

## **Sarah Burrows - Storyteller for Scarborough Stories**

Sarah's story explores being different, but awesome.

Hello, everyone. I'm Sarah Burrows and this is my story.

I like to be different. I love standing out and being myself. And the best way for me to do that is to wear outgoing clothes. It can be difficult though, especially at college because literally everyone wears black and I'm constantly standing out.

It's okay. I love the attention. There's this one student who likes to say what's on her mind. She's autistic and she always has something to say about my outfits, which doesn't bother me by the way, it's quite fun. Once I went through a phase of wearing bucket hats and she said 'Why are you wearing a hat inside?'

I walked up to college one day wearing cow print jeans and she said 'No offence, you look like a cow'. I got quite moody. To let her know it didn't bother me, I wore a bucket hat for 2 weeks straight. I'm glad I did, now she calls me bucket hat girl. I wish I'd have worn the cow print jeans now, because then she would have called me cowgirl.

Three things you need to know about me. One, I'm autistic. Two, I have a germ phobia. And three, I love cooplunds. And the reason you need to know that is because I'm reading a poem that I wrote in 2020 a lockdown about Lockdown:

Lockdown has been great for me

blinded by germs, now I can see

washed and sanitised

The rule of three

I invented it back in 2003

Stay in the home, nothing to do

going with the flow

Not allowed to leave, I never do

I'm not complaining though

It's not that much different to how my days usually go

I like to look sharp whenever I've gone out

But PJs is all I now wear

And if you take a peek

I might look like I'm a fake

But does it look like I care?

Finding the perfect outfit is a tough task

Because now I have to think about my mask  
Do the colours go?  
Does it show off my eyes?  
Have I forgotten to sanitise?  
I have to obey the rules and cooplands  
My favourite shop  
Only two people are allowed in at once  
Smart  
The circle is where I have to stop  
So we are approximately two metres apart  
I don't like rules  
Yet I play along  
Because I'm a big fan of hygiene  
Cooplant, congratulations  
You've outsmarted the hygienic queen  
But I do have to get crisps or a sausage roll to complete my meal deal  
And that's kind of mean  
I just want my tuna baguette and oasis  
And leave without causing a scene  
And I have to ask to get the tuna mayo mixed  
Which doesn't make sense  
Why order a sandwich in the first place?  
I'm gluten intolerant  
I'm getting off topic now  
Let's return to the subject matter  
The life choices or make now  
Are whether to have weetabix or coco pops  
I go for the latter  
I don't have the day's planned anymore  
My chalkboard weekly planner is always blank  
But Netflix came in to save the day

And there's a certain show I'd like to thank  
After I finished watching 10 seasons of friends  
I became a little insane  
I cried when it ended  
And now all I know is boredom  
And there's undiagnosed back pain  
Which is still there actually  
Mum, have you got the ibuprofen?  
I'm not losing the ability to socialise  
I've never been that keen on it anyway!  
I did catch up on my friend Alexa's life  
We tend to bond every day  
I think this lockdown has been rough on  
Because when I asked her to sing a song  
She paused a little and then she said  
I don't know that one  
If you asked me if I want to go somewhere  
I'll kindly say no  
It is okay to assume  
That only four places I'm ever going to go  
Are the four corners of my bedroom  
My bedroom and I, we are so tight  
I don't let in natural light  
I don't know anymore what's outside my door  
Has the front room wall always been white?  
As I say, lockdown has been great  
It's just my cup of tea  
Because the world hasn't changed  
It's all the same  
To the Waterson family

This next poem is personal to me. It's about my anxiety and I'd like to share it with you guys. It's called puppet master:

I'm tied to the strings, there's nowhere to go  
You are the puppet master of my disaster show.  
I'm another character in your made up play  
And the price the world has come to watch me pay  
You wipe out any flowers and dress me as a clown  
You hate my useless looks, so you turn them upside down  
I have the same style, wear the same clothes  
All the same lines, all the same shows  
The spotlights on me and everyone staring now  
I've got to put on an act, sadly I know how  
I've broken down the parts like a script in a play  
And all I want is someone to say I'm not okay  
I've secured my perfect mask and taught myself to shine  
So the people seeing the clown can believe I am fine.  
I've never shown them me on stage ever since it was aired  
because I never got myself to admit I'm emotionally scared  
I always fail to break my strings because I know I would fall  
And I don't think I have the strength to get back up at all  
The audience laughs as I break  
So I ignored them as they cheer  
Because the ones that helped me break the strings to me are the only ones who are here  
I want you to remember your strings will eventually break  
The feeling of loneliness is something I deeply know  
And at the end of the day, the advice I want you to take  
Is that it's always been you in control of your show