Section Intro: Transformations

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In written text, writers sometimes undergo a transformation: at times little, other times profound. Efforts to rewrite a paragraph, alter a sentence, or even a word can result in a completely evolved text. Throughout this process, writers can experience a change of their own: in how they recollect their memories and how they perceive themselves. In the process of writing, undertaking research, raising awareness for a cause, or challenging perceptions, transformation is possible.

In the stories that follow, each of the author’s memories take us to places that may be unfamiliar or even frightening. Yet contained within the stories are elements that are known to all of us: fear, courage, passion, uncertainty, and justice.

The authors describe events that have affected them personally in such a way that readers have to take notice. Readers gain a sense of how uniting towards a common goal can lead to transformation. The writers in this section have a sense of history and a need to create change. Despite differences in causes, these writers use language to move readers to awareness about themselves and the world around them.

By trying to see the world anew, to see possibility, each writer asks us to think about change—and how transformation is possible. Like the butterfly emerging from the chrysalis, each piece shows us the change that can arise when we slow down and reimagine a particular situation.

We invite you to discover these transformations for yourself, and perhaps to see how everyone has the potential to bring about change.

—Emily Gilson and Ceasia King