

Discovery

"Discovery. 9 letters. 4 syllables. Such a basic, simple word, yet so many interpretations.

Some words have different impacts to others. Some words can make you see, like pretty. Some words can make you feel, like grief. Some can make you remember. The remembering words are the best, at times. Discovery is one of the words that can fit into all categories and it largely depends on who you talk to.

Some people spend their whole lives attempting to make discoveries- be that in the science world or trying to prove the existence of a place after death. Many people succeed and make numerous discoveries; Einstein was one such figure. More spend their whole lives aiming to make a discovery and then die with nothing to show for it. Is that a waste? Or is it a waste to make the discovery and then realise it was never as important as it was in your mind, before it was found? Then there's the people who spend their existence searching, then die only to have someone stumble upon their work years later and uncover the discovery that was just under their nose.

What is it that makes humans so intent on discovering? Maybe it's something to do with their short attention spans? They get bored so quickly of things that are simply spectacular. They're constantly searching for new things to play with, like children working their way through a toy box.

I suppose it's only at the end of our lives that we are all guaranteed to make a discovery. As Death leans against the wall and smiles at your dying body, you'll realise exactly which parts of your life you regret and which parts you were happy to have lived. What might Death look like? The obvious answer would be the grim reaper character we've all learned of in story books. I always believed it depended on the life you've lived. If you've lived a life of missed opportunities and grudges, surely you will see Death as cruel, ripping you away before you have time to make amends. If you've lived a life of thrills and love, maybe you would feel sad at the thought of leaving, yet on the other hand maybe you would welcome the break, the slow, the calm.

The trouble, is that once the discovery is made, you can't tell anyone, because you're dead. Or at least that's how it appears on the outside. I've been lying six feet under for a while now, perhaps years, though one can tell. And that's been the most horrific discovery. What's worse is you can't tell if anyone else is in the same place as you. Have they died for real or are they stuck in nothingness like you are? With black mist shielding their eyes keeping them locked inside their bodies? I guess some discoveries are never meant to be made. But still the question is leached onto my mind: What really happens, when your heart stops beating?

I finished reading, took a breath and laid down the sheet with the essay written on it. Not one part of me wanted to look up at the parents of the 6 year old child who had composed this strange and haunting piece. Instead I took a few moments to inspect my desktop. A thousand years of silence seemed to fill the room which appeared to be shrinking.

One. Two. Three. My eyes flicked up to see the waxy white faces of Mickey's mum and dad.

"He wrote that?" The father's words were the first to be spoken. The scratchy dryness of my throat convinced me speaking wasn't the best option, I settled for a nod.

"That's ridiculous. He was six for God's sake, where would he have even learnt to write like that?" I hadn't voiced my disbelief as obnoxiously as Mickey's mother now did, but I felt what she said. It wasn't the literary level that concerned me, although admittedly rare prodigies do come around every so often. No, what worried me was the ideas the writing conveyed. Such thoughts had no place in the mind of a child who hadn't even reached their seventh birthday. Part of me was fired up, ready to dig deeper and unearth what was going on; another part wanted to bury everything that had just happened. Bury it deep so no one would even know it had existed. I felt this overwhelming sense of guilt, I'm not sure why, but it was crushing."

-end of transcript

CONFIDENTIAL:

CASE #1073 THE DISAPPEARANCE OF MICHAEL RYDER

PRESENT: OFFICER DIAS, CONSTABLE ROSEN AND THOMAS JAMES (SCHOOL TEACHER TO VICTIM)