

The Art of Visual Storytelling Written Works

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Izel's Decision

(>500 word Flash Fiction)

Izel didn't like her choices. If her twin brother, Atl didn't agree with her, then he would be her enemy. She couldn't abide by that. Somehow she had to convince him to see reason. After all they were gods; powerful and immortal, entitled to all that the world offered. After many centuries of fighting to keep the balance of good and evil, Izel believed they were losing the war and it was time for the remaining gods to take their rightful place. "Please Atl," Izel pleaded.

"You knew what we were getting into when we sided with Tialoc. He has never deceived us," Atl argued.

"No, he hasn't, but he's losing. *We're* losing." She stomped farther into the heavily wooded area.

Atl grabbed her by the bicep and jerked her to a halt. "You were so willing before to take up his cause. What has changed?"

"Our people are dying while our supposed leader does nothing. We need to change that. *We* can change that. All we have to do is embrace our true godship. Do what comes natural to us and wield our power with absolute rule. We can make the humans bow to us."

Atl held her gaze. "We were entrusted to protect humanity."

She scoffed. "Have you seen the state of humanity? They are an infectious disease, constantly fighting over land and natural resources. They continue to pollute Mother Earth and grow more destructive everyday. It's only a matter of time before they completely annihilate themselves."

Izel held out her hands, palm up. "Please brother. I do not wish to do this without you."

Atl shook his head, his frown deepening. "I cannot, Izel."

Izel allowed her sadness to the surface, then firmed her spine. "I am truly sorry you feel that way." With a quick prayer for forgiveness she shot a stream of pure pink light from her fingertips. The bolt caught Atl in the chest. His eyes widened in shock, then dimmed.

White-hot spears forced air from her lungs. She gasped and clutched at her breast as pain enveloped her entire being. Damn, she'd forgotten about their connection. Blood darkening his shirt, Atl fell to the ground.

The acceptance in his eyes was her undoing. She scrambled toward him and cradled his head in her lap. “I’m sorry, brother. So sorry.”

He gripped her hand, leaving streaks of blood on her skin. “I understand.” A moment later he disappeared in a puff of white smoke.

Izel stared at the bloodstain seeping into the damp earth. Soon new life would spring from that stain, something beautiful and lasting, not the ugliness she’d just committed. She balled her hands into fists and pounded the ground. A hollow feeling and emptiness she’d never experienced spread through her soul.

She tested the connection, building an image of Atl in her mind.

Nothing.

She lifted her head and wailed to the sky.

COMMENTS FROM INSTRUCTOR

This is interesting and unique. We believe their exchange, and it is believable except for this part: Damn, she’d forgotten about their connection. As his twin, it is not likely the connect

After all they were gods; powerful, immortal, and entitled to all that the world offered.

Commas after introductory elements: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/607/2/>

Semi-colons:

<http://theoatmeal.com/comics/semicolon>

<http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/marks/semicolon.htm>

Itzel's Decision Explanation

For the >500 word version, I addressed the punctuation issues that were raised Professor Moore as well as added a few sentences for clarification.

I also changed the line, ... "Izel forgot about their connection," to ... "murdering Atl." I'm hoping that will make what she's feeling more believable.

Izel's Decision-Revision

(>500 word Flash Fiction)

Izel didn't like her choices. If her twin brother, Atl, didn't agree with her, then he would be her enemy. Somehow she had to convince him to see reason. After all, they were gods: powerful, immortal, and entitled to all that the world offered. For many centuries now, she, and a handful of other gods, fought their megalomaniac leader, Montezuma, to keep the balance of good and evil. Now Izel believed they were losing the war and it was time for the remaining gods to take their rightful place. "Please Atl," Izel pleaded.

"You knew what we were getting into when we sided with Tlaloc. He has never deceived us," Atl argued.

"No, he hasn't, but he's losing. *We're* losing." She stomped farther into the heavily wooded area.

Atl grabbed her by the bicep and jerked her to a halt. "You were so willing before to take up his cause. What has changed?"

"Our people are dying while our supposed leader does nothing. We need to change that. *We* can change that. All we have to do is embrace our true godship. Do what comes natural to us and wield our power with absolute rule. We can make the humans bow to us."

Atl held her gaze. "We were entrusted to protect humanity."

She scoffed. "Have you seen the state of humanity? They are an infectious disease, constantly fighting over land and natural resources. They continue to pollute Mother Earth and grow more destructive everyday. It's only a matter of time before they completely annihilate themselves." Izel held out her hands, palm up. "Please brother. I do not wish to do this without you."

Atl shook his head, his frown deepening. "I cannot, Izel."

Izel allowed her sadness to the surface, then firmed her spine. "I am truly sorry you feel that way." With a quick prayer for forgiveness she shot a stream of pure pink light from her fingertips. The bolt caught Atl in the chest. His eyes widened in shock, then dimmed.

White-hot spears forced air from her lungs. She gasped and clutched at her breast as pain enveloped her entire being. Damn, she didn't realize murdering Atl would be so painful. Blood darkening his shirt, Atl fell to the ground.

The acceptance in his eyes was her undoing. She scrambled toward him and cradled his head in her lap. "I'm sorry, brother. So sorry."

He gripped her hand, leaving streaks of blood on her skin. "I understand." A moment later he disappeared in a puff of white smoke.

Izel stared at the bloodstain seeping into the damp earth. Soon new life would spring from that stain, something beautiful and lasting, not the ugliness she'd just committed. She balled her hands into fists and pounded the ground. A hollow feeling and emptiness she'd never experienced spread through her soul.

She tested the connection, building an image of Atl in her mind.

Nothing.

She lifted her head and wailed to the sky.

Izel's Decision

(100 word Flash Fiction)

Betray humanity or betray Atl? Izel had no choice. As gods, they were omnipotent, immortal, and worthy of worship and adoration. After many centuries of fighting to maintain the balance of good and evil, Izel now believed ruling humanity with absolute power was long overdue.

“We were entrusted to protect the human race,” Atl said.

Izel scoffed. “They’re an infectious disease and deserve to be exterminated.”

Atl shook his head.

Without hesitation Izel shot Atl. Agony stole her breath, even as Atl hit the ground. She scrambled to his side. Acceptance shone in Atl’s eyes before they closed. Itzel wept

COMMENTS FROM INSTRUCTOR

100

This one is a bit confusing. Who is on the side of “good” and who is on the “evil” side in this equation?

Without hesitation Izel shot Atl.

Commas after introductory elements: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/607/2/>

Izel's Decision Explanation

For the 100 word version, I addressed the comma issue, then added a sentence to clarify who was on the side of good and who was on the side of evil, as well as address why Izel made the choice she did.

Izel's Decision

(100 word Flash Fiction)

Betray humanity or betray Atl? Izel lamented the answer. As gods, they were sworn to protect the humans and free will. For eons she fought for them —and lost. Now Izel believed, as their supreme leader Montezuma did, that ruling humanity with absolute power was long overdue.

“We were entrusted to protect humanity,” Atl argued.

Izel scoffed. “They’re an infectious disease and deserve to be exterminated.”

Atl shook his head.

Without hesitation, Izel shot Atl. Agony stole her breath, even as Atl hit the ground. She scrambled to his side. Acceptance shone in Atl’s eyes before they closed. Izel wept.

Izel's Decision

(25 word Hint of Flash Fiction)

Arguing, Izel and Atl trek deeper into the forest. Atl rebuffs Izel's demand to enslave humanity. With calculation and regret, Izel kills Atl. Izel grieves.

COMMENTS FROM INSTRUCTOR

25

This is a brief version of the story, but it is missing the connection with the characters. Keep the characters first and the plot second.

Izel's Decision Explanation

The 25 word version was more difficult in achieving a connection with the characters. So I changed the focus from external to her internal conflict.

Izel's Decision

(25 word Hint of Flash Fiction)

Izel didn't want to murder her brother, Atl, but it was the only way to enslave humanity. Steeling her nerves, she strikes. Repentant, Izel grieves.

Box of Chocolates

Sensory Exercise

Your crinkly wrapping beckons like a lover's coquettish wink. I hold my breath as each scintillating layer is revealed until I reach the bright, shiny box beneath. The cardboard is smooth and cool as I caress it with my fingertips. My hand trembles in anticipation. My heart thumps a hasty rhythm as I lift the lid and the rich, sweet aroma fills my nostrils. I take a moment to savor this tempting goodness. Laid out before me is a veritable treasure trove of lusciousness. Tiny brown morsels. Some light. Some dark. Some round, some square. Even some with stripes and polka dots. Waiting. Tempting. Beautiful. I select one. Divine goodness holds me close as sensual creaminess rolls across my tongue. Decadent smoothness gives way to putrid, sour crunch. I spit the tidbit out in haste. Do I try another? This one is dark. It's bittersweetness soothes my bruised palate, and yet the gelatinous goo now oozing down my throat is more than I can bear. Disgusted I throw the box away. Maybe another day.

COMMENTS FROM INSTRUCTOR

Good work here. We definitely get the complications inherent in the "looks can be deceiving" department.

Box of Chocolates
Sensory Exercise Explanation

In the sensory exercise, I corrected some typos, and added punctuation that I missed earlier.

Box of Chocolates

Sensory Exercise

Your crinkly wrapping beckons like a lover's coquettish wink. I hold my breath as each scintillating layer is revealed until I reach the bright, shiny box beneath. The cardboard is smooth and cool as I caress it with my fingertips. My hand trembles in anticipation. My heart thumps a hasty rhythm as I lift the lid and the rich, sweet aroma fills my nostrils. I take a moment to savor this tempting goodness. Laid out before me is a veritable treasure trove of lusciousness. Tiny brown morsels. Some light. Some dark. Some round, some square. Even some with stripes and polka dots. Waiting. Tempting. Breathtaking. I select one. Divine goodness holds me close as sensual creaminess rolls across my tongue. Decadent smoothness gives way to putrid, sour crunch. I spit the tidbit out in haste. Do I try another? This one is dark. It's bittersweetness soothes my bruised palate, and yet the gelatinous goo now oozing down my throat is more than I can bear. Disgusted, I throw the box away. Maybe another day.