together accordingly. I overcame this challenge by thinking about things that I admire and used thesaurus to replace common words with more advanced words. And I also used some repetition to emphasize my main idea and to make my point clear.

Of all the pieces I have written, my favorite one was our first week assignment “Meet My \_\_\_” and in my case it was “Meet My Necklace.” I liked this assignment because of all the things I had, it made me think which one of them I cherish the most and dear to me. It also reminded me that the necklace I wear everyday leaves my conscience at times even though I have it on everyday when I am awake or asleep. I also liked all the other journal assignments where we had to write about significant friendship, a time where I had to be anonymous, experience with memoir writing, a moment from the past that changed me, experience with short story and poetry writing, and etc. These journal assignments actually made me think about important moments of my life and feel free to write about them.

My least favorite assignment was from week 5, by Myriam Gurba “Pendeja, You Ain’t Steinbeck: My Bronca with Fake-Ass.” The reason why I didn’t like this assignment is because it had too much Spanish which I didn’t understand and had to translate Spanish words to English.

Also it felt like it was targeted to a specific group of people: Hispanics, and I was the inappropriate audience. Another piece of work that I didn't enjoy was giving a formal critique to Ursula K. Le Guin's "The Wife's Story." The reason for it is that since it was a fictional story it was very confusing and hard to grasp, but it was still interesting and creative.

In general, I had a really amazing experience with this class even though I know it would have been so much better face to face because it makes it more live when I see teachers and students actively participating and discussing matters, building academic relationships with teachers and classmates are easier because we see each other face to face, and traditional classrooms create a more structured and productive environment with less distractions than a home setting. I was new to open-lab and thought I would have difficulties navigating the system but thanks to the professor's office hours, uploads on how to post, and a really easy breakdown of each week's assignments. The class also refreshed my mind on principles of english writing which will be needed everywhere at any moment of life. We don't have to be a writer or a poet in order for us to take away something from this class. For example, as simple as sending a text can tell about the character, setting, content, and point of view. Sending professional emails also can include these concepts. So, enhancing writing skills is always good and will always be needed.

# *Memoir*

I remember we had this neighbor who lived right next to our door for a long time. It was about 5 years ago that she had her third child in the middle of the summer. She used to stay home, and her husband used to be the only person working. Even if she was closer to my mom and talked to her here and there, we never knew what he used to do and barely saw him. He would come home once in 2-3 weeks and leave again. She used to be with children all day at home, not leave the house, send them to school while she was suffering from many complications of pregnancy. It was one of the summer nights, I was in my room watching a movie with my big headphones on. From somewhere in the background, I heard screaming and banging. At first I didn't pay attention, but the sounds just escalated and I heard a strong bang on my wall.

I paused the movie, took off my headphones, and listened carefully to what was going on and it was horrific. Insults thrown at the helpless women, threats of abandoning the family or kicking the poor woman out, and it didn't stop at that, he then threatened to murder her, that's when I interfered and had to call the cops while also refusing to tell them who I was because I was scared. As soon as I called the report of domestic violence I heard another bang on the wall. I immediately rushed to their door to maybe help buy the poor lady some time until the cops came but I was scared. I was scared a ruthless man who was beating up his pregnant wife would also cause some harm to me or find out that I was the one who called the cops.

I did not knock on the door, I was scared for my life and did not want to double the trouble. My brother kept on saying we should go for help, but I said it's not a good idea. We were also scared that my dad would wake up from these noises because if he did wake up he would go interfere to help the lady from this situation which was the right thing, but I was scared then her husband might do something to us now or in the future. I closed all the doors, and was praying for police to come faster. 10-15 minutes after, they came and they were investigating the situation. I could not hear well what was going on, but I think they saw the physical injuries, called an ambulance for the lady and took the guy with them. I was very happy that they did so. I told the situation to my mom and she tried reaching out to her the next day, but she was never able to. Later we found out that he was arrested for some period, came out after paying a fine and was placed under order of protection. But I was surprised that later on they got back and

lived together again. Then shortly after they moved out and for some reason the connection between her and my mom got lost and they never talked again. We do not know what happened, but what I think the cycle of violence continues in her life and she does nothing about it.

# *Short Story*

After my sister left, all my dad's rage was aimed at my mom, even at times he wanted to beat her. All he was saying was "you always take your daughters' side and try confronting me and my sons when we are right about something but you do not know how to discipline them yourself. You are good for nothing, I should have sent them to my mom who actually knows how to raise girls." I was really angry and went up to him and said if you did not want us, by the time we were born you should've tossed us to the garbage, and if you raise your hand to my mom I swear to you I'll call the cops on you and I want you to be in jail. This moment my younger brother slapped me in my mouth really hard and I bit back his hand. They called their friends and asked to help find her, they also called my sister's friends and asked about her and threatened them that it would be bad for them if they finally found her and she ended up being in their home. They all denied.

I told my mom that I know where my sister is and she shouldn't worry about it because she was crying and suffering my dad's threats everyday. And I sure knew that she would not tell him a word and she didn't. They took my phone and my brother was dropping me and picking me up from school everyday so "I don't become like my sister." I was so happy that I was still in contact with her by borrowing my friend's phone to call and text her while I was at school. I would come home and only speak to my mom, hating on my brothers and father and showing it without hesitation. One day my dad came home with a piece of cake and gave it to me and said "this is for you my cupcake." I took it and threw it in a garbage right in front of his eyes and said "I hate you! Why do you bother bringing me a cake when I'm my mom's daughter and not yours?" My brother tried pulling me to his room and I expected him to beat me up and I was so eager to fight back no matter how much I would get hurt myself. My dad said "Stop!" I saw the tears filling his eyes as a cup full of water that would pour down with a slight shake. Now I felt strong, and told him that "One day I will grow up, make lots of money, buy a beautiful big house to live with my mom and sister, and not a single space for you and for your sons because I hate you. I

hate you!” Then he cried, he said: “I’m sorry, I will not do this again, when we find your sister we will all live together in this big house. We are going to be a happy family, all of us, together.” I let his hands go and went back to my room. Couple days passed, I was still in contact with my sister, and they gave me my phone back. One day, I came to my father and asked if he treats my sister good, she will come back home, if not me and my mom will move out with her and live separately, but if my mom chooses to stay then I will move out with her myself. He stood silent, and later that night he told me to tell my sister to come home. I said okay, and remember everything I said.

When she got married to her boyfriend, they weren’t very happy but I’m so glad she is happy with her life.

# Poetry

She's the pinnacle of god's creation  
She's unlike anything I've ever seen.  
I am blessed to have witnessed beauty's incarnation,  
a sight that would turn the bare desert green,  
a dream come true would be to become her mere servant  
It'd be one step closer to a subliminal paradise  
to her the love in my heart will lie dormant  
a love that will cleanse my soul from everything vice  
to me she'll be the only deed I deem important.  
The same importance as it is for a flock of doves to fly high above  
The void i had longed to fill  
Was finally filled by a beauty's love.



# Dialogue

## Me and my brother:

**Me:** Hey bro

**Brother:** Wassup

**Me:** Can u please bring me redbull, I'll give u the money. I need to do my assignments today and I need the red bull

**Brother:** U didn't sleep good?

**Me:** No

**Brother:** It's gonna take some time cuz I'm with my friends now. U can't drink coffee instead?

**Me:** No, coffee is gonna be too weak for me today. How long u think u gonna take?

**Brother:** Dunno, maybe hour or two

**Me:** (Sad emoji)

**Brother:** Which one u want?

**Me:** Small light blue can

**Brother:** Gotchu sis

**Me:** Thank youuu, but please can u try to make it fast?

**Brother:** Ok

## Me and my friend:

**Her:** Can I see this weekend?

**Me:** Aww, where?

**Her:** Anywhere you want no problem

**Me:** How about tomorrow? Is it good for you and I will come with Omar (my bf). Cuz I work this weekend

**Her:** What time? I have dr. appointment at 1:30

**Me:** So probably Omar has to go for his drills in the morning and he should be done by afternoon

**Her:** Ok, afternoon like at 3:30?!

You guys decide where you wanna go, let me know and I'll find out how long it takes me from the doctor because he's in Bay Ridge and 5th Ave

**Me:** That's okay, you can take your time with that, I have to go get my nails done too in the morning, and will go to the mall to return something

**Her:** Ok, we'll let each other now when we're done

**Me:** Cool, and I will let you know if Omar is coming also, because they didn't tell him to come yet from his base

**Her:** Ok baby

#### **Me and my schedule coordinator at work:**

**Me:** Hello Mary, can you switch me to the morning shift if there is a chance?

**Mary:** Hiii yes. I'll work on that for you and let you know when

**Me:** Thanks

**Mary:** Just note I would have to move some days around for you in schedule

**Me:** What do you mean by that?

**Mary:** If I can keep you with the same schedule you normally work I will. But if there are some days that I'm fully staffed then I cannot place you on those days, because everyone has a schedule already.

**Me:** Ohh, but it's okay if you put me on the new schedule for January from the morning.

**Mary:** You want to change your schedule to mornings in January then?

**Me:** Yeah. I wouldn't mind working from December if you at least give me heads up on what days I will work

**Mary:** Oh okay. I have an opening starting this calendar. If you don't take it now I will offer it to another nurse because I need to move someone.

With that being said, hopefully there's a morning opening in January. If there is, I'll remember you want it.

**Me:** Okay perfect, December works for me, but please do not put me on Wednesdays I have classes.

**Mary:** Okay

**Me:** Thanks

# *Journal 1*

Of many experiences I have experienced, the one that has changed me the most was moving to the United States when I was 15 years old. We moved here with my family, and I never wanted to be here. Leaving my friends behind was very difficult. I did not know English, going to high school, and being bullied for that was the greatest trauma of my childhood. English I learned back in my country seemed like a completely different language and sounded very unfamiliar than what they spoke here. So I had to begin from scratch.

I remember a history teacher having me on the board to present to a whole class when she knew that I did not know English. It was a very painful and embarrassing experience. In the beginning, I used to come home and cry to my parents to take me back home and that I hate being here. My mom used to stroke my head and tell me “you should always have your head up, and prove to everyone how great you are.” These words motivated me so much and I gave all my effort to learn English over the summer before the sophomore year began and I was very eager to do great in school. And I did, I proficiently learned to speak, read, and write in English in two years, and I did excellently in all my classes and became a recognizable student at school. Bullies then stopped bullying me. I’m thankful that I am currently pursuing and continuing to work on my academic and career goals. Coming to the United States has changed me as a person because I learned to be strong, persistent, and passionate about everything I do in life.

# *Journal 2*

Hello, creative writer.

My name is Sarvinoz Erkinova and I am writing to inform you about the experiences I had in creative class this semester. To begin with, just as the name tells you this class consists of materials that are creative and fun. We read interesting stories, memoirs, poetry, and dialogues, interpreted them, and wrote critiques about them. We also had an opportunity to share our feelings, thoughts, and ideas about other students' and writers' works. Materials covered in this class are not like in other classes where you have to write papers that are research-based, long, and boring. It is fun because it enables you to write many things that are interesting to you.

Among all the work we have done this semester, my most favorite activity was the "Meet My\_\_" assignment because it makes you think about one thing that you have that is special to you or tells something about you. We often hear the expression that we shouldn't focus on materials so much and generally there is always a negativity about having love or connection towards materials. But, ironically we all have it or at least most of us do, and this assignment is very friendly and realistic about it. Another one I liked was a work done by an anonymous writer "Whatever Happened to\_\_?" because this story shares how chronically women are abused, discriminated, and oppressed by men or society in general to do things that they love. It is very realistic and can relate to many and the story is filled with details and vivid descriptions that I really loved. You might like it too.

I generally do not like online classes because it blocks us from doing many things that we can do during in-person sessions. In-person sessions allow us to make connections, discuss matters, and build academic relationships that we cannot do online. Also, I noticed that online classes contain more work than in person, and if you are a full-time student and a worker, you should be prepared for a lot of reading and writing that this class entails and manage your time accordingly to meet these needs. But, our professor breaks down materials into smaller and simpler pieces

and is always there for help and support. I also recommend that you keep a planner and organize classes and assignments for each of those classes and look at it often to be on track.

Having good reading and writing skills is always a perk. From as simple as writing a short professional email to writing complex writing projects for an important class or a project at work, requires good writing skills. In this class, you would learn more or refresh your mind about the basic elements of writing by writing things that you enjoy. Read the announcement part of each week before doing the assignments, and you will learn a lot from there.