

# Custom Essay

Narrative Essay on the Last Great Auks

# MEISTER

Name

Institution

Date Submitted

It was a Friday afternoon and our Biology class was about to finish. I was sitting in the far back, tapping my right foot and impatiently waiting for the clock's long hand to strike the number 12. Our Biology teacher, a tall, kind man in his mid-30s, was probably rambling about how much damage humanity has done to the natural world. He loves lecturing us students about caring for the environment and protecting the creatures within it. I couldn't understand what he was saying though, since I was too focused on getting out of the room.

The school bell rang and the whole class started packing their bags. "Class dismissed." Our teacher said with a sigh. I stood up from my seat and opened the classroom door. I rushed towards the schoolyard. My friends and I would meet and spend a couple of hours sitting under a tree talking about anything we could think of. We would spend hours talking about games, television shows, and how our class crush would notice us.

One of our friends, John, was late. We saw him walking towards our tree, he had a frown on his face. As a good friend, I stood up and met him halfway. "What's wrong?" I asked John. "Nothing. It's just the story earlier from our class earlier." John replied. I scratched my head in confusion as I walked alongside him. "Those poor things." John continued as we approached the tree. Of course, I was a kid back then. I was so confused about what got my friend down. John was a year older than us and maybe that is why he was affected by that story more than us. I mean, I didn't even listen during class. I was just doodling on my biology book while I waited for the class to dismiss. "Tell us about it then," I told to John.

We sat underneath the tree with the rest of our friends and John began the story. It was about this penguin-like bird called the Great Auk. Scientists referred to them as the first penguins. They stood gallantly with their chest out as if they were knights honored to serve a king. Like the penguins, the fur in their abdomen was white while the ones on their head and back were black. The Great Auks lived in the cold northern parts of the world. Away from mankind and the dangers that come along with them. They live on small islands where a lot of Great Auk colonies would form. This made hunting them difficult since the hunters would need to prepare for a long trip into cold harsh waters.

Though they lived in harsh climates, this did not stop humans from hunting them. Their thick furs, nutritious meat, and large eggs fetched high prices in the marketplace. These were the reasons why they were targeted by hunters. The demand was sky-high and the supply was a challenge to obtain. Making patrons pay huge amounts of money for Great Auk-related products. Most of the time, hunters kill the animals on-site to make transferring the blood-stained products easier. As time passed, the numbers of the Great Auks dwindled. Their whole population was living on specific islands which made finding them easier for hunters who are already in the vicinity. They were sitting ducks, unable to defend themselves. No matter how much they cry, the hunters would continue killing them. No matter how much they flap their wings, they could never fly towards freedom.

“They couldn’t just fly away?” asked one of my friends. “No. They were like penguins. They couldn’t fly.” John replied. “So, the hunters got them all?” asked another one of our friends. John shook his head with a sign of disappointment on his face. The hunter killed every single Great Auk they spotted with their eyes. Their eyes glitter for

profit whenever they see a helpless Great Auk on the northern islands. For years, people thought the Great Auks were extinct. That humans have decimated their homes and left no Great Auk alive. But that wasn't the case.

A family of Great Auks lived in the cold waters near Iceland. They lived in seclusion, far away from the thoughtless hands of mankind and other dangers such as natural predators. This however wouldn't last. Due to the Great Auk being known as extinct, scientists would pay high prices to sailors, hunters, and other kinds of laborers in exchange for a Great Auk sample. And not long, the couple of Great Auks living near Iceland was found by two sailors. They have lived a peaceful life, away from the clutches of mankind but due to the pursuit of knowledge and profit, one of the most horrible acts against a species would ensue.

The two sailors found the last two Great Auks in an islet near Iceland. The innocent Great Auk couple was incubating an egg - a symbol of hope for the species who were once thought extinct. They were the last Great Auks, and within that small piece of land, they found refuge. Though flightless, they found freedom. Though there were only two of them left, they made a promise for the future. They were free from the fears of fate. Or so they thought.

The two sailors who found the Great Auks were guided by greed and profit. To some, those two last Great Auks were a testament of how a species can endure a great tragedy. That life often finds a way to continue on. But for the two sailors, they were just clueless birds. They approached the unwary birds and caught them by surprise. One of the sailors wrapped his rigid hands on the fragile neck of the two birds, one bird in each of his hands. He tightens his grip, exhausting the breath of life from the Great Auks.

While the other sailor discovers the last egg. Without a second thought, he lifted his boots and crushed the egg as if it was just a twig in the forest floor. The last hope of the Great Auks strangled by mankind's cold hands and crushed under the heels of humankind.

That was just another day underneath that tree for us kids. It was just another story we talked about. But thinking about it now, understanding its meaning, and realizing the horrible acts that humanity is guilty of, perhaps it's time we give back. We are guilty of annihilating whole species just to earn profit. We are unburdened by these unspoken crimes, most of us are not even aware of it. The story of the Great Auks is just one of the hundreds of species that have gone extinct. Some due to natural causes while some due to the tactless efforts of mankind. I will always carry that story with me, to remind myself that I have a debt to pay to the natural world.

MEISTER

Reference

United Nations Regional Information Center for Western Europe. (2020, September 29).

The Great Auk: A lesson in history on biological diversity. <https://unric.org/en/the-great-uk-a-lesson-in-history-on-biological-diversity/>

Custom Essay

MEISTER