

THE WVMS Literary Magazine

FALL/WINTER
2023

GRADES
5-8



SHORT STORIES, POEMS,
ARTWORK AND MORE!




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ALL ABOUT APPLE FEST!

BY VIOLETTA QUEZADA



You're probably wondering, "What is Apple Fest?" but if you know...
DON'T SPOIL IT!!!!!!!

So, Apple Fest is kind of like a carnival but it's soooooo much fun! And, if you are wondering if there's any type of food whatsoever - yes, there's all types of fun and delicious food, like nachos, popcorn, cotton candy, and of course, lots and lots of apples.

If you're wondering about what else they do in Apple Fest, they also sell jewelry and all kinds of cool antiques and unique items.



It's also not all related to apples; there are things that you can find at a thrift store and most are sold by local vendors. You're probably wondering, and yes, some of the items are not that cool but they are unique in their own way.

If you like rides, then you'll absolutely love the Warwick AppleFest's awesome rides! This year there was a cool house that was so wacky and there was a hamster wheel in the house too. There were horse back rides, and the longest and tallest slide, and a twisty whirlee ride too!!!

So don't miss out on October 6, 2024, Warwick's Annual... drumroll please !!!!!!!..... APPLE FEST!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Bye, see you there!

Photos provided from
<https://www.warwickapplefest.com>
and Bruce Balistrieri Photography

GO WILDCATS!!



RUNNING

BY OWEN BARRETT



This year was my first year running Cross Country. Prior to this, I had been in Warwick Track Club for a few years and also did a few summers of Rec Track. If you asked me before Covid if I ever wanted to run, (on purpose), I would have said no. After the Covid shutdowns, my buddy Ryan signed up for Warwick Track Club. I signed up after skipping out on sports during the Covid pandemic phases. We had a lot of fun doing Track Club and Summer Rec Track. I ended up loving it. I also participated in Mileage Club for 2 years and was the Vice President of Mileage Club last year. I did the Color Run last year and came in first place at the Color Run this year at our school. Last Spring my mom signed up for a 5K with me and my sisters. We ran our first 5K together. I knew I wanted to run XC after that race.



The Girls XC coach ran the Summer Rec. track program so I knew her from running in that. Ms. Rueckert is the boy's coach and she is great. I looked forward to practicing every day. I love the team and I really enjoy going to meets. I'm happy with my time, for the most part but I still want to improve and beat it. My plans are to be faster next year. I can't wait for Track to start in the Spring.

Running is an amazing sport. It helps you set goals and achieve them. It's a great form of exercise. It builds stamina and pushes you to do more, and to keep going. If you have any stress or are worried about anything or just want to let off steam, running is awesome for that. Joining a team will also help you meet new people and make new friends.

THE HARVEST DANCE

BY EMMA RIEDER



HELLO! I AM GOING TO BE YOUR WRITER AND TELL YOU WHAT TO DO WHEN IT IS TIME TO GO AND HAVE FUN AT THE HARVEST DANCE!

DATE AND ARRIVAL:

THE DATE FOR THE HARVEST DANCE WILL BE LATE OCTOBER AND USUALLY STARTS AT 7-9 P.M. THE SLIPS TO COME INTO THE HARVEST DANCE ARE CLOSED WHEN IT IS 7:30. I RECOMMEND YOU SHOW UP AT AN EARLY TIME LIKE 6:35 OR 6:40 SO YOU CAN GET IN EARLY.

FOOD:

IN THE HARVEST DANCE THERE ARE MANY FUN AND EXCITING ACTIVITIES TO DO. BUT, UH OH! YOU'RE HUNGRY! FEAR NOT FELLOW READER, DURING THE HARVEST DANCE THERE WILL BE PLENTY OF SPOOKY AND DELICIOUS SNACKS DURING THE DANCE. INCLUDING COOKIES, CANDY, CUPCAKES, AN ICE CREAM TRUCK, AND MANY MORE DELICIOUS TREATS FOR EVERYONE TO ENJOY AND EAT!

GAMES:

YOU SPENT A GOOD 30 MINUTES DANCING LIKE NO ONE WAS WATCHING, YOUR LEGS START TO HURT AND YOUR PHONE IS AT LOW BATTERY, AND YOUR FRIENDS ARE NOWHERE IN SIGHT! OH NO! WHAT WILL YOU DO?! DON'T SWEAT IT, IN THE DANCE WE HAVE A CORN TOSS IN CASE YOU GET TIRED. STAY ENTERTAINED AND MAKE NEW FRIENDS, IT'S A WIN-WIN!

DANCING:

AND NOW THE THING THAT YOU HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR... THE DANCE ITSELF. IN THE DANCE, YOU CAN DRESS UP IN A COSTUME OR JUST DRESS UP FANCY, AND DANCE! AT THIS DANCE, WELL, YOU DANCE. HAVE A SONG THAT YOU REALLY WANNA DANCE TO? NEAR THE DJ THERE ARE PIECES OF PAPER ON WHICH YOU WRITE DOWN YOUR SONG OF CHOICE AND THE NAME OF THE ARTIST. (EX. CAKE BY THE OCEAN BY: DNCE, BAD BY MICHEAL JACKSON, AND BAD GUY BY THE INTERRUPTERS)

AND SO.... NOW THAT YOU KNOW SOME NEW OR IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT THE HARVEST DANCE, YOU CAN NOW GO TO THE DANCE AND PARTY!!!





GREAT WOLF LODGE

BY DESMOND GOLDSTEIN

Running through the halls frantically, I'm waving my wand around while *creeaaak* the chests open. Wait, this is a weird spot to start, let me take it back a bit.

It all started when we got in the car, barely containing - no, not even containing- our excitement. This was our first ever trip to Great Wolf Lodge, so we had no idea what to expect, other than the fact that it was a hotel. In the car, me and my sister, Simone, must've had a million questions, and our parents had almost no answers. They either didn't know, or just refused to answer for more of a surprise once we arrived. We were in that car for 2 hours, but it felt like 5. Then, after a painful 2 hours of driving, I saw a sign through the mist in the distance, which read 'Great Wolf Lodge'. "We're here!" Simone and I exclaimed.

Once we drove up, two giant stone wolves were there to greet us. We pulled up and parked. We grabbed our luggage, brought it in, signed in, and got our room cards. Once we got up to our room, we unpacked. It took about 30 minutes to finish unpacking. Me and Simone shared a room which had a television and a bunk bed. I got top bunk easily because my sister was afraid of the height. Once we were happy with the layout of things, we left our room and started exploring the hotel. Simone and I were extremely excited when we found that there was a fountain spewing out chocolate, as well as an all-you-can-eat buffet, even though the buffet mainly excited me, because it meant I got to eat a lot. It also had an indoor waterpark, which we went to a lot. But what was most important was that after we pretty much had memorized the place, we knew exactly where we were headed.

The next day, we headed straight for the room with the sign over it that said something amazing. I don't remember it perfectly. Something about magic or another mystical thing like that. We didn't even have to beg to enter. One simple ask and we went in. I honestly wish asking for things at this age was as easy as that. Anyways, once we entered the room, there were stands covered in wands and accessories and all sorts of things. I got a blue wand and a handbook on what to do. Simone was sadly too young to get one. Once I got this, I was excited as ever. The woman that gave the wand to me taught me how to use it. I learned that to use the wand, I needed to twirl it, then point it at whatever to activate what it's pointing at.

GREAT WOLF LODGE, CONTINUED.

BY DESMOND GOLDSTEIN

At first, I just ran around pointing my wand at chests scattered throughout the halls until I looked into my handbook. It led me around using easy riddles. When I got where it instructed me to go first, I saw nothing other than what looked like a dark screen that would show you a map of the place, like at malls. But when I didn't really have any other ideas, I swung my wand at the screen. All of a sudden, an animated stone-looking face appeared. Shocked, I listened to what it said. It gave me tips on what there is to do, what the wand does, and then finally told me where to go. I was led to a giant fake tree, also with a screen next to it. I wave my wand and on the screen, two eyes and a mouth appear. They gave me another quest. I keep running around doing quests and waving my wand. After a while, I stopped. It's time for the waterpark.

Once I get my sister up, (it's only about 8:00 am), we get in our bathing suits, and we go. Right when we walk in, I see slides everywhere. There's also a normal pool, a wave pool, and a giant water bucket on top of a tower. We have to sign in, but then, we can play. We first check out the average pool, which, obviously, isn't that exciting, but the excitement of everything else makes it seem great. Next, we visit the wave pool, which seems pretty boring, until I lose my balance and fall. I get up easily, and we head out of it. Next is what I'm mostly excited about.

The slides. We first go to some of the smaller slides, which I'm mainly at for my sister. There was this one small slide with two next to each other, which I went down on with her, because she asked me to. But then I start going to the bigger ones, slide after slide, rush after rush, line after line, but there's one slide that I get on that I regret once I reach the top. Looking at it, I saw this giant swirly slide, and just looking at it from a top view, it looked like the most intimidating thing ever. I was hesitant to go on it, so I asked my mom if I could go back down the stairs, but she said no, and even though I was confused and mad about that, looking back on it, we were on that line for a while, so it was understandable. After a bit longer, I realized the only way out was down. So on the slide I went, and, wow, that was amazing. "I wanna go again!" I exclaimed once I reached the bottom. I kept going on it, and at one point, I convinced Simone to go on it too, she did, but she didn't have as much fun in it as I did. I also got covered in water going up to the formerly intimidating slide because the giant bucket tilted over and splashed me. After more sliding, more quests, more frantic running, more sleeping, more waking up early, and just more excitement in general, our vacation had come to a close.

A bit before leaving, we give our final farewells to our room, the waterpark, and the magic. We grab our suitcases, get in the car, and leave. That was the best vacation ever.





AXOLOTLS

By Zoe Barrett

I've become fascinated with Axolotls and maybe you've been a little curious about them too. What I like about them is they are always smiling. What I learned though is just because they are smiling, doesn't mean they are happy.

Did you know Axolotls can grow over 12 inches from the length of their nose to the tip of their tail? Axolotls can also lay 400-1,000 eggs in only a few hours but sometimes it can take a few days. You know how lizards can detach their tails as a defense mechanism and they will grow back? Well lizards have nothing on Axolotls, because they can regenerate ALL of their body parts...even parts of their brain and tissues in their eyes and heart!

You may be wondering who found these amazing creatures that some people call Mexican walking fish.. It was the Aztecs who settled in the valleys of Mexico. They found large salamanders living in a lake that was surrounding the island where they built their capital. They can't stay out of water like their salamander cousins can because Axolotls don't ever lose their gills. They were found in Mexico's Lake Xochimilco and Lake Chalco. Even though they have become popular pets, Axolotls were almost extinct in 2020. In the wild they are only found in some canals in Mexico now. People are trying to save them.

Axolotls were first marketed as easy-to-care-for exotic species for everyday people to raise. Social media popularity has raised endangerment, as they have become an ongoing trend to have. My hope is for Axolotls to get off of the endangered species list.

HOW TO DO STOP MOTION

BY JAXSEN MITA

WHAT IS STOP MOTION?

Stop motion is a style of making movies. The style is that you take inanimate objects and then make them move by taking many pictures of that object. This can take hours of work. You have probably seen stop motion movies before. Some are *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer* and *Nightmare Before Christmas* are both stop motion movies.

HOW TO DO STOP MOTION

If you are still reading this, you probably don't know how to do stop motion. Now I will tell you... Wait, you actually want me to? Well, I don't know if I should! Fine, I will tell, but first I will tell you a little about myself. I have been doing stop motion for four years now. I am completely self-taught and my first video was me practicing making a LEGO figure walk (it was not good). Now I am working on a video that has taken me more than a month to make.

How to do stop motion (This Time for Real)

Now for the life story of a crocodile named Fred. Okay fine, I will tell you how to do stop motion. I use an app called Stop Motion Studio. It has a free version and a paid version. The difference between them is what you get. In the paid version, you get the "onion skin" animation technique, you can put sound effects in, and it is just a lot more clean. I would not start with the paid version. If you decide you want to start doing stop motion as a hobby then I would definitely get it. Okay, now for the set up. You will need a stand for your phone, a few books to make it level with the camera, a few lights - maybe three or four. You might have to find different lights because of light flickings, which is when the light flickers and causes the pictures to have slightly different shades on an object. If you want to learn how to make a LEGO walk I would look up a video on how to or make your own.

HOW TO DO STOP MOTION, PART TWO: MAKE A MOVIE

Now that you have all the things that you need, now you have to make the movie. First, find a good spot with leveled ground, make sure that it's inside, close all curtains so that no light makes its way in, and shut all lights off. Now, put your phone in the stand and decide where you want to put your stand. Next, take your books and stack your books until your books look like the ground. Then, take your object that you will be animating. Put the object on the books. Now this is where you might have to add or take away books. You have to make sure that your object is in the center of the screen and that you are eye-leveled with the object. Now we animate.

Next, I am going to show you how to do a simple spin. You first start with by taking a few pictures of your object then you move it very slightly in a counter or clockwise way and you keep doing that process until you are back to where you started. Now you have done a successful stop motion!

If any of this is confusing I am sorry I do want to restate that I am completely self taught and that this makes sense to me I would look up a youtube video too. Have a good day, bye!



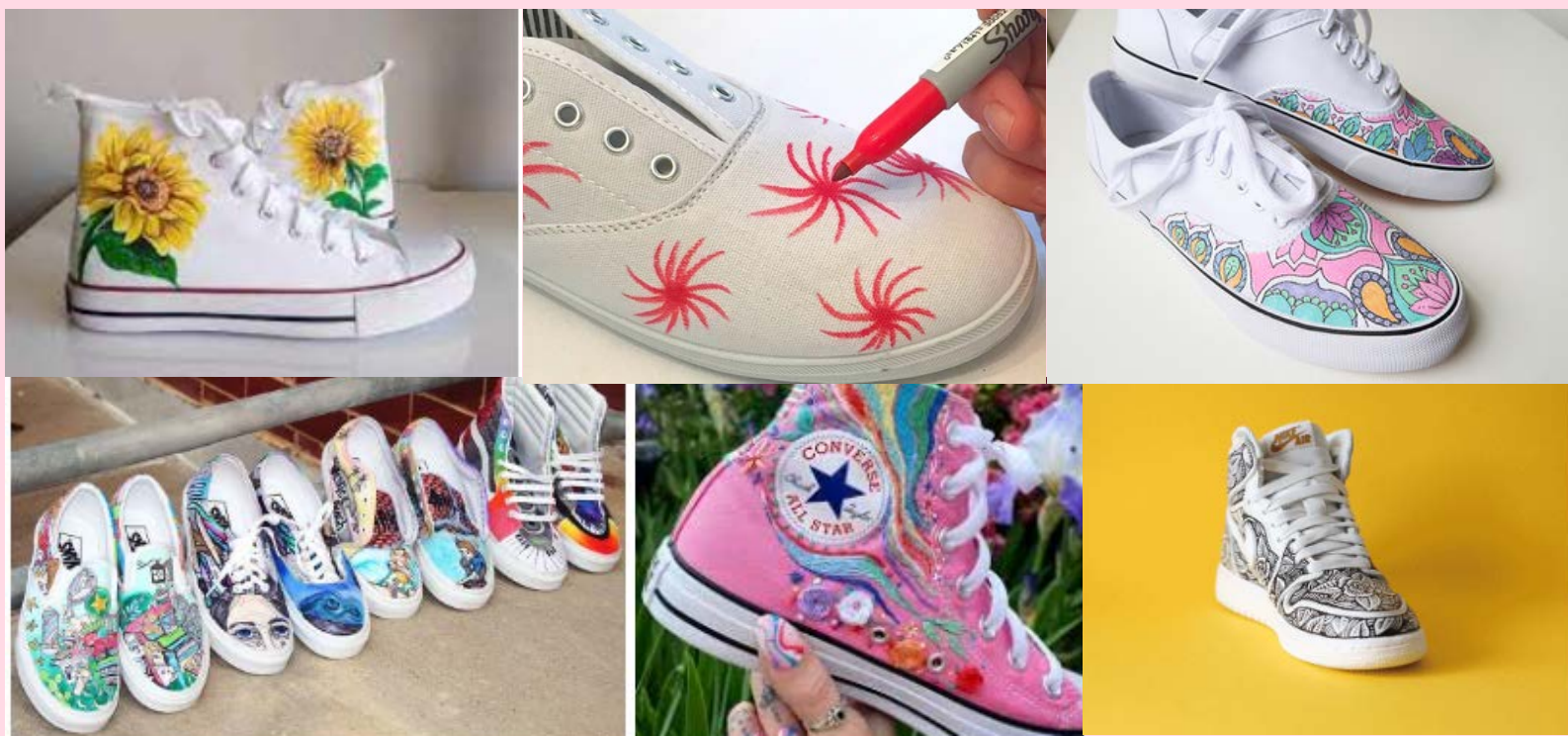
DESIGN YOUR OWN

Sneakers!

By Fiona Morrison

Have you ever wanted to design your own shoes?
If so, read this!

- 1** Get some white shoes. Any ones will do!
- 2** Think of a design you want.
- 3** Sketch it out on the shoe with **PENCIL** so you can erase it.
- 4** Once you like the design, outline it in Sharpie.
- 5** Then you can color it in however you want with Sharpies.



THE WISH OF

hope

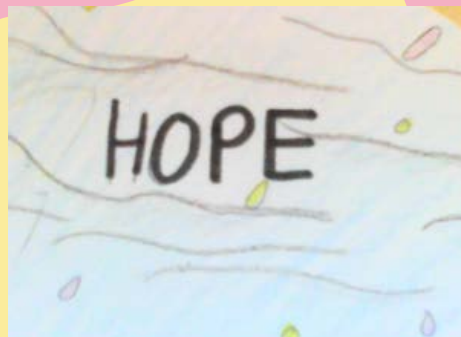
BY ALESSANDRA LUNDGREN



*A whistling sound a sound of hope
A wave of water a sound of love
Petals flying through the air
Messing up my pretty hair
Buts thats okay
Because today I feel a wish of hope*

*A whoosh of air
The sound of hope
A flowing stream
A wave of hope
Today there is a wish of hope*

*If you have a bad day
Just always remember
There will always be a wish of hope.*



Spanmilton Poetry

BY LEONARD TOSH

Sesame seeds

**They're on the Burger King Whoppers
They look like little freckles for the top bun**

I like fast food

But I try to stay away from it

Ain't that lit?

THE END

Door knob

Goes on a door (Shocking, I know)

Floors are low

On the ground

But door knobs are special

**You twist the knob, which is oftentimes made
of metal**

Metal is cool

**You get it by mushing minerals together to
make a rock**

Rocks turn into ore (Not a floor)

Ore is turned into metal

I had to google this

**Metal is turned into door knobs and
sometimes swords**

Swords were once used to earn accords

Now they are sold on Ebay

**Some sellers donate their money from swords
towards accords**

THE END

The letter "r"

Makes me feel worse than tar

I like paste

This is the fourth verse

Of this pirate adventure (arrrrr)

**But it's better than your angular
displeasure**

THE END

Desert

Not dessert

Sandy and, like, really hot

Don't bring your bike

Phone the autobots

And go on a hike

With Mark Wahlberg

Just like in the last movie

I like movies

Troy

Brad Pitt did a good job playing Achilles

Don't Brad Pitt and Matt Damon look alike?

I think they do

I used to get them confused

Tom Holland is the hot actor nowadays

That's just what I've heard

**I hear Leonardo DiCaprio is making a
comeback, though**

THE END

FRED IS DEAD

By Emma Rieder
& Jaxsen Mita

Fred is from the dead
He came back and then he died again
He lost his head
Fred became sad
Then became mad
He ran around around in circles all day

Why

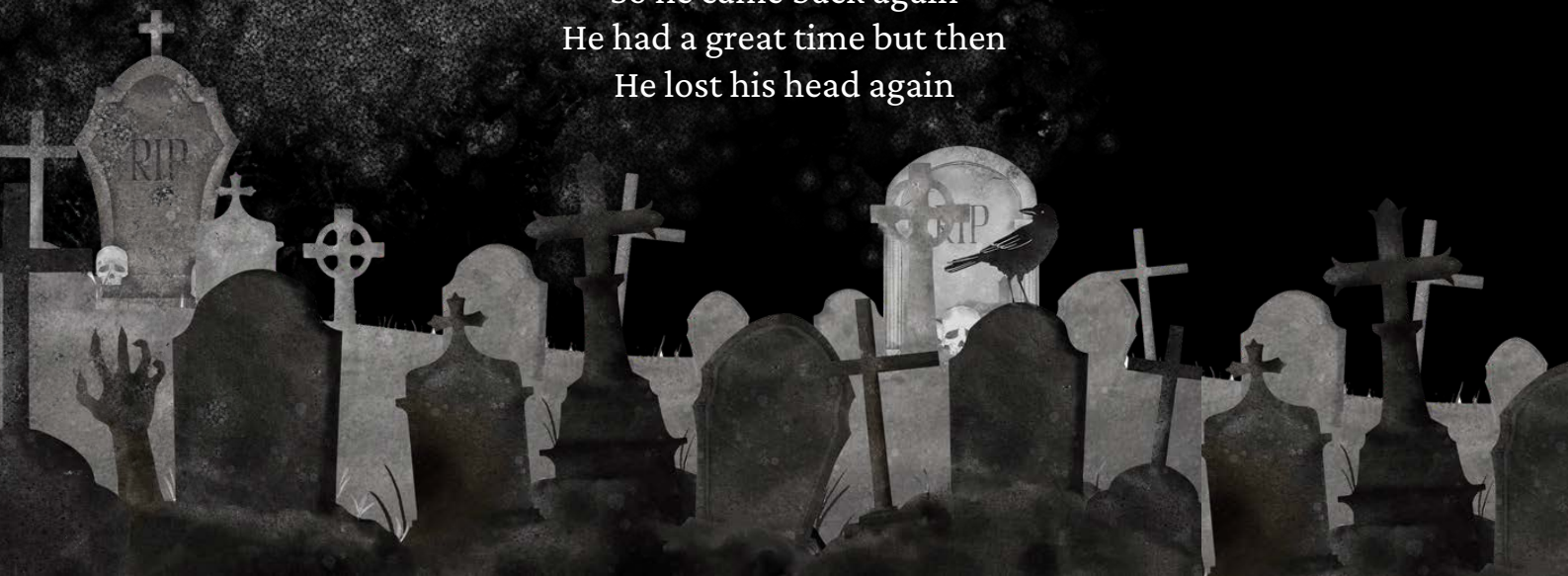
Because he has no head
Then fred died again
He has sad and mad
So he came back again
Fred became happy
Then he die again
He lost his mind
He was nothing

Why

he lost his mind
Then fred died again
fred gave up
He was sad
But he did not care
why
because He gave up
Then he decided not to give up
Why because he liked life

Why

Know one knows
But he did
So he came back again
He had a great time but then
He lost his head again



A decorative banner at the top of the page features a yellow string with blue and green triangular flags. In the center is a square containing the Brazilian flag.

Pao de Queijo

(Cheese bread)(Gluten Free)

BY ANGELA FUCHS

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon salt
- 2 cups of Polvilho Azedo (sour tapioca flour)
(Brand: Yoki)(Use this brand for gluten free)
- 1 cup of Polvilho Doce (sweet starch)
(Brand: Yoki)(Use this brand for gluten free)
- 1/2 cup of cheddar cheese shredded
- 1 cup of white cheese shredded (you can use Mozzarella,
Parmesan, Asiago, whatever white cheese you like)
- 1 + 1/2 cup water (room temperature)
- Philadelphia cream cheese one package of 8 ounces



Directions

Start by putting the salt in a bowl. Add the polvilho Doce, add the polvilho azedo and mix with your hands. Add water slowly (room temperature). Continue to mix using your hands and add the cream cheese. Continue to mix and add the cheddar cheese and the white cheese. By now you should have a nice dough that doesn't stick to your hands. Then, you can start making the balls and put them in the tray so that you can bring them to the freezer.

After approximately 15 minutes in the freezer you can take the cheese balls and put them in a plastic bag and return to the freezer.

When you want to eat the cheese balls, preheat the oven to 360 degrees Fahrenheit. Put the cheese ball in a tray with parchment paper and place the cheese balls about 2 inches from each other.

Put the cheese balls in the HOT oven and bake them for 35 minutes. DON'T open the oven during this time.

After 35 minutes you turn off the oven and remove the tray with the cheese balls. Leave them on the top of the oven and you can eat them as they are cooling off.

Pizza Grilled Cheese

BY BREANNE MCCABE

Ingredients

- 2 slices of bread
- Marinara sauce
- Mozzarella cheese
- ½ stick butter
- (optional) pepperoni
- (optional) Basil/cilantro/oregano

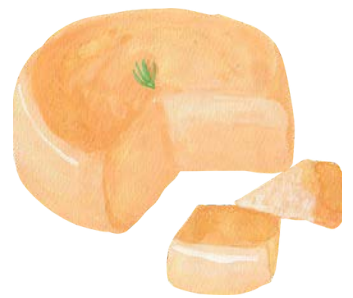


Baking Tools: Pan, spatula, knife



Directions

Heat stove to medium low. Put ¼ stick of butter on pan and wait until melted. Place bread on pan, then add sauce and cheese (optional) pepperoni and basil/oregano/cilantro. Lastly, add other slice of bread then flip. Cook until desired crispiness is reached and enjoy!



Margial!

Chocolate Souffle Cakes

BY ISABELLA CORDOVA



Ingredients

Makes 4 servings

- 6 tablespoons ($\frac{3}{4}$ stick) butter, cut into pieces
- 2 eggs
- 4 ounces semisweet chocolate, chopped
- 2 egg yolks
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup granulated sugar
- Raspberry Sauce (optional)
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoons cornstarch
- Powdered Sugar
- $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon salt

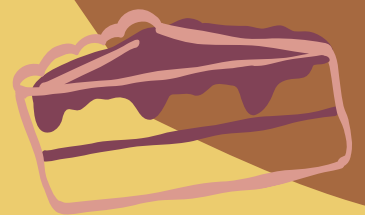
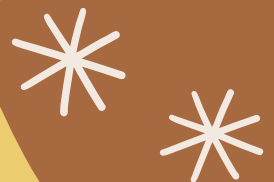


Directions

1. Spray four 6-ounce ramekins with nonstick cooking spray. Place on a small baking sheet.

2. Combine butter and chocolate in a small saucepan; heat over low heat until mixture is melted and smooth, stirring frequently. Combine granulated sugar, cornstarch and salt in a medium bowl; mix well. Add chocolate mixture to sugar mixture; whisk until well blended.

3. Whisk eggs and egg yolks in a small bowl. Add to the sugar mixture; whisk just until blended. Divide evenly among prepared ramekins; cover and refrigerate overnight. If desired, prepare raspberry sauce.



S'mores Pops

BY GIULIA LEPINE

Delicious s'more treats you can have every day and every season!



INGREDIENTS:

1-5 Hershey Chocolate Bars
A bag of marshmallows
6 - inch sticks (marshmallow sticks but smaller)
Graham crackers



DIRECTIONS

1. **FIRST, CRUSH THE GRAHAM CRACKERS AND PUT THEM IN A BOWL.**
2. **PUT THE CHOCOLATE IN A BOWL AND MELT IT IN A MICROWAVE.**
3. **PUT THE MARSHMALLOWS ON THE STICKS.**
4. **DIP THE MARSHMALLOWS IN THE CHOCOLATE**
5. **ROLL THE CHOCOLATE COVERED MARSHMALLOW IN THE CRUSHED GRAHAM CRACKERS.**
6. **LET THE MARSHMALLOWS DRY FOR A HALF HOUR**
7. **ENJOY!!**

Chocolate Chip Muffins



By Ryliegh Retcho

Ingredients

- 1 egg
- 1 cup of milk
- ¼ cup of vegetable oil
- 2 cups of all purpose flour
- ¼ cup of sugar
- 1 tablespoon of baking powder
- ½ teaspoon of salt
- ½ cup of chocolate chips

Directions

- Preheat oven to 400°F
- Place 12 paper muffin liners in a muffin tin
- Beat egg in bowl, stir in milk, add oil
- In a Separate bowl, add flour, sugar, baking soda, salt
- Stir Dry ingredients into wet mixture, adding a little at a time
- Add Chocolate Chips
- Batter should be lumpy
- Fill muffin cups ¾ the way full
- Bake 20-25 minutes or until golden brown
- Remove from pan immediately and enjoy!



GINA'S FAMOUS ICE CREAM RECIPE

BY GINA NEGRON



STEP ONE: Get your favorite ice cream (like my favorite is strawberry ice cream!)

STEP TWO:

Get your favorite cereal and sprinkle a handful on the ice cream (like my favorite, Lucky Charms! I would sprinkle a handful on the ice cream)



STEP THREE:

Get your favorite fruit and put four small pieces on! (This is optional)



STEP FOUR:

Add chocolate, strawberry or any other syrup that you put on ice cream or use milk.



STEP FIVE:

ADD SPRINKLES - WHY DO I EVEN NEED TO TELL YOU THIS?!



STEP SIX:

Whipped cream!

STEP SEVEN:

Lastly, add as many marshmallows as you like, big, small - up to you!



ESCAPE THE EARTHQUAKE

By Izzy Cordova

It was an afternoon on a Sunday, when Leah and her friend, Isabella, stopped at a local cafe for lunch. The waitress greeted them, as she handed each of the kids a menu.

“The blueberry bagel looks tasty!” announced Isabella.

“You’re right, although I’m eyeing those tacos!”

The waitress came back with her clipboard. “What could I get you two today?” the woman asked.

“May I please have the chicken tacos,” Leah said politely.

“And I’ll order the blueberry bagel.” Isabella said while handing the waitress their menus. “

Sounds good! Your food should be out shortly,” exclaimed the woman. She then went back to the kitchen to deliver the order.

As the kids' food was placed in front of them, Leah and Isabella picked up their fork. Leah scooped up a bite sized bit of rice. Suddenly, her plate started to shake and the taco shell split in half! Isabella's bagel fell from her hands! She then said worriedly, “Are you okay Leah?”

“I think so,” Leah responded, but then changed her answer quickly! “Aahhh!!!” It’s an earthquake!”

Everybody went rushing out of the building, everybody, except for Leah and Isabella. “Quick!” We need to get out of here!” Isabella yelled, while her heart raced. She then slipped out of her chair, but Leah stopped Isabella from exiting the cafe. “What are you doing?!” Isabella panicked.

“Just stay calm, and we’ll both be okay.” Leah said swiftly. She then grabbed her friend's hand, as they headed to the table in front of them.

The two slipped past the dishes that fell to the floor, and ducked under the table. Leah demonstrated the position of her hands. “Cover your head with one hand, and hold on with the other.” Then, they waited.

ESCAPE THE EARTHQUAKE

By Izzy Cordova

Continued...

Suddenly, Isabella picked her head up. Boom! Boom! Leah then did the same. "What is that noise?" Leah wondered. The shaking of the earthquake had finally stopped, but a strange sound had come from the kitchen. "I'll go see what's going on," Leah announced bravely, and scared at the same time. She then took off. Leah walked closer and closer to the kitchen, and was about to push the door open, when..... Boom! The door had blasted into pieces! A blazing ball of fire spread onto the wood counters! Smoke rose into the air. Leah couldn't see Isabella anymore. She pushed her way through the fog to escape. "Run!!!"

Leah and Isabella rushed out of the building in a hurry. Outside of the grocery store, across the street, was a fire truck, checking for extreme damage. The truck was about to leave, because the fire was not visible from outside. Leah sprinted to the firefighter closing the door of the truck. "Wait!" she screamed!

The man opened the door again. "Hello, how are -"

"There's a fire in the cafe!" Leah interrupted. Just then, you could see the fire. It had spread to the roof! Without a word back from the firefighter, the truck was being unloaded. A police officer tapped the kids back, and led them to safety.

The officer had led them to a park far away from the flames. The sun started to go down. The three were silent, but they all watched as the firefighters put out the fire. After the fire was put out, one of the firefighters had walked over to Leah and Isabella. He took off his gear and sat down next to them. "Are you two okay?" the man asked. The kids nodded yes. "Well, the fire is clear, and damage is gone if you want to walk around now." the firefighter then said.

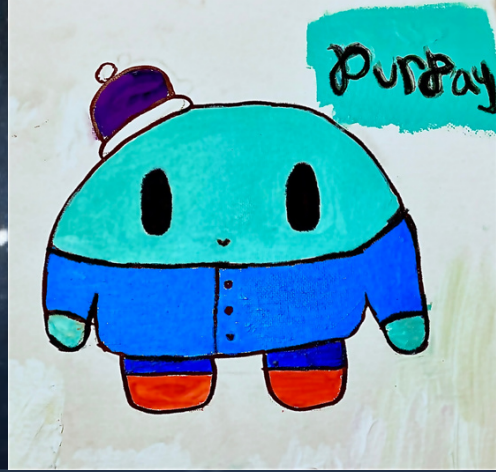
"Okay!" Isabella agreed. The two sat back up again, and turned around. "How about some ice cream?" Isabella asked Leah. Leah squinted and saw a small ice cream cart on the other side of the park.

"Why not?" she answered. They walked through the sunset and through the field. Leah ordered vanilla, and Isabella got mint. Then..... Plop! Leah's cone dropped from her hand.

Isabella stared open-mouthed. "Just kidding!" Leah joked. That evening Leah and Isabella laughed and laughed. After all, it had been a great afternoon.

THE STORY OF PURPAY

BY HELENA GELL



Purpay is a little, green, friendly alien. He lives on **Planet Purple**. The whole populations names start with **P** (i.e. His mom: **Palm**, His sister: **Petunia**, His brother: **Purbee**, His Youngest sister: **Purpila**). He is the second-youngest in his family, and he is very happy on **Planet Purple**.

One day, Purpay woke up on a different planet called Earth. There were **HUMONGOUS** creatures, (he was the size of one of their feet!). Later, he found out they were "Humans". He got very tired, and found a hole just big enough for him. He slept until mid-day the next day. He was hungry, so he went to search for some food, and he found a berrybush. He went to reach for one, and a little girl (who looked about age 8) picked him up. It was very cold outside, and her hands were warm.

"Don't eat that!" she said. "They're poisonous!"

She put Purpay in her hat and carried him to her house. She had a miniature house that she called a "Dollhouse". She had a miniature everything! Coffee mugs, couches, chairs; she even had a little tv! But, she also had mini clothes!!! The little girl gave him something called "hot chocolate", it was delicious! The rest of the afternoon, the little girl played dolls with him, dressed him up, played with him and even gave him some food (specifically marshmallows). When it was time to sleep, she let him sleep in the miniature doll bed.

The next morning, they went to the park. She dressed Purpay in a tiny coat, tiny boots, and a little purple hat. As they strolled through the park, it was snowy and Purpay tried to catch snowflakes on his tongue! This made the little girl giggle. They walked into a building labeled "MALL". There was a **HUGE** tree. It had tinsel and ornaments and lights, and a bright star at the top! It was the most beautiful thing he had ever seen. They stopped at a store that had a bunch of gadgets and toys. She set him on a ledge and whispered, "Stay here,". So he waited until she came out with a small purple box with a green bow on top. She picked him up and they went to a "Santa Clause Stand" and they got to sit on "Santa clause's" lap. (On Planet Purple, they have someone named purple clause. Yes, purple is the main theme of Planet Purple.) The little girl's mom said, "Say cheese!" but of course, Purpay cant say "cheese" so he said "aaaaaa!" with his mouth wide open. Then a small machine clicked and flashed and they were off to go!

THE STORY OF **PURPAY**

BY HELENA GELL CONTINUED...

When they got home, it was late, so they watched a movie. The popcorn fit perfectly into Purpay's mouth. Right before bed, the little girl whispered, "Tomorrow is Christmas Eve! I bought you a gift. I really hope you like it!" she yawned and soon after fell asleep. After a while he looked at the stars and realized how much he missed his family. *I miss you guys*, he thought. *Goodnight*.

The next day was Christmas Eve! The little girl and her mom looked like they were planning for a party. *OH! A Christmas Eve party!* He thought. Soon, a whole bunch of people started coming through the door (aunts, uncles, grandparents, and cousins, he assumed.) Once they had all settled, the little girl introduced Purpay to her family. They were fascinated by him, so he went on to be polite, and said, "BAAAAGA!" And all of them giggled. So he said "Ooga shagoo ne!" and they all cracked up laughing. The party went on, the little girl and her cousins played with Purpay in the dollhouse.

Later, before they went to bed, they got cookies and milk on a table near the tree. The little girl explained to Purpay, "Okay, so when we go to sleep, Santa will leave presents under the tree!"

"AaaaAAAAaaaah!" said Purpay. Suddenly, they heard a crash in the backyard. They went to see what happened and there was a tiny purple spaceship and 4 aliens slightly bigger than him popped out. "Mom! Petunia! Purbee! Purpila!" Purpay said excitedly. They all had a big group hug. "I missed you all so much!"

"We were worried sick! Are you all right? WHY ARE THOSE CREATURES STARING AT US?!? It's time to go home!" his mom said.

The little girl and her mom didnt have a clue to what they were saying, but they got the idea. The little girl whispered something to Purpay and he asked his mom; "Can we stay here overnight mom? Please? It's Christmas Eve!"

"Well alright but just tonight!" his mom replied. All of his family and the little girl and her mom sat on the couch while Purpay told about his adventures on earth. Then it was bedtime, so the little girl got out some other doll beds for his family to sleep in.

"Goodnight everyone!" she said.

Ooho!" they all replied. The little girl giggled as she walked away to her own bed.

THE STORY OF **PURPAY**

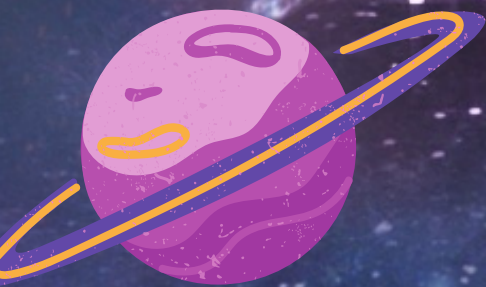
BY HELENA GELL CONTINUED...

In the morning, Purpay woke up and woke up his family because there were presents under the tree! The little girl came down and gasped. She called down her mom and she started opening up presents. In the middle of all of it, she got out the purple box with the green bow! She said, "Here Purpay! I got you a gift!"

He opened it up and inside was a stuffed animal with a purple hat! Then he felt a stab of guilt for not getting her anything. And as if she read his mind she said, "No, it's okay. Because the joy you gave me was spending time with you! I also have this picture to always remember you!" she showed him the picture of him and her and Santa clause. "I will really miss you!" she started tearing up, and so did Purpay.

"Grrbily!"

She knew what he meant and they shared a hug. Well, sort of, he hugged her cheek and she wrapped her soft hands around him. Later, after they all had eaten breakfast, all the aliens loaded into the spaceship. And as they went into the sky, the little girl and Purpay waved until there wasn't a dot of each other left seen. Up , up, up, into the galaxy, not knowing if he'd ever see the little girl again.



An Excerpt from

FOR AMIRA

By Charlotte Gunther
Part Two from Spring 2023

Two weeks, two weeks that's how long it took to gather the needed materials. You would never think that two weeks would ever take so long. Questions pounded Aliyah from all sides every second of the day. Whenever Aliyah heard voices outside her bedroom door she unbarricaded her door, and crept out into the hallway as covertly as possible. She glanced down the plain stonewalled hallway with torches lining the path. The voices of servants streamed in from a room near Aliyah's as they made up the nearby bedrooms. She would dart to one of the servant's cleaning carts and grab something she needed. One time she grabbed a pocket knife. Another time she grabbed a sewing kit and a basket of linens. She even grabbed a dagger from a sheath attached to the cart. Each time she wandered outside of her room she heard snatches of conversations from the servants.

"At the end of the week, yes, at the end of the week."

"Royal line."

"Do you think they'll like the rooms?"

Aliyah didn't know what they meant. But she did know one thing: those rooms hadn't been used in years if her father was having the servants fix up the rooms. Someone must be coming to stay for a while. Someone important.

Finally at last after 14 days of feverishly quick work, Aliyah and Ellie had made it just barely to Friday night and were reviewing their plan. Ellie said, "Jon will meet you once you get to the bottom. Go with him and no matter what happens, don't stop for anything or anyone."

"Oh and Aliyah ..." Ellie added sternly, her face serious, "Whatever you do don't look back. I'll be at the meeting point just don't look back."

Aliyah nodded as Ellie passed her the bed roll she had sewn from some of the stolen linens and her bag.

Aliyah slung her bag over her shoulder as she took one final look at the room.

The first time Ellie fell on her from the vent, her mother, her sister, a happy family, the thought of what the room had been once upon a time, came rushing back to her in a wave of memories. With one swift movement she broke the window. The shattering of the glass couldn't be heard as it was lost in the howling of the wind. She carefully climbed out of the window and descended into the darkness.

THE NOT SO IMAGINARY FRIEND

BY RYLIEGH RETCHO

Violet was 4-years-old when she made her first friend. It was an imaginary friend but she didn't think so. Neither did her friend.

"Mommy! Mommy!" Violet shouted as she ran across the schoolyard to her mother.

"Yes, honey. What is it?"

"I made a new friend today on the playground."

"That's great," her mother said. "Where is her mom? I'd like to meet her."

"She's right next to you, Mommy."

"Oh, I see. Honey, this is an imaginary friend. We need to make real friends."

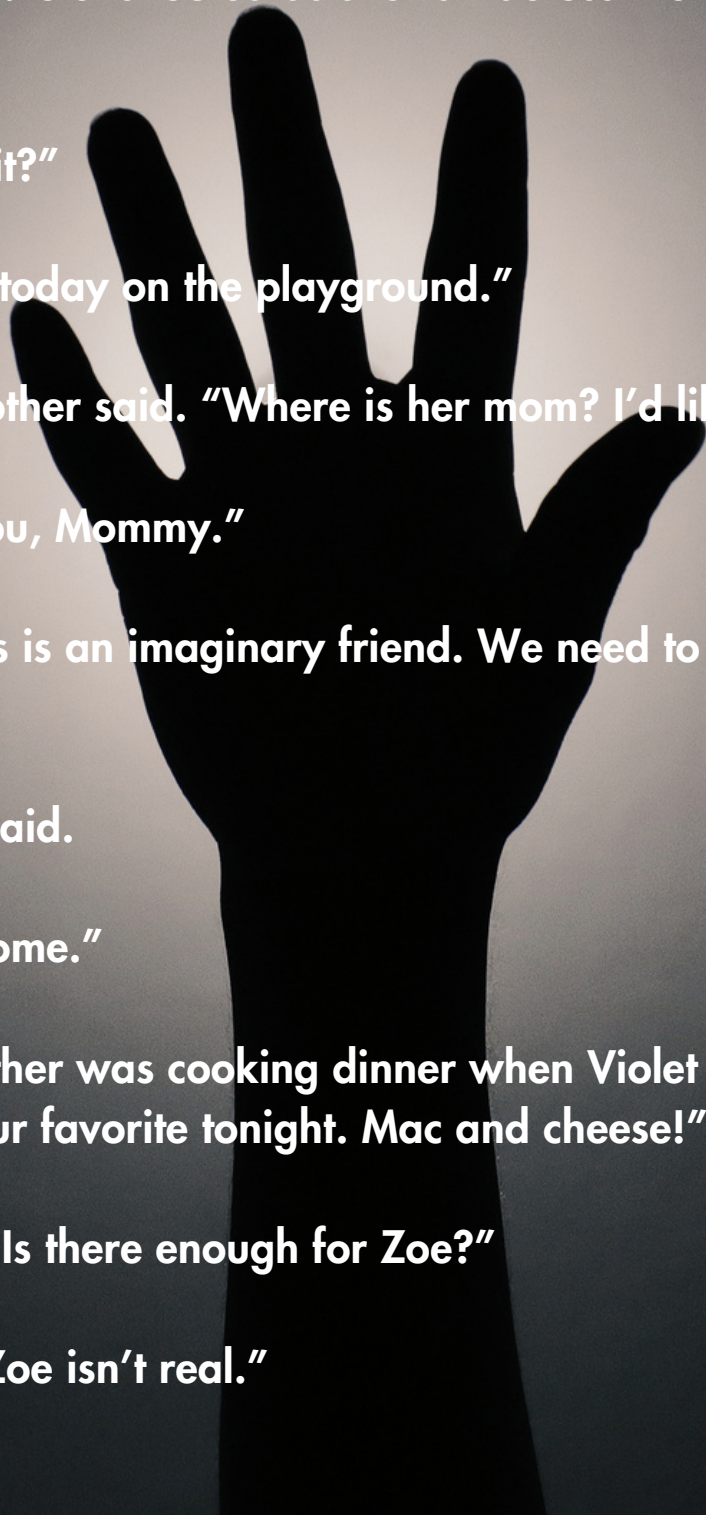
"Zoe is real," Violet said.

"Ok honey, let's go home."

At home, Violet's mother was cooking dinner when Violet walked in. "Hi, Violet. I'm making your favorite tonight. Mac and cheese!"

"Thank you, mommy. Is there enough for Zoe?"

"Hon, I told you that Zoe isn't real."



THE NOT SO IMAGINARY FRIEND, CONTINUED

BY RYLIEGH RETCHO

"But she is real," Violet said angrily.

"OK then, but there is not enough for Zoe."

Later that evening, when Violet's mother was getting Violet ready for bed, she heard a noise coming from Violet's room. She went to check it out and when she got there, she saw nothing. She thought it was odd but continued getting Violet ready for bed. She put Violet to bed and went to get herself ready for bed.

Bam! There was a loud crash in Violet's room. "AAH!" She ran to her room to make sure she was okay and when she got there, she found a little girl in Violet's bed instead of her. She was wearing a white gown and had long messy brown hair. Her hair covered her face so Violet's mom couldn't see who she was.

"Violet?" her mom said with a shaky voice. "Are you okay?"

"There is no Violet anymore," a voice said from the bed. "Only Zoe." The girl moved the hair from her face and the mom screamed. Zoe had no face. It was just an empty black void.

All anyone can figure out is that Violet and her mom vanished. No one knows more.

The End.

HENRY ANDERSON

By Addison Hurd

The screams and shouts the cries of pain (so unprofessional). Those were the sounds from two years ago when my parents died in a car crash. My name is Henry Anderson, I don't believe in feelings and emotions (awful). After the car crash, I realized it does not fix anything but I do know about the real world and all of its horrific's, like birthdays, those memes on Snapbook or whatever, and worst of all, Mrs. Beth Carterson.

She is supposed to be nurturing to me, make sure I have a good education, but I am smarter than her. Actually the smartest. There are other kids at the Birch Wing Orphanage but all of them are licking stuff off the floor... and pooping. I complained about this, but they said, "They are two years old." Age does not give you an excuse!

I haven't gotten adopted yet and I don't even know why. I mean, I am smart, kind-ish, and I am intelligent! Then I hear the words every kid wants to hear (except me) over the loudspeakers. "ADOPTION TIME." The time where the infants come to the front lawn and see if anyone wants to pick them up, sign some papers and adopt. I have stopped participating in this activity because apparently Beth found my hiding spot (smarter than I thought, I guess), but today was different. I felt something, so instead of hiding and hoping no one comes to find me, I went out into the sun and sat down watching all the kids getting picked up by adults and leaving away from the Birch Wing.

I felt something and then before I could get up and walk back into the darkness someone said, "I told you, I didn't want any two-year-olds," said the woman.

"Sweetie, I am so sorry I called this place and they said they had a 13-year-old" said the man standing next to her comforting her. I knew I was 13, but they couldn't be talking about me. Finally I got up and before I could walk into the orphanage, there standing in the most cheerful smile I could ever have seen on that face (scary) she said, "Wait don't leave, your kid is right here!" Then before I knew it there was that woman, she was running up to me!

This was probably the most awkward moment of my life. There was me, packing my stuff, then having that guy calling me "kiddo" and the cherry on top, was me leaving the orphanage. I have always wanted to, but now that it's actually happening I am not sure if that's what I have wanted.

THE THIRD FLOOR BEDROOM

By Lainey Murphy



It all started not too long ago, when a couple from Virginia moved to the third-floor bedroom. They were like every other couple that walked through the rusty double doors of the apartment building.

The middle aged couple moved to New York City for job opportunities that were too good to turn down. Sally devoted her life to help those in need as a pediatrician doctor and Jack is a trauma nurse. They met on their first day of internship. They always went out of their way to help those in need. At night they would feed the homeless with a delicious home cooked meal.

When they walked into the third-floor bedroom there was a foul smell as if someone died and the corpse was somewhere in the bedroom...

“Jack, I'll be back. I'm going to get some air freshener.”

Sally left the room unsure if Jack was going to be okay. When she came back there was blood splattered everywhere.

“Jack, where are you?”

Then she saw Jack's body laying there on the stone cold ground. She hunched over. There was a pencil stabbed deep into his heart. Sally tried to save him, but it was too late; he was gone....

Sally was about to call 911. She reached into her back pocket but her phone was missing, though she was sure that she had left it there. She was looking around frantically wondering how to get the heck out of this place. The door was locked and the windows were bolted shut from the outside. There were no tools, nothing. The only thing she could do now was wait until the sun would come up.

Just then, Jack's body rose up, his bones twisted and turned.

“That's it, I'm DONE!!!!” Sally said painting.

She could see a glimpse of light coming from the window where the wooden planks did not cover. She heard a clicking sound. The door was open!!!!!!! Sally ran out of the rusty double doors of the apartment building back to Virginia.

THE END OR IS IT JUST THE BEGINNING.....

The Invincible Monster

By Vivian House

Arianna stood on the side of a barren rocky mountain, looking at the world around her. As far as she could see there was only smoke and death. No flowers were blooming and the trees blackened and burned limbs stretched like fingers reaching towards the sky. She was staring, dumbfounded at chaos and terror that she had helped- no she HAD created it. She had torn down towns, destroyed crops, set fire to peoples hopes, dreams...and families, literally.

She had the bruises and scrapes to prove it. An ugly scar twisted down the side of her neck from a farmer's pitchfork that had not been treated in time. Her body and clothes were covered in dirt and ripped practically to shreds. She had no home, not now anyways, always traveling, destroying, then moving on. It was a shock to be back here. The place where she was raised, the place she used to call home. Her family was dead by now but their old home still stood. So many memories lay in that house, most nothing but a blurry jumble of images after all this time. Only the most recent was still clear in her mind, the last time she ever stepped foot in that house. When she swore her loyalty to master, became not a human but a tool, a weapon. "Weapons don't have minds" master says, "thats why you must give yours to me." Arianna still looks human though, she hasn't aged a day in so long, years and years at least. It's been so long, and she has been free so little she has lost track of time. It's been at least fifty years since she last ate, and longer still since she's slept. Her long auburn hair is tangled and her chocolate brown eyes are tired and too old, too tired, have seen too many deaths. They were the kind of eyes that watched unmoving as people threw themselves to her feet and wailed for mercy. Offering anything, gold, silver, even their children. Anything they had ever owned was offered to her to spare their own foolish lives. Every little trinket you could find had been offered to her. She never answers, what was the need? They were dead before they could finish talking.

But... sometimes she had doubts, little pieces of her old self breaking through. Just hints of a conscience under the layers of darkness and evil wrapped ever too tightly around her soul. Little voices that said, "don't do this Arianna." She ignored them, she had given up her life completely. She was now nothing more than skin, flesh and bones to be used only for killing. Only for what her master wanted. How easy life was now, no choices, no free will, her master was everything, he needed her. Without her he couldn't destroy the world. If that was what master wanted she would do it, she had no other choice. Thats what she wanted... right? Thats what she liked. Arriana didn't know anymore, she was just the simple farmer's daughter, dreamy and foolish. Arriana had become a monster. A ruthless, vicious killer... starting with her family.

Arianna felt the familiar prickling of the master returning. He would take over her thoughts so she wouldn't have to think anymore, Arianna liked that, didn't she? She thought she did. Thinking made her head hurt. It was ever so blissful, to just let someone think for her, to be absolutely and completely under their control. But just this once she didn't want to return. The prickling turned to sharp pokes like thorns poking at her from all angles every time she moved. Her precious moments of freedom were receding. Master was taking over, slowly now but it would only get quicker. Arianna knew that from experience.

Arianna reached into her pocket and pulled out a scrap of paper and just the stub of a pencil. If she did this, what would happen? Master would be incredibly angry, that she knew. If he was in control, who knows how he would punish her? It would certainly be something painful. Before she could think

The Invincible Monster continued

By Vivian House

anymore, did she mention thinking made her head hurt? and before master could take over. Arianna took a deep breath to steal her nerves and wrote. It was simple and fast, exactly what she needed: a riddle that only the purest and bravest could solve. Her writing in the messy sprawl of someone who had not written or even spoken words to another human in decades. She finished, and with the last shred of her own control, flung the scrap into the wind, praying to gods who had never helped her before that it would find the right person because this was no way for any girl to live.

Her hand went slack, and her eyes glowed black as she spoke. She spoke not in the voice of a seventeen year old girl but in the voice of something old and strange, something secret, something you'd never want to meet. A wisp of black smoke curled from her mouth as she said, in Master's thick silky almost too sweet voice,

"My poor sweet little invincible monster, don't you remember my ONLY rule?"

Its voice turned angry and almost dangerous. Arianna had never heard it talk like that to her before. After all, she was its favorite, not anymore though. It said,

"Never communicate with humans ... WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?????"

"Yesss, I think there will be many punishments for you tonight, little monster."

Arianna's eyes flashed black and she fell to the ground a scream ripping out of her and sweat ran down her face merging with tears even as her mouth twisted into a cruel smile.

Black curls whipped around her face as five year old Daphne scrambled to the top of a huge rock. Skirts fluttering around her in the windy afternoon. She was reaching unsuccessfully for the shred of paper dancing in the wind just out of reach above her head, her older sister, Charlotte glanced up at her from where she was weeding the garden far far below, "be careful!" she called. But it was drowned out by a victorious squeal from the top of the rock. Daphne had caught the paper and came slipping down to land in a heap at the bottom. The paper still clutched in one grubby fist. Read it read it! She chanted, as Charlotte helped her up and frowned disapprovingly at the new tears and stains on her dress. Charlotte gently took the paper and read the single sentence written in the shaky handwriting of a girl who looked like she had not written in decades it said...

All legends start with a truth...

Help me find my ending.



Record Player

By Asher Levy-Dahl

DING DONG!

The mail was here, Kaylen had been waiting for a letter. She anxiously approached the door to get the mail. Then at the top of the stack: Miss Kaylen Ford, 34 Parks Drive, Connecticut, NY.

Kaylen opened the envelope swiftly, her family surrounding her, waiting.

“Dear Miss Ford, congratulations you have been accepted into Studio Lotus in Asbery! We are dearly sorry but you may only bring one person with you so choose wisely. See you sunday! Austin Greene.”

“Oh no.” Maya Kaylen’s little sister said.

“It's okay” her mom tried to comfort her but it was too late. Maya was already bawling. Sadly, Kaylen knew who she would choose and it wasn't her parents. It was her friend, Anna, who had been with her since she was in third grade and Anna was in fourth grade.

Ring Ring. The phone kept ringing until finally she heard “Hello? Oh thank god you answered. I get to go to Studio Lotus and I want you to come with me, please,” Kaylen said. Then, Anna basically started reciting what seemed like a monologue, saying stuff like how she's so proud and happy. They spend the next few days packing. And then it was Sunday.

At lunchtime they got to the apartment. Right away they were amazed. “Oh my god,” they both said. Then in the corner Kaylen noticed a record player with a note attached to it.

The note read: “We expect great things of you and we’re so proud! Love, mom.” Kaylen was lamenting the job and leaving her mom. But then she remembered that Anna was by her side.

DON'T FALL ASLEEP

BY IZZY CORDOVA AND SIENNA JARER



Beep.

October 13 2008.

It was midnight when Jack heard his phone ring. He woke up confused and scared of why his phone was ringing so late at night. He nervously picked up his phone and saw the number on his phone was anonymous. He thought nothing of it and went back to sleep.

About two hours later his phone rang again. He saw "Anonymous" on his phone and just thought it was one of his friends trying to be funny, so he laughed it off and went back to sleep again. About 30 minutes later, his phone rang again, and the caller was anonymous. He tried to decline the call once more, but it wouldn't go away. The ringing of the phone just kept getting louder and louder and louder.

He finally answered the phone and all he heard was white noise and someone mumbling, "Don't fall asleep."

"Haha, very funny," Jack says. Before he has the chance to say anything else the line disconnects - *Beep*. "Huh, that was really weird," Jack says. "Whatever, I'm going back to sleep."

All of the sudden a voice comes from the phone, "You shouldn't have done that..."

TO BE CONTINUED...

The Man Who Escaped

By Asher Levy-Dahl



Anya Green was a nice enough kid, she got good grades and helped her teacher. She thought it was a nice normal college Monday until she got to school. Outside the doors there were police officers and police dogs, she was kind of scared because she didn't know what was going on but she went to class. In class, everyone was murmuring about the police but no one knew what was going on. She asked her friend Addi Spear what was going on but she didn't know either, until the teacher walked in with a worn look on his face. He got the children to quiet down eventually, and then the announcements came on. "As you all may have noticed some additions to our school, do not fret unless you have something to hide. The dogs will be doing locker searches and class searches throughout the day."

At 11:47 Anya's class was searched and they found nothing. Anya went to lunch and a random stranger was sitting in her seat. "Can you please move?" She asks him politely, and he does but she notices he's the only person in the lunchroom with a backpack. Anya never actually spoke to him but she saw him in the hallway from time to time. The boy eventually says hi to Anya and they start talking. They talk about classes and teachers. After some time the boy asks if Anya can keep a secret, she says yes and he tells her that he had a certain (dangerous) contraband machine on school grounds. Anya was struck with a bad feeling in her stomach and weakly said okay. The boy, who found out his name was Josh. Josh said that he was holding it for a friend and that he couldn't keep it at his house. Anya thought to herself "So that's why the police were here". She went along her day with that thought hanging over her like a bee to honey.

Anya wanted to tell Addi but then Addi would tell a teacher and Josh would know she told and then Josh might hurt her. She was scared 24/7 now and tried to avoid Josh but he kept sitting at her table, so she moved to a crowded table so he couldn't find a spot there. He kept stopping by her locker to try and talk but Anya ignored him even though it might have been a bad idea. On Friday she was relieved that it was the end of the week even though she loved school because she would have the weekend to contemplate whether to turn him in or not. Friday passed and Saturday did too and still nothing. She realized that if she turned him in he could face jail time and not be able to get to her for a while.

The Man Who Escaped, continued.

By Asher Levy-Dahl

On Monday Anya finally found the courage to go down to the principal's office. She waited and waited for what felt like centuries until the principal Mr. Thorpe, a nice-looking tall man called her in. "Hi Anya, how are you?" He asked "Okay," Anya said shakily she told him about Josh and everything that happened. Mr. Thorpe wasn't mad at her, surprisingly he was proud that she told an adult. Josh and two police officers got called into the office and the principal told Josh that he would have to testify in a court of law and that he would probably be getting jail time. Josh was furious and tried to reach for his backpack but one police officer took it away and the other detained him.

The next day Anya brought the newspaper with her to school to show Addi, the front page the headline was Local 16-year-old boy sent to prison after possible school endangerment. "oh my god" said Addi as they flipped the page and it gave information on what happened but what stuck out was what it said at the bottom. Joshua Anthony, 16, when put in cell stated "Anya I know you're reading this and just know I'm coming back." Anya was even more scared than she was before but she decided that she'll be ready. Addi said that she would protect Anya because they knew that she would be first on his list. But Anya said, "I hope he's shaking and quaking there in that cell, scared that he's going to see me."

Anya thought wrong though because when she got home she was not prepared or brave. What she did was she locked the front door and hid in her room. At 3:45 there was a knock at the door and Anya got scared half to death but it was just Addi who was going to stay with her for the next few days. They lived okay for the next few days but with a bad feeling in Anya's gut. Addi and her were just talking but then Addi's voice got cold "You know how Josh targeted you instead of everyone else." Anya was a bit freaked out by this but she said yes Addi proceeded to tell her that Josh had asked her who some of her more gullible friends were.

Addi thought that he was just going to play a harmless prank. But she had no idea that he was going to try and hurt her. Addi apologized but Anya didn't talk to her for the rest of the night until dinner. Addi tried apologizing again and Anya accepted it this time. Anya apologized and said that she knew it was an accident and that Addi wasn't trying to hurt her. They ate dinner lightly chatting with Anya's cat, Ophelia, curled up underneath them.

They went to bed but Anya didn't sleep that well. Eventually, she fell asleep and in the morning she was shaken awake by Addi. She seemed like she was crying before Anya got up quickly and followed Addi. Anya realized that Ophelia was nowhere to be found and she started to cry. They got really scared and started to comprehend that something probably happened to Ophelia. Right away the first thing that came to both of their minds was Joshua. He must have

The Man Who Escaped, continued.

By Asher Levy-Dahl

taken her or something. But they were both capable 20-year-olds and knew that they could get her back. When Anya and Addi were looking around for Ophelia or Joshua they got a bit anxious.

By six o'clock both of them were sweaty and out of breath with no cat in sight so they decided to go back home and continue the search tomorrow. That night at dinner nobody said anything, they just silently cried. The next morning both of them were groggy and had bloodshot eyes from the lack of sleep and the crying. Around noon the mail came. It was the usual bills and the newspaper, but then they realized that there was another letter with no return address. They opened it and read the letter, Dear Anya, I know you must have noticed that something has gone missing in your home lately but do not pine for Ophelia because she is safe. If you send me one thousand dollars to a bank account under the name Shane Sullivan, by Monday of next week then I will give her back.

Anya was petrified with both fear and anger. Thankfully she had some money stored for special occasions but she was desperate so she rummaged through her stuff and found the money she brought it over to the bank, deposited it and left. Both she and Addi waited and waited in agony until Tuesday morning Ophelia was back. Even though she was safe at home Anya knew this was not the end for Joshua. They went along with their regular lives and did everything normal but then they got another letter. Anya you may have gotten your cat back but just know this is not the end. The next day Anya and Addi went down to the police station to try and get some protection.

"We need a police officer!" Addi said hurriedly "Why?" the sergeant said. Anya and Addi explained everything that happened with Josh and finally, the sergeant said "I can give ya one of 'em." He was talking about an officer. "Okay that's good enough I guess," said Addi. The police officer looked disgruntled at that statement but just went along with it. "I'm still scared" said Anya "Me too" agreed Addi, they were both sitting in the back of a cop car getting escorted back home.

Be on the lookout for Part Two of "The Man Who Escaped" in our Spring Magazine!

THE LAST HOPE

By Vivian House

It has been over 400 years since something smashed into our sun, sending massive meteors crashing into our planet, killing millions and sending our galaxy into a state of darkness and terror the universe has never before seen. Some of us have survived, as we have always seemed to do. The rich built bunkers stocked to the brim with anything you could want or need and they survived, if only just barely. As for the poorer souls... well lets just say dying would have been a mercy. My name is Aravia. I am the leader of a small colony on what's left of the planet Elirya. If you're reading this that means that either I have found a way to save my people or everyone I love has died. I see no other ending to this tragic tale that to my regret is absolutely real. As I write this my people are in grave danger, but I am terrified that I do not know how to save them. I don't have much time but I want someone to hear my story, to know the troubles my people have faced because I will NOT have them be forgotten. Here is my story:

After the meteors destroyed Elirya, our dying planet permanently changed. In the initial explosion many died, and many more didn't. Those that survived were not quite human anymore... We first dared to venture out of our bunkers and secret bases where we stayed hidden, like timid little mice. Almost two years after the meteors first hit, people finally crept out into our new world. We were astonished and horrified. In all our planning and waiting for years in the bunkers everyone had their own idea about what our new world was going to be like. But I don't think anyone had pictured what awaited us. Everything had changed. Wildfires of brilliant gold and amber flames still burned, tearing across the land even two years later, lighting the world in an eerie red glow and covering everything in a suffocating layer of ash. Huge winged beasts that were not there before now soared overhead letting out bone chilling roars while strange creatures who only vaguely looked like the animals they once were lurked in the shadows of partially destroyed buildings. Thick angry clouds covered the sky, never disappearing as thunder rolled across the sky, teasing with rain that never fell.

The air was sweet enough to choke on, which some people did. Everywhere I looked there were dead bodies, some were just piles of bones picked clean by something I didn't even want to know about and others... had looked disturbingly fresh. After that first trip some people continued to go outside to try to find food because we were running dangerously low but most people preferred the relative safety of the bunker. Slowly we started to realize that the more time we spent outside, the more we changed. It was very gradual, not nearly like the animals and people that changed into horrid freaks immediately after the explosion, with no emotions or instinct except inextinguishable hunger. At the time some of us were

THE LAST HOPE, CONTINUED.

By Vivian House

changing faster than others but now I don't think there is a single one of us that still looks human. I stopped aging first. I have looked like I was 18 for over 400 years. The whites of my eyes have turned completely black with a ring of gold in the very center. My once brown hair turned completely white and my skin took on a grayish tint. My teeth fell out one by one and were replaced with incredibly sharp fangs and my nails are now claws.

Although most of us still have human emotions, instincts and have stuck together in little colonies all over Elyria, it has taken me far too long to accept that if I don't get all of us out of here we will be little better than animals. We will be just like the people who turned in the first few years, perhaps worse. I started seeing signs of this a few decades ago but I ignored them. I had convinced myself and everyone else we were safe. First it was just little things, eating raw flesh, snarling and growling, fighting for leadership, (I won). But lately things have been getting worse and more and more people are slowly going insane, turning into wild beasts. It breaks my heart but we kill anyone who does. They are a danger to my pack and I would do ANYTHING for them, they are the only family I have left. We have found evidence that while my people are becoming more wild and savage, the original monsters are becoming smarter, able to set traps and ambushes. Something they weren't able to do even a decade before.

One day, a few months ago I was hunting and I stumbled across a large gaping hole in the ground (literally). Something smelled very strange inside and around it and had me worried so I snuck back to it in the middle of the night. I couldn't go in the day because if I had, others would have insisted on coming with me and this might end up being dangerous. Besides I didn't even know if there was anything down there. For all I knew it could have been a nest full of harmless giant bunnies(they were delicious when fried) but I had a feeling that whatever was down there was not as harmless as I hoped it would be.

Late that night I carefully lowered my painfully thin body through the hole. At the bottom I paused, my boots squishing in the wet mud, to let my eyes adjust to the bleak darkness. A thin shaft of moonlight trickled in through the hole above, illuminating a cavern much larger than I had originally thought. Water trickled down the walls running into an underground stream somewhere in the darkness. Above by the cavern ceiling bats rustled and squeaked. The damp, cold air seeped through my clothes making me shiver. I wanted to get this figured out and then leave this place and cover it up so no one could find it again. I walked along the stream following my nose, the smell got worse the further in I went. Soon I could barely see and was stumbling along blindly. My hair caught on the wall and tugged me backwards. Hissing, I crouched to untangle it from the rocks. Mud and grime covered me and when I stood up to go on I banged my head on the ceiling. Hard. Gritting my teeth against the pain, I stumbled forward, the ceiling was getting lower and the smell was so much stronger I gagged.

THE LAST HOPE, CONTINUED.

By Vivian House

Suddenly up ahead I could see the faint outline of an opening up ahead quickening my steps. I hurried forward so anxious to get out of here that I almost went right off the edge of a huge cliff. Only my quick reflexes stopped me. When I saw what was in front of me, I immediately dropped to my knees and crawled forward both disgusted and horrified. Spread out before me in the biggest cavern I had ever seen was a colony of the freaks, some squatted around fires, FIRE they had figured out how to use fire! Others resettled and fought on the floor of the cavern. But what caught my eye was a small group huddled in the back of the cavern surrounded by freaks that looked to be guarding them.

As I watched a freak reached his hand out and grabbed a woman's arm she screamed and struggled but none of the others did anything to help. They seemed to be backing away, turning their backs on the poor woman who was being led, still struggling around a corner until she was out of my sight but where the other people could see everything. I gritted my teeth together to keep from screaming. This was awful, I had to return home and get some people to help me. Maybe we could launch an attack by sneaking through the tunnels but we would probably be slaughtered. We were so outnumbered here.

As I watched I saw a freak walk away from the group of humans still cowering in a corner. He plunked down next to some other freak and left a clear path around the outskirts of the cavern. Without thinking, I started making my way down the steep slope of the cavern wall. It wasn't a long way to the floor and I managed to get down without any of the freaks noticing, thankfully. I ducked under a shallow ledge to make sure the path was still mostly clear of freaks. I can't imagine what they would have done if they had noticed me. Actually, I could very clearly imagine what would happen to me. It wasn't something that was high on my list. Of things to do before I die. And it's a very long list.

I wiped the mud and grime off my face as best I could. But after considering how best to cross for a second I reached down, scooped a handful of mud and gravel off the floor of my little cave and smeared it back onto my face, then my arms and shirt. It smelled nasty and felt even worse but at least now in the dim light of the cavern. I would be able to blend into the rocks better, and the disgusting smelling sludge covering my body would hopefully mask my human scent. Just in case, I slipped a small knife out of the side of my boot and hoped I wouldn't have to use it.



The Future Horror

By Lola F. Stern-Crespo

It was a nice cloudy day in mid-Danish summer, and I wasn't aware that major changes would come my way. I was in my summer house in Slagelse, Denmark, 50 minutes outside Copenhagen. Out of the backyard windows, you can see the blue ocean by a tan beach. My favorite place in the world. I remember hearing some chit-chat between my parents talking about the United States for a few nights before going to bed, but I thought it was nothing out of the ordinary as sometimes we would spend summer or winter holidays over there.

Suddenly my parents asked me to sit down with them, they were squeezing my hands, and their faces looked like they were trying very hard to smile, but I saw fear. In front of me, I saw my grandma looking quite serious but happy, they all looked worried. I was confused. All of a sudden my mom asked, "Ann do you want to say it?"

"Say what?" I thought.

"Are you sure you don't want to say it yourselves? She is your daughter after all," my grandma replied.

"Yes I am sure," my mom said with hesitation.

I whispered to mom, "Smile," trying to reassure her.

"Okay," my grandma breathes heavily. "You are moving to the United States, Yay!" she exclaimed with a smile. My parents were smiling too.

My body slumped over, and I felt sadness taking over, "Why do we have to move?" I said with a sob. I never would have thought that words could feel like boulders. My body slumped over, and I felt sadness taking over, "Why do we have to move?" I said with a sob. I never would have thought that words could feel like boulders. Tears felt warm, but yet were burning in my eyes. I couldn't feel myself. My mind went

The Future Horror, Continued.

By Lola F. Stern-Crespo



pitch black, and the demon took over me. I was so mad, so angry, so sad. I felt a bit lonely. Tears were running down my face. My family tried to comfort me but I wanted to be alone. I ripped out of my parents grip. I was terrified, petrified, and scared all at the same time about the future. I raced through the hallway to my room. I grabbed my pillow, and a storm of tears came over me. My pillow was soaking wet.

After 3 minutes of crying and not knowing how I felt, my mom knocked on my door. “Lola, can I come in?” she quietly whispered at the door. I was too sad and lazy to respond. So she opened the door and sat by my pillow. I sat up, in hopes that this was a bad joke, but my mom hugged me, she was also very sad.

“Me and your dad want to be closer to our parents, especially mine. They are very old and frail,” she responded.

At that moment, I wasn't ready for the whole truth. My mom said to me that we are going to be living with my grandparents until we get our own house. That made me very sad, but I had to smile and say how excited I was, so my grandma wouldn't hear how much I hated the idea of moving, even to be with her. My life as I knew it was coming to an end.

Finally, I agreed that it was a good idea, and I know now why. Nevertheless I asked for eye drops because, gosh, my eyes were so dry. I tried to take a nap, but since my brain was spinning around I couldn't rest in any way.

Now, I have lived in the United States for over 2 years, and soon I am going to celebrate Thanksgiving for the third time, even though I never did that before. I am currently living in New York State, but when I originally moved here, I lived in New Jersey. I am also living with my Abuelita and parents. Last year I went to Denmark during the summer to see my friends. I really hoped to not forget my Danish because it is my mother tongue, and go to University there. My mom was right, if I didn't move I wouldn't meet the wonderful friends I made, and learn about many other cultures.

We moved one year after they (my parents) told me we were moving, we took an airplane, it was quite scary. We arrived at 10-11 PM. We arrived at a NY airport. My Grandpa was driving us home to NJ. I was exhausted. I think I fell asleep on the car ride. I went home and got in my PJ's, and got in my blow up mattress, because I was really jetlagged.

Christmas at the Fireplace

"Ding" the door went as Jayden walked through the gingerbread smells.

"Hi Jayden, Welcome back to the Fireplace said Marie the owner of the amazing gingerbread store.

"Jayden what would you like today?" said Marie, "My usual" said Jayden. gingerbread Mocha and gingerbread cake with the frosting.

"Aw, Thanks", "Now I have bad news said Marie, The fireplace is closing for Christmas EVE!" "No, The fireplace is a BIG

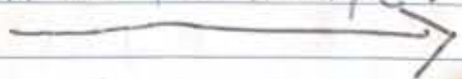
part of Christmas! said Jayden as she took a sip of her gingerbread Mocha. "But we were thinking about selling the fireplace, to YOU!" "What!"

"To me.?" "Wh-why?" "Because we know you know the people, This is like your second home by Christmas Time!" "I will think about the offer" said Jayden as she walked through the door with an opportunity in her hands. "Hey Kiddo" said Mark her dad.

"Hey", "Why the long face" said Mark, "BECAUSE!!" "The Fire Place is closing on Christmas EVE!" "No Way" said Mark. "And guess what"

"What?" "They are selling it to me!" "Dmg, that is awesome, take the job!" said Mark. "I dunno" said Jayden. "OK, I'll take it!" "All right" said Mark.

"But just one thing Jayden" "And what is that" said Jayden? "Do you know how to cook gingerbread" "AAAAHHH HHH!" "NO!" "OK" said Mark "calm down Jayden!" "OK, I'll calm down". "I'll just ask for the recipe or... just look for the recipe!"

"Everything is under control dad!" 



Christmas at the fireplace

Hi Marie!

Hi Jayden

I'm Isabelle Jay

aw some!

awwt

what

I need the
Recipes!

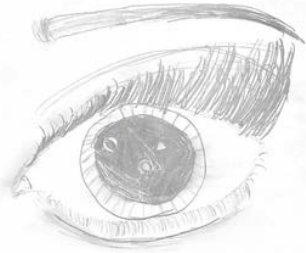
OK!!

Great, thanks



As Jayden walked through the fireplace she did not smell Christmas cookies, or see the beautiful decorations on the walls, but everything was packed into boxes, even her lucky chair with the teddy bear carved into it! "ah" Marie sighed as she saw everything in boxes. "It's gonna be hard leaving here." "I know, Marie." "But it was nice traveling here to Colorado, visiting the sites, and having a Christmas gingerbread factory." "But you put so much hard work into this place!" said Jayden bursting into tears. As Jayden saw Marie and her son Leroy go, she ran and said "I will always remember you, Marie and Leroy, my second family" "all I know Jayden, is that I left the fireplace in REALLY good hands". And to this day, forward Jayden is the new fireplace owner and had a wonderful Christmas with her family sipping gingerbread, cocoa and nibbling on gingerbread cookies as they wait for Santa by the fireplace. Jayden stood up and said "Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good night!" The end!

AMAZING ARTWORK



Fiona m



Amelia
Soehngen



Drawn
By
Fiona
Contino

I see
you



Helena Hall



A Spin on Snow Angel
Helena Hall



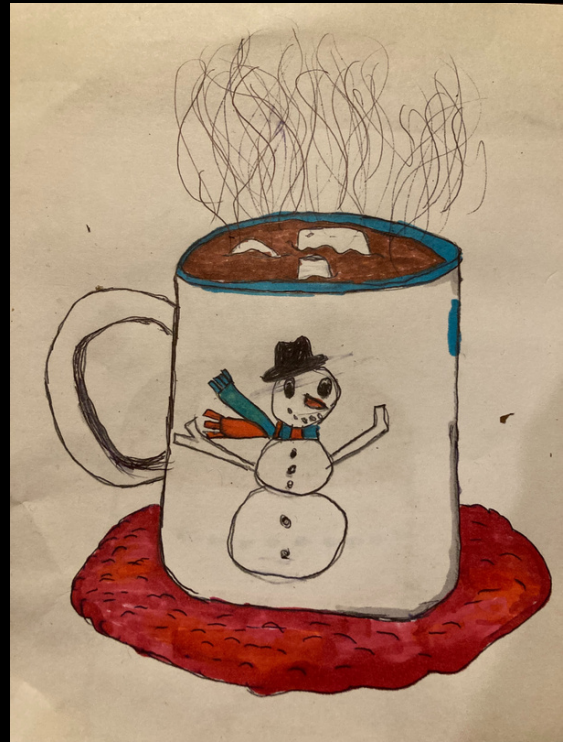
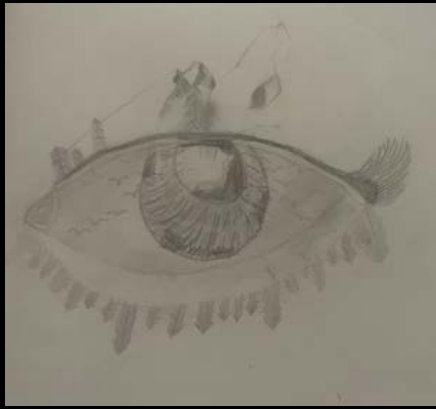
Helena Hall



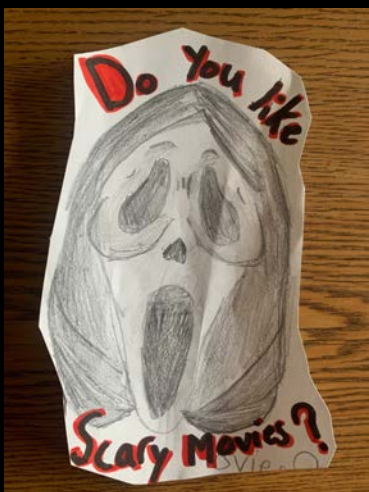
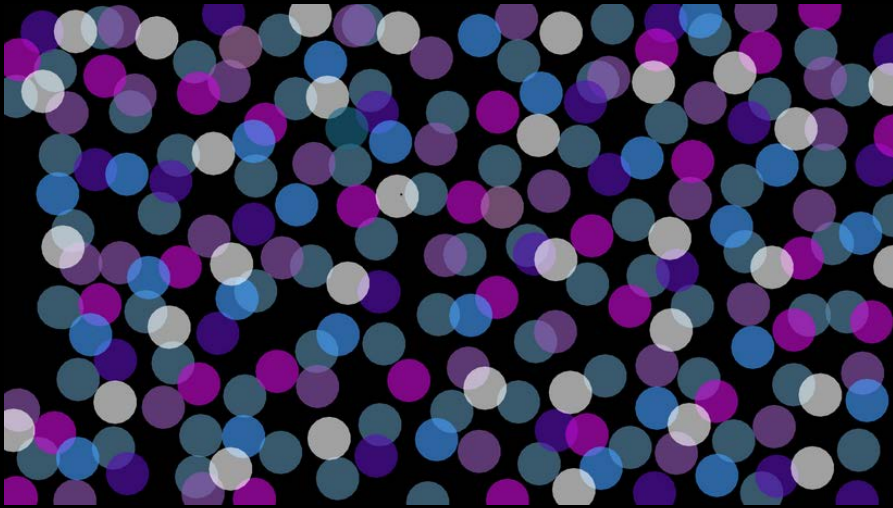
Connolly



Lizzy Cordova





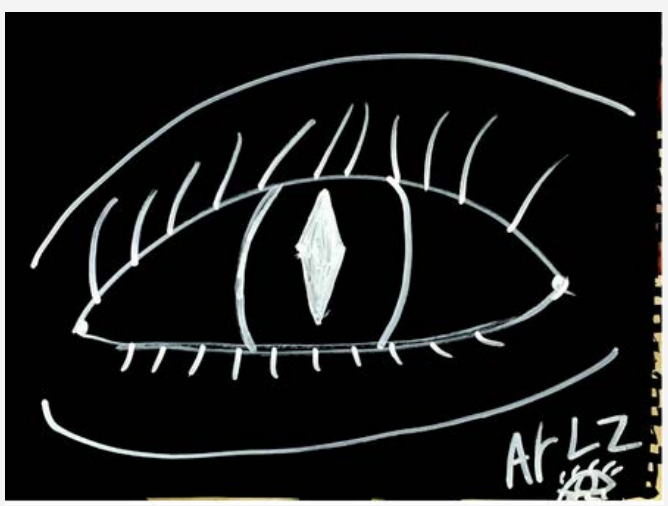




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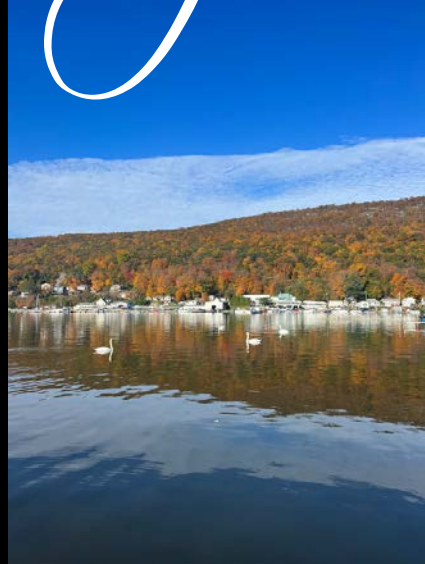
Artwork by Danielle Brooke



digital artwork by deborah robles



Photography



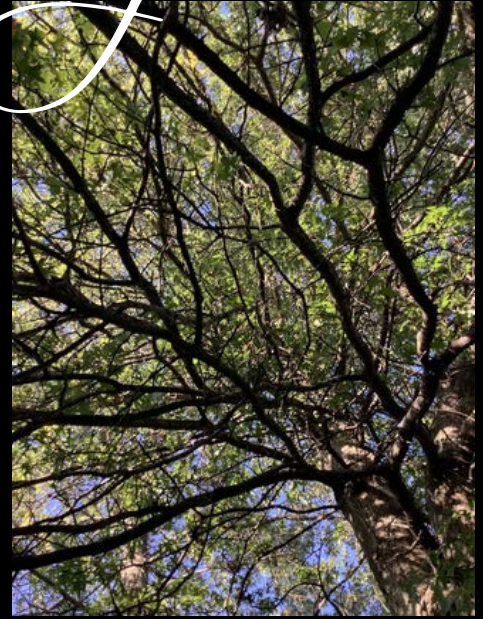
Taken by Izzy Cordova



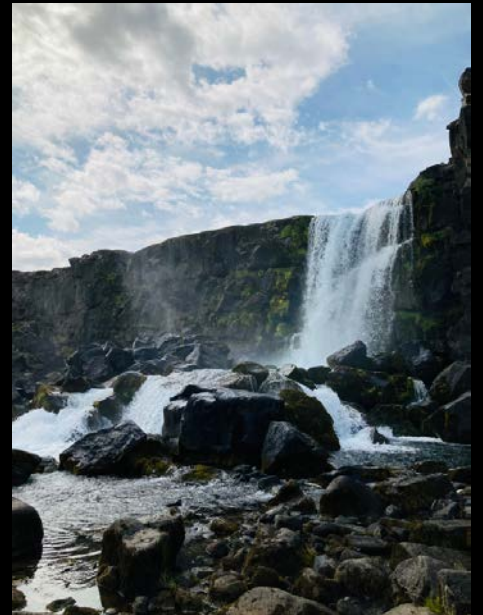
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Pet Spotlight!



Submitted by Desmond Goldstein



Submitted by Helena Gell



Submitted by Olivia Soehngen



Submitted by Gina
Negron



Submitted by Olivia Soehngen

WORLD GUESSING GAME

BY BAY ORR
ANSWERS ON NEXT PAGE



EASY

- DWAYNE 'THE ROCK' JOHNSON HAS A CITIZENSHIP IN THIS COUNTRY DUE TO HIS FATHER.
- THE CAPITAL CITY OF THIS COUNTRY IS OTTAWA.
- THIS COUNTRY PRODUCES THE MOST MAPLE SYRUP IN THE WORLD.

MEDIUM

- THIS COUNTRY HAS 22 OFFICIAL LANGUAGES SUCH AS BENGALI, PUNJABI, TAMIL, AND MORE.
- THIS COUNTRY ALSO WAS COLONIZED BY THE BRITISH UNTIL 1947.
- THIS COUNTRY IS FAMED FOR ITS TUK TUKS AND WONDER OF THE WORLD- THE TAJ MAHAL.

HARD

- THIS COUNTRY IS THE LARGEST COUNTRY IN AFRICA.
- THIS COUNTRY FOUGHT AGAINST THE FRENCH TO GAIN INDEPENDENCE.
- THIS COUNTRY BORDERS TUNISIA, LIBYA, MOROCCO, AND 3 MORE.

EXTREME

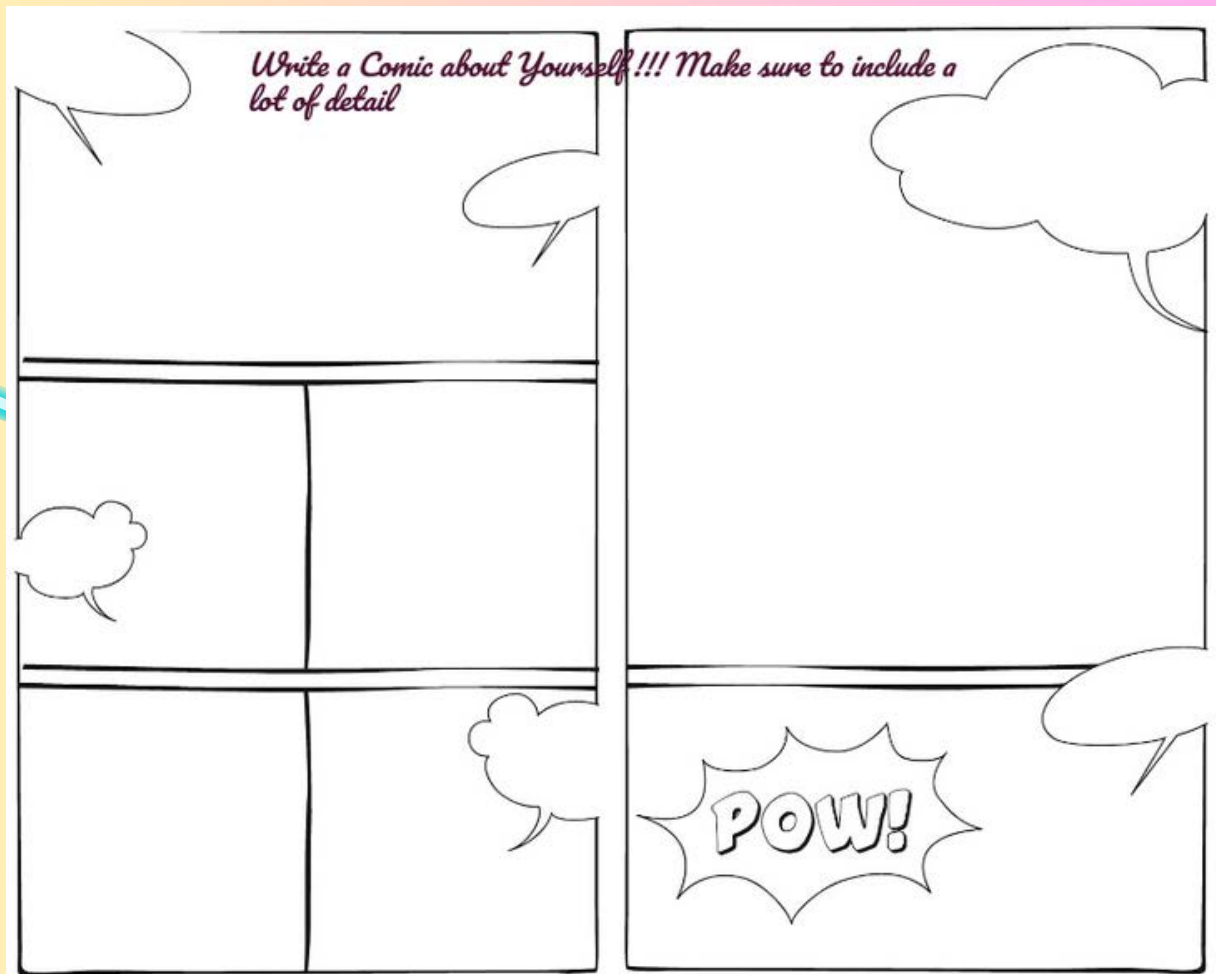
- THIS COUNTRY'S CAPITAL HAS A FAMOUS STREET CALLED NYHAVN.
- THIS COUNTRY SURRENDERED TO GERMAN FORCES IN 6 HOURS IN WORLD WAR 2.
- THIS COUNTRY NOW BORDERS CANADA DUE TO A RECENT TREATY OVER AN ISLAND.

MORE GAMES!

Spot the difference
Can you spot 8 differences?



Created by Helena Gell



Created by Violetta Quezada



Thank You for Supporting
The Warwick Valley Middle School
LITERARY MAGAZINE

This edition of the Literary Magazine is our biggest and best yet! A tremendous thank you goes out to all of our hardworking, talented members spanning grades 5 through 8. We are incredibly proud of you all and of what you have created. All of the members of the WVMS Literary Magazine would also like to thank our wonderful, supportive school faculty and administration, as well as readers like you!

Please be sure to check out our Spring/Summer Edition, coming out June 2024!