

The First Time

by Jonathan Gregory

I nervously pushed in on the yoke. SKIRRRK SKIRRRK SKIRRRRRRK. The sound of the landing gear starting to roll filled the cockpit through my head set.

My heart was skipping beats, sweat beaded on my face. Once I was sure the gears were on the ground, I applied the breaks to slow down the plane and pulled back on the yoke to aerodynamically slow down the plane. It looked like it was slowing down because the speedometer read 70 mph.

Dan, my flight instructor, shouted into the microphone, "Pull back the throttle to idle!" I pulled on the black knob; the loud engine became quieter and quieter. The plane became slower and slower. There was this extraordinary feeling in my chest. a feeling like nothing else in the world. I knew this was something that only a few people feel in a lifetime and I felt it.

Now I know why landing is a thrill.



The Speech

by Michael Mas

He tried to decide what to say in his speech. His computer hummed an endless tune as he worked in the library. As he thought, he looked at his screen which was blank.

He felt fear running through his bones because he had only two days left to write it, and he had many other obligations as well. There were other people working also. Their talking annoyed him. He wondered how long the speech should be. "Should I speak slowly and write a shorter speech," he wondered. "If I do that, I may lose some of the audience."

He looked around, and saw the books neatly stacked in the shelves. Some had bright colors red, green, and white. Some were dull and covered in dust, falling apart at the spine. The computer roared, it had been on for hours and began to over-heat. He still had not written anything.

He wondered what would happen if he had no speech. He shuddered as he thought this. "They will most likely boo, throw rotten, stale tomatoes at me, then the pitchforks." He quivered again. As the time passed he remembered that he would lose the election if he didn't have the speech. Beep, beep, beep, his watch signaled another hour had passed. He stared back at the screen and wondered.

The Ride

by Kristen Lewis

I wondered what was about to happen as I boldly descended the final flight of stone stairs and entered the large steel doors that led to the dusty field. Feeling thousands of eyes boring into me from all sides, I strode toward the man who had announced my number. After a mini-interview he motioned with his hand to a boy standing idly by a small door who, after a slight nod, exited.

Seconds later, a shrill whistle pierced the stifling air of the stadium as a dark shadow passed over. A sinewy dragon landed gracefully in front of me, blowing dust into my gaping mouth with its large, translucent wings. Lowering its thin head, the beast cooed and sniffed me, ruffling my hair in the process.

I clambered up the large lanky lizard, using the spikes protruding from its back to aid my climb. There was a slight dip between the bases of the dragon's wings. I sat. Once I was comfortable, I clicked my tongue; the dragon responded by flapping its wings, propelling us into the air. With the confinement of the stadium behind, I began the most exhilarating experience of my life.

