As Taylor Davis ambled to his bus stop, he thought, “Ambling, yes ambling.“ He would no longer just walk, he would amble. His Composition teacher would be proud that he was showing, rather than telling. Ambling showed that he was cool and had just an edge of swagger. If he ambled enough, it might just prove to be true.

Taylor greeted his friend with the usual, “Hey, Dylan, here we go. Another day in hell.”

Dylan just grumbled his response.

Taylor thought his Junior year would be different. But three weeks into school he realized it wasn’t. It was the same old routine, the same old rules, the same old teachers droning the same old expectation after expectation. And Taylor was already bored. Not that he wouldn’t do just fine. He always did. As and Bs were the norm. But he wanted to experience a thrill. And year after year, he was faced with the reality that it just wasn’t going to happen in high school.

“Maybe, we’ll even get the rice and teriyaki dippers lunch special again today. Now, that would really put the cherry on the sundae for me,” Taylor said.

“Your sarcasm is dripping sarcasm. Did something happen at the Davis’ household this morning that warrants your extra sour attitude?”

“Hah. Nothing unusual. A strange man at my breakfast table, my mom wreaking from her latest alcoholic binge, and grandma moaning about her gout and irritable bowel movements.”

Taylor had no grandiose ideal of what his teenage years were going to unveil. Whatever became of him was going to be exactly what he made of himself. He had no parent asking how his day went or how his grades were. His grandma occasionally offered the, “You need to keep your grades up so you can get in college.” Taylor wasn’t sure what happened to this message for his mom. She never finished high school, never held a job for more than six months, and spent what he thought was to be his child support on cheap wine and cigarettes. The only time he did get money was when the boyfriend-of-the-month had a job and actually thought that he would be more than just a temporary thing. These poor saps would offer money or the latest electronic gizmo to Taylor to try to be the “cool” boyfriend. Taylor would always take the gift--he felt he deserved it--but knew it was wasted money for the guy because by the following week, he would be out.

“Hey man, let’s do it,” Dylan broke Taylor’s thoughts and led the way to the bus as it gasped to a stop.

“Home, sweet, home,” Taylor sighed climbing the steps and getting his first whiff of the stale sweat left over from the previous night’s sports trip.

They made their way back to their usual fifth row seat with the elementary kids monitoring their every move. It was the one place where Taylor felt worthy. He and Dylan were the oldest ones on the bus--most juniors had their own cars or had friends that had their own cars--so they were somewhat of a legend on the bus. Real-life high schoolers and Taylor milked the attention for all it was worth.

“Hello, my little minions. We’re off to see the wizard.”

The younger girls laughed and the boys held up their hands hoping for a high five.

Taylor had even noticed a few of the middle school boys trying to grow their hair out like his. None were very successful however because recreating the haphazard display of curls verging on frizzy, but yet defined, was a signature style Taylor wasn’t even sure how to obtain. His dark hair had a mind of its own and he learned it was best to let it go except on the rare days when he would slick it back into a ponytail. He wasn’t sure he really liked that look though.

Dylan started his sulking, “Man, this sucks. What is the point of school anyways?”

“It’s to spew out the next generation that memorized 15 lines of Shakespeare, learned what a variable is, colored a map of the United States and carried on the tradition of dressing in silly caps and robes while marching to Pomp and Circumstances to obtain a piece of paper that said, we did it.”

“Great. That’s inspiring.”

“Alas, my friend, two more years and that shall be us.”

“And in the meantime, we just go from class to class when the bell signals us, kind of like the non free-thinking characters in *Anthem*, and we are supposed to enjoy it.”

“Yeah. Remember freshmen year when Ms. Christy tried to tell us that our lives in high school were similar to Equality’s in that book and everyone got so pissed and was like ‘No way would we ever live in that society’. Guess she was right; we do live in it.”

“I know. But maybe we can find the “light bulb” or the way out, like he did.”

“Oh, like what? Escape from high school? Find our own little society waiting for us just on the other side of the football field.”

“Yeah. Why not?”

“Because then we won’t have that silly little paper that we need to get into college.”

“And why college?”

“Because that’s where the real learning begins. Where we will be able to converse and share ideas with others that actually have an intelligent thought. And the class won’t be riddled with cheerleaders in their little outfits and the potheads that sit in the corners and the just plain ‘dumb breeded from dumb’ that exist in this small town.”

“And in the meantime…”

“Well, we’ve made it two years so far. Half way to go.”

“And you’re looking forward to this?”

“Of course not. The only thing I’ve really enjoyed so far was our film remakes of *The Odyssey* and Dante’s *Inferno*. And you heard Mr. Brown yesterday when I asked if we would have film making opportunities for projects.”

“Yeah, a flat out, ‘No‘”.

“I know. I don’t understand. Those were so cool. We could make one just for fun.”

“I’m sure we will. We should do a Romeo and Juliet one. Jeremy would be a perfect Juliet.”

Taylor chuckled, “Yeah, he does have the woman part down. His Calypso was right on.”

“I bet if we brought it in for Ms. Christy, she would play it.”

“Oh, no doubt. She showed our last one to the principal. That was so cool when he told me he thought I made a great Virgil.”

“We should go visit her.”

“Definitely,” Taylor said raising one finger matter of fact. “She’s the one teacher that got me excited about a class. She’ll know how to get us through these next two years.”