

# Miranda

## Reflective Essay

I was standing in line for coffee this morning. Overwhelmed, after a very sickly Sunday. Two young men were discussing their upcoming business finals; they had been studying for hours. I have never been the “study for hours” type, I become bored quickly and drift into other thoughts and have battled my own consciousness trying to study for finals in the past. I’m good though. I pull through. But only just. This quarter has been the most productive of my educational career. I learned more about myself than I have any other quarter, and to know your true self is really powerful. In "Eragon" someone’s “true” name, that is in the language of magic, has a great power over them; to know someone’s true name is to know them wholly and have full control over their consciousness. Most people do not know their own true name. This Spring Block I have begun to unravel my true name from a long list of names and personas that have followed me. I have felt always like something of a loner, but during our final trip I found myself falling, finally, easily into this community. It was open, and fair, and compromising, and fun. I think maybe I am more of a people person than I thought. I will, however always value the special bond that one on one conversation and friendship reaps. I will also always value my alone time, my time to just imagine. I have learned that I am not very good at concealing my emotions. I’m not particularly surprised by this, but it is something I want to play with a bit. Perhaps I can approach frustration and anger differently. I learned that I will never get past my mom’s death, and that’s ok. I also learned that it’s ok to have some regrets in your life, because they help you learn, and decide who you really are. Sometimes you don’t know something is wrong until you try it for yourself. I feel more comfortable with myself outside. I wrote the skeleton of a story while I was on my solo, it felt good. I want to go to school some more, and I want to explore imaginative naturalism more. I want to convey information and feeling for the natural world through one’s own conscious imagination. Hmm. Did that make sense? I have this notion of a camp type thing where people explore the natural world through art, storytelling, music, with the idea of the interconnectedness of their physical being with the earth. So there would be a garden where food grew, basketball, a lake, guitars, microphones, video cameras, looms, pastels, books of mythology and natural history. I think it would be kind of magical. The educational process is one that I think opens more fully when you know who you are. Spring Block really opened my eyes to my true self by throwing me into real situations where I had to work with large groups, teach multiple age groups, and make so many bloody plans I thought my eyes would fall out. But I did it (eyes in tact), and I grew so much more than I did from pre-calc or economics or beginning jogging (though that presented plenty of challenges). No final could measure my growth more than our final trip, and no amount of studying could have taught me more than the trip itself. Experiential learning was the original form education took. Children followed their parents, copying their actions, still do I suppose. They pick up language by being close with it, and in the past children learned their environment through similar immersion. The final trip really immersed us in a place, especially the solo where we stayed in spot, calling it home. I wish I had been able to gather fresh berries. Anyway, my point is *this is* home, and the natural order of the world continues to dance around us, and most people don’t even know they are part of it. But by teaching children about the cyclic nature of the earth by gardening, exploring, imagining, they will begin to learn their true names too, and their place on the earth as part of an amazing, beautiful, lively, inspiring ecosystem, wherever they might be.