

Candidate A evidence

A Millionaire's Dream

For my personal writing I have chosen to write about how I would spend one million pounds. I will talk about my love for Celtic and sport and my family. Also, I will be talking about buying a house and other things like a car. The million pounds would help me do all this and not many people have the opportunity to do all this.

The first thing I would use my million pounds to buy would be a Celtic VIP season ticket. I love Celtic so this would be the one of the first things I would buy because I love Celtic and the fans and the atmosphere. I would also buy this because you would get a ticket to every game including the games against Rangers and all the European games and the atmosphere at those games are amazing and if you're there then you're proud to be a Celtic fan. My first Rangers game we won 5-0 and it was amazing to be there because we also won the league that day and the atmosphere was amazing and that was the day I fell in love with Celtic. Also, last season Celtic were voted the best fans in the world by UEFA and to be there and have a VIP season ticket it would be amazing and special.

If I had a million pounds, I would buy a three-story house in a nice estate. I would buy this because everybody wants a big fancy house and if I had a million pounds then I would buy one and then use part of that million pounds to make my changes to it like change the carpet and the wallpaper and get a couch and change the kitchen and toilet so I make it comfortable for me and make it look nice. Also, I would buy a Ferrari to go with my house. I would buy this because I'm interested in cars and I would want a really fancy car so I could just go where I wanted to go and I want to learn to drive as quick as I can because you are limited to where you want to go without a car and when you have a car you can go most places.

Another thing I would do if I had a million pounds would be to give my mum and my dad one hundred thousand pounds each to spend on whatever they want. I would do this because family means a lot to me and to see the smile on my mum and dad's faces would make me happy and proud because my mum and dad have looked after me all their lives and giving them this money would repay them in a way for looking after me. Also, if any of my other family members were in trouble then I could help them out because that is what family is all about.

After I had done these things, I would buy a ticket to all the tennis major finals in tennis. I would do this because I'm very interested in tennis and if I did go to one then I would love to see Rafael Nadal in the final because I grew up watching him win and I would love to be there to see him win another major and the four majors are held in Melbourne, Paris, London and New York. This is also good because I

could also get to go sightseeing and I could say that I've been to a tennis major final and have got to visit these beautiful cities.

The next thing I would do with my million pounds would be to buy a ticket for the darts world championship and a ticket for the premier league of darts in Glasgow and a ticket for the final of the premier league in London. I would buy tickets for this because I love the darts and I would take my dad with me because we share this interest in darts and we would love to go see it live. Also, I would love a ticket for the final of the world championships because it is one of the biggest sporting events in the world and if I went, I would love to see Gary Anderson in their because he is Scottish, and I would love to see him win and I could say I was there.

After that I would put the rest of my money into a bank account. I would do this because I would be saving for the future so if I have a wife and children then I could give them everything they wanted, and I could give them the best childhood a kid could ask for.

In conclusion, as you can see from this essay how I would spend one million pounds. Also, what you can see from this essay I love sports and my family.

Word Count: 823

Candidate B evidence

Goal line technology: Good or Bad?

The topic that I chose for my discursive writing is goal line technology. I will talk about the good things about it like you can't argue with technology and the bad things like how much it would cost, and could it slow down the game. Also, I will be talking about past occasions where we would need goal line technology. Goal line technology will do a lot for football because teams were getting beat because of a goal that was not giving or giving but wasn't a goal.

The first argument is the referee might not see if it is in and then the referee will get a lot of abuse for not giving it or giving it but it shouldn't have been a goal. For example, on the 27th of December Hearts played Hibernian at Tynecastle and Hibernian scores a perfectly good goal but the referee didn't give it because he couldn't see it and neither could the assistant so they got a lot of abuse of the fans players and manager. Also, this was a derby and a derby is significant because it's against your rivals who you hate. Also, they would have won that and that would

have been significant because they would have gone into third and two points behind second. Another example is England vs Germany in the World Cup 2010 when the ball was clearly in and the referee didn't give it. Now this is the World Cup the biggest international football cup and if that was giving then it would have made the score two all but Germany went on to win the game 4-1. Now onto the fans, the fans pay a lot of money to watch football so when their team should win a game, but they didn't get a goal, or a goal goes against them then their wasting their money.

The second argument is against goal line technology and my argument is if a team has all the momentum and goal line technology stops the play the momentum could shift the other way and it could cost them the game. Also, a team could need the three points and goal line technology stops the play and that could cost them at the end of the season or they in their in the cup and they get put out because the momentum switched. Also another bad thing about goal line technology is that the fans love the debate. Sepp Blatter the ex-FIFA president believes the fans will talk about the game for ages because of the decision.

Another good thing about it is, it is confirmation to the fans. Now if you think about it, it is great for the fans because their paying money to see a game that is fair and the players are having a fair game because if your team has had the ball by the goal line and the referee doesn't give it then the fans aren't getting their money's worth and a fair game and also the players aren't getting a fair game either so that could prove vital at the end of the season because it should have been a goal in that one game but it wasn't giving. An example of this is when Chesterfield played Middlesbrough in the 1997 FA cup semi-final and it was 2-1 to chesterfield and chesterfield scored to make it 3-1 and instead it got disallowed so Chesterfield had to score a late equaliser to take it to a replay and they lost the replay so they could have been in the final but they didn't because there wasn't any goal line technology.

Another bad thing about goal line technology is the cost of it. To have goal line technology in one stadium, a league would have to pay £260,000 a year and £3,900 per game. Now leagues like the English premier league, French, German, Italian and other big leagues can afford it. But leagues like the Scottish, American and other leagues can't afford it. I think that FIFA should give them the money so we can get it to make it a fair game. Also, FIFA has got the money so why should they not give them the money.

Looking at the arguments above I think if they bring down the price of it for the smaller leagues then I think it will be a step in the right direction for football because there won't be as much controversy.

Word Count: 727

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Candidate C evidence

I have seen how disabilities affect the people that I love. I have seen them break down when people mock them, but on the other hand, I have seen them filled with elation when they overcome the hurdles caused by their disability. When they come face to face with their hurdle, they don't just give up and walk away, their sheer amount of resilience allows them to work tirelessly so that what limits them no longer does.

Take my cousin, James, for example. James was born with Spina Bifida alongside other conditions. His shunt, means he has to be careful not to bang his head, and his Spina Bifida makes walking long distances a struggle. Imagine having 34 operations in 17 years, or not being able to walk until you were 3. It's these factors that have helped shape James into the person he is today. What about my Auntie Catherine? She was born with Down Syndrome, and wasn't able to talk until she was 7. But that hasn't stopped her, and she won't let it stop her. James and Catherine don't let their disabilities stop them. James loves going to football matches and meeting up with his friends, and Catherine attends college and has had multiple part-time jobs over the years.

With James and Catherine being very close family members, I have seen first-hand the troubles that they face on a daily basis. Catherine's condition makes it difficult to understand what she is saying, but she doesn't let this stop her having conversations with people. I have also seen James feeling rather disheartened when someone makes a comment about his disability, but despite this, he puts it to the back of his mind and carries on being the positive person that he is. When I think of the issues that I have had to put up with over the years, like studying for prelims or even the occasional fall out with friends, it always amazes me how both James and Catherine are able to take the issues they face on the chin. This is a quality that I have always admired, and it is something that is changing the way that I deal with the problems I face.

Usually when I come across something that I can't do, my first response is to give up and move onto something else. This creates problems, especially when it comes to schoolwork and exams. I would look at a question in an exam for example, look at it and get really stressed out because I wasn't sure how to do it and this would affect my performance in the other questions. This is all just part and parcel of the overall pessimistic person that I am, but I am working on changing this. In the case of schoolwork, when I come across a question that I cannot do, I give it as good a go as I can and I spend time working on other examples like that so I can really get to grips with how that specific type of question works, but most importantly, I don't get as frustrated as I used to.

I was never really a fan of trying new things either, but James helped me to get over that as well. Because of James' Spina Bifida, he can't walk long distances, so

when we were in Florida 2 years ago, we hired a mobility scooter for when we were walking about the theme parks. I will never forget James' hatred for the idea, and for the duration of the flight he was determined not to use the scooter. That was, of course, until he gave it a try. I have never seen anymore more attached to anything in my life. Trying to get him off this scooter was nigh on impossible, but this is what really resonated with me. The whole idea of trying something new and different, even if you seriously don't want to, is now something that appeals to me. Because of this, I decided to attempt public speaking, so that I could better the way in which I present. When I was picked to represent the school, I couldn't think of anything I didn't want to do more than this, but just thinking about James falling madly in love with the scooter allowed me to give it my all, and to my surprise my team ended up advancing in the competition.

This change in the way that I think and do things has been fundamental to my development. I haven't really thought about it much before, however, now that I have taken the time to analyse the events that I have witnessed in my life, I have realised just how much seeing the development of James and Catherine has affected my life for the better. Being able to see anyone overcome a barrier of any kind is something that makes me appreciate just how incredible the human body and mind truly is. Even when there is a physical boundary stopping someone from doing something, like James' Spina Bifida or Catherine's Down Syndrome, if a person is truly determined, our resilience, courage and effort will allow us to break down these barriers and develop into a stronger person.

Candidate D evidence

Should There Be Dedicated Parking Spaces For The Elderly?

Older Adults encounter many difficulties as they age, from isolation to bereavement of spouses, so the issue they don't need is having to walk a considerable distance to the front door of their local Supermarket. The sad reality is, this is what is happening. It's a given that as you get older, you develop certain problems like arthritis that will inhibit your ability to walk distances, so what can we do about this? To me the answer is clear, remove some of the masses of disabled spaces and introduce a brown badge system for Older Adults.

I understand the need for disabled spaces, however I personally feel that there are too many of them in certain shops. Take Tesco Port Glasgow as an example, most of the spaces closest to the door are disabled. This leaves Older Adults to find a space that will be further away from even footpaths and the main entrance. Older Adults need most of the facilities a Disabled bay offers, like access to an even walkway, wider spaces and proximity to doors. Without an even walkway, Older Adults become more likely to fall. This may not seem like much, however, 1 in 3 Adults over 50 die within 12 months of fracturing a hip, and this increased death risk stays with the person for 10 years. They are also 5 to 8 times more likely to die within 3 months of the fracture.¹ Older Adults also require the additional width that disabled bays have in order to allow them to get walking sticks or Zimmer Frames in and out of cars.

I know that some people think that older adults should just apply for a disabled badge if it is that much of a hassle, but then that comes with being branded as disabled for something that is purely age related. If you have a badge system that is given to you when you reach a certain age, it will help Britain's older adults stay mobile, and most importantly, stay connected. Most of our Older Adults who have suffered a fall, whether at home or outside, have a fear of going anywhere in case they fall again. Providing access to a safe, level walkway reduces this fear. Isolation is also a killer of Older Adults in Britain. So how could we implement a badge system like this? There are two ways I can think of: The first being remove some Blue Badge Spaces and replace them with a Brown Badge Space, the second way being, allow Disabled Spaces to also be used by someone who is a Brown Badge holder. One thing I feel we shouldn't do, however, is tell the Older Adult to get a disabled badge. Growing old shouldn't be a disability, however we should make it easier for the person.

¹ <https://theconversation.com/why-hip-fractures-in-the-elderly-are-often-a-death-sentence-95784>

There is a way to make these ideas simpler, by re-organizing the layout of the car park we can easily fit these spaces in. By moving Parent and Child spaces to the rear of the car park, we can fit in the “Brown Badge” spaces, while keeping the larger bays so that parents can get their kids into and out of prams.

There are only a few places where this system is in use. In the London Borough of Hillingdon, “Residents over 65 with a Brown Badge can use dedicated Brown Badge bays located in council owned car parks, on street and in some privately-operated car parks in Hillingdon.” This information I sourced from the Hillingdon Council website². On this website, they address that these bays are “located close to car park exit points and, where possible near to the pay and display points.” We can see that Hillingdon Council have been able to implement this successfully, with the British Parking Association citing over 7000 users of the scheme.³ Enfield Council also have a similar system but have set the age limit at 70 years and up.⁴ I have been unable to find of any similar system north of the border. Both of these systems work well and have a considerable amount of users, so it begs the question, “Why hasn’t this been implemented nationwide?”

Unfortunately, I was unable to find a clear answer to this, however, I feel it is because Older Adults with difficulty walking will ask to be assessed for a Disabled Badge so the requirement for another type of badge would be redundant. My Auntie has a Disabled Badge, not due to any real disability, but because she can’t walk long distances, something which comes naturally with ageing. I don’t think it’s fair to hand a Disability card to someone whose issue is purely age related. With an ageing population, more older people will develop a disability, such as a heart condition, and will take up Disabled Spaces, so by introducing spaces for able bodied elderly persons, this will relieve some of the stress from the Blue Badge system. I feel that this is a simple solution that will help our older adults to keep connected with family and friends, as by knowing they won’t have to walk far to get to the front door of their local coffee shop, the hairdresser or a restaurant will help make them want to leave the house as they aren’t put off by the distances from the spaces. Isolation is a serious issue in the UK with “Hundreds of thousands”⁵ of older adults dealing with isolation, a condition that can lead to depression which is a growing factor of dementia.

² <https://www.hillingdon.gov.uk/brownbadge>

³ <https://www.britishparking.co.uk/News/brown-badges-go-on-street>

⁴ <https://new.enfield.gov.uk/services/parking/parking-permits/elderly-persons-parking-permits/>

⁵ <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/loneliness-in-older-people/>

So although the elderly not being able to park may seem like a minor problem at first glance, you can clearly see that it can cause more severe problems than sore legs when having to walk to get to the door of Tesco.

Candidate E evidence

Pablo Escobar and the Illegal Drugs trade in Colombia. A biographical Account

Colombia has a major impact on drug trafficking in Latin America. It is known for producing the most cocaine out of any country in the world and some of the globe's richest, most powerful and dangerous men are from Colombia.

The main Drug Culture in Colombia kicked off in the 1960s, starting off with marijuana and gradually changing to cocaine in the 1970s when a man named Pablo Escobar, who is commonly referred to as the "world's greatest outlaw" came into power. Escobar started off as a petty criminal, taking part in low profile offences, such as forging high school diplomas and proceeding to sell them, various street scams and stealing vehicles.

He eventually fell into working for a drug dealer called Alvaro Prieto which then led him onto starting his own cocaine business in 1975. This business spread around Latin America and up into Miami, Florida

The law eventually started to take note of Escobar's actions and started to build up a case against him. Two officers arrested him but he later had them killed and the case was dropped. This is what led Pablo to later deal with authority by bribing or murdering them.

The cartel Pablo founded was named the Medellin Cartel and it was co-founded by his brother, Roberto Escobar and cousin, Gustavo Gaviria. Pablo was very fond of his family - his wife Maria Victoria Henao and their two children, son San Sebastian Marroquin and daughter Manuela Escobar. Most of his free time was spent with them and a lot of important decisions were made, revolving around the safety of his family. Ensuring their safety later proved to be difficult.

As time went on and Pablo Escobar and his cartel became more and more powerful, new circuits were made for shipments and more US states were being distributed to, such as California and New York. The Medellin Cartel was responsible for 80% of cocaine importation to the United States.

Escobar was reeling in a considerable amount of money at this point but he was running out of safe locations to keep it stored. As a result, much of it was buried around Colombia and lost. Occasionally someone still stumbles across it accidentally. Many go out looking for it but few have ever actually found it.

Aside from Escobar's involvement with drug trafficking, he was seen as a public hero amongst the poor people of Medellin due to the fact he donated millions of dollars to schools, hospitals and rundown neighbourhoods, gaining huge popularity and putting him in an even more powerful position than before. Pablo used this method to acquire the

allegiance of poverty-stricken individuals who became a kind of private army which he later used to attack the police in his dispute with the government.

Public attention sparked for Escobar when he ran for president of Colombia in the early 1980s. At this time the majority of the public was unaware of the drug cartel that Pablo was leading and from an outsider's view he could easily pass as a noble public figure. This all came to an end when, during the election, the major involvement that Pablo Escobar had with drug trafficking was revealed, resulting in Escobar dropping out of the campaign. It also marked the start of a relentless war between the Colombian and the US governments.

In Escobar's feud with the government his attacks, aimed at anti-narcotic police, became more severe and were responsible for more than 250 bomb attacks and dozens of massacres resulting in 1,142 dead civilians. Escobar planned the terrorist attack on the Avianca Flight 203 (a domestic passenger plane) that ended the lives of everyone on board along with 3 people who were struck with falling debris.

Escobar's reign came to an end on the 2nd December 1993 when he was tracked by the authorities using radiophone transmissions. This resulted in a police shootout with him and his bodyguard. They tried to escape by running across rooftops and into various alleyways but the shootout eventually ended in a fatal blow to Escobar's ear. It is unknown who took the last shot on Pablo and family members say that he shot himself but it's unlikely we will ever know.

Even after his death Pablo Escobar's influence is still felt and has changed drug trafficking around the world forever.

733 words

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Candidate F evidence

The Light Side to Dark Humour

“The comic and the tragic lie inseparably close, like light and shadow” - Socrates

Veiled contempt, political agenda and satire are the core of modern entertainment. In reality the mix of perceived intelligence perched on a new age social media soapbox is the cornerstone of our society. A stepping stone to popularity and fame, or merely a means of expressing frustration or emotion in a socially acceptable manner, dark humour is undeniably an art form.

Sigmund Freud even wrote a book – “Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious”, focusing on the fundamentals behind our daily humour. I would hate to dissect the anatomy of a joke like he did (taking all the fun out of it!), but I cannot help but be intrigued by the notion that humour is not only a necessary coping mechanism but also a valuable weapon in life’s arsenal that is intrinsic to our DNA. On average, it is said, a person will laugh seven times in a ten-minute conversation. Humour is the rope that binds us together, and is proof that we can communicate with each other without using language. Laughing is one of the simplest ways to convey our emotions. Stroke victims may be left unable to talk but they are still able to laugh and cry, able to communicate their basic feelings. The sound of laughter can be recognised worldwide. It defies the language barrier. It is a primitive display of fundamental emotions. Our laughter can be used as a shield, not for hiding behind out of cowardice, but one that, when used sensibly, protects us, nurtures us and prepares us for the future. Self-deprecating humour can be used as a defence mechanism, allowing us to thicken our skin, because when we learn to laugh at ourselves it may relieve the pain when someone else is laughing at us. While clean humour may be expectable in social situations, dark humour can be used as an extremely effective method of managing long-term stress. It is both our defence and our saviour.

Dark humour can deliver a message. It can be subtle, brutal and thought provoking, yet powerful in its honesty - forcing us to consider the taboo subjects, that we would rather shun than embrace. Within the medical world, people can be exposed to distressing situations daily, but despite this they still need to find an outlet for their bone-chilling emotions. Dark humour can allow them to deal with painful passing, stressful situations, and terrible trepidations in their workplace while still communicating normally with their co-workers. In fact, this use of humour is so mainstream that medical students are forced to undergo a training course, teaching them to manage the trauma they may encounter in their future profession. This process is commonly acknowledged as gallows humour, a way of ethically dealing with the horror of their chosen profession. However, "There is a subtle but essential difference between laughing at the dead and laughing at death" *1. Mocking the afflicted is not where the humour lies, but rather thumbing the nose at mortality. Though doctors are not alone in the world when needing to deal with death. A doctor's patient will need to discover a way of coming to terms with his or her ailment. While some may be offended if a person were to make a joke about their condition, others find it reassuring that they are comfortable around them, as well as their illness. In addition to this, people processing a death may suffer from high stress levels and prefer to exchange jokes, rather than talk seriously about it, as it will help desensitize themselves to the situation. Everybody needs a way to cope with the feelings people would not normally address, because if the subject is delivered as a punchline, perhaps it will lessen the blow. Abuse of dark humour could be overlooked, because jokes should be left as jokes. Right? There may be no ill intent, but harm could have been caused and should be addressed. Those adroit at its delivery can feel special, intelligent, even superior. They are a part of an elite few that understand the joke! It allows us to stop, if only for a minute, and shake off the stresses of the day and start fresh tomorrow.

Dark humour can make a change. It is fuelled by oppression, by the lack of power, by sadness and disappointment, by abandonment and humiliation. As a teenager growing up with the legacy of Global Warming, Brexit and the Trump Presidency I could go on and ponder the future of human-kind and whether or not we are prepared to deal with the

implications of our actions, but I've got homework to do. Sympathising with the aforementioned situations is simple as they are commonly publicised through social media, as a means of comedic relief. I truly believe I have been educated more about politics, through Instagram than by my family and teachers. This most likely is not my teachers' fault as there is no need for my physics teacher to randomly complain about Brexit. These issues, although serious, are often portrayed as a joke in the eyes of the internet, but this is not because the younger generation is inconsiderate, nihilistic or lazy. It is because they are trying to make sense of their inheritance.

In conclusion, what can I say? Jokes not drugs? The world without a way to take the edge off, would probably lead us all to a life of insanity. No matter what your method of relaxation is, everybody needs one, and everybody has one. Whether it is baking, reading or laughing, everyone has a way of making the bad seem a little better. Dark humour shields us from the worst aspects of our life, it allows us to share our deepest feelings in a way that would be acceptable in a casual, social gathering. To pacify the darkness in our life perhaps we need to embrace some of it, because if we can acknowledge it, we can strip it of its power. Don't let dark humour hide in the shadows, let it come into the light.

1003 words

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Candidate G evidence

Chapter One: Jane Doe

White. All I can see is white. It burns my eyes, as I try to pry them open. Shapes forming. Pristine angels descending towards me. One opens its mouth but there is nothing but a deafening buzz of silence. A moment of serene tranquillity is seemingly impossible, yet the feeling of extreme bliss is overwhelming at this moment. Despite being observed like an animal in a cage, being trapped in the gaze of the angel's piercing eyes, gives me a sense of security. Nothing could happen while they are here. They are my saviours.

White. Once again, the painful light shines in my eyes. My angels are not above me. Widening my eyes, light floods my senses. It hurts. Why does it hurt? "She's up!" a voice cries. A rush of footsteps approaches me. The pristine white coats return. My angels? To my side I see a figure, lingering behind the angels. It slowly advances towards me and grasps my hand.

"Thank God, you're alive," it sighs. I study its kind face. Its deep ocean eyes paired with the relieved smile resting upon its aged skin. No matter how hard I try, its face never spawns any reaction from me. While it radiates emotion, I lay staring with blank eyes. I feel nothing looking at its face. A stinging sensation shoots up my arm, a cold liquid flowing through my veins. As I turn my face, I see there is a needle in my arm. A nice surprise. The angel smiles. "Hello. I am nurse May." The angel spoke an automatic response. "Can you tell me your name?"

My name... My... name.

"Umm..."

The kind figure mutters to the robotic nurse holding a clipboard, and as his lips move, she sluggishly writes. Yet all I hear are nonsensical syllables. What is my name? Nothing makes

sense. Why am I here? Who is this person holding my hand? Who was I? The white slowly fades to black. Everything disappears.

A soft voice whispers in my ear. Once again, I wake up with a painful shot. Today, the cold flow in my veins embraces every cell, offering up a sense of security. The scent of the room strikes my nose with familiarity, perhaps the only thing I can confidently say I know. The figure smiles, and I smile back. Questions float to the surface of my mind. "Who are you?"

"Your dad." It chuckles, with a dejected smile. There is a storm in its eyes, waves crash against the rocks, as it tries not to spill the ocean. Friendly concern grows within me, but in reality, I don't care. It then proceeds to stare into my eyes for an uncomfortable amount of time. The piercing eyes stung. I shift my gaze towards the window. The blue sky floating above the lush green is painted on the walls, building a terrifying contrast between where I am and where I want to be.

"Why am I here?"

"Well, umm, there was a car crash..." its voice cracks and an awkward pause passes, "and you were in it." I regret asking the question. Not because of the answer, but because I realise it doesn't matter. Knowing why I am here, does not change the fact that I am here. But what will I do when I get out? I have no other way of gathering information about my former self, other than trusting my 'dad'. Who was I? Who will I be? Everything previous hidden by dark waters, the figure before me is responsible for the unveiling of a truth untold:

The pulsating beat of the heart monitor protects us from the awkward silence. While I swim in my thoughts, my 'dad' proceeds to approach the window. The painting looks different today. The soaring sapphire sky replaced by a melancholy cloud overlooking the vast land, yet it still radiates hope. I wish I could talk to my 'dad' but starting over with

someone new is always awkward. I have seen its face endlessly but looking at it gives me an unsettling feeling. I am looking at someone who definitely knows more about me than I do. There was no ice shot this morning. The absence of my medicine triggers more emotions than looking at my own 'dad' in his eyes. "Umm... dad." I reluctantly spit, "What was I like before?"

"Well..." it laughs, "You were not that different, actually. You never talked to me or wanted to spend time with me. At times I didn't even know where you were. When the crash happened, I had no clue you had even left the house." The awkward silence happens again. It hurts. Is that really who I am? To the rhythmic pulse of my heart, I close my eyes, but I do not sleep.

I am happy. The frozen flow in my vein is home. My pain fades away, and tranquillity returns. Facing my dad, I see him in a new light, I remember him. Not as my dad, but as a person who was treated wrongly. In the future, his opinion of me will change. His ocean was calm today as he gazes down at his phone. The soft glow of the phone bounces off of his face. At this moment the water seems to be peaceful, I was floating in the centre of the sea with nothing on the horizon, other than the vast blue. Everything is still, until the nurse erupts out of the door, sending a crashing wave down on my beautiful blue. "Hello, hello. How are we today? Good?" explodes her mechanical greeting, barely giving me a second to think. "Well, we have some good news. You have a visitor,"

A visitor? I ask myself 'Who could it be?' but I have realised I, undeniably, know nothing about her.

"Her name is Emily." At that, very theatrical timing, 'Emily' walks in through the door. Surprisingly, I do not recognise her. But I need to know who I am to her.

1000 words

Candidate H evidence

"I was within and without"

When the camhanaich sneaks in to rouse the landscape,
I am wrapped in a blanket of silence,
surrounded by the melody that belongs to nothing and yet everything.
Awe permeates every single cell.

Calligraphic cliffs stare blindly at the infinite sea,
saluting, searching, brooding,
dreaming about the lost partners
they can never reach again.

Hazy, haughty Highlands stand proudly.
These granite giants yearn to tell a story of Caledonia down the centuries,
but their words are ciphered in ribbons of clouds,
whispered by a persistent but elusive wind.

Thurso, Tay, Tummel writhe like veins with the vital water
betwixt the Scottish wilderness. Such power, such potential
begins inconspicuously from a secret source in the hills,
till it fans out as it is refracted through the estuarial prism.

Strewn land is stitched together with threads of bridges
passing identity down through time,
by hundreds of anonymous hands,
each placing its own pebble on the national cairn.

I saw an eagle, scouring through the pendant welkin,
muscular wings jet him majestically
to patrol with percipient eye history, culture, traditions, our land-
a kite tied to an invisible piece of string.

Centuries old Shetland crofts are fused to the peaty landscape -
ink - soaked into blotting paper.

The Caisteal Suibhne is not
Alexander Stoddart's sculpture carved in rocks.

Lighting is an exquisite symbiosis between the Sun and the Moon
'balanced on a pair of scales in Cernunnos' hand.
Fleetingly the fireworks of Aurora Borealis perform
an enticing Dance Macabre as a show of respect.

Those blinded, imprisoned by their glaring glass screens,
have a distorted view of Mother Nature.
They think themselves civilised, sophisticated
but their bare feet will never make a connection.

Lives are letters in the glass bottles drifting,
perpetually, desperately, aimlessly.
Others are momentary footprints on the golden beach,
resonating with the rhythm of all consuming, callous tide.

I am a sailor from the gelid waters of the Baltic,
in the vicinity of dynamic delta of Vistula.

I am a sister of Conrad, a friend with Wojtek the Bear
adopted by this wilderness of thistles.

Bereft of speech, I watch the erudite stars peppering the sky
like countless sand grains in clypeus of national identity -
uninterrupted, concordant and enlightened.

"This is my own, my native land!"