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CBC Writing Competition

Junior Level Entry
Category: fiction
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A Tale of Intelligence versus Instinct
"Hence, the Animals"

Scene One

The story commences during nighttime in a forest with a tarantula preparing to feast upon his prey, a paralyzed opossum. The tarantula notices a deer and hides in nearby foliage, lest the deer inadvertently rescues the opossum. Soon after, a wolf enters the scene and sees the deer. The wolf ambushes the deer and amorously devours it. After the wolf scouts the vicinity in proximity, he trots to the discovered lake, a few feet away from the tarantula, and rinses the blood off his snout. Consequently, he detects the opossum and carries the apparently post-mortem opossum back to his den and a terrified tarantula trails him into a thicket.

"You're not pretending are you?" sincerely inquired Tarantula. "Everyone has to die sometime", Tarantula informs mockingly. "Why not die nobly by feeding me, prolonging my disappointment with the Grim Reaper?" Tarantula laughs wryly while the opossum helplessly lies there. "Oh, deer." Seeing a deer, Tarantula frantically searches for a decent hideout and sneaks into nearby foliage. Tarantula watches the deer sniff, look up and begin to nibble on the grass. Enter Wolf, Jr. from the upper east side of the forest, yawning.

Wolf, Jr. desists yawning abruptly, seeing the unsuspecting deer. Since he is in a thicket, he tiptoes from one tree to the next, until he is nine feet away from the deer.

"This is my lucky day, er, um, night." Crouched, Wolf, Jr. approaches the deer and reaches five feet when the deer jerks its head up, and for what seems like an eternity, it stares into the thicket.

Tarantula provides his own commentary in hopes of staying calm while he witnesses the spectacle. "I wonder if the Grim Reaper heard me."

Meanwhile, Wolf, Jr. waits patiently for the deer to resume eating, and when it does, Wolf, Jr., without hesitation, leaps onto the deer, with his claws unsheathed as they dig into the flesh. Instantly, the jaws follow suit, collapsing the animal, blood spewing onto the grass. Tarantula is barely containing himself as he salivates at the sight of fresh blood.

Finished with the corpse, Wolf, Jr. takes a look around, sniffing out a peculiarity but shrugs and reasons it's the deer. He trots to the noticed lake nearby and rinses his snout and starts washing his crimson teeth with his east paw. Heading back to his origin, he steps on the opossum, inspects it, and snatches it with his teeth. "I'm sure dad's hungry," he cackles malevolently as he promenades into the thicket.

Furiously fearful, Tarantula formulates a plan to retrieve his meal and sets off restlessly after Wolf, Jr.

Scene Two

As an anxiously angry Tarantula tails the despised gray mammal, Wolf, Jr. nears the den which is only a few yards away when he himself is jumped by the spider, invoking an automatic brawl, but Tarantula outsmarts him, appearing to have departed yet he is close enough to infiltrate the familiar cavern.

Aboard a tree, Tarantula takes advantage of the thriving trees as he leaps from branch to branch, the only visible indication of the wolf's position being the wolf's hindquarters. Anticipating just the right moment, Tarantula, without delay, pounces onto the wolf's head. Wolf, Jr., reacting stunned from the

elements of surprise and pain, accidentally presses the opossum into the jaws, securing the animal's position for a while.

"Aww, crud. It worked last time," Tarantula laments as he swan dives off the cranium of Wolf, Jr.'s muffled cursing and somersaults onto the dirt ground.

"Get this thing off me!" Wolf, Jr.'s speech is impeded with muffles.

"You know, you shouldn't talk with your mouth full," Tarantula smugly replies to the somehow coherently audible mandate as he brushes dirt off of himself

Wolf, Jr. is infuriated. "Hey, wise guy! Do you *want* to end up an insect?" Wolf, Jr. passes the time as he shakes his head frantically, hoping to loosen the opossum, which only helps to the wearing off of the paralytic poison.

Not worried, Tarantula taunts the canine further. "And just how do you expect to accomplish that? You can't even handle my posse."

This exasperates the wolf. "Ooh, you're dead. You just don't know it yet."

"First you take me food, then you forecast like an astrological meteorologist, and *then*, you have the aud*a*city to call me ignorant?" a reprehensive Tarantula retorts.

In over his head, the dog replies, "Ummm, yeah."

Tarantula scoffs. "Do you realize whom you're talking to?

Wolf, Jr. seems to contemplate, even placing upper paw to his chin and stroking it. "Yeaa-no."

Scornful, Tarantula informs him. "Fool, you are talking to the swiftest animal in this turtleneck of the woods, the *Terraintula*."

Impatiently, Wolf, Jr. says, "Quit stalling."

Having realized he's pressing his luck more than necessary, Tarantula proposes, "Okay, ok. Whoever has eight legs can go first."

Wolf, Jr. immediately rises in protest, but then has an epiphany, gazing into oblivion. "Ohhhhhh."

Seizing the moment, Tarantula creeps behind a tree.

Pitifully deciding that he should let the spider strike first, but being in conflict with instinct, Wolf, Jr. fails to notice the spider's hiding, only his departure. So he shrugs it off and enters the den.

Aware of the opportune moment, Tarantula crawls into the den, flabbergasted at all the possible hiding spots.

Scene Three

At the same time as Tarantula is eavesdropping on the conversation between Wolf, Jr. and his patriarchal cohort, he recognizes the elder wolf's voice and puts 2 and 2 together as to his relationship with the blind canine being a provider of food in exchange for portions of a blood repository.

"Stop *right* where you are, you feckless ingrate."

Bewildered, Wolf, Jr. relieves his father of homeland security. "It's me, dad!'

"Junior?"

"Yeah, dad. It's just that there's something in my mouth," Wolf, Jr. assures.

Relieved, Wolf, Sr. lets his son know of it. "Whew, bless my hearing."

"Dad, your hearing is blessed. That's how you can hear and recognize me. Now help me get this thing off!"

"Right, right." He walks, bumping into his son. Differentiating the opossum's fur from his son's, Wolf, Sr. bites the opossum's and jerks his head upward, the opossum following, knocking Junior out. Senior drops the animal and attempts to dig in, but the animal comes to and panics. It scurries out of Senior's reach.

"*So*, I brought you food," Junior normally says it with casualness hinting.

"You *never* bring me food, and the one time that you do, it escapes!"

"Well, never say never," Junior gets out, trying to save face.

"How about *not ever* again? Ah, forget it. Catch it already. I feel like I'm losing my sense of taste. You wouldn't want a father with numb eyes *and* tongue?" Senior then turns paranoid. "Or would you? And what's that smell? I recognize it."

Leaving the den, Junior mutters about his father, “You lost your taste when you chose this stench-attractor for a home, you unlucky dog.”

Having eluded death once more, the opossum isn’t sure it’ll make it. All that shaking plus his wound discourages the opossum of a future. So the motivation for survival is an exercise in futility, and seeing how it’d rather endure death by an eight-legged vampire with fangs more preferable than incisors agonizingly penetrating its flesh, causing tormenting pain, the opossum establishes a position in seclusion where he’d wait for Tarantula or any other animal without canines to consume his hopeless bodice.

Tarantula confronts Senior about getting the opossum for him; the wolf agrees. Tarantula pushes his luck and asks about getting blood-paid in advance. As if it were the most hilarious thing Senior had ever heard, the geriatric wolf laughs hysterically.

“Are you serious? Pay you for what, standing there? Be back by eight. There’s the door.”

Scene Four

Without Tarantula knowing where the opossum went, and Junior’s determination to terminate his father’s rants, the race to reach the opossum is still anybody’s game. As Tarantula exits the miniature cave, Junior catches a glimpse of him scampering towards the lake when he looks back at Senior to mutter about him. Being the faster animal, Junior intervenes with Tarantula’s plans once more.

“You have quite the conundrum before you,” boasts Junior.

“Big word, there. Do you know what it means? Anyway, what’s that? Is that an unknown creature?” Tarantula motions northeast. Gullibly, Junior monitors the indicated area. During so, Tarantula scurries up a tree opposite the wolf. “Why don’t you make like a tree and leave?” Leaping over a small tree in a single bound, Tarantula lands on a branch on the tree above Junior and shakes the branch, leaves falling on the hectically searching Junior, annoying him.

“Fine, I will.” Junior strides off to what appears to be back to his lair, but Junior has a surprise waiting for him. Tarantula, knowing fully well it’s a trap, but seeming to have an insatiable hunger, desperately proceeds to the lake based on probable cause that the opossum would return to his home.

Scene Five

Out of the thicket and into the liar, Tarantula is proximate to both his prey and predator, looking forward to his paycheck while Junior waits for the timely instant to ensnare that pesky spider as the opossum is in suspense as to how his death shall incur.

Tarantula advances toward his fodder equivalent, but is suspended by marine obstacles, namely water. That’s when he is face-to-face with an extremely intimidating…

Wolf, Jr. grimaces, “*So*, which two legs do you want me to sever off of you?” Staring at Tarantula, Junior also notices the opossum but also the water and both the opossum and Tarantula catch this.

Watching the events, the opossum on a lily pad paddles with its paws to the shore to ensure his ideal death by the aquaphobic arachnid.

Meanwhile, Tarantula is dangling from the jaws of Junior when he attempts to retain calmness of mind with, “You know, my species of pest in the Mesozoic era was equivalent with the Tyrannosaurus Rex. Technically, *technically*, you could call me a *Tyrantula*.”

“Life won’t be so funny *to* you when you look like a Sasquatch daddy longlegs.”

“Hey, you mangy cur coat! I double dog dare you to eat me!” diverted the opossum.

Junior snickered, “I never pass up a chance to put someone in their place.” Junior drops Tarantula who scuttles into the previously used shrubbery.

“*Not ever* should you say that again,” forewarned Tarantula.

Junior charges at the opossum who strafes after Junior trips over the overlooked antlers of the deer he demolished beforehand, tricking him into the lake. Junior is hydrophobic, so he drowns.

Appreciating the convenience of the situation, Tarantula cherishes it by jumping the opossum. The opossum sees a future for himself and asks Tarantula for a favor: by retrieving Junior from the

depths, Tarantula will have something to devour, thus having a reason to let the opossum live. Tarantula complies, although he has differing plans for Junior.

Impatient and bruised, Senior shows up later than 8 at the site of his dried son. Tarantula proffers Junior to Senior, who complains about the smell. Tarantula's blood craving is satisfied when Senior tells him where his paycheck can be withdrawn as Senior unconsciously annihilates his appetite by the tastiness of his own offspring.

Thend