Pigeonhole Episode 38

[bright ambient music]

Introduction

CHORUS OF VOICES: Pigeonholed, pigeonhole, pigeonhole, pigeonhole, pigeonhole, pigeonhole, pigeonhole, pigeonhole.

CHERYL: I'm trying to convince more people to add written image descriptions and/or alt text to their pictures on social media. Audio describers especially, I'm pointing my finger in your direction right now. Please, describe your photos. It's not like the people who love your audio description finish an audio described film, then log onto social media and say to themselves, "Wow, I love having accessibility only part-time!" It doesn't come naturally or easily for everyone to translate a picture into words, I know. So, team up. Work with someone who can help out.

[bright ambient music fades out]

Today, me reading the AI-generated descriptions I've found in Microsoft Office products and on social media when my images fail to load. I'm only going to translate one by telling you what's actually in the picture. If you find yourself at any time wondering what the pictures actually are or wanting more, welcome.

Now, to be fair, some of the things I'm gonna read are kind of true. Many of them are completely wrong, but the things that do have some truth in them, really, um, I'm not sure that it even matters that they got some of the details accurate because you just still have no idea what's going on. Please start adding image descriptions or alt text to your posts, on your blog, and in your e-newsletters!

[awkwardly distorted old-timey waltz]

The story

May be an image of 1 person.

May be an image of 2 people, tree, and text.

May be an image of 4 people, people standing, and outdoors.

No photo description available.

A picture containing dog, grass, mammal.

No photo description available.

A picture containing food, plate, indoor, rice.

A person and person sitting at a table with food and drinks.

A cat lying on a chair.

A person with glasses and a cat.

A picture containing text, monitor, indoor, person.

Graphical user interface, website.

A collage of people.

A picture containing photo, different, piece, chocolate.

May be an image of text that says, “ROXBURY International FILM FESTIVAL.”

May be a cartoon of text that says, “When the teacher lets the class pick their own groups: made with mematic A II.”

A picture containing drawing, plate, cup. [music stops abruptly]

This is a PowerPoint slide where I placed the logos for closed captions and audio description on a blank slide for a presentation on, well, closed captions and audio description. Note to self: prepare presentations on drawing, plate, and cup for next time because the work of writing the alt text is already complete!

[awkward old-timey waltz starts up again]

A person wearing a garment. Description automatically generated with medium confidence.

[waltz plays a bit longer, then fades into an upbeat, jazzy, lounge-y number]

Wrap up

Check out the Audio Description in the Making online exhibit from the AIM Lab at Concordia University at AudioDescription.AccessInTheMaking.ca for some innovative, creative work. The students chose an artwork (or video game, book cover, mead fermenting, a binder, a logo, whatever they wanted) and described it. Then, many of them basically tossed the original artwork and created a new type of story starting from the audio description. I gobbled it up. I hope you will too.

And check out Andy Slater. He’s a blind sound artist and musician who did a whole exhibition of paintings that was presented as only alt text, meaning you had to use a screen reader to hear or read descriptions of the paintings. No visuals were even presented. It’s called Invisible Ink, and if you don’t know how to use a screen reader, that’s OK. Instructions are provided on the website at ThisIsAndySlater.net/InvisibleInk.

[lounge fades into bright ambient theme music]

Every episode is transcribed. Links, guest info, and transcripts are all at WhoAmIToStopIt.com, my disability arts blog. I’m Cheryl, and…

TWO VOICES: this is Pigeonhole.

CHERYL: Pigeonhole: Don’t sit where society puts you.

Music in the episode: “Dark Eyes.” by Teddy and Marge. (Source: FreeMusicArchive.org. Licensed under a Attribution-Noncommercial-Share Alike 3.0 United States License.) “Helges

Friend Woke Up (ID 1268) - Remastered" by Lobo Loco. (Source: FreeMusicArchive.org. Licensed under a Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.)