

*Assignment Journey: Describe a memorable journey you have taken, alone or with others. Emphasize the visual detail. Your journey story should also include a narrative thread -- events occurring sequentially, usually measured over a period of time; e.g., at 9 a.m. we left Los Angeles; by 10 a.m. we were in Ventura, heading north, etc. The narrative thread need not be that explicit, but the goal is to create the sense of a story (a narrative) unfolding. (500 words)*

The sharp buzz of the phone interrupts the momentary silence. I stare at it, dreading answering. The last caller was a man who wanted to know why he could not buy a nuclear submarine and dock it in the Connecticut River. Sighing, I pick up the phone:

"Good afternoon..."

"Hey kid, it's the boss," the congressman interrupts me. "I forgot my voting card. The vote ends in five minutes. Meet me at the west entrance."

Not waiting for a response, he hangs up. I scramble into the congressman's office, grab the forgotten card off his desk, and begin the journey to the Capitol Building.

In theory, the walk from the Cannon House Building to the Capitol through the underground tunnel shouldn't take long. From the outside, the Cannon House Building is a lopsided square. The challenge is inside, where each floor presents a maze of twists, and around each bend are identical deep cherry office doors.

Taking the marble stairs two at a time, I curse the lack of traction my shoes have on the slippery floors. My heels echo on the marble floor, the noise distracting my calculations on which turn to take. Somehow, I end up in the cafeteria.

Hurriedly retracing my steps, I'm slightly out of breath when the shoes I was cursing moments ago cause me to skid across the floor directly into my George Washington University classmate Alfred Lawrence III. I don't know Alfred well, just the rumors that swirl around campus. *His father owns half of Newport, R.I., he dines with Supreme Court Justices, and is heir to a fortune.* Dressed in Italian loafers and a dark hued Armani suit it's easy to believe the gossip. I remind myself that I don't have time to ponder the truthfulness of the rumors.

Apologizing for crashing into him, I start a sort of half walk run towards the tunnel, which I think is around the corner.

The time on my cell phone says three minutes left. I start to panic and run faster.

I flash my Capitol badge at the guard sitting at the tunnel entrance. Frowning with squinted eyes, he lets me enter. I'm clearly breaking some sort of house decorum by running.

The underground tunnel, called the Capitol Subway System, is similar to a subway. Except unlike a real subway tunnel this one is made of bright, white marble, appearing so sterile a surgeon might continue using a scalpel after it fell on the floor.

Breathing hard, I reach the end. Two minutes left. I hop on the nearest elevator forgetting about the rules. A congressman I don't recognize gets on, shoots me an annoyed look and it hits me that the plush red carpeting, gold doors, and wood panels mean I'm on a members only elevator. I give him an embarrassed look as I get off at my floor, trying to remember what side is west. Looking up, I sigh with relief as I see the silver hair of the congressman pacing up ahead.

"Finally, what took so long?" the congressman asks. Before I can respond he leaves to vote.

I leisurely stroll back to the office this time able to enjoy the history surrounding me.