

**Exemplar #1:** Prompt #3: Write a piece of fiction which explores philosophical ideas.

**Purpose:**

*To experiment with an extreme of the vegan debate. Inspired by the world wide debate about whether consuming animal products is morally 'right'. Also inspired by discussions in class about personhood. So this creative piece plays with, what if everyone agreed that animals had personhood? What if everyone decided that animals should have the same values as humans? As a result what would happen if everyone was vegan? In this world being that everyone is vegan and that the consumption of animal products are illegal. Having the minority be the people who consume animal products. Having them shamed for it. Which takes what our traditional world in the close past where everyone agrees that consuming animal products is morally 'right' and flips it on its head.*

*I attempt to achieve this and engage my audience by:*

- *Using satire to highlight overt problems that show that there isn't always one clear answer to our moral problems.*
- *It also engages the audience with its obscurity and difference to our 'normal' world.*
- *Using the descriptions of the senses to involve the reader and strike emotion within them.*
- *Mr Gray is a named character where the girl is unnamed. This is used to persuade the audience into seeing Mr Gray as more human and therefore having bias to his character.*

**Milk is Death**

My life before was blissful. Calmly waking up softly to the clanking and pounding sounds of the new sustainable cells going up. The calming, welcoming smell of recycled animal feces being reused for building skyscrapers. It's the smell that trickles and Oozes in through your windows each morning, hardly competing with any other forms of joyment. Lingering in the depths of your nostrils as you easily slip into your predetermined attire. The world has evolved into our perfect utopia. The "Post animal consumption world" A time where we're able to look back on our grandparents and say we did it. We fixed the world. Peace when there used to be protests and uprisings. Order when there used to be spontaneous outbursts. A cohesive community, all the same. All healthy. All right. It will only be a matter of time before people like Mr. Gray die away. When this world is truly worshiped. We become grateful, and our torturous past is erased and forgotten forever.

Mr. Gray. You'd think that he'd be happy living in the controlled and peaceful civilization of 2098. Not him. Yet my days are still wasted looking after an old man who couldn't be less than a waste of fresh air. Frail and trembling he looks like he could disintegrate into another pile of dust at any moment. His face droops to the floor, always only holding the same expression of un-motivation and hopelessness. Always slugging around like a useless hacky sack. His name suits him well as only the colour gray looms from the bones and soul of this man. Stubborn asshole, sitting, while everyone else is busy giving back to the society that graciously forgave him for his old animal farming ways. Instead he barely trudges around his concrete government assigned cell he so desperately hates. Looming around blankly staring out at the brightly lit streets. Only ever

talking about his 'past life' on the farm. A wretched man living without guilt of his own actions. Now living off old secret powdered milk packets taped to the bottom of his dull plaid patterned couch. 'Always better fresh' he repeats every morning, lost of hope. Trembling, spilling the milk over his off white, carpet textured robe. Heaven knows what he's going to do when his cow TORTURE packets run out. Besides, only one remains. No longer stuck by tape but rather the continuous growing spider webs suspending it like a malicious net. He always used to say he had a lifetime supply. I wouldn't be surprised if he ended up being correct. Maybe if that rotting toothpick died I wouldn't have to wait to get paid. He has no family to shower in riches. Living amongst enslaved animals to his disgrace is not family. If it was up to him, he'd sign away his riches to a glass of milk.

But that's the only reason I still tolerate his stubborn ways. Money and inheritance. There was big demand for illegal dairy products when the government banned it. His farm was one of the last. So that man may be cranky but hidden inside that inconsiderate meat eating heart, is gold. Pure, shining and plentiful gold. Perhaps if it wasn't for that I would've turned him in for possession of illegal animal cruelty products. Unfortunately for me you can't sneak your way into a will while the other is in jail. So here both of us stay. Feeling like eternity it's been since I picked up this job. Little did I know it would be with the worst man I will probably ever know.

The day she finally snapped. Mr. Gray desperately tried to leap off the couch as she swiftly snatched the milk packet from beneath the couch. Ripping the spider webs still attached to the plastic. Mr. Gray's will was left open and untouched on the dining room table.

"ARE YOU KIDDING ME!?" The girl exclaims.

"I have looked after your inconsiderate, insensitive, and vile being and I get.. nothing?!"

"Please. Put that down, it's the only thing I have left of myself." The man struggles to stutter out.

In the will her name was nowhere to be seen. Mr. Gray stumbled towards her as she stared him in the eye. He abruptly came to a halt as she held the milk out the fifth-story window. Barley suspended. Before Mr. Gray has a chance to speak, he is cut off.

"I should've done this long ago." she says with a condescending smile.

"You musn-"

Mr. Gray stops. The world slows as he helplessly watches. Joint by joint. Finger by finger. As her hand unravels. The cool breeze topples the milk. His purpose is set free into the world that hates it. Like a tired and heavy head. The milk falls, only picking up pace as it nears the pavement below. Splat! Silence. This is quickly interrupted by a sea of gasping from down below. A mother covering her child's eyes as he cries. Most are just stunned. Many people below, unable to unstick their eyes from the white patch of a murder scene splattered along the road, stared in horror. All else they can see is the girl. Peering over the balcony with an empty expression. She knew how doomed she was. They were not getting out of this one. She is now involved. Within that moment ,she regrets it. She thinks about everything that has led up to this moment. All the times she could have turned Gray in but didn't. Hands heavy, she turns back to the old man.

Mr. Gray only looks at her for a second. Only to utter with his face almost pressed against the floor. "What has the world come to?"

Mr. Gray turns towards the hallway, slowly dragging himself to his room in acceptance. His worn out slippers scuff the floor as he walks. Leaving the world in shock and forever changed. With this somehow, nationwide event.

#### Marker's feedback:

Ka pai, – I like your willingness to play with perspective and structure in these stories to add some nuance to your ideas. You've got some awesome imagery in the first piece (some favourites include "slugging around like a useless hacky sack" and "spider webs suspending it like a malicious net") and effective metaphors in the second piece (i.e. "She had sold her apartment to join the colony of ants"). I also appreciated the crafting of your parallel-structured sentences in piece one: "Peace when there used to be protests and uprisings. Order when there used to be spontaneous outbursts."

One necessary next step for Merit is to address the inconsistencies with language conventions. For example, both pieces have multiple fragments; some might be intentional, but it's difficult to tell since others seem unintentional. Additionally, some of the structural choices confused me more than they developed a clear idea. In *Milk is Death*, I'm unsure why the point of view shifts from first person to third person, particularly since it still sticks closely to the girl's perspective. The closing fragment also felt incomplete and anticlimactic to me.