

WV-2013, English 100, Second Place, (Professor, Dr. Jacqueline Wilson-Jordan)

A Monster

Cassandra Estrada

There is a monster that lives in Chicago. She sleeps at day and roams my house at night invading my fridge and eating all the leftovers. She stands a little over five feet and has a dimple on her left cheek. Her short brown hair and brown eyes contrast with her paste-colored skin. She has a devious look that can shatter glass, and her voice is sarcastic and rude. She is more intelligent than expected for only being a sophomore in high school. The worst time to approach this creature is in the morning when she is angriest. However, she is not always unbearable. Sometimes on a good day, if you are lucky, the monster can be funny. She has a crude humor and is very quick-witted. Monsters can be tall, small, green or blue; this monster is my sister, Natalie.

At night when I would get home from work late, Natalie and I would stay up watching everything on our DVR. The two of us are NCIS fanatics and convinced the show educates us on how to become pro crime solvers. We would sit on the couch and eat Ben & Jerry's Chubby Hubby from the pint with our biggest spoons. In the morning, it was routine to wake up late and complain that staying up all night is never a good idea. Natalie, in a generous mood, would cook mac and cheese for my brother and me. Unfortunately, the noodles would be uncooked and she would forget to add necessary ingredients. Still, she believes herself to be a master chef.

There are many things my sister is not. She is not a chef who masters the art of Kraft Macaroni and Cheese. Natalie is not an artist, unless you believe a drawing of a person should have a circle as a head, a long line as a body, shorter lines as arms, and little circles for shoes. Then, yes, Natalie is a wonderful "stick-person" artist. Do not worry Adele, if Natalie is your competition you will be okay, considering dogs howl when Natalie belts out "Someone like you." If you are an experienced dancer competing against Natalie, then good luck to Natalie. Bouncing up and down is cute for little babies, not as successful when you are fifteen years old. Thankfully she does not plan to pursue any of her imperfections.

Above all this, Natalie can be tolerable. She can be a comedian even though her jokes are mostly insults. Her special jokes are more delightful when she is not making fun of you. Surprisingly, she can be an educator when she is helping me with my college homework. Of course, she brags that we have the same reading materials. A friend of Natalie's would say she is very attentive and insightful. I've learned that if I trap her in my yellow beetle bug car, she has no choice but to listen to me complain.

Only two people are privileged to experience the greatest characteristic of Natalie. My brother and I know her as a sister. A sister is most definitely an unwanted gift, but I am blessed that I have Natalie. No matter how devious, she has a special place in my heart.

A note on process from Cassandra: When writing my character essay I was inspired by missing home and my sister, and I was pushed by my teacher to use my emotion to write my essay. I spent time in class writing a first and second draft, as my teacher and classmates helped to edit my paper.