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English 110

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Consider The Animal

Upon arriving to the annual Gagnon-family reunion cookout, I consider the many options awaiting my consumption. A kitchen littered with entrées; meals as far as the eye can see. Franco-Canadian heritage dishes such as tourtière, cretons, a wide array of smoked meats, chômeur, and of course, poutine. Each carbohydrate-packed meal emanating with a rich, vivid scent, causing my stomach to grumble and my mouth to water excessively. I reach for the maple smoked bacon with gleaming eyes and eagerness.

“Absolutely not, Ethan. You know the rules.”

“But mom, it smells so good. Why not?”

“We don’t eat animals. Period.”

This was the story of my life until I turned 13. My parents raised me as a vegan, alongside their own dietary restrictions. My father grew up on a farm witnessing the perils of beautiful bovine creatures and innocent avian species being bred for one purpose: slaughter. Having been turned off by this process, he swore himself to a lifestyle of veganism in hopes to cleanse his past and repent for what his father had forced upon him. I have mixed feelings towards the subject. As I’ve grown, experimented, and experienced, I can attest to the rampant and common cruelty animals are subjected to. However, I realize there is a connection between people and their culture in terms of food. Humans have always been conscientious about obtaining nutrition since our humble hunter-gatherer beginnings. These traditions have carried on far-and-wide, and

respectfully so. Should we, non-animal eaters, consider those who choose to consume meat to the same degree we expect them to consider us? I think so.