

# That One Time the Essay a Child Wrote Over Summer Break Was Way Too Fantasy

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“See you later, teach’.”

“Yeah, see you next time. Take care on your way home.”

I turned an energetic voice to the returning students, and saw them off with a light wave of my hand. It was the first of September. Yet separated from the world’s general flow of time, the elementary school I served had called for its opening ceremony. A long summer break had ended, and the second term had begun. I placed the report cards I’d collected back from the students, and their summer homework on my desk, before doing some simple cleaning of the classroom.

It had already been a few years since I found employment as an elementary school teacher. And this year I had taken charge of a class of third graders said to be more mischievous than the norm. It’s true I was surprised by their power first term, but even I still had a youth’s conceit in me. And one way or another, they turned out to be honest, and interesting children. I was glad I held on.

“Even so, everyone’s as lively as always. And full attendance, what’s more, everyone did their homework. I already praised them, but I should do it again tomorrow.”

Nodding to myself in the empty classroom, I took a glance at the clock on the wall. Today’s classes carried through ante meridiem. The afternoon would be busy with meetings and preparations, but there was some time to spare. I produced a rice ball I’d bought beforehand from its plastic bag, and after eating it, I sat in my seat and brought the summer homework I’d collected up close.

For the other works, I’d have to mark up the sheets, but if it were only essays,

then spare time would do fine to read them through. And I was a little curious to see what sort of summers the kids of my class had spent. With those light feelings, I turned an eye to the 'Summer Break Essay' I took in hand.

Now then, now then... oh, this is quite a thick one. Just how much did he have to write about? Ah, it's Hiroshi-kun's. That kid's a bit easy going, but he's an earnest and nice kid. I wonder if went on a trip or something.

*'July 21<sup>st</sup>, summer break began, and my family decided to go on a trip at once.'*

"Hmm, I wonder where they went."

*'Or so I thought, when a golden light appeared at my feet, and by the time I noticed it, I was in another world.'*

"Fwah!?"

A strange voice came out.

*'There were a lot of knight people like the ones you see in anime around me. There was a princess too. "Welcome, brave hero" she said. I was surprised.'*

"Of course, anyone would be."

*'It was surprising to be surrounded by so many people, but I decided to stand up. "Just where could this be?" Asked my dad.'*

"The family went along!?"

No, I really should be glad a single third grader didn't go off to another world alone. Wait, more importantly, the hell's with another world? For that earnest Hiroshi-kun to write such an out-there essay, just what happened to him over summer break? He greeted me so happily less than a few hours ago. What's more, his family (what's more, an adult) just entered the stage.

*'The princess explained. The Demon King was going out of control, so she wanted us to save the world. She led us to the place the legendary weapons were kept. Before going, mom spoke with the princess with a serious look on her face. She said something about reparations or kidnapping or assurance of living standards. She made the princess cry.'*

"Your mom sure is strong."

*'After consoling the princess, and telling her everything would be all right, we held hands and decided to go along. Reaching the treasury, we found a sword*

*and spear there. "This is the legendary sword," said the princess who stopped crying, as she brought it over. When it touched her hand, it suddenly began to glow. Mom was the chosen one.'*

"Your mom's amazing!"

Let's put having a good talk with Hiroshi-kun off to tomorrow, and read the report for now. I was just plainly curious about what came next.

*'Dad got the spear, and Akihiko got a nice set of claws. But because knives are dangerous, I picked up a staff lying around the corner. "It's covered in dust, are you sure it's alright?" I was asked, but I kind of liked it, so I took it anyways. After that, the princess produced a sweet from the sleeve of her dress, and gave it to me. When I told her, "I'm not supposed to take candy from strangers," and gave it back, she looked sad.'*

"Good job, Hiroshi-kun. But a princess that walks around with candy..."

*'We also met the king. Mom and dad talked with him. "When you're done with your work, you will be able to return home," when the king said that, "I only took a week of paid vacation, so can't you do something about that?" dad negotiated. When I also said, "I promised to play with Kengo-kun a week from now, so I'd like to go back," the princess tried persuading the king. After a week, we can go back once, it seems.'*

"Is that really okay!?"

You sure are weak to your daughter, your highness! And the princess is weak to Hiroshi-kun!

Reading a bit more, it was finally decided they could move freely between the world and earth. They would spend the first week in that world, and after that, since mom was a housewife, she'd take up noon hero shifts. Dad would help out in the evenings, and on holidays. Hiroshi-kun whenever he had time over break. The kid called Akihiko-kun said he wanted to stay in the other world until the demon lord was defeated. Eh? Is Akihiko-kun alright?

If it was until the DK was defeated, that meant there wasn't a problem if he didn't return to earth, so he's not a student or working adult. Since holding a blade is OK, he's at least older than Hiroshi-kun... huh? But Hiroshi-kun didn't give him an honorific, right? If he didn't give one to an elder who's not a student or worker, then is he a NE... let's not go there. Imagining it is a little sad. I'll just

ignore it.

*'For the week, we were trained in the castle. Because we were summoned, we were strong, they said. The old magic guy taught me. After a week, I was able to pour water from the staff. It was tasty, and refreshing. But I couldn't make anything else. When mom and the others were tired from training and I gave them water, they looked happy, so maybe it would be fine like that.'*

"Oh, that's a bit heartwarming."

*'Mom shot lightning from her sword, and destroyed the castle a little. Dad and Akihiko defeated lots and lots of soldiers. After seeing that, I gave some water to the princess crying in the corner, and she clung onto me tight saying, "So this is solace..." When I gave it to the knight people, they looked a little more energetic. When I can't even use healing magic, it was a little strange.'*

"There's no doubt about it, you're the healing factor."

After that, he gave water to the king holding his stomach in pain at the trouble the family was causing, and all the important people, and got them to dote on him like a grandson, it seems. Those otherworlders sure have it hard. Though they reap what they sow.

*'After that, we went on a journey. With our family, and the princess, and the old magic guy, and thirty knights.'*

"That's a lot!? ... no, is that normal? The Hero family's a bit out there, on occasion."

*'The old guy was apparently the one who summoned us, and he would summon us every day on our travels, and send us back and everything.'*

"He's not working himself to death, is he?"

*'The princess also wanted to come along. "I'll definitely protect the solace of this world!" she said, and the king and a lot of people stuck up their thumbs and saw her off. Even though she's a princess, it looks like she fights with a mace. She said it was simply good sense for a noble lady. Also, she said we weren't strangers anymore, and gave me lots of candy. It was tasty.'*

"What's with this walking mass of retorts?"

The journey from there proceeded more as a summary. Perhaps because after a week, Hiroshi-kun had returned to earth. His parents and the people of the country said giving Hiroshi-kun crude food and making him camp out was simply

absurd, so he'd return to earth at eight every day without fail, get dinner with one of his parents, and sleep soundly in his bed... that Magician really is going to collapse one of these days.

After that, his dad sent a bandit brigade flying into the distance, his mom crushed an army of monsters, Akihiko-kun defeated three of the Four Heavenly Kings, and the knights got plainly dragged in as they tried to help. The Princess followed through whenever they went too far, and the magician did, in fact, collapse a few times. Hiroshi-kun took it all at his own pace, handing enemies and allies the water he poured, and doing some healing aftercare.

So as not to show little Hiroshi-kun any blood, they always used the back of their blades, it seems, but naturally enough, they didn't hold back any further. Yet why are those beaten up and traumatized monsters healed by Hiroshi-kun leading the way to the Demon King's castle? At first, the princess and co. were wary, but after about five days, they'd just go, 'what, again?' and they stopped even questioning it. You're amazing, Hiroshi-kun. Never change.

Since it was written from Hiroshi-kun's POV, it felt heartwarming, but that journey was definitely chaos. And led by the monsters, and at times, riding on their backs, they made it to the castle within the break. There's no way they should've reached the last boss within forty days, but there was no helping it with this family, so I found myself strangely accepting it as it read. I'm probably going to challenge the next parent-teacher conference with a low profile.

W-well... it was a really real essay, but I doubt it really happened. Don't mind it, don't mind it.

*'We had finally reached the demon king's castle. I took a selfie with the black dragon who took us there, and said goodbye. He was cool. It looks like monsters can't speak words, but the monsters who led us were all really kind.'*

"Huh~ this is strange~. There's really a picture of Hiroshi-kun and a dragon stuck in here. Just how am I supposed to interact with his family from here on? We're going to be together for the next seven months, you know?"

*'There were lots of monsters in the demon king's castle. But everyone kept moving forward. The princess exterminated any monsters that came towards me, so I was alright. "Knights, go do your job! If Hiroshi-kun is even so much as scratched, that family will get scary!" she said in a loud voice. Everyone was*

*amazing.'*

“Why did you have to put that into your essay and show it to your homeroom teacher (me)!? What’s with this life-threatening pressure of responsibility! I didn’t want to know that!”

A teacher’s life... more than that, this elementary schooler’s essay had established that my life was facing its greatest crisis yet. As a teacher, I know it’s absolutely no good to show favoritism to a child. But you know man, if anything happens to Hiroshi-kun, aren’t I like dead? My face was stiff, but for now, I decided to read on. The last line may end up being, ‘and then I woke up’. I can only hope.

*‘When we went into a large room in the demon king’s castle, there was a large demon man there. “There’s a hero called Akihiko who defeated all the other Heavenly Kings, right? I request a duel with him, one on one.” He said. When we all looked at Akihiko, he stepped in front of all of us. It looks like he accepted the duel.’*

“You’re so cool, Akihiko-kun.”

*‘When Akihiko stepped up front, Mr. heavenly king opened his mouth wide in shock, and became full of openings, so we decided to believe in Akihiko, and press on. From behind, “Woof, woof Awooooooooooooooh!!” we could hear some amazing cries of battle. Stay safe, Akihiko.’*

“Akihiko was a dooooooog!?”

When I first started reading, I had imagined on my own that Akihiko was in household security (NEET), but it seems he really was in the literal sense! If he were a dog, Hiroshi-kun would drop the honorifics, and his weapons would fit!

... Wait a second. So everything I imagined a human doing had been done by a dog? The DK’s strongest Four Heavenly Kings were done in by a dog! Of course the poor last one would open his mouth wide!

*“Akihiko will be fine, right?” When I asked that, “Akihiko-san is the mighty canine who has won against countless monsters, and ground their belief that they were the strongest to the ground. As with all the other Heavenly Kings, I’m sure he’ll lose his will to fight, and hole himself up somewhere,” the princess said with a pretty smile to cheer me up.’*

“Where did that princess who was probably still decent at the start go?”

*'And we finally arrived at the demon king's room. All the good knights held up their weapons. Mom her sword, dad his spear, and the princess, her war hammer. I held up my staff and the photo of the old magic guy who collapsed halfway through the castle (not dead yet), and opened the large door.'*

*"Old magic guuuuuy!"*

*'The demon king was sitting in a chair. He asked, "Why would humans from another world go so far for this one." Mom said, "It's true I thought it irrational at the start. But I don't hate the people of this world all that much. I don't want them to face misfortune." As she smiled. Father said, "It's fate," and cut it short. The princess and the others shed tears at mom's words, and said, "Thank you." She had said defeating monsters was a good source of exercise and wonderful stress relief, and something about the reward being enough to pay off the loan on the house and car and everything else afterwards, hooray! Did something in her change?'*

*"It's the world of adults. And did you really have to say it? I wanted to remain oblivious and feel moved with the princess and everyone else."*

And as expected and all, it ended with Hiroshi-kun's party's victory. The Demon King was surely strong, I couldn't picture this family or mainly the princess being defeated at all. That was the answer.

Hiroshi-kun did his best to express the battle, but, 'the sword mom swung went swoosh and cut the castle!' or, 'the princess' hammer smashed through the wall and kapowed the Demon King!' This ain't human, is the only thought that really went through my head. Demon King, you did your best.

*'The demon king fell to his knees. Then from the door in the back, a girl around my age ran out. She cried and cried in front of the demon king, and coughed as she blocked our way. It seems the demon king's daughter had an incurable illness called "Miasma Fever". No matter how far they searched through the demon world, they couldn't find a cure, and an old book said that there was someone in the human world who could wash away miasma with the Solace Staff of the gods. They had turned up the human world to get their hands on it.'*  
*"So the Demon King had his own reasons."*

*'That staff had a god living in it, and only ones it took a liking to could use it. Apparently, it could produce holy water, and wash the hearts of whoever drank*

*it. By legend, it could even purify the wicked hearts of monsters. When I asked what that meant, it seems it may let you be friends with monsters. The girl said, "I don't have much time left in this world, and if I die, father will stop attacking the land of humans!" to the princess. It made me really sad for some reason.'*  
*"... Wait a second, holy water? Staff of the gods? Drink it, and it will wash evil from the hearts of human and monster?"*

All the way there, they were blocked by countless monsters on their path. And at the same time, they guided the way to the Demon King's castle. At times, carrying them on their backs, they all worked together to get the party there by the end of summer break. But was there a reason for them to hurry so? A reason to go against their beloved overlord?

... That's right, they had a reason of their own. To go against the king's will and be thought of as traitors. Even if words didn't get across, they had a wish they wanted to grant. And that had entrusted it. To a kind and small hero.

*'I wanted the girl who wouldn't stop crying to cheer up. So I swung my staff. Because it had brought a smile to mom and dad and Akihiko and the princess and the old guy and the knights and the king and the monsters and everyone in the country. I thought if I did, then maybe that girl would smile.'*

*"Hiroshi-kun..."*

*'When I made water, the girl looked shocked. "It's tasty water, amazing water that will bring a smile to your face," I said, and handed over the water. "If you're scared, do you want to drink together?" and she nervously drank some with me. At that moment, the girl's body suddenly started glowing, and a strange black thing ran away from it. I was surprised, and the girl was crying and crying again, but at the end she gave a small smile. It made me really happy.'*

That's amazing. With all that chaos, he managed to tie it up in a pretty bow. You're amazing, Hiroshi-kun.

*'After that, the demon king thanked me, and lowered his head at the princess. He apologized to mom and dad. The demon king was really beat up, and I felt a little sorry for him.'*

*"Keep a hold on that kind heart of yours."*

*'The human and demon country got around to talking to one another. Maybe*

*they can become friends one day, the princess told me. It seems the monsters who guided us were holding down the other monsters, and helping out humans. It was because of that, she said. It looks like things are going to be hard from now on, but they'll do their best.'*

The heroes that returned received a grand banquet. The princess was taking leadership in mediating with the Demon King. With all he was responsible for this time around, it wouldn't be strange if he got capital punishment.

Though Hiroshi-kun's essay stressed how exceedingly tasty the food they put out was, so I'm sure he wasn't informed of the specifics... but I doubt it will turn out too bad. For the humans or the monster, or the Demon King family.

"... Huh, teach?"

"Whoah! ... Waait, Hiroshi-kun? Why are you in the classroom?"

"Um~ I'm sorry. I forgot my water bottle, so I came back to get it. Mom was angry at me."

"Water bottle? I told you to make sure you hadn't forgotten anything. And I was even going to praise everyone for having no lost items tomorrow..."

"Eh? No way~. Teach, overlook it today! I won't forget anything anymore!"

A child's voice taking my eyes from the page, I found a boy I was charged with had entered the classroom. The owner of the essay I had just been reading no less. As he put his hands together and pleaded, I let out a sigh. I'll tell him it'll be for this time alone. His face as he gave a wide smile was the face of a third grader you could find anywhere. Is this the hero who went on a grand adventure this break? I laughed a little to myself.

Right, since he's here in person, I better ask what's up with his report. It was quite nice as a story, but as expected, it isn't something he should've submitted as a school report. Especially not a, 'what I did over summer break' essay. When I was about to open my mouth, I heard some footsteps racing down the hallway.

"Hiroshi! Don't leave me behind, I was about to become lost!"

"Eh? Deana? Weren't you waiting at the entranceway?"

"Mmm... I mean, I had some interest in school. I've always spent my time in the castle, so..."

At the fidgeting girl with blushing face, I unintentionally opened my eyes wide. It was the first time I ever saw such perfectly silver hair. Not white or gray, a truly beautiful silver. For starters, she was definitely not Japanese. It was as if she alone lived in a different world than mine, a girl who gave off such a feel. A young girl with enough impact to blow away the thoughts I had up to that point.

Perhaps noticing my stare, or noticing for the first time I was even there, the girl called Deana's face turned even redder as she hid behind Hiroshi-kun's back. Looks like I saw too much, I thought and repented. On Hiroshi-kun's explanation that I was a teacher, she finally lowered her guard.

"And Deana, you can't run through the halls at school. Ah, teach, sorry. Deana came over to my house to play, and she doesn't know the school's rules."

"Eh? Ah. I-I'm sorry. I apologize for running through the halls."

"Um, as long as you understand, that's fine. If you slip in the halls, you may hit your head, or run into someone else and get hurt, so you have to be careful."

"I see, that's right, school usually has a lot of people in it. Thank you for the warning!"

With the girl's lively reply, I ended up smiling. She had a strange use of words, but she was quite an honest child. And keeping these two stopped up in this classroom any longer felt a bit off.

"Now then, get back home already. Be careful of cars and bikes on the way back."

"Mm, cars were those fast vehicles with four wheels, were they. Bikes should be a thing with two wheels. I remember sis went weak at the knees when she saw one."

"Yeah, she finally got around to learning pedestrian crossings. She looked a little sad at how she couldn't get all the way to school."

"Next time, let's all go together. I want to go to all sorts of places... someday, with my father as well."

After my words started up a conversation between them, they gave their partings together. And lowering their heads, they left the classroom. I somewhat saw them off, and shrugged my shoulders, as I turned my eyes back to the report I had stopped partway through.

*'August 31<sup>st</sup>, school starts tomorrow. I will never forget this fun summer for the rest of my life. Mom and dad returned home, and they're trying to use the reward to pay off their loans in a way that doesn't look suspicious. Akihiko took along the defeated Heavenly Kings, and went on a journey of world reformation. It sounded like fun, but when I told him to come home sometimes, he replied with a, 'Woof!' The old magic guy revived, and after drinking my water, he said he's going to do his best at his job.'*

The contents written were truly absurdly fantasy, and some part of me made a strange smile float on my face.

*'When we returned, the princess said she wanted me to, 'call her sister'. I was also happy about it, so I became her little brother. The king said I could come by anytime I wanted, so I think I'll go again. Another thing that surprised me was that the girl was going to be coming along with us. Her physical abilities were sealed with magic, and it seems people of that world can come to our world as well. Sis said she wanted to come too, so we promised we would meet again. I want to teach her all the fun places on earth.'*

*'I'll do my best to make Deana smile a lot.'*

"God speed, young man. And do your best in life and parent's day and parent-teacher conferences, me. It really won't be a joke if I turn heroes and an otherworldly kingdom and a Demon King against me."

I scratched my head, took the remaining essays and everything else I needed in hand, and moved my feet towards the staff office. I felt that some part of my heart had grown just a little warmer.