

The Centre of the Universe

by Jason Lee Norman

After lunch Miss Gale told us to push our desks to the edge of the classroom. We are going to learn about the universe she said. We are going to learn about the solar system. Miss Gale then asked who wanted to be a planet. Who wants to be Saturn, she said. Who wants to be Jupiter? I did not raise my hand when Miss Gale asked about the planets. I wanted to be the Sun, or at least the moon. Mostly the sun though because the sun was so bright and so hot.

The very best part about being the sun was that Miss Gale chose Emily to be the Earth. Emily stood in the centre of the room and it was my job to orbit her. Look Emily, I said, I'm orbiting you and keeping you warm and giving you energy. I'm heating the seventy percent of you that is covered with water. I could see her smiling about half the time. Look Emily, I'm charging your solar powered calculator and helping you relieve your dependence on foreign oil. I could see her smile less than half the time now because sometimes Ethan (the moon) was in the way and then the other planets came and got in the way. The other Ethan even got to be Pluto because Miss Gale wasn't able to explain why Pluto wasn't a planet anymore. We kept orbiting and orbiting Emily until Miss Gale said, "Stop!"

She told Emily and me to switch places. This is the way things are now, Miss Gale said. We all revolve around you. Everybody, even you, Miss Gale? Even me. Then everybody started orbiting again, even the other Ethan who was not even a real planet, so far away, he started orbiting. I began to feel very warm, like the actual sun. I saved most of my best warmth for Emily, when the Moon wasn't in the way.

