

The Ambiguously
Alphabetical
Adventures of
Sullivan P. Sullivan

by Chris Hazeltine

A That Is To Say Story



A Storybird
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Dedication: For Morgon — as always, my reason for being and for creating.



A... is for Adroit.

When it came to using his imagination, Sullivan P. Sullivan of Trenton, New Jersey was most Adroit, that is to say... he was quite skillful and clever in creating imaginative adventures and pretend friends.

While Sullivan P. Sullivan saw nothing wrong with his imagination, his mother, Francine “Francie” Sullivan, who was a receptionist at the Howard Johnson’s on highway 19, found her son’s imagination strange and weird, and she would often tell him so, strongly, and with many loud words.

B... is for Barrage.

Almost daily, when his mom got home from work, wearing her polyester uniform with its stain-resistant pleats and sensible shoes, she would find Sullivan P. Sullivan daydreaming. He would then steel himself against her spitefully demure Barrage, that is to say... her prolonged attack on his laziness.

“Why are you such a noodle, Sully?” she would yell. “Why can’t you be like other boys? They’re outside breaking windows and having boy fun. They have real friends. They’re not inside daydreaming like noodle boys with fake phony noodle friends. Why are you such a noodle boy?”





C... is for Corpulent.

Sullivan P. Sullivan loved his mother, but she never really understood why he daydreamt. When his father, Francis “Frankie” Sullivan who worked for O’Malley’s Construction as a big crane operator, died, Sullivan P. Sullivan always believed he could find his dad in the imaginary secret places.

So, while his mom yammered at him, Sullivan P. Sullivan hopped onboard his Corpulent, that is to say... his bulbous and obese dirigible frog, the USS Nerpht, and traveled northwest into the world of his imagination in order to find his father.

D... is for Dour.

At the gates of his imagination stood the Sensei Norbert, keeper of the keys and sticky notes. Sensei Norbert had a Dour, that is to say... a gloomy and sullen look on his face when Sullivan P. Sullivan arrived.

“I see you’re back,” Sensei Norbert droned.

“Yes. I’d like to go into my imagination, please.

“Still looking for your dad?”

“Yes.”

“Hummf,” said Sensei Norbert, as he unlocked to gates of imagination.





E... is for Escapade.

Just inside the gate stood a llama named Nine. As Sullivan P. Sullivan approached, it snorted and mooted and pointed its nose to a sign: \$3.00 for a Ramble; \$5.00 for an Escapade, that is to say...a reckless adventure, free from confines or restraint.

Reaching into his pocket for a pen, Sullivan P. Sullivan wrote Nine a check for \$5.00.

Once the check cleared, Nine hunkered down and let Sullivan P. Sullivan mount. And, grabbing the reins, they were off.

F... is for Foreboding.

Unbeknownst to both Sullivan P. Sullivan and Nine, they were being followed by Faux Father Phineas, Sullivan P. Sullivan's nefarious non-dad. It was Phineas' plan to prevent Sullivan P. Sullivan from finding his real father. Suddenly, Sullivan P. Sullivan was overcome with a great sense of Foreboding, that is to say... a strong, inner feeling of misfortune or evil. He felt a tingle on the hairs of his neck. Nine felt a shiver go down his back. But, they moved on.

And, Faux Father Phineas loomed in his sedan, following the two, far behind, deeper into imagination.





G... is for Gregarious.

Traveling through brambles and bushes and bugs, they happened upon a Snerk. Unlike most Snerks, who are irritable and acrimonious, this Snerk was quite Gregarious, that is to say... he was sociable and kind.

Joining them, he offered Sullivan P. Sullivan and Nine mouth-freshening mints and regaled them with dangerous stories of origami lizards and kumquats as they traveled on.

But, as night grew deeper, they became weary, so they stopped at an inn of some repute.

H... is for Hiatus.

At the Munger Moss Inn and Livery, they were well received at the front desk by Norman Mews, who, for the summer, was on Hiatus, that is to say... he was taking a brief break or interruption as the chief mime for the Calabash Circus of North Dakota.

“Welcome back, Mr. Sullivan, he mimed. Tonight, we’re serving a savory ramen borscht in the dining room and, of course, your rooms are prepared as you like. Your father left a message. He said, “Sweet dreams, and remember to brush.”





I... is for Intrepid.

In the morning, after a breakfast of beignets and coffee, brewed by famous, retired baristas from well-known establishments, Sullivan P. Sullivan left Nine and the Snork sipping mimosas by the pool and mounted his rented, Intrepid steed, that is to say... his resolute and fearless horse, Quixote.

Riding toward towns distant and far, Sullivan P. Sullivan sensed the perniciousness of Faux Father Phineas nearby. But he was not afraid. Carrying a mighty lance and wearing a clean pair of underwear, Sullivan P. Sullivan was indefatigable.

J... is for Jaunt.

In the late afternoon, the intrepid two arrived at the small hamlet of Tlouse. Sullivan P. Sullivan noticed that the pet elephant of his friend, Mr. Letreck, was out for a Jaunt, that is to say... taking a short, pleasurable journey. The elephant was weaving and floating above the houses.

When the elephant was out, Sullivan P. Sullivan knew that Mr. Letreck was feverishly painting, again.





K... is for Kindle.

Years ago, Mr. Letreck was fortunate enough to see the great performance artist, Fontaine L'Margot, perform her mysterious dance, the L'Petit Bunion, for one night only. Afterwards, she retired from the spotlight and became the frosting chef at a trendy urban boulangerie.

Ever since, Mr. Letreck has painted and painted, trying to Kindle, that is to say... trying to excite or rouse that special love he felt watching Fontaine.

L... is for Lithe.

In his memory and in his heart, Fontaine L'Margot was elegant and Lithe, that is to say... she was supple and readily bendy as a dancer. And, despite the critics panning her performance with words like: Shocking! Deplorable! and Vomitus!... by watching Fontaine, Mr. Letreck finally understood what Dr. Scholl meant when he said, "the soles of the feet frees the soul of the heart."

Mr. Letreck's only regret was that he was unable to get Fontaine to autograph his socks before she left the dancing world forever.





M... is for Mammoth.

While Quixote freshened up at a watering hole, Sullivan P. Sullivan walked on. Turning the corner, he discovered a Mammoth, that is to say... immensely large and enormous boulder man, sitting and listening to the telephone wires sing.

"Hey, Sully. How youse doin'?"

"Have you seen my dad?"

"Sully, forget about it. He's around. He's hiding, but he's waiting for youse at the end. He wants youse to have a good time on your little imagiventure. Don't youse worry. He's always watching...but so is that Phineas fool. So, youse be careful.

N... is for Nemesis.

Indeed, Faux Father Phineas was watching. And lurking. As Sullivan P. Sullivan's fully deputized Nemesis, that is to say... his opponent who cannot be overcome, Faux Father Phineas used all his special skills and training he learned from the weekend nemesis workshop last August. He spied. He clandestined. He ghoulded. He did everything in his power to prevent Sullivan P. Sullivan from finding his real father. And, except for the fact that he was in the wrong town where Sullivan P. Sullivan was not, Faux Father Phineas was an excellent nemesis.





O... is for Opaque.

Meanwhile, back in the town where Sullivan P. Sullivan was, he stopped into the local Sneezemonger to purchase some teal taffeta-tinged traveling tissues, at 35 cents a pack. Six for a dollar.

In a moment of generosity, the proprietor, Mr. Björn Nyqvist, demonstrated his Scandinavian hunting sneeze, causing his entire body to curiously turn Opaque, that is to say... incapable of allowing light to pass through. This might remain an unremarkable feat, except for the fact that, moments before the sneeze, Mr. Nyqvist was utterly translucent.

P... is for Plethora.

Suddenly, and without so much as a “by your leave,” Sullivan P. Sullivan was muscled into a bakery across the street. Once inside, he was rapidly taught the subtle art of muffinry by a sumo baker named Daiuke. Inside the store, there was a Plethora, that is to say... an overabundance of meticulous muffins: big & small, fat & tall. Some muffins were inside-out; others outside-in. Once he understood, Sullivan P. Sullivan put on an apron and helped Daiuke. Hour upon hour they made muffins, and while exhausted, Sullivan P. Sullivan was very pleased to know this muffin man.





Q... is for Quietude.

However, even when on imaginary adventures, making muffins, looking for your dad, and foiling Faux Father Phineas, it's sometimes nice to find a little Quietude, that is to say... a little calmness and tranquility from the events of the day.

It's especially nice when the nephew of a mammoth boulder man stops by, wraps you up in his arms, and sings lemony songs of asparagus as you fall asleep.

R... is for Requisite.

“Um, hm!?”

Loath to interrupt Sullivan P. Sullivan’s slumbering, it was Requisite, that is to say... necessary for a particular purpose that a gentleman with a red hat – given to him by his grandmother before her travels to Timbuktu required her to wear only blue hats – had to get Sullivan P. Sullivan’s attention.

“Excuse me, sir. Your dad asked me to deliver this ticket to you. It’s for the special event. And, because I am late, you are late. Sir.”





S... is for Svelte.

Sullivan P. Sullivan was so late that he was on time for only the end of the special event. From a rather unsatisfactory seat (Row Z, seat 190), Sullivan P. Sullivan observed Ben Zykowski standing upon the podium of distinction, looking quite Svelte, that is to say... slender, graceful, and urbane, with his medal of accomplishment draped heroically around his neck. For the seventh year in a row, Ben Zykowski had successfully held his arms akimbo – for more than 38 days – beating out Mrs. Fiona Peterson, of North Cambridge-bilge.

T... is for Taut.

All was not a loss. Outside, there was a carnival to celebrate Mr. Zykofski's success. Of all the rides, the most provocative to Sullivan P. Sullivan was the tether-tie ride, operated by a genuine manta ray, on loan from Gulliver's Gulps Fish Emporium, on 64th Street and Lexington.

Once hooked in, Sullivan P. Sullivan was told to think helium thoughts and, instantly, he shot up into the air, with the tethers nice and Taut, that is to say... tightly drawn. For many minutes, he had great fun floating like a human balloon animal. That is...





U... is for Ugsome.

... Until a most Ugsome, that is to say... a most horrid and loathsome child cut in line, tinked and tangled the taut tethers, and shouted for all hear: "Your dad is dead, your dad is dead!"

"Not in my imagination, he's not," Sullivan P. Sullivan informed the reprehensible ragamuffin. "And, I can tell by your fictitious, fallacious, and felonious ways that you work for Faux Father Phineas. You tell him for me that I cannot be fooled. He is a phony fiend, and so are you. I leave you, now, to wallow in your waywardness whilst I visit the next exhibit."

V... is for Voracious.

Walking into the next tent, Sullivan P. Sullivan encountered a Mr. Vincent Slumpner, better known by his friends at the Rexall drugstore as Norman Nees, eating rudely and Voraciously, that is to say... consuming a large quantity of vegetables.

“Get outta here, kid!” said Vincent sometimes known as Norman. When he spoke, he spittled rutabaga far and wide. “Isn’t this an exhibit?” asked Sullivan P. Sullivan.

“No, it’s my lunch. Now, go away!”
Not one to mince words, Sullivan P. Sullivan left, immediately.





W... is for Wrath.

As Sullivan P. Sullivan wandered the carnival fairgrounds, he discovered a crowd, standing next to the fried cotton-candy seller, and suffering the Wrath, that is to say... the strong indignation and resentment of a weightlifter. Apparently, the lifter of weights considered himself a poet, The Bard of the Barbell.

As the crowd mocked and jeered him in his prosody, he shouted back an indignant haiku:

Sizable are my words
Weighing heavily
Against the Sun!

X... is for Xenophile.

Unexpectedly, Sullivan P. Sullivan heard a honking behind him. Up rolled a rail car with a driver. The chauffeur was, as Sullivan P. Sullivan noticed, a genuine Xenophile, that is to say... a person attracted to foreign people, cultures, or customs. His rail car was German, his clothes were Parisian, and his hair was combed in a special Lithuanian way. Plus, he spoke in a most beguiling dialect that could not be determined.

“Your papa, he has hired meself to extract yourself to the location of himself, forthwith. Embark and let weselves sally forth.”





Y... is for Yearn.

The chauffeur was a strange man but an excellent driver. It was a very long trip and Sullivan P. Sullivan started to Yearn, that is to say... he started to have strong and long wantings for his mom. To Sullivan P. Sullivan, she was his super hero, with phenomenal powers of love, that helped him get through the death of his dad.

Sullivan P. Sullivan knew that his dad was dead and that his mom was alive.

He understood.

But, one way or another, he would always yearn for both of them.



Z... is for Zenith.

“Young sir,” the chauffeur intoned, “we have come to the Zenith, that is to say...the culmination of your imaginary excursion. You may now detrain the rail car. God speed.” As the rail car rolled away, a rainbow suddenly appeared. And, sitting on the rainbow...was dad!

“Up here, my boy!” Using a nearby step ladder, Sullivan P. Sullivan climbed the rainbow and joined his father.

“I’m pleased with your imagination, my boy. How was your day?”

And they talked until the sun went down.



Join Sullivan P. Sullivan on his Quirky and Quixotic Alphabetical Adventures as he visits with his Imaginary Friends and Searches for his Father.



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