

Writing Your Way In- and Out- of a Story

Finishing the last word of her book, Maggie's state of euphoria she had whenever reading a book faded away like dew under the warm sun. As she was punted back into the immutable system of waking up, eating, doing homework, and sleeping, she thought what it would feel like to be a character from a book. These thoughts were normal for a 12-year-old girl, but to Maggie, she wasn't just daydreaming; the way books had a storyline and a lesson to teach, while real life had no morals, and most wrongs done have no ramifications. While most people in her 7th grade class wished for food, money, or happiness, Maggie's wish was to be in a book. No one understood why she had said that, or maybe they thought she was immature, but in reality, she wanted a life with a plot, a life where quarantine meant more than staying home all day. Ever since she was younger, the books she read piqued her curiosity in a different way: how a choice in between life and death would feel in real life versus in books, whether anyone in this world would be brave enough to choose other people over themselves, rather than being superficial and wishing for things that you never had. Would life have a protagonist and an antagonist like in books or was it just a cycle of being the protagonist of your story and the antagonist of someone else's? Because of her own questions, she appeared aloof to everyone else, even her parents.

When she got her wish, though, Maggie learned that she didn't want to be in a book, since it was the different sides portrayed in life that made it life, and not just words on a page. Those words, ideas, and pictures could never compare to the depth and strange beauty of life. However, by then, it was already too late, as she was already too deep into her own story. She couldn't talk, admonish herself, nor rely on the synergy between herself and her friend. Maggie had to write her way out of the hole she had dug for herself while wishing to be in a story the whole time. That's why she started writing her own book. At age thirteen. About her twelve-year-old self. She turned her derelict, useless, and empty ideas, and experiences in life into words and pictures that finally made sense.

Now that she had written her way out of her own swirling story and mind, Maggie could be herself. The person who daydreaming about other people in books had held back. She just had to see life for what it was, and see that the twisted, dark paths it led to were beautiful in their own way.