



Little Shards of Summertime with Stories

It's summertime! Sun is shining. Leaves are growing on the trees. Fruits and vegetables are thriving. While some people were on a summer vacation, StoryMasters and new and old friends gathered on August 14 and enjoyed five stories.

Catherine Magruder – *Oh Henry!*

Every child is a perfect child to their parents. So is Henry. **Catherine Magruder** swore that he entered the world, smiling. But even perfect Henry had faux pas in the past. He was a poor reader in junior high school. In high school, he stopped going to school and the school threatened to take a legal action against Catherine because of that. But when he became a sergeant in the army and started taking care of 4 soldiers, he realized how his mother has guided him and gotten his life back on track every time he got into trouble and thanked her. After all, he is a perfect child, isn't he?

Harold Gee – *A New Start, A New Heart*

How do you pick a successor? From a book titled "*Worldwide Laws Of Life: 200 Eternal Spiritual Principles*," **Harold Gee** shared a story about how a tribal leader tested a young succession candidate. If somebody is just going after money, they won't accomplish anything. Leaders need to be inspirational. So the tribal chief tested the young boy's wisdom. Harold suggested to think big, act big, be relentless in our pursuit, and challenge ourselves to become better.

Pieter Severynen – *Will the Bad Guys Win?*

As a California landscape architect and consulting arborist for a half century, **Pieter Severynen** told us that the life underground is as complicated as the life above. According to Pieter, there are good fungi and bad fungi. Good guys work for plants, gathering food and water. In return, they get the plants' sugar. Bad guys want to lead a life of highway robbery and assassination. They're lurking underground, looking for their next victims. His creative way to illustrate the battle between the avocado tree and fungi fascinated us, which led to a fun conversation afterwards. Pieter, when you grow an avocado tree next time, can we have some?

Miyo Yamauchi – *Password*

What makes you feel safe? What is safe? Where do you belong? **Miyo Yamauchi** wove two little incidents related to her legal status. She had never thought of those questions until she was held up for hours at the border of Tijuana, Mexico and strangers questioned her legal status at the Hollywood Bowl. Unlike her regular mischievous style, this story was poignant sprinkled with humor. Miyo told us when we recognize the humanity of others, we feel protected. Recognizing the humanity comes from understanding. Understanding starts from listening.

Camille Miller – *Wild Kingdom*

One day **Camille Miller** was invited to her coworker's home party. When the door was open, she couldn't believe her eyes. Flies playing poker, canines of every kind watching the annual dog show, a kangaroo serving water, seals playing water volleyball ... her story was definitely a wild kingdom! According to her, there are parallel characteristics between human and animals. If you were an animal, what animal would you be?

Meeting functionaries included Toastmaster **Jon White**, General Evaluator **Anna Ziss-Patton**, Timer **Tina Tomiyama**, Wordmaster/Grammarian **Anna Ziss-Patton**, and Evaluators **Cynthia Moore**, **Margaret Mitchell**, **Ashton Cynthia Clarke**, **Lee Amatangelo**, and **Aprille Isham**.

Listening to wonderful stories and constructive feedback is jubilant, but welcoming a new member multiplies the joy. Yes, we got a new member. Let's give a warm welcome to the newest StoryMaster, **Debra Thurston**! Stay tuned, everybody. We'll get to know her soon. Debra, welcome to StoryMasters!

Next meeting is September 11. (GUESTS, [RSVP FROM HERE](#))

UPCOMING STORYTELLING EVENTS

Many enchanting storytelling events keep coming up. Check them out on [our event page!](#)

Aug 21

August 2022 Sacred Storytelling

<https://thestorymasters.org/event/august-2022-sacred-storytelling/>

1:00 PM PT / 4:00 PM ET

Category: Storytelling concert

Location: Virtual

Cost: Free

The beloved original program from Artists Standing Strong Together. Our own **Ashton Cynthia Clarke** will be telling a story!



Aug 21

Bedtime stories for grown ups

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/bedtime-stories-for-grown-ups-tickets-383563166757>

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Aug 28

6:30 PM PT / 9:30 PM ET

Category: Storytelling concert

Location: Virtual

Cost: \$6

Start your week right with a bedtime story and short meditation to help you rest. Award winning storyteller Laura Packer will tell you a gentle bedtime story and guide you through a relaxing routine to help you fall asleep sooner and stay asleep longer.



Sep 1

WOC Writers' "Write To Read" Reading Performance

<https://thestorymasters.org/event/the-1619-project-20220901/>

4:30 PM PT / 7:30 PM ET

Category: Reading performance

Location: Virtual

Cost: Free

The Women of Color (WOC) Writers Workshop is back for a virtual reading. **Ashton Cynthia Clarke** will be reading passages from the Pulitzer Prize noted book, The 1619 Project, and sharing her own story as well.



Sep 8

Twisted Tales: Dual Stories Interwoven

<https://thestorymasters.org/event/twisted-tales-dual-stories-interwoven/>

5:00 PM PT / 8:00 PM ET

Category: Storytelling concert

Location: Virtual

Cost: \$15

Join storytellers Vicki Bryan, Margaret Burk, Katie Green, Marilyn McPhie, and Sue Searing, and emcee Chetter Galloway, for "Twisted Tales: Folktales and Personal stories, entwined."



Sep 15

Strong Words: Voices of the City at the Autry

<https://theautry.org/events/performing-arts/strong-words-voices-city-autry>

7:30 PM PT

Category: Storytelling concert

Location: The Autry Museum

Cost: \$10

Join us for an intimate evening of storytelling, music, and art inspired by the Dress Codes exhibition.



Sep 16

SHIZUKA - 静

- Oct 9

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/shizuka--tickets-390712992077>

Multiple dates/times

Category: Play

Location: Zephyr Theatre

Cost: \$45

Shizuka-Gozen is the most popular entertainer in the capital of Japan, Kyoto, where the gorgeous court aristocratic culture is flourishing. It's written and directed by Tomoko Karina, showcased in 2021, earning the Best Play and Best Direction nomination at BWW.



Check out more events at: <https://thestorymasters.org/events/>

Disclaimer: Events are posted as a service to our members, friends and the storytelling community. Posting is not an endorsement.

JULY MEMBERS SPOTLIGHT

Once again, StoryMasters and our friends shined on storytelling stages last month. The followings are just some picks.

Discover the Power of Personal Stories

StoryMasters did it again! On July 16, **Margaret Mitchell** and **Hiba Hamdan** facilitated a successful storytelling workshop, welcoming a model speaker, **Jon White**. It was educational, engaging, and entertaining. Simply, the best!

Our workshop drew the biggest crowds and received rave reviews, which was not surprising.

Thank you for making us proud to be a StoryMaster!



Miyo Yamauchi took a road trip to Santa Clarita and shared a hilarious story at a talent show called 10x10 for which ten performers entertain the audience in different forms.

[Learn about City of Santa Clarita's events](#)



Ashton Cynthia Clarke had a busy weekend, telling two powerful stories in one weekend.

On Saturday, she wowed the audience at Strong Words. Next day, the Turbine Arts Collective invited her to the special live show called "This Is Now" which is performance and discussion, created in the context of our continuing conversation about race, gender, sexual identity, and equality.

[Learn about Strong Words](#)

[Learn about Turbine Arts Collective](#)



This month's theme for Storytelling Association of California's Genre Series was Humorous & Laughing Stories. Who represented StoryMasters? The king of comedy, **Jon White**! Oh, his story was hysterical!

[Watch Jon's story here!](#)



Miyo Yamauchi entertained the audience at the Fanatic Salon Theater with the WPA (Writer, Performer, Artist) group.

[Learn more about the Fanatic Salon Theater](#)

Excellent work, StoryMasters and friends! Keep up the story-worthy work!

STORYTELLING STUB

Do You Need a Coach? Yes, You Do!

The other day, I was listening to a story. Somehow, I felt disconnected and started wondering why. The story was entertaining and the teller was engaging with the audience, but something was off for me. If he had told the story at a party, I would've enjoyed it more. That's right. It's a story for a social gathering, not for a paid storytelling show. Then, I wonder...if he has ever had a storytelling coach.

At the Good Liars Club Festival a few weeks ago, after Linda Yemoto told a delightful folktale story, she gave a credit to Motoko for helping her. To me, both Linda and Motoko are equally superb professional storytellers who specialize in folktales. When I see their names, I know I will have a fantastic time. So Linda's getting advice from Motoko surprised me a little. It also made me smile because I think most of us need a storytelling coach if you want to take your story from good to great.

Picking a coach can be tricky though. We all have our own voices. You need to know your uniqueness and filter, what to take and what to ignore. Sometimes, one little piece of advice can take your story from good to bad. I learned this lesson the hard way. Many many years ago, I asked a well-known public speaker for advice. She was energetic, dynamic, and engaging. I knew my story would be fabulous with her help. She was enthusiastic in sharing her feedback and we had a great time together, but surprisingly, her suggestions didn't help my story. In fact, it got worse because they didn't fit my style. Also, we had different views of what's funny.

A coach doesn't have to be professional. Their speaking styles don't have to match with yours. You want somebody who can give you invaluable suggestions (or even questions) so that you can take another look at your story from a different angle. You may decide to keep it as is after taking a shot, but when you take a stab, you may be surprised how a little change makes a huge difference.

Are you ready to take your story to the next level?

EDITOR'S NOTE

Every Journey Needs A First Step

Humans have unlimited wants. Recently, Nature Sustainability posted a research article about if the fundamental economic principal was true or not. Researchers conducted a survey of 8,000 people across 33 countries (6 continents), asking how much money they want in their absolutely ideal life. Here is the abstract.

The result shows the principal is not universal, and applies to only a minority of people. In 86% of countries the majority of people thought they would achieve their absolutely ideal lives with US\$10 million or less, and in some countries as little as US\$1 million or less. However, a substantial minority (8–39% across countries) wanted as much money as they could obtain, indicating unlimited wants. Limited and unlimited wealth ideals were not related to country differences in economic development, but those with unlimited wants tended to be younger, city-dwelling people who valued power, success and independence, and lived in countries with a greater collective focus and acceptance of power differences.

I'm definitely in the majority. I don't need too much money, but it would be nice to have some.

Did you buy the \$1.34 billion Mega Millions jackpot, 2nd largest in game's history last month? As the prize was still climbing, my imagination exploded. So I asked my friend about what to do when I win. "How many accountants do I need? Maybe two? If I have only one accountant, the person may run away with the money." "Miyo, you need at least three accountants. If you have only two, they may conspire and betray you. If there are three, one of them will fall out."

Then, we started calculating. If the winner takes the lump sum, \$324.2 million will be in the winner's pocket after paying the federal and state tax. It's still a lot of money. What can we use that much money for? While sharing my money plan, my friend shook her head. "Miyo, you're so stingy! You don't deserve to entertain yourself like that! You didn't even buy one ticket!"

She's right. Your dreams don't come true if you don't do anything about it. When I joined Toastmasters more than 10 years ago, I just wanted to improve my English. I didn't even dream about winning speech contests, speaking on many stages, having my own one-woman show, or getting paid to speak. Looking back, I realize how far I've come in the storytelling journey. It all started with the first step.

Maybe I'll buy a lottery ticket next time.

— Miyo Yamauchi

