

Brett Baldwin

Age: 18, Grade: 12

School Name: Cypress Bay High School, Weston, FL

Educator: Shawntee` Herring

Category: Flash Fiction

The Planes of Existence

Henry lives in a box. His entire world is a single square plot of land, roughly the size of an apartment. He is content growing his crops, watching the ants and birds fly about his house, with enough food for himself and enough stimulation to keep him content his entire life.

Henry feels no need to explore, because there is nothing to explore.

He lives on the first plane.

The birds that fly over his home have a different reality. They can leave Henry's home, fly all the way into the sky until they reach a destination only they can access. They watch from the heavens as Henry sits in his home and eats his dinner. They live on the first plane and have access to one above it.

The ant queen has access to three planes. She not only can fly into the sky alongside the birds, and brave the perilous journey as she ascends, but she can also dive deep into the ground, a place the birds and Henry cannot go. She can travel around the world, on its sides and underneath it, an ability given to her by her perspective.

The queen lives inside a massive cavern, larger than a million of her subjects, and can enjoy the bountiful harvest of a single kernel of corn with just a wave of her hand.

The queen lives on three planes.

A shadow follows the queen. Sometimes she can see him, and other times she cannot.

The shadow can go everywhere the queen goes, but when he oozes into the darkness nobody can follow. From that darkness he can see everything. Henry's small world, the open air for the birds, and the monstrous cavern for the queen. He watches all from a wall of darkness only he can enter.

The fourth plane.

These planes cross and weave in the oddest of places with other planes, all from different perspectives within the world. Henry's pet fish lives in a plane of his own, a castle that is never invaded. The fleas on Henry's dog live in a jungle of hair, a plane full of conflict where survival is never guaranteed.

Some creatures can cross planes, like the queen's shadow. Others are confined to one, like Henry. All of these planes exist within each other, and all provide a unique perspective within their own universes. They can interact with each other to a limited extent, or sometimes not at all. Each plane relies on the planes around it to continue to exist. Each perspective forms its own universe, it's own plane of existence, and allows for the unique insight into the square that Henry calls his home.