

Honors College Essay Example

Scalding hot water cascades over me, crashing to the ground in a familiar, soothing rhythm. Steam rises to the ceiling as dried sweat and soap suds swirl down the drain. The water hisses as it hits my skin, far above the safe temperature for a shower. The pressure is perfect on my tired muscles, easing the aches and bruises from a rough bout of sparring and the tension from a long, stressful day. The noise from my overactive mind dies away, fading into music, lyrics floating through my head. Black streaks stripe the inside of my left arm, remnants of the penned reminders of homework, money owed and forms due.

It lacks the same dynamism and controlled intensity of sparring on the mat at taekwondo or the warm tenderness of a tight hug from my father, but it's still a cocoon of safety as the water washes away the day's burdens. As long as the hot water is running, the rest of the world ceases to exist, shrinking to me, myself and I. The shower curtain closes me off from the hectic world spinning around me.

Much like the baths of Blanche DuBois, my hot showers are a means of cleansing and purifying (though I'm mostly just ridding myself of the germs from children at work sneezing on me). In the midst of a hot shower, there is no impending exam to study for, no newspaper deadline to meet, no paycheck to deposit. It is simply complete and utter peace, a safe haven. The steam clears my mind even as it clouds my mirror.

Creativity thrives in the tub, breathing life into tales of dragons and warrior princesses that evolve only in my head, never making their way to paper but appeasing the childlike dreamer and wannabe author in me all the same. That one calculus problem that has seemed unsolvable since second period clicks into place as I realize the obvious solution. The perfect concluding sentence to my literary analysis essay writes itself (causing me to abruptly end my shower in a mad dash to the computer before I forget it entirely).

Ever since I was old enough to start taking showers unaided, I began hogging all the hot water in the house, a source of great frustration to my parents. Many of my early showers were rudely cut short by an unholy banging on the bathroom door and an order to "stop wasting water and come eat dinner before it gets cold." After a decade of trudging up the stairs every evening to put an end to my water-wasting, my parents finally gave in, leaving me to my (expensive) showers. I imagine someday, when paying the water bill is in my hands, my showers will be shorter, but today is not that day (nor, hopefully, will the next four years be that day).

Showers are better than any ibuprofen, the perfect panacea for life's daily ailments. Headaches magically disappear as long as the water runs, though they typically return in full force afterward. The runny nose and itchy eyes courtesy of summertime allergies recede. Showers alleviate even the stomachache from a guacamole-induced lack of self-control.

Honestly though, the best part about a hot shower is neither its medicinal abilities nor its blissful temporary isolation or even the heavenly warmth seeped deep into my bones. The best part is that these little moments of pure, uninhibited contentedness are a daily occurrence. No matter how stressful the day, showers ensure I always have something to look forward to. They are small

moments, true, but important nonetheless, because it is the little things in life that matter; the big moments are too rare, too fleeting to make anyone truly happy. Wherever I am in the world, whatever fate chooses to throw at me, I know I can always find my peace at the end of the day behind the shower curtain.