

# LITERARY MAGAZINE

LOWER CANADA COLLEGE - MAY 2012

## Note From the Editors

Thank you to everyone who submitted their writing for the final issue of the Literary Magazine in this academic year:

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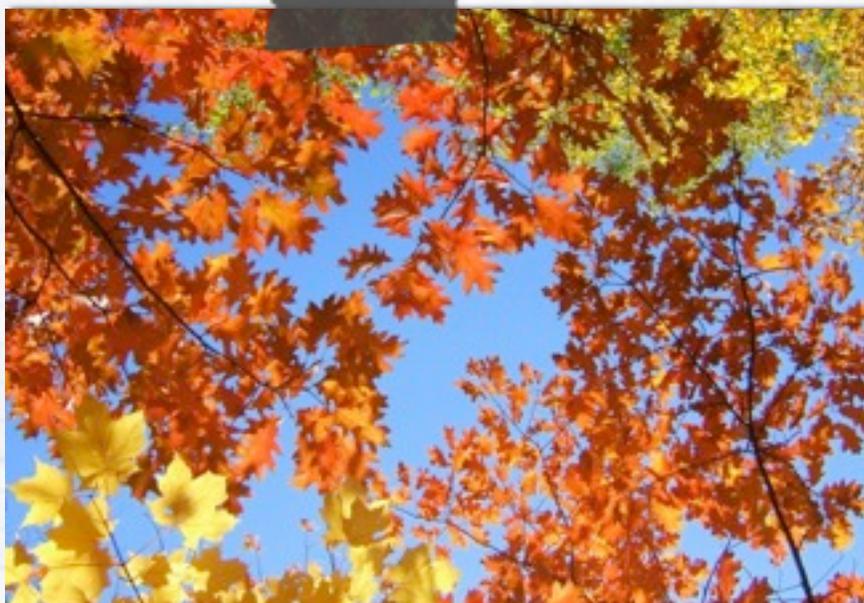
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## Traveling Leaves

**By: Hailey Elder (grade 12)**

Straight below the third floor window and across the street stands a wall made up of many large stones, half of which have broken through the grout and fallen onto the road. Leaves are falling now, beautiful maple leaves

of red, orange, and gold. A woman in a light coat is raking the leaves away, scooping them up in bunches and tossing them aside. Her daughter, a fair-skinned five-year-old in a puffy pink coat and a hat topped with a pom-pom, is balancing on the stone wall.

continued on page 2



TRAVELING LEAVES - PAGE 1

MASCARA - PAGE 3

POETRY - PAGE 4



A TIME TO DIE - PAGE 5

POETRY - PAGE 6

REJECTION - PAGE 8



POETRY - PAGE 10

ON THAT CLEAR SUMMER'S DAY - PAGE 11

PUBLIC SPEECH - PAGE 12

## ...continued from page 1



### TRAVELING LEAVES (CONTD.)

Her legs are swaying back and forth, but her eyes are fixed on the traveling leaves.

The scene continues for quite some time, the woman raking away, her daughter watching silently. At first glance, the woman seems comfortable with her chore and moves so naturally that one can assume she has raked leaves many times before. From a closer view, however, perhaps from where the girl is standing rather than from this far-off window, one might just make out the heavy bags that are weighing down the woman's gray eyes. With the intense way she's watching her mother, the girl must be able to see them.

The silence of the wind is ruptured when the girl, whose deep thoughts leave creases across her forehead, asks her mother, "Is that why they're called leaves? Because they have to leave?" She has a strong voice for such a young girl, but it still manages to crack on her last word.

The mother takes a moment to reply, during which she stands frozen, the leaves atop her rake beginning to blow away with the breeze. Eventually, she sets the rake down, turns to her pink daughter, and says with a crooked smile, "Well, everything has to leave eventually. But they won't be gone forever; they'll be back again in the spring."

"You promise?" the girl asks in the most despondent of tones. Her perfect, pale cheeks have transformed into a shade of rosy red, but she isn't shivering. She's plenty resilient, as the cold doesn't appear to bother her at all.

The woman nods. "I promise." As her reassured daughter smiles from cheek to cheek, the mother senses that it may be time to go inside. So the two head into their tall, brick house, hand in hand as they cross the street. Soon after they're gone, the day is overcome by darkness, and the window no longer has a story to tell.

Early the next morning, however, as soon as the first rays of sunlight creep through the window's glass, the scene from the night before is alive once more. Now, the road is obscured by a large, black truck parked next to the brick house. One of its back doors is already open, but there is no passenger inside.

The little girl, back in her pink coat and pom-pom hat, is standing next to the pile of leaves that she watched her mother shape. With gentle fingers, the girl picks up a leaf off the top of the pile and marvels at its brilliant red color. Then, she leans closer to the newly dead piece of earth and whispers, "We can leave together. That way, we'll both come back."

After a long goodbye from her mother, whose gray eyes are now streaked with tears, the girl hops through the open door and into the back of the truck. As her father drives the two of them away, the girl gazes out the window, taking in the scene as she leaves it behind. As the sight of her mother slowly fades away, she presses her red leaf against the window. "I'll be back in the spring," she says aloud, even though her mother can't possibly hear her. "Just like the leaves."

Straight behind the car window and across the street stands a wall. Most of its large stones have spilled out onto the road. The red, orange, and yellow leaves from the adjacent maple tree have been raked into a neat pile in front of the wall. A woman in a light coat is standing by the pile she shaped. Her hair is swaying back and forth with the wind, but her eyes are fixed on one last traveling leaf.

# Mascara

by Somee Lee

Grade 12

...

It was unbelievable what teenaged spite mixed in with a speck of mascara could spawn. They had never been on very good terms before, but never in her wildest dreams did Asia imagine that Brittani could be so ridiculous. 'It was a freaking spot of mascara, it's not like I broke some law,' she thought to herself. Perhaps she had broken a law, an unspoken teenager law of some sorts. Make-up must be perfect at all times, or you will be shunned from the rest of the female teenaged population? the blonde girl wondered bitterly, yet in amusement.

Fourteen-year-old Asia Longpre had just fallen victim to Brittani Marino, otherwise known as "The Hottest Girl In School". Brittani had everything a teenage girl could possibly want: perfect, thick chocolate-brown hair, a dumb but gorgeous boy on her arm, enough money to fund a small country in Africa, and, last but not least, extravagant make-up skills. Rumour had it that one makeover from Brittani could change you from Ugly Betty to Kim Kardashian.

This being said, it wasn't really surprising that this goddess of cosmetics would be the first and only person to point out that Asia had been walking around school with a dash of mascara on her nose. "Oh my God," the beauty had exclaimed, "Asia Longpre, you have mascara all over your face!"

Her first reaction was rather slow; all she did was stare blankly at this ridiculous outburst. "What are you talking about, Brittani?" she had asked in an exasperated tone. "If I had mascara all over my face I'm pretty sure I would've noticed by now."

Asia watched her, bemused as the Italian girl shoved her hand in her Gucci purse and pulled out what looked like a compact. "Look!" she cried, thrusting the little mirror into Asia's hands, "take a look yourself at the abomination your face is."

Still quite amused, the blonde popped open the pink compact and took a quick look at her visage. Right away did she notice what Brittani was talking about; there was a little dab of mascara on her nose, slightly above the right nostril. Shrugging indifferently, she brought her hand up and scratched away the little fleck of make-up. Satisfied, she snapped the mirror shut, and put in back into the other girl's hands. "There, are you satisfied?"

It seemed that the lack of reaction drawn from Asia had rather aggravated the gorgeous girl. "Umm, no," she retorted, "getting rid of the fleck is not going to solve this problem, Asia!"

"The fact of the matter is," Brittani's tone suddenly changed to a professional one, "that you pretty much fail at make-up. That is the real issue at hand."

"How the hell is that an issue? Heck, why the hell do you even care?"

"Because, I refuse to have to look at someone every freaking day who can't even apply her make-up properly."

'Okay, this is just getting ridiculous.' By now, quite a large dose of annoyance had started to mix in with her amusement at this situation. "Brittani, do you not realize that we are fourteen? Half the girls in our grade don't even wear make-up."

"That is not the point!" It seemed like Brittani was actually getting quite upset over this, as she was slowly turning red. "The point is that you are ugly, and I don't want to see ugly people in my peripheral vision every day of the week!"

"Woah now," Asia started, annoyance slowly transmuting into anger, "that was just uncalled for. What the hell is your problem? It was a f-ing speck of mascara on my nose; I don't see how that makes me ugly. Like, I'm sorry if I offended you with my oh-so ghastly looks, but really?"

"Whatever, Blondie," Brittani snapped. And with a turn of her heels, she was gone.

Somehow, that encounter triggered a series of events that Asia had definitely not anticipated. Over the span of a week, girls would

suddenly start whispering behind their hands as she passed by. Boys would give her odd looks, and even the teachers seemed to be reluctant to talk to her. It didn't bother her for the first couple of weeks, but when people started to refuse to sit next to her in class, Asia decided she had had enough.

"Okay, what the f\*\*\* is going on here?" she demanded, standing up as soon as the teacher left. "Why are you all avoiding me like the plague?"

Normally soft eyes had now turned a piercing, icy blue as Asia stared down her classmates the best she could. She may have been petite in stature, but she was definitely not a force to be messed with. The staring seemed to have worked; Hannah Abbott, a timid girl who didn't really speak a lot, piped up.



continued on page 4

## Mascara (CONT. FROM P. 3)

"It was Brittani Marino," she confessed nervously, "Brittani told us that you didn't shower and you smelled bad and that you had a really bad case of burping and farting so we shouldn't go near you . . ." Others in the class began to nod softly in acknowledgment, unable to meet Asia's eyes.

Her initial reaction was confusion; the whole situation was so bizarre that Asia had no idea what to think of it. The reality of it all sinking in, she began to laugh uncontrollably.

"Ahahaha! Ahahaha -oh my God- that's what it was? And here I was -ahahahaha- thinking it was something serious!" The other kids looked at each other in alarm and uncertainty; they weren't sure how to respond. The little blonde girl was holding her sides and giggling madly. Taking initiative, Hannah decided to try and talk to her. "Umm, Asia?" she asked quietly, aren't you mad?"

"Mad? Mad? Why the hell would I be mad? I'm just awed at how harebrained Brittani really is!" And with that, the laughing started up again.

No one dared to bother Asia again; the kids had come to realize that since it took more than Brittani Marino to take this girl down, no one would be able to. Brittani, intimidated by Asia's indifference to her prank, still avoided Asia as much as she could, but in a different sense; not because of spite but because of fear.



## Poetry...

### The Sky is Still Blue- Liam Reckziegel, grade 10

Look around to position my view,  
Beat down by a moving typhoon.

No place to go,  
No place to hide.  
I only find myself looking at the sky.

By what chance I see the sky so blue?  
My world tumbling down, I am doomed.  
How so could the sky be blue?

I cease to see the changing hue.  
Not bland or black.  
Just the sky so blue.

The sky so blue,  
How ignorant it must be.  
Unable to hear my heaves.

I push and pull,  
Rejoicing in pain.  
Just to see the sky so blue.

### The Beach- Adrian Perlinger, grade 9

The wind blows hard over the empty beach,  
The only noise to be heard is the roar of the waves,  
The golden sand is permanently stained,  
Stained with the lives of thousands of young men,  
A cool breeze passes over the sea shells,  
But no creature is there to feel it.

In the water there is a helmet,  
It is rusting and slowly degrading,  
As were the lives of the men who were here  
70 years,  
They all live in a house six feet long.

The wind blows steadily and hard over the empty beach,  
Searching for life,  
On the graves of a forgotten youth.

# A Time to Die

(Julia Peterson, Grade 10)

The woman never knew what hit her. She was crossing the street, her short black heels clack-clack-clacking over the asphalt. Her blonde hair was pulled back in a tight bun and her crisp white shirt was creased perfectly and tucked into her skirt. She was talking on her cell phone, shouting at someone on the other end. And then...a squeal of tires, a panicked driver honking the horn...and nothing.

I sit up in bed and look around, my heart pounding. I take a deep breath. A dream. It was just a dream. And yet...it was so real. The cell phone, the car, the woman. Me. I rub my eyes, trying to get my sight back. The headlights left me light-blind. The dream headlights, I remind myself. Dream. Not real. The car was not real. The woman was not me. It was only a nightmare. I turn over in bed and close my eyes. The light-spots dance over my eyelids as I steel myself for the new horror I'm about to face.

This is familiar. I know this place. The sidewalk, all pitted and cracked, and that spot where I wrote my initials into the cement. I walk along, in a skin that is not my skin, looking at my world through a strange woman's eyes. The woman is old, and wisps of white hair fall on her face as she pushes her walker down the street. Then, a sharp stabbing pain shoots through her chest. Her grip on the walker loosens, and she falls to the ground before she can even call for help...and then nothing.



The first thing I am aware of is my heart. My young, healthy, beating heart. I lie in bed with my eyes closed for a few minutes, just listening to the thumpa-thump, thumpa-thump, thumpa-thump inside my chest as I take deep, shaky breaths. It was just a dream, Amanda. Just a dream. I am sixteen, not eighty. Lying safe in bed, not out walking. Most importantly, I am **alive**.

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My alarm clock goes off at 7:30. Way. Too. Early. I slide out of bed and zombie-walk down the hall to the bathroom. I splash cold water on my face, but my brain still feels like mush. As I turn off the tap, I stub my toe on the door. In the same place where I stubbed it yesterday. I curse it in three languages as I stumble towards the kitchen. The good news: coffee is warm in the pot. The bad news: my dad is sitting at the table reading the paper, which means that I'm not getting any.

"Tragic", he mutters as he thumbs through the paper. "Absolutely tragic". I cross my fingers that he will leave soon, and I go make myself some toast. Which is viciously hard to do with crossed fingers, I might add. After spilling the jam all over the counter and burning my finger on the toaster, I give up on the whole "crossed-fingers" thing. It looks like Dad's settled in for a while, anyways. I sit down in my seat and try not to drool when I smell the warm, caffeiney steam from Dad's mug. The newspaper is spread out all over the table, and I grab a section. Obituaries. Seriously, how does this particular page always manage to find me? Isn't it enough that I see death every time I close my eyes, without having to face it when I'm awake, as well? I glance over them, just out of habit, and something catches my eye. Well, someone, actually. It is the picture of an old woman, with wrinkles upon wrinkles and long, long white hair. "Just a coincidence", I think, but I read the caption about her anyways.

The obituary says that "BROOKES, Helen", was 82 years old, that she passed away peacefully in front of her home last night, and that she will be fondly remembered by her children and grandchildren. I walk over to the window and look down the street. A couple dressed in black are walking up to the door of the house that I saw last night, with a bouquet of frost-bitten flowers.

"Just a coincidence", I whisper. "Sad, but true. It's just a fluke". But, on some level, I know that it can't be.

## The Wind-

Henri Thibault, Grade 10

The wind makes way into the haste  
It calls to me, trembling in the night  
An awoken battered soul lifted from the depths  
Of the dreams eating away at my mind  
If I could only go back to better times  
Where innocence outweighed caution  
Where we could be free under the roaring sun  
To laugh, live, and be together as one  
Never deceived by the ticking hand  
Smiling patiently above my head  
Justified yet again by my empty bed  
Fate has finally lent its hand  
And I must go  
If not now, then never  
For the stars have dimmed their lights  
So I must settle for the wind.



# A Morning Frost

by Haily Elder (12)

He is the perfect stillness of a morning frost.

He is transient, delicate, and pure.

His eyes are the cloudless sky:

vast, calm, and free.

With the slightest wind, he could blow away.

He means nothing to me.

He is the finest mixture of blue and white.

He is ambitious, tenacious, and strong.

He flies over lakes of ice:

clear, quick, and light.

Like the creatures below the surface, he is hidden beneath his shell.

Buried behind a perpetual wall, he is impossible to meet.

His true self cannot be found, yet

he is everything that I see.

He is the cold, sharp hail that rips apart the winter's snow.

He is relentless, stubborn, and fierce.

He pounds and crashes upon my earth:

slick, dark, and obscure.

Like an unfaltering virus, this frozen, bitter rawness overtakes his soul.

His ice cuts through my veins, harshly piercing until I bleed.

He is the cause of all of my pain.

He is everything that I need.

He is the silence of something lost.

He is dead, done, and gone.

He is the ghost inside my head.

He is nothing; he is the end.

Before I left, before he stayed, he was my best friend.

I was betrayed.



# Rejection

Olga Jablonsky, Grade 10

It was betrayal at its most profound. Abandonment at its finest.

You were now in the state of litost. You regressed into your atrabilious attitude and pessimistic weltanschauung. You found yourself in a deeper hole than the one you started from and felt like there was no getting out.

You did all your schoolwork and watched the people pass by in hoards as gregarious human packs do-- everyone clinging to each other-- yet you were alone.

You finally thought you had found a true buddy, but this extremely short, joyous time turned into a snakes-on-a-plane situation so all you were left with was the drop from chaos's way.

Things could not seem worse and despair cut through the last sensible thought that still nuzzled itself inside your brain.

It all started out during a political sciences lecture.

You were sitting alone in a row for eight in Cambridge's Preston Memorial Auditorium. Both rows, behind and in front of you, were filled with students and you were diligently working when you felt a tap on your shoulder.

You turned around to see what drastic event could have forced the person behind into making contact with you, for you were a 'leper' of your school at that day and age.

To your surprise, Mindy, the 'normal' girl in your class asked you if you had an extra cue card since you had an inventory of supplies stashed in your back pack.

You kindly passed one back to her and kept on with the lesson acting like nothing had ever happened. What an eventful class! Blah.

As lunch time clocked by, you relaxed in your usual spot at the foot of the staircase next to the accounting office and jotted some notes down from your 20<sup>th</sup> Century English class.

You were just about to press the pen to the paper to throw down the last fragment of your sentence when you felt a petite shadow cast over your notebook.

Mindy was standing over you, smiling.

"Thanks again for the cue card. I was short one for my upcoming oral, so you pretty much saved my life."

A selcouth feeling precipitated by an effusive display of gratitude made you smile awkwardly and you simply said,

"No problem."

Then, you quickly looked back at your paper and pretended to be busy with work, hoping that she would go away.

**continued...**

## **Rejection (continued)**

“I was wondering if you wanted to come get coffee with me today after school. You’re in many of my classes and I’d like to get to know you better.” Mindy said.

If, at this moment, the world were a cartoon, your eyes would have popped out of your skull all the way to China and the little lab rat running on the wheel, powering your heart, would have croaked. This was the first time since high school that someone had asked you to do anything leisurely with them.

You swallowed the knot clogging your throat and nodded. Mindy proceeded to schedule the meeting time and place for after school.

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It had been two hours since you and Mindy had started your chitchat over coffee and you let out a side of you that you’ve never seen. You were talking and laughing and telling her about your aspirations and admirations.

All seemed great and you felt that maybe this was the start of something new. This was the start of a real friendship!

All of these sweet, naïve thoughts soon hit the reality road when Mindy got up, mid sentence. You looked past your shoulder and saw her whole clique come through the door of the coffee shop. With a monotone, formal voice, Mindy started talking loudly, not looking you in the eye anymore,

“Wow. Look at the time! Thanks for helping me get my book back, but next time, don’t go through the trouble of getting me coffee and everything, I am a really busy person.”

With that, she was out the door and her possy was giggling.

Shame and a sense of doom swept through you. All emotion capsized and you realized that Mindy’s side of the conversation was all a palaver.

She walked out on you and pretended not to give a care in the world since being seen with you was a form of social suicide.

“How do people expect me to live on this earth if this is how I’m treated?” You thought.

In the finest form of emotional betrayal and physical abandonment, all you had hoped for that day was lost. You were once again alone and were put in an indescribably uncomfortable position.

You made up your mind that this would never happen again. Today would be the last day that anyone would treat you like this, let alone see you on this earth.

## Poetry...

### If Bob Found a Coconut - Michael Hamilton (8)

If Bob found a coconut,  
He would marry it and live in a hut.  
He would put it in a dress,  
And try to feed it watercress.  
Everybody knows,  
That Bob would try to count its toes.  
When he found out he can't  
He would step on an ant.  
Even if you tore them apart,  
The coconut would rip out your heart.  
No one knows how the coconut would  
rip it out,  
But it would find a way, and then make  
sour kraut.  
It would eat the kraut up,  
And then buy a cute little pup.  
It would name the dog Spark,  
And take it on a walk in a park.  
Then, they would be pirates and steal  
people's loot,  
That is, if Bob ever found such a fruit.



### Handful of Dirt Jordan Barg (9)

The handful of dirt that I'm holding means  
I'm holding the bottom of the world  
The part of the world that everyone  
steps on  
Crushed dreams  
But it can bring life  
Grow grass and flowers  
But only if you let it

### Classroom Jordan Barg (9)

The classroom I'm in is a place to be with  
friends  
And to connect  
The classroom I'm in is the gateway to  
knowledge  
A bright future  
The classroom I'm in is a place to learn  
A place to think  
The classroom I'm in is a place to teach  
A place to help others



# On that Clear Summer's Day

Carly Brender (I I)

Day 1:

I slowly moved towards the driveway. I was gripping his hand so tightly that I could no longer feel the pain. I had become numb, lost all sense of being. My eyes grew cold as my son put his clean canvas bags into the back of a black polished car. His firm full lips brushed against my forehead as he kissed me farewell. Then he whispered in my ear "don't miss me too much..." At that moment I could not contain myself. Tears were rolling down my face. He pressed his rough fingertips into my cheeks to clear them of my sadness. My son then turned to the car, opened the heavy door and looked back at me. He tried to hide his emotions behind the mask of a bold tough soldier, the fear and sadness in his eyes. He blew me one last kiss as the car pulled away. As soon as I caught the kiss, I placed my cupped hand on the side of my face so that my son will never be to far away...

Day 6:

On that bright clear summer's day, I forced my feet across the freshly cut lawn towards the blue, striped mailbox. I found a dirt-stained letter that had bent up on its long and winding journey to me. The shriveled-up note was from my only son who was in a war far away. He spoke of the scorching hot temperature and the great trustworthy friends he had made. In the end of his message he said that I am what he's fighting for. My heart began to race and grew to such an intense volume that I could hear it pounding in my ears. My eyes began to fill with a salty liquid and I tried so hard not to let it slowly pour down my smooth ivory skin. Oh, how I missed him so much. It had been the first of his letters from war.

Day 83:

Late in December, I received a worn out letter. It was from a brave soldier from my son's base. My tears stained the wrinkled paper with every word that I read. He explained vividly how he was out in a torn-up prairie, running as quickly as his muscular legs would move him through the blood marked grass. He was all alone. The deafening sound of gunshots began to ring in his ears. The bombs that were exploding felt like thunder crashing around him. The enemy captured him. That was when he saw a dark broad shouldered silhouette moving towards him. The somber figure had come back for him and set him free. "The man who saved my life" he said, "was your son." The soldier briefly explained how my son had urgently asked him to write to me. He swore that he would, as great thanks for saving his life. It was the last of his letters from war.

Day 294:

The crisp autumn leaves flew all around me, as my curled auburn hair blew in the whistling wind. A black polished car pulled onto the dirt driveway. A tall captain stepped out from the vehicle where my young son once stood. My knees began to shake; I lost feeling in my legs as they buckled beneath me. My soft hands stopped my fall into the cold dry earth. The captain ran fiercely to help me regain myself. The moment I tilted my head up towards him and my gaze caught his, I recognized his warm honey eyes. I knew that this grown man was once my little boy. He is my son. He explained to me with a loving smile on his face that he was following my orders from each of my letters that someday he'll come back home to my open arms. He dropped all of his heavy dirty bags on the floor, wrapped his strong arms around me and pulled me close. He was holding all of my letters from war.



# QAIS Public Speech - Finalist

Sam Ergina (11)

"Nobody ever drowned in his own sweat"  
-Ann Landers

Ladies and gentlemen, we're here right now to honour what every single one of you has done for this country. You men and women have served this great nation with dedication and dignity. Trust me, I know there are moments when the enemy seems too great to defeat. The terror outweighs the good, and no matter how much of yourself you put into the battle, it seems like you're on the losing side. Well, I'm here to tell you that if 100% isn't good enough, you put in 110%. You're working hard? Work harder because like Ann Landers said "Nobody ever drowned in their own sweat".

I remember some horror stories from my days of working with you guys. The rules aren't the same out there in the wild, but your courage and bravery provides a beacon of hope to the civilians in need of some justice. It is justice that you fight for, to establish stability in a place where chaos erupts as often as a live volcano. If you give up now, the other side wins. They have the advantage of their numbers; you take one down, two take his place, but we are the better trained. We are the more efficient. We are the more organized. This is why we will prevail.

If you commit to this with determination and perseverance, you will be victorious. Mind over body is the key to success, and history has taught us the harder you work, the more it pays off. That's what happened with Audie L. Murphy. Many consider him to be the most famous soldier of World War two at a whopping height of 5'5" and weighing a solid 110 pounds. If any of you are wondering why he even enlisted, so were the Marines, Navy and Army paratroopers who proceeded to flatly reject him. He was finally accepted by the US Army, and passed out during one of his first training sessions. His superiors tried to move him to kitchen duty to keep the scrawny kid out of danger, but he refused. He worked, and worked and worked. Murphy understood that sweat never did anybody any harm, and refused to bow down to his body's limits. When he finally got into the battle, he performed brilliantly. By the end of the war he had been awarded the Medal of Honour, along with thirty-two other US awards and medals, five awards from France and one from Belgium. That's a man who understood the value of an impeccable work ethic and the drive to excel.

You may think there are many differences between you and Murphy, but there are many ways you can relate to him too. Like him, your job is to restore peace amongst insanity, to fight for the benefit of all people. All civilians have the unequivocal right to comfort and safety, but there are some who disagree. The attacks on our land, our territory, have been vicious and merciless, with the perpetrators causing thousands of dollars in damages. This, my friends, is the enemy and they lurk within our own bases, threatening to destroy the order that you must maintain.

But hell, I'm not here to bum anybody out. Truth is, this task force I'm standing in front of has accomplished the most I've seen from any group that's come before. We need more men and women like you in this world, that do their bit for the greater good of humanity. So I'd just like to offer my congratulations to every single one of you here on your success against the odds. You guys are the greatest mall cops this country has seen in years, and you've represented the Mall Cop Association of America with honour. I hope you continue in your efforts to slowly...very slowly, make the world a better place. And remember, nobody gets any discounts at MacDonald's so stop flashing your badge at the manager to get 60% off on the chicken nuggets. I mean, seriously, those badges are from the Dollarama for crying out loud. But yeah in any case, good job and good luck.