

New work from fiction contest

'Beautiful Other People'

By **ALYSSA EVANS**
COAST WEEKEND EDITOR



This week marks the fourth entry in Coast Weekend's fiction writing contest. To participate, send in a short story, no longer than 250 words, to aevans@dailyastorian.com. Entries can be continuations of published prompts or new works of fiction. This week's edition is "Beautiful Other People," by Sarah Johnson, of Naselle, Washington. "My great-grandparents lived above Youngs Bay on Smith Point long ago. I like to imagine myself on some of the for-

mal-dress pleasure excursions up Youngs River in Victorian days, so that's what I've done in this story," Johnson said.

'Beautiful Other People'

July 13, 1889. Full moon yesterday; its northeast edge is whittled now but it's brighter tonight and I know why — I'm so happy.

Joey M. and Robert P. rowed a party up Youngs River today, to picnic at the falls. I was squeezed in the little bow seat with Iris. When we left Smith Point she whined about sunburn and made me sit left to shade her. Why should I be sunburned? We graduated eighth grade at Upper Astoria Public together. She's had a new dress every season since.

Slack tide and easy rowing, but Joey showed off his stroke. It looked fun; I wanted to try. He wouldn't let me. He said the Youngs Bay tides were no joke and I'd get us carried out to sea. Humph!

I was hot and disgruntled with them; how did it happen?

Above the confluence I first admired how hard Joey pulled, and wished I hadn't tried to take his oar. I glanced at Iris, in her tailored white muslin and that lovely forget-

me-not fascinator. I wasn't jealous, only glad that she was so pretty, and out on the water.

Their lives, all those other lives in the boat, became more important than my own — beautiful, precious and enormously significant. However silly, vain, selfish they could be, it was only the unfortunate misuse of material meant for grandeur.

I'm still holding that in my heart tonight, here in the plum orchard.

I want it to never go away.



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