

### “Once Upon a Time”

Everyone’s life begins with a “Once upon a time.” As children, we grew up without worry or fear of what the next day would bring us. In “Once Upon a Time,” Gabriel Okara states, “They would laugh with their hearts and not with their teeth.” The father in “Once Upon a Time” explains to his son, how much better life was when he was a child, rather than an adult. The innocence of our childhood that is as pure as sugar and the sweet sensation of going to friends’ house and always being welcome are the little pleasures in life we took for granted as children. For we did not know that we too would have to wear a street face, office face, work face, cocktail face, school face, and more. We too, may have to live a life in which we are not happy, in return having to fake it. Gabriel Okara stated a truth that many seem to ignore, just as they ignore the reality behind their fake lives. As children, we could speak our hearts and hurt no feelings for it was the truth and we meant no harm by it to anyone, so why change that innocence, as we get older?

Growing up is not so wonderful anymore. As far as I can remember, it was always a young child that dreamt of being an adult; while not understanding the problems of being older. As you can see in lines 1-4, the father clearly states he is not happy by the way he has to live. “But believe me, son. | I want to be| what I used to be when I was like you. I want| to unlearn all these muting things. | Most of all I want to relearn| how to laugh.” He does not want to be fake and wear those faces that hide lies behind them, he wants to be like the child. Do those faces have to be worn? Could life not be easier if everyone just spoke their mind and told the truth? Not everyone you encounter will be

pleased with you, and the only people that matter should be the ones that care, but will not look at the faults in you, for they love you. When a bitter truth is spoken, it is for your best, not to harm you, then why do people get mad or act as though they accept it?

Possibly, you could say the elders are jealous of this “laugh and smile” that the children surrounding them may have. They want to learn again, but they are afraid of what it will bring with it. Will they have to be open and honest with people now? Every action has its’ reactions, both good and bad. It would be much to hard though, for it is only they, not the whole world that is changing with them. They stand-alone. “ One person alone, can change this world,” is a phrase I have grown up hearing from many teachers and parents, and I have learned to believe it, just as many other children may have, also.

Have adults forgotten what they have been teaching children? If one person takes a step, than maybe, just maybe so will another. “It does not matter what others think of you, just be yourself,” than why should it matter if you change and another does not? It should not, or at least that’s what we’ve been taught. But, according to the reference the father in “Once Upon a Time” makes to society, no one is being himself or herself. Instead they are hiding behind the faces that they have grown accustomed to, almost forgetting who they really are or want to be. Today, it is such a time period that we can make it on our own and not depend on another. We can make new friends who like us for us and not the faces we wear. Do we, the people of this society want to wear those faces for the rest of our lives, is it really that enjoyable to wear them? I know I am not perfect and I too wear those faces, but it was never brought to my attention until after reading “ Once Upon a Time.”

