

Singapore HeritageFest 2009
“Arte (factually) Speaking” Story-Writing Competition
Shortlisted Entry (Lower Secondary Category)



Contest ID: 18
Name: Joel Yeow
Gender: Male
Age: 14-year-old
NRIC: SXXXX421I
Nationality: Singaporean
School: Raffles Institution

Artefact: View of a Tiger in a Cage
Museum: National Museum of Singapore

Loss of a species

They're everywhere. Those evil, malicious things that snap shut when you go too close to them, those tall, erect, bipedal beings with long sticks that make booming sounds and shoot out metal objects that pierce and rip.

They're all out to get us. My family and I. We do not understand the meaning of these horrible acts. Already, more than 50 of us were caught. Our community is slowly disappearing, at the hands of these powerful beings.

What have we done wrong? Who have we offended? We have lived in this jungle for many years, many hundreds of years. Our ancestors lived here, in peace with the beings. But now, they want us dead. They want to destroy us. What is the meaning of all these? No one knows. There have been many speculations, but none are sure.

Then something happened. The beings expanded their territory. This was too much. We had no space to live. Our territories were being invaded. They planted large areas of plants, strange plants that we had never seen before. There were these beings in the fields everyday, slicing the plants. It was all too tempting. We wanted revenge.

The killing of the beings started. At first, it was only the daring ones. Then, everyone started to do it. Soon, nearly one of these beings was being caught everyday. The feeling was great. We were fighting back. We would certainly triumph over these lower-class beings, who had no natural weapons, whose skin was soft, whose flesh was succulent and delicious. Ah, the taste was such a temptation.

But then, we were wrong.

The beings had brains. They devised plans. They created advanced machines. We had angered them. We were doomed. We could not fight back.

Now, they're everywhere. They're determined to catch us, to torture us, to destroy us, for all we have done to them. It is too late. Our kind is doomed. There is no hope. Now we wander day to day, waiting to be caught, waiting to be killed, and waiting to be destroyed.

Those beings with fairer tone are helping those of darker tone. They have imported many devices, deadly devices that are designed to kill. They come in large metallic cages, a few of them sitting together. The beings are now a symbol of death, of destruction, of doom.

Now, I wander about in the jungle, waiting, watching, ever careful...

There it lies, too late, I did not see it.

A gasp of pain rings through the jungle.

Now I sit in this dreaded cage, waiting to be destroyed. The beings lurk outside my cage, their eyes burning with anger towards me. They carry dancing flames in their hands, dancing as if mocking me, mocking my impending doom.

I know that I am not the first with this fate, and definitely not the last. They will hunt us down, till the last of us are dead. This is the end of our kind in this jungle. This is the end of me.

I wait, pleading for mercy, knowing it falls on deaf ears.

At last, the door of the cage opens. I know it is too late to struggle or fight back. I silently await my doom.

The fire draws ever closer. This is the end.

This is the end, for me and my kind.

(553 words)