

Western Voices 2013, English 280, Third Place, (Professor, Barbara Ashwood)

How I Spent My Summer Vacation

Robert True

It was my very first day of work, about three weeks into summer break. My mom got me a job in the factory where she works. I wasn't very excited; in fact, I was exceptionally nervous. It was like the first day of high school all over again, sweaty palms and all. The miniature digital clock on the dash displayed 4:30 a.m. in its usual green light. The sun was still down and the summer air was still cool as we drove to my 5:00 a.m. shift at the factory. My mom kept her eyes on the road, "Don't forget to report to Roger." I stared out of the passenger window looking at cornfields, "I know," I said. About thirty seconds of silence went by until she repeated herself in the same exact tone she used before, "Don't forget to report to Roger." I looked at her with the annoyed expression that I always give her when she repeats herself, "Yes, Mom, I know. Report to Roger when I get there."

In the distance I could see the immense building. The dullness of its grey color made it stand out against its natural green surroundings, the only sign of human life within 15-miles. Before either of us said anything, we were in front of our destination. "These are the doors you go to for the factory, my office is further up the way.... I'll see you at around 3:00. . .Just call me when you're out." I looked at her with an expressionless face, "Thanks, Mom. See ya then." I quickly got out of the car but slowly walked to the revolving door that I would be going in and out of for the rest of my summer. Some other factory workers were walking over to the factory doors, too. They all looked exhausted, with 5 o'clock shadows, and their facial expressions didn't help either. Every one of them looked miserable to be coming here for work. There was even a guy who was missing an arm and a leg. He had a prosthetic leg so he could walk and so he could continue to work. Most of them looked to be about 40 years old, some even 50 or 60. As soon as I walked through the doors I saw everyone checking in at the desk where a security guard was posted. I looked around apprehensively and turned to the security guard. "Excuse me. I am a temp here and today is my first day." He looked back at me nonchalantly. "Oh yeah, I'm supposed to report to Roger." He nodded. "Wait one se..." The security guard was interrupted by a squeaky old voice that came from behind me, "I'm Roger!" I quickly turned around and saw the man that was missing extremities. I immediately hoped that the look on my face wasn't the expression of surprise. I didn't want to make him feel uncomfortable. "Hi, today is my first day and I'm supposed to report to you." I expla

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After packaging and labeling for two straight hours without any real small talk, Roger

A note on process from Robert: I chose to write my essay about the summer I worked in a