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# NATIONAL YOUNG WRITERS' AWARDS

# 2017

THE FUTURE

For ages 4-14

..... THE TOP 10 STORIES .....

# PERCY'S ADVENTURE

There was a little penguin, Percy who lived in Antarctica. He wore a big yellow t-shirt everyday as it was very hot. Years ago there was two metres of ice which had melted into a tropical rainforest that was now his home. Percy doesn't like staying at home, so he goes out on an adventure all the time. He is only 5 years old and doesn't wander far.

One day Percy came across a plane next to his home. He was a bit nervous to look inside, but he was a curious penguin. Percy crept into the plane to take a peek. Within seconds huge figures jumped into his view. The huge shapes wore white spacesuits and bubble helmets. Percy was so frightened he tried running out of the door, but he banged his head. Percy fell asleep.

Whilst Percy was unconscious the spaceman figures walked out into the tropical rainforest collecting sand and leaves.

Humans could not visit Antarctica without wearing spacesuits because of the high temperature. The atmosphere burns their skin and stops them breathing. Before long the plane was filled up with lots of boxes loaded with a variety of plant and animal life. At that moment the plane set off with Percy still asleep. The plane travelled quickly North with its rocket boosters.

After whizzing in the air for a long time the plane finally landed. Suddenly Percy woke up! Percy didn't know where he was and was worried. He waddled out of the plane slowly and slipped on the ice. He discovered he was now surrounded by ice. Percy was fond of the cold as for some reason he thought he should be there. Just then he saw ahead of him a colony of king penguins who looked just like his family. Percy ran towards the colony and was reunited with his family. Percy loved to go on adventures but he was happy where he now lived.

by Jessica Earwicker, age 6, from Bournemouth


# WILD DREAMS

The boy's eyes snap open. Five inches away two vermillion eyes scan his brown irises. He instantly recoils. Abruptly the droid whirls away and the boy groggily sits up. In the distance a gruff man's voice calls out 'Wakey wakey Sleepers; we're going to CarbonCity. Eleeto need some good old-fashioned human hands. Quickly now, into the hyperport'. The boy, dazed and confused, stumbles out to a 10-metre long hovercraft vehicle, shimmering silver. A group of newly-awoken Sleepers climbs in as droids fuel the vehicle with salty-smelling seawater. They spin away in a blur. Ahead of the boy he can hear the gruff man answering questions... "CarbonCity? Sure, it's the most advanced city on the planet. Headquarters of Eleeto Corp, run by the superhumans. Only city left above sea level. Every human on the planet wants to live and work there. You should feel lucky".

They shoot across vast oceans and high barren wastelands. Suddenly CarbonCity emerges like a shimmering mirage. At first the boy thinks it a jungle but nearer, silver skyscrapers appear, cloaked in clusters of trees, giant shrubs springing from every metal storey. Murmurations of birds fly into and across the tree canopy making the buildings seem alive. Outside the heat sears the boy's skin. They enter what the boy thinks is a temple, with towering spires covered by a strange pixelated membrane. A tall, dark-haired man appears on a balcony, glittering obsidian eyes taking in the group. "Welcome Cryogenic Sleepers to May 3017. I hope you had

pleasant dreams." Everyone laughs. The man's voice is a velvet charm. The boy is pushed to the front in the heave to get nearer to this freakishly magnetic personality. Close-up, the boy sees the tell-tale strip of metal brain implant in the superhuman. "I am Alvaro 269, President of Eleeto Corporation. You've been chosen to help us realise our dream - BulletPod: the most technologically advanced vehicle in the Galaxy." A buzz of excitement ripples around. "BulletPod will help us win the intergalactic race to colonise Alpha4 in the Feather Solar System. It is the most crucial venture humankind has ever undertaken." More applause. "Before the Testing Phase we need to eliminate all organic pollutants in the atmosphere. Your task is to decontaminate the skies and get Eleeto Bulletpods racing." The crowd roars its approval. The boy stares outside and realisation slowly dawns. His blood runs cold and he feels a rising panic. They want to kill the birds.

The tiny song thrush stands proud but fragile on the promontory of branches, repeating its sweetest song, clear and pure over the thrum of hyperports and droids below. Its soft brown plumage, freckled underneath gives it almost perfect camouflage but the boy's eyes are fixed on it, remembering. "If only we could go back.....". Tears streak his face. He turns and howls with a guttural strength to the Sleepers below, "My name is Noah. I was given this name to remember my mission. We are all animals. Stand with me".....



Joseph Ryan, age 9, from Woking, Surrey



# REBELLION

Prologue  
2987 AD

To: NASA HQ  
From: Discovery Probe 3  
Sirius B inhabited. Alien life found to be hostile. Message received declaring war. Discovery Probe 3 counting down to self-destruct.

The Rebellion  
3017AD

Yatrick was there. When the comets glowed brighter than stars, when they fired on his house, when they killed his father. When they landed and asphyxiating clouds of smoke rolled out, the aliens advanced. They carried sunbeams and were like nothing ever seen on Earth before. He ran, ran with quantum speed, leading his mother and friends away, only to hear his mother's final breath as her time ran out. There was a gaping wound in her chest, spewing blood like it was poison; his last relation was dead.

Yatrick wept, but did not give up. As the novice leader, he led the remainder onwards into the old mining caves. Looking behind at the ribbon of children following him with unwavering loyalty, he realised that, at 13, he was now the oldest survivor of his metropolis. His role as the Pied Piper did not go unnoticed by him, and he smiled at the memory of his mother's stories.

As they reached the deep mines Yatrick noted with sombre realisation that they had seen no other survivors. They were alone. It was up to

him to secure the safety of his dishevelled horde. The panic of chieftom momentarily dented his confidence. He was the leader. But could he lead? He was alone.

All too soon, the time came for him to prove himself. They waited until the comets retreated, then Yatrick led his group on a scouting expedition to seek the tech needed to thwart the aliens' assault of the planet. With mercenary skill, his comrade, Hislak, located some tech that could help in the war against the aliens: an atomic disruptor, a hi-jacking skeleton key and a holo-analyser.

They travelled to the base under the shroud of darkness, carrying only their ultra-violet torches. Sneaking hurriedly to the rear of the compound, Hislak scoffed at the overconfidence of the aliens leaving it unguarded, and hi-jacked the insufficient security with the skeleton key. This act of sabotage meant that Yatrick could slink inside the base.

Scanning the building with the holo-analyser, he saw the corridor leading to the Core Dynamics Processor. Yatrick rushed towards it. Hearing alien chatter approaching, he sought the magnetic hotspot on the mainframe he knew was used to power the alien grid. With one quick movement, he set the atomic disruptor to detonate and shouted over to Hislak to escape. A quick glance back at the atomic haze emanating from the disruptor assured him of his success. Within minutes, the building, the technology and the alien colony would be destroyed.

They had won.

Oliver Roscoe, age 11, from Watford, London

# UNTITLED

My eyes blinked open to the deafening echo of refined dwarf star that was relentlessly being fired upon me. I was sure that I missed quite a lot during my blissful sleep of 300 years, even before I entered my peaceful realm of dreams I had been careful to avoid having to face any of these threats straight after my awakening. Obviously my attempts had failed.

The once wholesome and innocent race of cybermen had forever changed into the twisted extra-terrestrial robots we now know and from the multiple 'ALERT' pages that AI47 (Agent of Intelligence 47) had opened up for me, it seemed that this was the doing of none other the blacklisted, corrupt warlord android named ADD99 (Agent of Death and Destruction 99) . He was loathed and hated by all but now all he was, was a stranger that had black, coiling jealousy eating away at him, bit by bite, until he was nothing but a mindless servant of hatred and chaos.

Of course, that's what I thought until I had stealthily sneaked up to the mainframe past all of those and discovered something that would've shocked the life out of me...but it didn't otherwise it wouldn't end like this and the many people on board this starship would end up dead.

Soundlessly, I approached the centre of my ship. The air conditioning had seemed to have taken a hit from the cybermen and a tornado of

winds had circled my destination. The strong air currents torpedoed my thin, paper skin and tried increasingly hard to delay my journey to the mainframe but its bold efforts were unsuccessful. At last I arrived to the place where I would not so anonymously save the thousands of humans still in cryogenic freezing in the extremity of the starship.

After making sure that I was completely alone, even so that AI47 couldn't locate me, I logged on the data. Being the captain of the starship I had access to all areas of data and thanks to this, I found out that my pristine AI47 had somehow disabled my cleaning software and developed itself so that it could overrule it's protocols and... kill me! My eyes skimmed through all of that information and I was choking on my own tears. The impossible had happened. I hated her for doing this to me and I hated myself for even making it in the first place.

The solution was pretty simple. I mean, I find it pretty simple but I don't know about you. While I rebooted the CPU (Central Processing Unit), a sudden, swift and unexpected bit of refined, unstable dark matter flew through me- tearing me apart from the inside- like I was a delicate ice sculpture. I slowly turned to find my life's work behind me there with the steep, jagged blade while the blood seeped out of me. With my last few breaths, I did one last thing and pressed SELF-DESTRUCT. Then a single mighty explosion ended it all...

Muhammad Affan Junaid, age 10, from Mitcham



# SEED OF LIFE

If you are reading this, our transmission to Earth must have been successful and communications have been restored. I am from a spaceship destined to search a closely studied planet for a plant that is thought to hold the Cure. Our mission left to transport 12 highly qualified and intellectual selected humans to find it as a result of the virus rapidly overtaking Earth.

We landed safely. There was no time to waste, we swiftly gathered our gear then left the spaceship. SmartContacts on, SmartSuit on; essentials that gave access to communication and protection. The SmartSuit was similar to what spies wore in books from the Olden Days, except impenetrable and equipped with numerous pockets and buttons to activate valuable gadgets – such as flashlights and knives. Much has changed since the Olden Days – the advancement in technology and medicine was never predicted to be so large. The invasion from aliens was never expected as no contact was ever received; they released a currently incurable virus which spreads immediately, leaving its victim a mere month left to live. I glance back at the steadily emptying ship then pull on my guard mask which supplies oxygen and leave.

We searched frantically for the Healing Plant. The Target Land is huge and by no means easy to search, with terrain determined to conceal its secrets. My SmartContacts revealed a message – the oxygen masks were running out. Time mocked our struggle by speeding up. Most go back to the spaceship but I stay. My family. The world. I couldn't let them down. In just 1 year, the virus would have killed off the entire population. The air becomes too thin to breathe normally. My eyes flood with tears but not

before an enchanting plant captures my attention. I run. This must be the one!

I sprint back to the spaceship, lungs crying for oxygen. Near the door, an unbearable pain overcomes me. The world faded away to the shrieks of panic: "Aliens are attacking! Prepare immediate departure..."

The spaceship arrived safely. "Any casualties?"

"One person remains in a comatose state after being shot by a rival laser. That is all." I hear the expressionless voice echo my endless nightmare where waking up is not an option...

Wailing wakes me up. "Where am I?"

"Home. We didn't make it. Only an eighth of the original population remains." Tears streamed down my cheeks in waterfalls. I looked around. I was surrounded by piles of dead bodies covered in white sheets. "Please bring me my SmartSuit." Everyone was perplexed by my command but followed my orders anyway. I delve into my pockets and found what I was looking for – a bottle full of seeds. "Is this what we need?" They cry with joy at finally finding the seeds of life!

After a few weeks of nurturing the seeds, it grew swiftly into a grove of ethereal trees blossoming with fruits containing the Cure, enough to heal the world.

No more will be sick.  
No more will die.

Tara Sapkota, age 13, from Slough, Berkshire

# UNTITLED

I didn't start out as much. I was just a pile of scrap metal in a junkyard. This was the first part of my life. And it stayed like this for many years. However, around 3017, a young man came along and decided to construct a robot. And that robot was yours truly. I have to admit, my creator was indeed a genius, worthy of even Einstein. Even though the parts he created me with weren't top quality, I was the most advanced of my kind. I even developed human emotions, which was what set me apart from other robots. For a while, life was bliss. Until my creator became demented... Yes, my inventor had become insane. Thanks to my newly developed emotions, I felt a certain amount of sorrow for him and his family. My sorrow turned to hatred, though, for his dementia meant I was confined to a life in a dusty life which was more pedestrian than a rock. That lab was my prison. I longed to go out into the World and explore. I wanted to see global works of ultra - modern architecture. I wanted to indulge myself with human culture and great works of literature. That was going to be hard, considering the fact that humans would've feared my appearance (my creator was a terrible designer). Since I dreaded my mundane life, I started constructing an escape plan. Today's the

day I put my escape plan to action. It was simple yet fool proof. For many months, during the labs closed hours, I'd been creating an artificial skin for me to wear, so I'd resemble one of the staff. And I have to admit, my handiwork wasn't too bad. Well, here goes nothing... So far so good. I'd managed to fool every scientist in this establishment. I was at the main entrance. Freedom was a few steps away for me. Unfortunately, my costume had a loose thread. Which therefore meant my disguise came. Everybody could see me for what I really was. So I ran outside. As soon as I was in broad daylight, some people fainted, shrieked or ran. But I took no notice, for I was mesmerised by what I saw: hovercars gliding gracefully and towering skyscrapers, with their peaks touching the fluffy clouds. It was true beautiful. However, I didn't enjoy it long. Security guards were in pursuit of me. Luckily, I ran down an ally and dived into a bin. When I peeked out, they'd vanished. Suddenly, the bin started to shake. My audio receptors detected groaning and creaking. I was thrown into a dark space. Then I realised I was in a garbage truck. Which meant that I'd be compressed. I felt the walls closing in on me. My robotic strength meant that I could use my arms to stop the walls crushing me. But not forever...

David Williams, age 12, from Barking, London



# THE ROSE

Allow me to introduce myself, my name is Dr. Wilfred West, and I am a scientist, a physicist at that. Since childhood, I have dreamt of the possibility of going to the future but alas my research has not been fruitful. To clear my thoughts, I look after roses and out of scientific curiosity, perform experiments on them for they are my favourite flowers of all.

As always, I woke up with a cheery smile because I was thinking about my beautiful roses down in my garden - glowing scarlet red in the Sun's radiant light. As I was watering my charming flowers, I thought about how I could finish building a time machine. This idea followed me everywhere. As I was thinking this, my eyes became fixed upon a grandfather clock. Suddenly, ideas filled my head and before I knew it I got work on the machine, working from dawn to dawn for days and days on end. Finally, it was finished! I was extremely exhausted and fell asleep almost instantly. Upon my waking, I rushed down stairs: "not one moment shall be wasted," I thought to myself. After starting it up, I was off - 1000 years into the future!

When I climbed out, I gasped. A wild tangle of roses hypnotized me with their sweet aroma. As I emerged from the dense rose bushes, I was struck with horror as a beautiful bird was eaten while in mid-air by an unknown plant; tree stumps were squirting acid and burning animals who came near them. Carnivorous flowers led heedless flies

into their mouths, gulping them down diabolically. At this point, bitter disappointment filled my heart. I was overwhelmed by the disturbing reality that humanity had disappeared - there were no buildings, cars, anything...It was a nightmare! But then, I saw it - a beautiful blue rose shining alone in this loathsome hell. So, inspired I was, that I ran forgetting about the savage and dangerous plants all around me: my eyes fixed on the flower. After carefully extracting it from the Earth, I decided to return home at once! Ensuing my swift departure from the future, I placed my dear rose into the soft soil in the centre of my garden as I cherished it affectionately.

The next day, I was breathing heavily and shudders passed through my body continuously- I did not understand what was happening to me. As my drowsy eyes passed over my treasured rose, I noticed that all other plants around it had begun to wither. I understood. I made a huge mistake bringing the rose home for it would bring about the downfall of humanity.

The rose had begun its parasitic process of mutation as it demonised all life around it. It appeared that I was its first victim with many more to surely follow. Collapsing in front of the imperious plant, I fell into a void of darkness, as it loomed over me, pouring pools of hatred down upon my dying body...

Sophia Aleksina, age 9, from Winnersh, Berkshire





# UNTITLED

In the year 2020 every human in the world has a piece of electrical technology, even babies know how to use iPads.

In the year 2100 technology has gone so far that humans want something more exciting.

In the year 2101 humans demand technological, robotic parts.

In the year 2150 due to tons of demand, labs are built to produce these technological body parts.

By the year 2500 every human in the world has at least one mechanical body part, even babies have at least a mechanical voice chords so that their parents can turn off their crying with a flick of a switch.

By the year 3000 mechanical body parts are taking over and everyone's body is made up of 55% metal and plastic.

By 3010 everyone's body is made up of 100% technology. News breaks, due to completely technological body parts reproducing is not available so...

By the year 3012 labs start to make robotic children, humans (or what is left of them inside their tin outer shell) love the new models, and keep ordering more and more. The idea spreads like wild fire and everyone wants the newest models when it comes out. There is the Babyron 2000 and the Wawa 800. There is even the Poopy 85736. Not only that but they are customisable. Parents can decide what their child will be like when they are older, short or

tall, strong or weak, thin or fat and roguish, or smart and sophisticated. This is the world in which our story begins, in the year 3017. The world is made of plastic, buildings, trees and even the pet dogs. And more importantly, the babies. Babies that were made of flesh are now a legend or a fairy-tale.

Until one day...

A female robot, part of the family by the name of Johnson, had pains one day around her stomach joint. A new hours later and she was in the repair and fix building (they weren't called hospitals anymore). The repair robots opened her circuitry and found an odd looking parasite that upon closer inspection was what looked like a legendary, fleshy, stinky human.

News made headlines all over the world. 'Human found in central circuitry' and 'Baby not plastic'. Robots from all around the world came to see the new delivery, the parents became celebrities. TV shows wanted to interview them, magazines wanted to take pictures of the fleshy, horrible human and people started to gain interest.

And with everything going on, people started to want one of these fleshy humans. So the parts started to be removed, people started to become people again. And the labs that produced mechanical body parts started to shut down and old legendary talk become reality, but the robotic children were allowed to stay and helped the humans in coexistence with each other. The world was back to normal and the humans had learnt their lesson, don't do something until you know the full consequences.

Libby Glyn, age 12, from Leeds

# UNTITLED

"Father don't let them, don't let them take me... don't let them..." I woke up abruptly, beads of sweat streamed down my face screaming and screaming about what happened that night, what happened every night to me. Anticipating more monstrosities, not even the sound of the gentle waves crashing beneath the hovering house could lull me back to sleep. Disorientated and fuzzy eyed from sleep I rolled, or rather floated, onto my side. My face inches from the floor twitched trying to focus my eyes through the transparent wall out into the sinister green sky, which overlooked the hovering city.

Somewhere out in the old diseased ridden world was my father; I knew what I was going to do; I was going to get him back. I couldn't stop thinking... Why had that man John Emanuel created a new mirrored world of Earth two years back? This new world was said to be 'paradise' so that meant no disease. When all the children under the age of fifteen were sent to the mirrored world, including me, they were left to think about their parents and family who were left in the hands of the disease. People say that in a few years everyone in the old world will catch the disease, and when that happens they will start to forget their families, and even themselves. My father was part of that world; he could already be dead.

My virtual net suddenly flashed up in front of me, delivering the Daily News as it usually does, but never this early. I slowly sat up in mid-air, expecting the usual news on the count of people still alive in the old world, which rocketed down, day after day. Instead, in large letters, a headline saying, "Last night, man escaped from the old world. Disease scare. Your robots will be activated!" I swiped away the screen and sat there in silence. He knew the chance of that man being his father was small, but it was possible.

After a while I got up, still with that thought swirling around in my head and went to get changed for work. The green sky slowly turned to purple as the day gradually drew on, and the amount of people flying out on the streets increased.

I slowly walked in the air, through to the door, and was about to reach for the handle, when the door was swung open so violently, that it nipped me on the nose and made a dent in the wall, creating a shower of dust. Once it had cleared, a man stood there, in the haze. It was my father.

Elliot, age 10, from Islington, London



# ROBO RABBIT

Achoo! Achoo! I couldn't believe I had caught another space cold. It was the third one this year. I thought of my doctor and a hologram appeared before me. The robot took my temperature and checked my pulse, then prescribed me a course of nanobots. I downloaded them and hopped out of my hoverbed. Mildred, my maid, appeared and made my bed, dressed me and cleaned my teeth. I printed a bowl of porridge and some honey toast before stepping onto the launch deck.

We had recently moved to Spartan from Earth, and I wanted to explore my new neighbourhood. All the oxygen from Earth had been used and the planet was polluted. The population had increased to 24 billion and everyone was setting up home on new planets in the galaxy.

I jumped on my hoverbike and thought of where I wanted to go. Immediately I was in the zoo simulation park. All the animals were robots but they looked like real animals from Earth. I saw Akansha, my favourite robot friend. She was made from shining, polished metal but could change colour. She had love heart eyes and an engine blaster on her back. We spoke to each other through mind think. We teleported ourselves to the robo-pet shop. I bought a robo-rabbit and called it Chloe. The shopkeeper told me she could eat real grass and carrots but she could survive on no food. I blinked and was back at home. I rearranged my room size with my eyes and created a huge hammock. Chloe read me a story about how to look after rabbits and program bunnies to escape foxes. I was feeling very sleepy so clicked the off button in my head. I loved being a robot.

Sofia Jenkins, age 5, from Sheen, London