

EXAMPLE SHORT NONFICTION STORY

Prompt: Write an interesting journalistic story that might appear in a magazine about a real person's unusual life. Show how this person has faced and dealt with unusual challenges. Make sure that the story contains at least five paragraphs, all the elements of a story, and a reference list containing at least three references. Use the MLA style.

TITLE OF THE STORY: Barefoot Bandit

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Barefoot Bandit

The “Barefoot Bandit” began living in the woods and robbing houses on Camano Island out of necessity. In contrast to the vacationers on beautiful Camano Island who enjoy sunbathing on the beaches, whale watching, and hiking, the “Barefoot Bandit” was troubled and hungry. Because he often robbed homes barefooted (he had no shoes), he was nicknamed “The Barefoot Bandit.” His real name is Colton Harris-Moore. By way of background, his neighbors on Camano Island reported that he had a difficult childhood. His parents abused him, his father left the home when he was two years old, and his stepfather died when he was seven. His mother drank and spent their welfare checks on cigarettes and beer instead of food. Colton also had problems at school. He was defiant, started fights, and was explosive.

When Colton was seven years old, he started living in the wild on the island. He broke into vacation homes on the island, taking blankets, food, and other provisions he needed for survival. Without much difficulty, he stole food from stores and homes. He continued stealing without being caught until he was twelve, when he was arrested for the first time. From age twelve to sixteen, he was convicted several times and sentenced for short periods in detention centers. At sixteen, he was sentenced to three years, but he walked away from a juvenile group home in 2007 before completing his sentence (“Colton Harris Moore” 1).

For the next three years, Colton robbed over 100 homes and stole bicycles, cars, trucks, and boats (“Colton Harris Moore” 1). Police traced his car thefts from Washington to Idaho, South Dakota, Iowa, Nebraska, and Illinois. After teaching himself to fly by reading and playing video games, he flew five planes. Unfortunately, he did not learn to land well, so he crashed all of the planes. Because he continued to commit some crimes barefooted, his “Barefoot Bandit” nickname continued to “stick.” He once left 39 chalk footprints at a crime scene. Not surprisingly, he became a folk hero; fans even followed his escapades on Facebook. People thought he never would be caught.

In July 2010, a plane was stolen from Bloomington, Indiana and crashed in the Bahamas (Anderson 1). When several homes were burglarized, the police in the Bahamas put two-and-two together and suspected that Colton had arrived in the Bahamas. They posted wanted posters for Colton. Meanwhile, a court in Washington released an indictment charging him with airplane theft. Shortly afterwards, witnesses reported Colton driving a boat in the Bahamas. The police located him, and they began a high-speed chase with boats. The police shot out the engine of the boat Colton was driving, so he was forced to stop. He threw his computer into the water and threatened suicide, but the police talked him into surrendering.

After Colton was captured as a 19 year old, he was extradited to Florida from the Bahamas. From there, he was sent to Washington state to face state and federal charges. In 2011, he was sentenced to seven years in state prison and over six years in federal prison (“Colton Harris Moore” 1). The two sentences were to be served at the same time. The judge took pity on him because of his horrible childhood. Colton told the judge that he wanted to go to college to study aeronautical engineering. In prison, he studied for the GED

exam and obtained his high school diploma. A project manager who works at the Boeing Company became his mentor.

After Colton was released from prison, he has continued to live an interesting life. Not surprisingly, people were interested in making a film about his life. He signed a contract for \$1.3 million, giving the rights to his story to a movie company (Power 1). Unfortunately, he had to pay the money to the victims who he had robbed. Then, sadly, his mother was diagnosed with cancer. He started a fund-raising page to raise money for her to receive cryo-preservation of her body until researchers can discover a cure for her cancer. Meanwhile, he is working at his attorney's office as a clerk. He continues to want to learn about building airplanes. He says that he has learned to ignore people who tell him that he cannot accomplish something. After all, he didn't know how to fly planes, but he taught himself how to do it. Surely he can accomplish anything he wants to do!

Works Cited

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