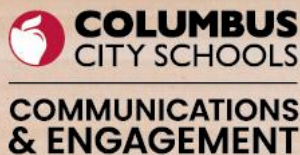
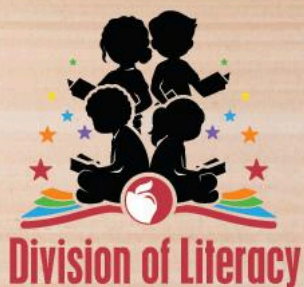


# MOMENTS IN MINIATURE

## A COLLECTION OF CCS SHORT STORIES

By Columbus City Schools' 4th and 5th Graders





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## Fourth Grade

### Aw the Dog

*By Mila Elias*

Hi. My name is Aw. Actually, I don't know if that's my name or my nickname because people just say "Aww man," whenever I walk into a room.

#### A Little More About Me

My hobbies are:  
Spying on mulch,  
Splashing people at the beach,  
And screaming at the top of my lungs!  
Pretty cool right?

#### My Family

I have 12 siblings, but they all moved away. I don't know when, but I'm going to find them some day. My mommy moved away too. I miss her the most.

#### My Human

My human's name is Tommy. He likes to call me Dave but I think my name is Aw because people call me that more often. My human's mom always calls me, "That annoying dog." Clearly, she's not the brightest bulb in the shed.

#### Carrie

Carrie is a chameleon. She's super nice and loves to eat bugs. Carrie and I chat every night before bedtime. Carrie didn't have a family as big as mine but she did have a brother. Her best bud! His name was Tim.

#### My Nightmare

My nightmare was on January 5th, 2021. Tommy's sister, Annabelle, was playing dress up and wanted to include me. She made me wear lipstick and brushed my hair and worst of all, she made me wear a...a...a...TUTU!!!

#### The Journey Begins

I layed down at night as I talked to Carrie. We came up with a brilliant idea. We're out of here!

#### The Escape

Have I mentioned that I live in a big house? Yeah, I didn't think so. The best way to escape is at night. We caused about \$400 in damage and lots of noise, but we made it. First, I had to bite the door handle to get it to open. Then, I found a more efficient way to "open" a door. I just smashed my head on it! Sure, it made holes in the door but it worked. (No it didn't. I lied. Carrie did all of the work.) But after that, we were gone! Sorry, Tommy.

### **First Day On the Road**

We're on the road! It feels awesome. I'm coming Mom!

(Two hours later) I need breakfast. I've been fasting for 45 minutes!

"Hey Carrie did we pack any food?"

"No, sorry Aw. I have an idea though! Follow me!"

They arrive at a fancy restaurant. Ooohh...there's steak and chicken and...

*Note to self: restaurants do not welcome pets in the kitchen. I did sneak some steak though.*

### **Home Sick**

I miss my human. I miss food. I miss water.

"Carrie, I want to go back."

"You can't."

"Why not?"

"I won't let you. You escaped to find your family and I escaped to find, never mind."

### **Carrie (Again)**

Hi I'm Carrie. And do you know what I miss the most? Tim, Mom, and Dad. I used to live in the wild. It was beautiful. Until something worse than dress up happened. One day when I was playing with my BFF Tim, these dudes just came in and captured half of my family. Me and Tim hid all day and night until they were gone. Then, the next day I woke up and Tim was gone too.

### **I Found Her**

Is that who I think it is? OMG!!!!!!! It's Mommy!!! I found her!!!

"Mom Mom!!!!"

"Huh, who said that?" said Mom.

"It's me, your son! OMG!!!!!! WOOF!!! How are you?"

"Amazing! Do you know where Bark and Hydrant are?"

"No, sorry sweetpea."

"Carrie I found her!! Can we go home now?!"

"You can. I'll stay behind"

Why?

“Because I want to.”

“Oh come on Carrie please come home with us. Pretty please?”

“I still need to find him.”

“Who?”

“Tim.”

“Then I’ll stay too.”

### **Back at Home**

“Have you seen my dog? He has blond hair and floppy ears and goes by the name of Dave. Have you seen him?” Tommy said in a worried voice.

### **Poor Carrie**

I give up. I’m never going to find Tim. We can go home now.

“Hip hip hooray!!!! We’re going home!!!!” Hooray.

### **The Highway**

All of these cars weren't here when we escaped.

“That’s because we escaped at night Aw.”

“Oh. I’m scared Mommy.”

“Okay we can walk now.”

“Okay Mommy.”

“Ahh help!”

“What happened Mommy?”

“My leg! It got run over by a car! It hurts so bad. Ow.”

“Oh no!”

### **A Large Box**

I’m in a large box and I don't know where I am or where Carrie is. I’m scared. Wait a minute... Carrie?

“Oof” said dude at rescue center.

“Haha sucker” said Carrie.

“Wow Carrie that was awesome! Let's get out of here.”

### **The Last Stop**

“Hey guess what Aw? I know where your mom is!” T

“Then let's go get her. Where is she?”

“I'm afraid she'll have to wait.”

“Why?”

“She's at an animal rescue center.”

### **I'm Home!**

*(weeks later)*

I'm home! I can't believe it! I'm finally home! Where's Tommy?

“Dave!!”

Tommy!

“Are you hungry?”

Those are my favorite words.

### **A Happy Ending**

What a happy ending. I got food!

“Bark, bark, woof”

Mommy!!

“Hi honey!”

“How's your leg?”

“Oh it's just fine! Where's Carrie? I have a little surprise for her.”

“Oh she's in Tommy's bedroom, here I'll show you.”

“Oh Carrie?”

“Yeah? Who is it?”



“It’s Aw’s mom, Bella.”

“Oh how are you? Is your leg okay?”

“My leg is fine. I have a surprise for you.”

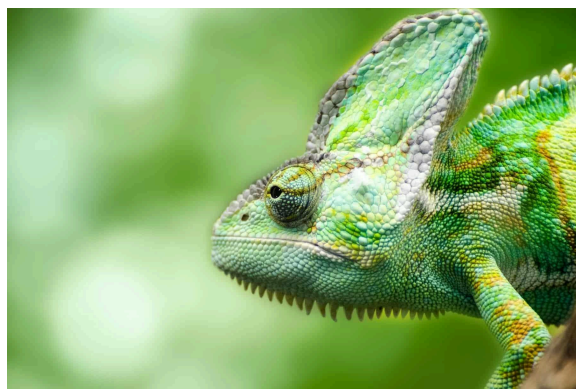
“Hey sis!”

“Tim!!!! Is that really you?”

“Yep! Tag you’re it!”

“Ha not for long”

The End





## Beast Slayers

*By Steven J. Mason Herrera*

There was a young boy named Kodota Gokiborn that had loving parents. He was loved by everyone and his parents always valued him. He was the perfect boy a parent could wish for. One day after coming home from school in 7th grade, he saw firefighters, cops, and a swat team around his house. It turned out that his parents were being harassed and threatened to be killed if they didn't pay money that a gang asked for. Since his parents couldn't pay them, they were killed by the gang members! Ever since that happened, Kodota has been fending for himself. He has never been the same since.

Now, we start off with an abandoned teenage boy named Kodota Gokiborn in a city in Japan called Hamamatsu. As you know, Kodota isn't the typical Japanese boy. He used to be the perfect kid that everyone wanted to hang out with, but ever since his parents died he's been acting differently. Now he prefers to hang out by himself and often seems like a lifeless body. But in reality Kodota is just melancholic since the two most important people he cared about and the people that actually understood him, had died at the violent hands of a brutal gang.

People from school suggested that Kodota go to therapy. But none of the therapists understood his pain and agony, so he stopped going. He still lives alone in the same abandoned house where his parents once lived. He used to have friends, but ever since his parents died he had become cold and distant.

One morning, Kodota woke up from a loud noise coming from outside. He got up and heard somebody calling for help. Then he heard gunshots, so he raced outside and saw an unfortunate young boy being harassed by a gang. This happened to be the exact same gang that had killed his parents! Kodota wanted to help the unfortunate boy, and he did by dashing outside and fighting them, disarming them, and taking their guns to finish. This allowed the boy that was being harassed to escape, but one of the thugs that was on the ground took the extra gun he had in his pocket and shot Kodota in his heart multiple times, making the chances of his survival dim. The victim went back to thank him, but the only thing he saw were the thugs and the person that saved him lying on the ground. He called 211 hoping that the person that saved his life and sacrificed himself to save him survived. After they took him to the hospital emergency room, Doctors struggled and tried their hardest, doing everything possible to try and save his precious life. But tragically, he didn't make it...

Kodota was pronounced dead. Immediately after he died, he saw a mystical, celestial being named Miguel, who spoke these very words, "Do not be afraid. You will soon see your Creator. When you wake up you will see the Lord Almighty."

Suddenly Miguel disappeared, and when Kodota opened his eyes, he beheld the God of all Creation – YahWey, who had granted the boy another life. In this new life, God informed Kodota that he was to help with God's Mission to bring peace to the civilizations who had not listened to God's messengers - even after facing His wrath over the centuries.

In this new place which Kodota would reincarnate into, God informed Kodota that he'd be living in a cave with peaceful, but dangerous and affectionate creatures that would help him complete his mission. These creatures that God was talking about were wyverns, dragons, snakes, serpents, cobras, and some other monsters that God had granted them powers beyond Kodota's imagination. Then without warning, everything went black as Kodota descended into a lush cave full of powerful beasts and monstrous creatures. It became a place where even sheep became dangerous beasts.

God spoke again saying, "I promised you the skill to tame monsters and all the power and abilities and knowledge you'll need to survive in this mendacious place."

And instead of giving him a family which would be a weak spot for him, he'd have to fend for himself. This would help him grow stronger since God didn't want his creation to suffer emotionally any more agonizingly longer but at least he wouldn't be alone.

Kodota Gokiborn reincarnates as a boy named Lóng which means Dragon. Instead of being born a human, instead he is born as a Dracotaur, a mix between a human dragon hybrid. He has the strength, protection and resistance as a dragon. The only thing is that he looks like a human with dragon wings.

As Lóng descends down from an opening inside a humongous lush cave with all sorts of mystical enormous affable but perilous creatures, God sends an angel called The Angel Of God to aid him and to console him. The angel would take care of Lóng well, also teaching him basic but important fighting skills, and also showing him other skills like cooking, crafting, building, hiding, sneaking and additionally - flying!

Stay tuned for Chapter 2 of ... Beast Slayers!

## Cheeks the Squirrel and the Adventures of the Kung-Fu Sloth

*By Gabriel Roher-Smith*

One day Cheeks the squirrel was eating a nut in his tree when he heard a chainsaw and looked outside his tree hole. Then he saw a colossal duck cutting down his tree. Just as his tree was falling, he grabbed his belongings and did a leap of faith to the nearest tree! But, he missed the jump and landed in a pile of leaves. From where he landed, he had an amazing view of the scene. The duck was cutting down every tree it saw. Other animals seemed to be falling, too. First, it was other squirrels. Then, other animals started to fall. Some did not fall because they were ducks and geese, so they grabbed their stuff and flew up. Cheeks realized that he was the only animal that had fallen out of a tree. All the other squirrels had been able to jump from tree to tree. The ducks and geese had flown higher to get away from the duck. Then a dark shape loomed over the forest. Cheeks dug under his leaf pile. When he came back up all the animals were gone. THEN, it all happened so fast! Cheeks was thrown into a bag and moved. Little did Cheeks know that an adventure that would change his life forever was about to begin.

After what seemed like days of moving in a huge leaf pile, Cheeks was dumped into the middle of nowhere. As far as the eye could see it was corn, corn, and even more corn. A spot in the corn stood out to Cheeks. He was not sure if he saw an opening in the corn or if he was going insane. Because Cheeks had nothing better to do, he went in. After walking in the corn for a very long time, Cheeks came across a Kung-fu dojo. He met the sensei who was a kung-fu sloth. The sloth said that he was on his way to battle the beast known as The Notorious Midnight Dragon and Cheeks could come along if he wanted to. Cheeks thought about everything he had just said. After a moment Cheeks decided that he would come along for the ride. The kung-fu sloth said, "We will leave for the dragon's cave at the crack of dawn."

In the one hour before the crack of dawn, Cheeks got all of his most important belongings in a bag to carry on the journey. He packed acorns, a water bottle, sun glasses, a first aid kit, and a flashlight to light their way through the dragon's cave. Suddenly, the kung-fu sloth jumped out of the corn and right next to Cheeks. Then he asked, "Are you packed and ready to go?" Cheeks responded, "Yes!" The sloth warned, "It will be a long and dangerous journey." With their hearts held high and their pockets full of hope to defeat the dragon, they started down the road.

While they were walking down the road Cheeks asked, "Where are we?"

The sloth answered, "I think we are somewhere in Japan."

"Japan?! Really? So we can go get some sushi?" Cheeks excitedly asked.

"No. We are nowhere near any type of human civilization," answered the sloth.



“Man! I wanted some sushi right now, but I guess I can settle for some acorns,” Cheeks disappointedly grumbled while fishing the acorns out of his bag.

Up ahead they saw a clearing with what looks like a thousand stones in it. They saw a unicorn who told them that underneath one of these stones was a magical rainbow key. The key would open a door they would later find on their journey. In a flash, both Cheeks and the kung-fu sloth are on their hands and knees turning over every stone looking for the rainbow key. When they were searching, the sloth told Cheeks that his name was Mander. Cheeks thinks “Mander, what a great name.” After about two hours of searching, Cheeks takes a break because he is getting impatient. After another hour, Mander needs a break because he cut himself on a rock. After two more hours of searching, they start to lose all hope, but when they are about to give up, Mander finds the key!! They stand up and give each other bear hugs of joy. Then, they talk to the unicorn again and he points them in the direction of the dragon's cave. Going in the direction that the unicorn told them to go, they came across a ravine with a cave in it. Mander worriedly said, “That's the cave of the dragon.”

Eager to defeat the dragon, Mander ran down the ravine towards the cave. Not wanting to be left behind, Cheeks darted after him. When Cheeks caught up, he saw Mander standing at the edge of a wall. Mander told Cheeks that even his most powerful kung-fu moves could not get past the wall. Cheeks thought about how to get past the wall when, out of the corner of his eye he saw a keyhole. He pulled out the rainbow key and stuck it in the keyhole. Suddenly, the door goes up and Mander and Cheeks see The Notorious Midnight Dragon. The dragon suddenly spewed lightning and slashed with its claws. With super fast reflexes Mander and Cheeks avoided the attacks and jumped, but they jumped too high and hit the top of the cave.

The cave started to fall. Mander and Cheeks ran out of the cave. Then they were trampled by squirrels, dojo masters, and a duck with chainsaws. When they looked back, they did not see the dragon so they thought he was dead. Mander told Cheeks the truth: He had come to the cave to save his friends. Cheeks looked around and recognized some of the squirrels from his forest and the chainsaw duck. Then he realized that the dragon was keeping everyone in his cave to eat. Cheeks said good-bye to Mander and the dojo masters as they went back to their dojo. Cheeks and his friends found a forest near the cave where you can find them today.

## Dingle and the Science Contest

*By Gracelyn Wishoff*

Luna was doing her normal school routine when she saw a bright blue poster.

“Huh wait! SCIENCE CONTEST?” she said happily.

She went straight home after school. Sometimes she went to the park but today was important. She looked at her watch.

“Okay I got a week to finish this. I’m the queen at science after all!”

That was true. After many tries she made a perfect plan.

“Okay so this will either be the first portal in the whole entire universe or everything in here will be destroyed...including myself.”

She pushed the switch. I mean doesn't every scientist do that? And out came a purple fuzzy ball.

“What? I thought my math was perfect? Wait, this isn't the right material. Dang it.” Luna said.

“Murp,” said the purple ball. It had dingley eyes.

“Hmm, you are adorable. Aw look at your eyes... Wait! I’ll call you Dingle!” Luna shouted.

It turned its head like it said it was a good name.

“Well I guess I could enter you in the school contest,” she said.

Suddenly the fuzzy adorable ball ran away.

“Wait, come back!”

She chased after the creature. Soon it fell into a can of paint and she put it to sleep. She started working on her poster for the contest. *Amazing wonders of mysterious creature! A fuzzy purple ball.* Soon after she fell asleep on her poster.

When she woke up, she made Dingle eggs, and herself, french toast. As Dingle gobbled up its food Luna said, “Wow, you sure are hungry. Here have some of my toast. I’m thinking of you riding a trike for the contest.”

“Murp?” said Dingle.

Luna pulled it out and said, “Here it is. Oh, we better get going, it's almost time. Hop in my backpack.”

Dingle hopped in and Luna got on her bike and went to her school. Once they set everything up, Dingle was amazed.

“Huh I guess it does look good. Here's your trike.”

Dingle's eyes sparkled as they hopped on. They did spins, twists, turns, and jumps. All the kids went over to see it. It even caught the judges eyes. Not soon after *The Amazing wonders of mysterious creature! A fuzzy purple ball* – won. Luna cheered.

“Great job Dingle! Want to get ice cream?”

Dingle did a silent murp which went yes.

They went to a place called Amazing Wonders Of Ice Cream.

“Two strawberry ice creams please. In a cone,” Luna stated.

“Well I must warn you, eating two ice creams can give you a tummy ache,” warned the employee.

“Oh, it's for another person.”

Walking back home, Luna remembered, “Oh no! Dingle we got to hurry. It's family night!”

They hopped on the bike and went home as fast as they could. Luckily by the time they got home her family was setting up. Meaning by family, it was just her mom. Luna had no siblings.

“Wow, you're just in time. Come on in with that.... Purple ball?” said mom.

“Their name is Dingle. Trivia tonight?”

Her mom nodded. Dingle ended up winning by 46 points. Luna went to bed and Dingle slept in their own. Luna whispered to herself, “Wow this Dingle thing is so cool. I can't wait to see what they can do tomorrow.” Then, she fell asleep happily.



## Explore Dystopia

*By Yazan Zayed*

### Chapter 1

The year is 2100, everything is controlled by Industry Tech Ltd – your phones, software, computers, livelihoods, and even the entire open and deep web! They dictate policy in the U.S. and even most of the world! If you speak out against their monopoly or rights abuses, you will lose your livelihood.

I will put an end to this, I am going to infiltrate the Industry Tech headquarters and bring down their evil company!

### Chapter 2

#### **The Break-In....**

I am now in the Industry Tech base to sabotage their communication and bring their company's monopoly to a halt! They are already losing money and their stock market is declining because people are waking up!

#### **Days Later...**

I've infiltrated and shut down the servers and am going to...

"Well, well, well," said the CEO of IT Ltd., Mark Sorrenta. "You will have to get through my army."

### Chapter 3

#### **The Endgame!**

All of the army is finished now for the CEO and the company.

"Ah, you got me... IF IT WASN'T FOR THE FACT I HAVE YOUR FAMILY HOSTAGE!"

"Take one step and see what happens!"

\*laughs maniacally\*

"Ok, \*pulls out EMP and g\*n.

“First, I have disabled your controller with my EMP. And second... \*BANG\*

“P-P-Please spare me, I can change!” said the CEO.

“No thanks.”

\*BANG BANG\*

Sorrenta drops to the floor. Now, Industry Tech is dismantled and everyone lives happily ever after!

## How Elephant Was Made

*By Carley Green*

One day a kid was playing with gray clay and it rolled into a tree and made a trunk. In the afternoon, people came over and cut the top of the tree off. At night time, the kid went to bed so mad that his favorite tree got cut.

The next morning he ate breakfast. After he was done eating his pancakes, he went outside and was playing with his clay and there were two branches on each side of the trunk. He was making an art project and two googly eyes slipped out of his hand and above the nose.

In the afternoon, he goes into the house and shows his mom his project. He eats dinner and goes to sleep. The next morning, there was a vine on the bark of the tree and then there were two logs on each side of the tree. After that it came to life and this cycle repeated and there are so many other elephants. Mammoths are one of the many elephants that went extinct.



## **I Don't Know**

*By Angelise Adams*

### **Dumb Kid**

There was this kid named Tommy and he had no idea what to write about for a book, so he wrote the title about not knowing anything. It was called "I Don't Know".

But after he wrote the whole story about it, his bully came to him and said, "I need your story loser!"

Tommy refused to give her the story he's been writing for a whole week. She didn't care at all. She just told him, "Who cares! You can do it quickly but anyway, you don't have a choice. It's either that, or I'll meet you in the alley way!"

### **Bullies**

Tommy does give her the story that he made. He thought of telling the teacher but he would be in more trouble with her. Now he has two days to make a 20 page story. Now he has a story to make of his bully taking his story called "I Don't Know" but now his new story is called "Stop Bullying for All".

### **Book Winner**

The teacher was so impressed with his story he got to join the competition for the best book. The teacher said, "If you win the competition you can get 50% in her class."

Tommy agreed to do it.

### **The Competition**

It was the day for the competition and Tommy was going to wear his favorite roblox shirt. It had blue all over it with white stars. He called his new book "The Robots in Space".

### **Loser**

He didn't win the competition. He got 7th place for the Twinkle Toe Elementary for the second grade. He still had a celebration though.

## Lost in the Country

By Anna Davey

There was once a little girl named Clarence who lived with her grandma in a small town near the suburbs. Every day and night Clarence would help her grandma work in the fields and around their small house. She loved being with her grandma, but wanted to go to school more.

One day a letter came in the mail. It said that all children from the town could enter in a raffle to go to a nearby school. Clarence was so excited and ran to tell Grandma right away. Clarence found her in bed, groaning. She rushed to the bed and tapped Grandma lightly. She quickly sat up and looked almost embarrassed as she looked toward Clarence.

“Oh, it’s just you,” said Grandma, as she sighed with relief. “Come dear, we need to work in the fields.”

Grandma got up, and headed for the door.

“Grandma . . .”

“Yes? If it’s about the carrots, I’m handling it, OK?”

“No grandma, it’s a school. . .”

“A school?” said Grandma, sounding confused.

“Yes, you enter a raffle to go to a nearby school. Don’t worry, the money will be covered.”

“Oh, it’s not the money sweetheart. . .” Grandma pauses. “ I just don’t know if I’m- **YOU’RE** going to be OK without me,” Grandma’s voice trails off.

“I’m going to be fine,” Clarence says as she grabs her grandma’s hand.

“You’re right,” Grandma replied. “All right, you can enter.”

“**YES!**” Clarence yelled. She hopped down the stairs in excitement. Grandma grunted as she went down the stairs. Night fell as Clarence clutched the submission paper in her hands.

“I can’t wait!”

Days passed as the day of the raffle drew closer. It was now the day before, and Clarence was the most excited she had been in her whole life. That night, Clarence could barely sleep.

It was now the day of the raffle. Clarence woke up, and suddenly sat up yelling, “It’s today!” The excitement rushed through her body like a lightning bolt. She ran as fast as she could to Grandma’s room. Grandma was on the floor, dead silent. Clarence tried to stay positive and thought, “Maybe she fell down in her sleep?”

But she knew the truth, Grandma was sick. She should have taken warning to all of the clues leading up to this conclusion. She ran to the phone and dialed 911. The siren’s sound grew closer until they arrived. Clarence watched the masked doctors put Grandma on a cot and drive her away in the ambulance.

Clarence was alone.

She was worried about Grandma, but decided to go to the raffle anyway. It was a long walk, and felt longer without Grandma at her side. Clarence got to the place the raffle was held just in time. The crowd gathered around a tall stage with a man holding a piece of dark gold paper. He said, “These kids were randomly selected and have been chosen by a wheel. The winners will come onto the stage to get their permission slip. Your guardian will need to sign the paper so you can go.”

That sentence hit Clarence in the stomach like a soccer ball. “Oh, no! How is Grandma going to sign the permission slip when she is badly ill?”

A drumroll started up, and Clarence focused on the stage. “First up is . . .” Clarence’s heart lifted. “Larie Masles! Come on up!” Clarence sighed.



Other names were announced, but when the last name was about to get announced, the man said, “Oh! Looks like we missed a name folks!” Clarence’s eyes lit up. The man’s mouth opened. “Clarence Walker!”

Clarence had never been happier in her life! She even took a few seconds to make sure this was reality. It was, fortunately.

“Come on up Clarence!” The man shouted, as he put his hand out. Clarence walked up the stairs and was given a small paper with her name in cursive, gold print. The raffle was over not long after that. Only one more name was announced.

Clarence walked home feeling happy and sad. Clarence walked past her house, and straight to the hospital. The room Grandma was staying in was a small area that smelled like plastic. Grandma was on the bed sleeping. She felt a hand on her back. It was a doctor. She told the doctor about her being Grandma’s granddaughter.

“I know you want to visit her, but she needs to rest. Your grandma has cancer in her lungs. Your grandma has been smoking and it has affected her lungs in a very bad way.”

Clarence is devastated by the news. “Here, let me walk you out.” Clarence looks back at Grandma, and whispers, “I’m coming Grandma, don’t you worry.”

## The Boy and His Sister

*By Kasha Eagan Guy*

There was a boy named Rider and his sister, Mae. They had a math test. Rider got all his answers right, but Mae didn't get but one.

When Rider found out that Mae got one right, he made fun of her. This made her cry.

A week later they had another test but a reading test this time. The teacher told them to study but Rider didn't want to because he knew that he was going to pass no matter what. But, on the other hand, Mae knew that she had to study if she wanted to pass. Rider saw this and started to laugh and he said, "Why are you even studying? You are going to fail again."

The next day was the test and Rider thought it was going to be a piece of cake – so did Mae. After the tests were graded, Rider saw his and was shocked he got none of the questions Right. Mae was shocked, too.

When Mae saw hers she was surprised and so was Rider! Then Rider realized that not everybody is good at the same thing. Everybody is different and good at something different. Rider apologized to Mae.

The lesson is that nobody is the same – we all have our differences.

## The Takeover of the Birds

*By Margaret Schroeder*

One morning in late spring, a meeting was being held by the leaders of the birds. They were discussing their plans to... **TAKE OVER THE WORLD!!!**

“We have been listening to the humans for years now. I think it is time!” declared Mr. Sparrow. there was a murmur of agreement from the other leaders.

“Now, to begin stage one of our plan we need to build a large human-feeder filled with their favorite food: french fries,” Mr. Morning Dove explained. So, the leaders and the other birds of the world began to build a human-feeder.

After the feeder was well underway, the leaders met again, this time to discuss stage two of the plan.

“Fellow leaders,” began Mr. Robin, “ we are here for one reason, to discuss stage two. We need to inject the french fries with the chemical that will turn them into birds.”

“Mwahahaha!” They laughed together.

Later in the secret lab of the birds, “Aw ha the chemical is complete! Now to inject the french fries with it!” said Blue Jack triumphantly. “I better notify the leaders right now!”

### Back at the Leaders’ Hideout

“Guys, Blue Jack just finished the chemical,” confirmed Mr. Sparrow. A cheer of triumph came across the leaders.

“That means we can begin stage three. After we set up the feeder we need to put up advertisements for a french fry feeder all over the world. Since we are going to put it up in France because it is the most popular place in the world, on the posters we need to say where it is,” finished Mr. Sparrow.

“Yes and we will have Feathers make the posters,” declared Mr. Morning Dove to the other leaders. This came as no surprise since Feathers was the bird equivalent of Michelangelo.

### After the Meeting in Feathers’ Studio

“This looks like the perfect picture to put on the posters,” declared Feathers soon after she sent a finished copy of the poster to the leaders.

### **Back in the Hideout of the Leaders**

“Feathers has just sent a finished copy of the poster,” announced Mr. Robin, while he held up the masterpiece for the other leaders to see.

“Now we can start phase four of our plan: w-a-i-t-i-n-g,” said Mr. Morning Dove plainly.

But, it did not take long before there were people from all over the world flooding the streets of France to get just one bite of the french fries. Eventually, there was only one person who had not eaten the french fries. His name was Sniffroo Dasergar. He, unlike the rest of the world, did **NOT** like french fries.

Now what you might not know about the leaders of the birds is that they can turn into humans. So Mr. Sparrow, being the most talented at turning into a human, went to go talk to Sniffroo Dasergar and see what his favorite food was. Now one thing you need to know is that he did not eat **ANYTHING**. The one thing that entered his body besides air was...**GRAPE JUICE**.

Luckily the chemical was purple just like grape juice. Now Mr. Sparrow went to go talk to Sniffroo Daregar.

“Hi, my name is Mr. Sparrow, I just have one question: what is your favorite food?” he asked.

This confused Sniffroo because why would a complete stranger want to know what his favorite food was but he obliged anyway, “Well I don’t eat food but I do like grape juice,” replied Sniffroo Dasergar.

“Very well then. I will bring you a cup tomorrow.”

With that Mr. Sparrow left, leaving a very confused Sniffroo Dasergar behind. Why was this stranger asking him – why not anyone else? Why did he care what his favorite food was? Why was he bringing him a cup of grape juice? And why did it matter anyway?

### **Meanwhile in the Leaders’ Hideout**

“We need to mix grape juice with the chemical,” Mr. Sparrow informed the others.

“I will call Blue Jack to let him know that we need more of the chemical,” said Mr. Morning Dove.

The next day when all was ready, Mr. Sparrow turned to leave when Mr. Robin called out, “Can we come? We would like to see our plan come together.”

“You can all join me if you so desire,” replied Mr. Sparrow.

With that they all turned into their human form and went to go see Sniffroo Dasergar. Now when the leaders reached Sniffroo’s house and knocked {*the birds are very polite even though they are evil*} he let them in at once and he was surprised that there was more than one. Then Mr. Sparrow spoke, “Sorry to bring so many other guests, but here is your grape juice Mr. Dasergar.”

Now Sniffroo was super suspicious but did not want to be rude so he drank the tiniest sip but he found it was so good that he drank the whole thing.

“Mwahahahahaha!” cried the leaders in triumph.

And so that is how the birds took over the world.



## The White and Black Bees

*By Aliyah Carter*

One day Ari and Jack went to the park. There were lots of bees, but all of them were white and black. Ari and Jack started to paint and then all of the bees went into the yellow paint. But then, the bees went into the pool and turned back into white and black again.

A bee went into the house and the bee ate all the honey. The bee turned orange and black. Then, the bee went out of the house.

The bees all ate lots of bananas and ate 5 each. Now, all of the bees are yellow and black.

All of the bees went into the ice cream shop then the bees got white ice cream. Then they turned white and black again. One day in the afternoon at 2:58 p.m., all of the bees went to the ice cream shop and all the bees got so much yellow ice cream.

THAT IS WHY BEES ARE YELLOW.

THE END

## Todo

*By Olive Guinn*

### The Life of a Pug

Everyday I wake up and think, I need fooodood, so I pick myself out of bed and go to the kitchen and decide what I want, but it's always the same thing. Even though I want a donut, I always get dog food. Next, I go into Bobo's room and lick him until he gets up to feed me. If he does not, I PEE!!!

10 - 9 - 8 - 7 - 6 - 5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1 - ahhhh...

“Todo, why would you do this!!!”

Arf arff, he doesn't understand what I'm trying to say.

“Now I have to take a shower.”

If you ask me, you need to take a shower every day, you are stinky.

“Todo, you want to go to the park after I take a shower and we eat breakfast?”

### At the Park

“Todo, you can go play.”

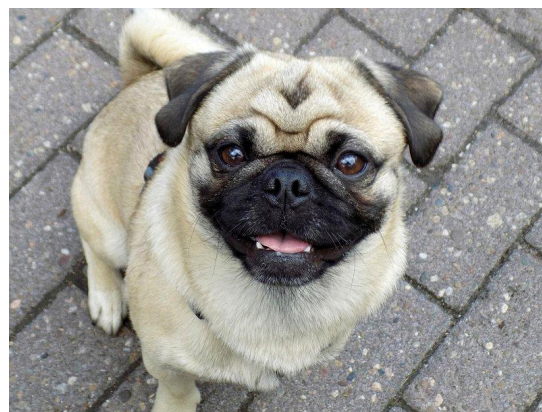
Arff arff.

“Ohh you want to play catch ok, go get it.”

Found it. Ahh, who's that girl with Bobo? As I walk over Bobo introduces me to Sarah.

“Todo meet Sarah, Sarah you know who Todo is.”

She does???



## Later

“Todo, dinner time.”

Wait, why is Sarah here she's not suppose to be here? Wait, is Bobo going on a date with Sarah?!!!

“Are you ready to go Bobo?”

“Yeah it's just I've never really left Todo alone before.”

“Well we could take Todo with us if you want.”

“Ok, hear that Todo? Eat up, you're going with us!!!”

Great, I know I have to see them kiss but I can bark if they take it too far.

“Come on, Todo we are leaving.”

## Home

I can't believe I saw them kiss so many times. I decide to go to bed before they come in because it could be an hour before they come in. And then it's morning, so I go into the kitchen and I see SARAH!!!! I run into Bobo's room, and he's already getting dressed after the shower. It takes him, like, an hour before he decides to get dressed or take a shower. What time is it? I have to go to the kitchen to read the time. Oh it's the time he usually wakes up. What's going on, is this a dream? Sarah is talking to Bobo, what are they saying? I can't tell what they're saying. They're too far away, wait now they're leaving. I can tell this is not a dream.

## Back

I watch Bobo open the door with Sarah. Sarah is holding a bag. I wonder what's inside the bag. Then I hear Bobo say it's dinner time. Sarah is eating dinner, and then she says to Bobo, “We have been dating for awhile, and I was thinking we should get married.”

Wait they have been dating for awhile how did I just figure this out? This does explain why he sometimes comes home late. I always thought it was work. Then I hear Bobo say, “YES YES YES!!!!!!!!!!!!!!”

## Wedding

As I stand by Bobo, I see how happy he is with Sarah and then I realize that he has someone else that loves him as much as I do.

*Author's note: I based this off of my Uncle Bobo. He has a pug named Buster that my Aunt Coco named when he was a puppy. But my Aunt Coco passed away 4 years ago, and my uncle started to date a girl named Sarah about two years ago. They are getting married in October, 2024. Buster went blind about two years ago because he's getting old. The pictures I used are not pictures of Buster.*

## What is Happening?

*By Kaeli Sawyer-Durango*

The waves and sand flow in between my feet and toes. The sunset shines and the water turns a pretty mix of pink, orange, and purple with a hint of magenta. My mom called me to come inside before it became dark.

I step inside and I smell mom's homemade mac and cheese. I turned the corner of the dining table with my little brother playing with his wooden cars. Dad had made them for his sixth birthday. My dad is a carpenter, and my mom is a cook. My mom wants me to be a famous cook or baker when I grow up, but I want to be an author.

My mom calls us to the kitchen and I grab a plate. She scoops mac and cheese on my plate. She had some crispy chicken on the side. I grabbed a second plate and she put spaghetti and garlic bread on the plate. I go to sit down and mom puts spaghetti and garlic bread on La'maya and Kaiyen plates. I eat my food quietly and quickly. I run to my room and get ready to go to bed. "Stop running Raiya!" my mom yelled at me. I had just walked to my room when I heard my mom.

"Sorry mom!" I said, as I peeked out of my door. I changed into my favorite pajamas and cozy, fluffy slippers. I jump onto my bed and turn on the TV. I turned the channel to eight to watch "Kitty the Cat" before going to bed. I brush my teeth and wash my face and go back into my room. My mom tucks me into bed and I cuddle next to my Kitty plush. I fall asleep as I cuddle in my cozy blanket.

I wake up in the clouds and get up on my feet and walk across a field of clouds. As the clouds disappear from under my feet, I scream as loud as I can. I got saved by a wolf with wings.

"I don't really know WHAT IS HAPPENING!" I scream as I wake up from my dream.

I get out of my bed and into my purple overall dress with my favorite shirt. I kick on my slip-on sneakers and grab my little bag. I said goodbye to my mom and I put on my golden rose skates and matching helmet. I dashed down the hill on my skates and Ni'Leah joined me on her skateboard. She wore a pink ruffle shirt with a metallic rose skirt that went to her knees. The skirt was fluffy and had small ruffles at the bottom and big ones at the waist. Going down, the ruffles go from pale metallic rose to midnight metallic rose.

We turn the corner and slow down. I sit on a bench and remove my clip-on roller skates. Ni'Leah gets off her skateboard and removes her helmet. I also removed my helmet. We walk into the school's main door and then stop at our cubbies. We take off our jackets. I tuck my skates and helmet in the bottom of my cubby. Ni'Leah puts her skateboard in the top of her cubby.

We walk to the cafeteria and get our food. We sit with the other girls at our table. Krista says good morning to me and Ni'Leah. "Good morning to you guys," Ni'Leah says as she sits and puts her food on the table. After a few minutes, we finished eating. We waited for the morning announcements.



“Good morning butterflies! Please throw your food away and head to class as fast as you can. This is your principal, Mrs. Clever, doing the morning announcements,” Mrs. Clever said over the announcements.

“Well, we better head to Mrs. Kevin’s class,” Aries said as she caught up to us. We walk into Mrs. Kevin’s class and we sit down at our desks. A few hours later, we ran outside to play on the playground for recess and me and the girls hop onto the merry-go-round and spin really fast.

As soon as lunch started, we rushed down the hallway to try not to get lost in the crowd, so we held hands. As we race to get our food first, we quickly grab our food and sit down. We munch on our lunch and talk about our life outside of school. We finish eating and the bell rings for us to go back to class. We go back to Mrs. Kevin’s class and we do some reading and science. By the end of the school day, me and the girls are exhausted.

We get our stuff from our cubbies and we head our separate ways. Aries and Rose stay back to help their mom Mrs. Kevin clean the classroom and me and Ni’Leah go the same way until she turns the corner and I head straight home.

## Fifth Grade

### Appreciate

*By KeMya Lowe*

This is a story about a girl, named Dianna, who was spoiled and very mean to her mom, dad, brother, and grandparents, but one day that would all change.

It was a beautiful summer morning until suddenly a scream came out of the daughter's room. Her mom had to get up and go see what it was. As she opened the door, she saw the daughter ripping all of the clothes out of the closet.

"Stop!" the mom said. "What are you doing?"

"I'm trying on some of my new clothes but my head is too big and the clothes won't fit over it!" Dianna cried.

"That's okay Dianna I will go to the store. Ok, Dianna?"

"Ok, Mom"

Mom went to the bedroom and the dad woke up.

"What happened?" asked Dad.

"Dianna is going to get some new clothes because her head is too big and none of her clothes will fit over her head!"

"Well, she already has a whole bunch of new clothes that I've already bought her. How come none of them fit?" asked Dad.

"I don't really know, I didn't really see her try them on."

"Well maybe peek through the door and see what she's doing."

"Ok."

The mom goes to her daughter's door and peeks through the door and sees that she's sewing up the necks of her shirts!

"DIANNA! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?"

Cutting up my new clothes because I don't like them.”

“You need to learn how to appreciate your stuff there are some kids who don't have as much stuff as you do.”

“Whatever I don't care about them.”

“I'm sending you to your grandparents house. You need to learn a lesson.”

“You can't do that.”

“Yes I can and I will pack your bags.”

“Whatever.”

The mom walks to the son's room and sees that he is not there. She goes to the kitchen to see him making his own breakfast.

“What happened mom?”

“Your sister is going to your grandparents’ house because she is being so disrespectful.”

“Oh.”

The daughter angrily packs her bags.

“I can't believe mom is making me go to my grandparents’ house! This is ridiculous! I didn't even do anything!”

After the daughter packs her bags, the mom gets ready and starts to drive her to her grandparent's house.

“This is a lesson for you to learn how to appreciate the stuff that you have. This is why I have to send you over there to your grandparents' house.”

“Whatever.”

One year later the daughter was over at the grandparents’ house and she had to do a lot of cleaning work and she learned her lesson.

“I'm excited to go back home.”

“Yep, I hope you learned your lesson,” said Grandma.

On the way home, she sees her mom at the front door waving.

“Hi mom! I'm so happy I'm back! I'm sorry for all the things I did and I've learned my lesson.”

“Yep, everybody's so excited to see you.”

And one more thing – make sure to appreciate everything you have because you can never know when it is all going to go away. Remember to always appreciate it.

## Book Shop

*By Za'riah Hairston*

One day, a bookstore mysteriously appeared in my town. It looked weird. It was a suspicious building and a curious place. I peered in the curtainless windows and saw the floorboards were damaged and the books were ripped apart! Then, I saw that a person was in there. Was it a person, or was it a ghost?

It had to be a ghost because I saw the tall figure walk through a shelf of books! I have to see more. I tried to open the door but it was locked. I walked around the building to the back to find a key or another door. Then I saw a shed with an open door. I asked myself, "How did that door just open? Nobody is here."

I got scared and I thought this was a dream but it wasn't a dream, I was totally awake!

I carefully walked into the dark shed. I couldn't see anything. Then, ahhhhh!!!! I fell into a deep hole and kept falling. Then, I landed on a pile of rocks and I got knocked out! A couple of hours later I woke up feeling dizzy. I couldn't remember where I was and what I was there for. I tried to get up but my ankle was twisted. It felt so painful! I tried to use my phone but I didn't have a signal.

I passed out again, and then I woke up and I tried to stand up. I finally got up. I found some bandages and food and now I need to get a light source. All of a sudden, I remembered I have a light source on my keychain! I forgot about my mini flashlight! Now I am ready to find a way out or survive in this dark hole. Time to find an exit.

First, I decided to walk to the left. It led me to a dead end. So, I decided to walk to the right. It led me to another dead end. The only place left was in the middle so I walked and walked, then I saw a ghost in front of me! You will have to read my next story to see what happened next!



## Cheetah's Vacation

*By London Bell*

This Story is about Cheetah and her family. She looks like she has spots with a long tail and makes sounds – like cheetah sounds. Cheetah has 11 siblings; she has 10 sisters and 1 brother. Cheetah's favorite sister is Stella. Cheetah's family lives in a big tree house. The mom and dad have one room. And then two siblings each share a room.

Today is vacation day. Cheetah wants to go on a cruise boat with her family. All of Cheetah's family pack their 14 bags and run super fast to get to the cruise boat.

The cheetah family walks in to pay and finds a room. There is not enough space for all of them in the room.

"Oh no!" Cheetah said.

"There is no space!" Stella said.

"What are we going to do?" Luna said.

"This bed is mine!" Sally said.

All the cheetahs are feeling anxious and angry.

Everyone starts to fight with each other. Scratching! Biting!

While they are throwing each other around, Mom and Dad cheetah say, "Stop! What is going on?"

Cheetah told them that everyone wants the bed.

"Let's search?" Dad cheetah said.

Cheetah searches around and finds an extra room on the boat and there are 12 bunk beds.

Just enough for everyone! Everyone went to sleep then woke up to have breakfast. They ate fish, beef, baked beans, macaroni and cheese. Next is swimming. First they have to put their swimsuits on and now they are going to the pool.

## Chess How You Play and How the Pieces Move

*By Cameron Barrett*

The rook is the piece that looks like a castle. It can move side to side and up and down. The king helps the rook because it can castle. Pawn can move 1 or 2 on its 1st move, but on the next move it can move 1 for the rest of the game. If the pawn goes to the end of the board it can become a different piece. It can move diagonally to take a piece.

The queen is the most valuable piece. It can move up and down, side to side, and diagonally. The bishop can move diagonally. The knight can move in a L-shape. The king can move in a box, and it is one of the most valuable pieces because this is the only piece that can be checked or checkmate.

A long time ago a game of chess was going on...

This is how they played...

**W** pawn d4 **b** knight f3 **w** pawn d5 **b** knight d5 **w** Q d5 **P** g5. **B** g5 **w** Q gh **b** p h6 **w** Q e5 **b** h7 **r** w q h5 **b** p b5. **W** q h5 **b** r g7 **w** b h6 **b** b b7 **w** q b5 **b** r g2 **w** kn f3 **b** r g6. **W** b f8 **b** k f8 **w** kn e5 **b** b h1 **w** kn d7 **b** kn d7 **w** p a4. **b** r g1 **w** r a3 **b** b g2 **w** q b4 **b** b f1 **w** kn d2 **b** b h3 **w** kn f1 **b** kn b6 **w** q d2 **b** b f1 **w** r a1 **b** b h3 **black win.**

The person who had the white pieces, lost. She flipped out and flipped the game. The person who had the black pieces told her to calm down. This was not enough. She had to go to the emergency room. She slipped on an ice cube, and fell and hit her head.

The person who played the white pieces, found out that she had brain damage. However, this did not stop her! She continued to play chess and did not always win. However, she learned her lesson, and never flipped another chess board. But, that does not mean that she will not flip a different game board.

## Craziest Birthday Ever!

*By Fartun Kalonga*

Hi! My name is Jayah and I had the most crazy birthday ever! So, my 12th birthday was coming up and it was on a Monday. I went to the store with my mom. The store was very bright and lit up with beautiful clothing. I went to get my birthday outfit, obviously. It was a long dress with flowers. I got it and I needed to get shoes to go with it. The shoes were black with a small heel. I loved it.

I went to a cool place called Koogles. Koogles was big and it had food and toys and alot of stuff. Koogles was fun because my mom was getting me whatever I wanted.

“I need a cake!” I said.

My cake was big and pink. Yum! I got all this stuff because my birthday was in one day. I got my hair braided. It was so cute and I loved it. I went to my house and I went to sleep at 9:23 p.m. – what a good birthday.

When I woke up, I looked at my dress and I saw it ripped up and I showed it to my mom. She said she didn't know who did it. But I saw my brother take my birthday shoes. It had to be him!

“Josh!!” I yelled.

Josh was being so rude as usual. I chased him around the house yelling and screaming. He said it was not him, but he is a liar. All of a sudden, I saw the sleeve of my dress in the dog bed.

It was Meg all along. I had to apologize to Josh, so I shared my birthday treats.

## Did You Notice?

*By Asha Mohamed*

You didn't notice, did you? You didn't notice when you pretended to be asleep in the car just to have your mother carry you up to bed for the last time.

You didn't notice when you ran to the door and yelled, "Dad's home," after work, and he picked you and spun you around for the last time.

You didn't notice when the rain washed away your chalk drawing on the sidewalk, and you never went back out there to color hopscotch again.

You didn't notice that when you dried off after you danced in the rain and jumped in puddles, you started caring about your makeup and hair getting ruined, and you never went back out.

You didn't notice that you hung up those plastic play phones and never opened them again. You have a real one now, and it was not a toy but an addiction.

You didn't notice you put your shoes on after playing in the ball pits, and you never took them off again.

You didn't notice when you ate ice cream for the last time without counting calories in your head.

You didn't notice when you had your last fight with your sister about who got to sit in the passenger seat before you started arguing about who got to drive the car.

You didn't notice when you stopped believing in a monster that lived under your bed and realized it was just a reflection of your mirror.

You didn't notice when you kicked your brother's seat during a road trip for the last time.

You didn't notice when you had your last Disney movie night with your family.

You didn't notice that grandparents don't last forever.

You didn't notice your parents growing up, too.

You didn't notice it, did you? You didn't notice that you grew up.

You notice it now, don't you?

You notice it every time you look in the mirror. You're shocked because your reflection doesn't look familiar.

You notice you look tired. You feel like it's been an eternity since you let your imagination run wild.

You notice you don't look like yourself, and you don't even remember what it's like to be a child.

You notice it every time you look back at pictures.

You notice how you are at that age that when you were little you were wishing for.

You notice it now don't you. Time goes by too fast.

You notice now that it's time to pause. You're tired of life passing you by and not noticing. Not noticing the people around you, but most importantly, not noticing yourself.

You decide to stop. It's time to look. It's time to notice. But notice what?

You. I see you! I see me!

I NOTICE!



## Disney Trip

*By Jazmere Gresham*

Jaz and Dhahabo are the bestest friends. The girls met at school.

They made plans to go to Disney to Magic Kingdom. It has rides there and they can see the castle. It is loud there because the people on the rides are screaming. It looks pretty there.

We planned to ride rides and eat churros.

“Awesome,” Dhahabo said.

“Hey Jaz, we should ride the Buzz Lightyear ride.”

Jaz said, “I want to ride the Dumbo ride.”

Dhahabo doesn't want to get on the Dumbo ride. But, she doesn't want to make Jaz feel sad.

Jaz said, “How about we do the Buzz Lightyear ride first?”

Dhahabo said, “Okay.”

Dhahabo said, “Jaz, I will buy us a churro because you picked my ride first.”

Jaz said, “That is a deal! I will buy lunch and dinner.”

Dhahabo said, “How about we both pay for dinner so it will be equal.”

Jaz said, “Okay.”

The day was ruined because it started raining and their plans got destroyed. While it was raining, they still went to get their churros.

They made an announcement that the park was getting shut down. They were pretty mad at this news. They shut down the park because of the storm.

Dhahabo said to Jaz, “Dang we can't get the churros.”

Jaz said, “That is okay that the day did not turn out how we expected.”

Dhahabo said, “Okay, I just wanted you to understand that. Probably tomorrow we can go to SeaWorld and it's all on me because you paid for The Magic Kingdom.”

Jaz said, “That is fine. How about we go eat dinner? I will drive this one time. Tomorrow is all you.”

The girls got into the car and drove back to the hotel. The workers in the hotel were serving dinner. They were serving macaroni, chicken, fruits, and rice. Dhahabo and Jaz start to eat and Jaz said, “This food is good!”

The next morning, they followed their plan and went to Sea World. The girls were excited to go to Sea World. They didn’t get to get churros or ride the rides at Disney, but they got to go to Sea World instead. Jaz and Dhahabo had fun on their trip.

## Don't Grow Up Too Fast

*By Shawnni Bolding*

When I was four, my mother read me books before bed. I did not understand why she wore makeup. I thought she was pretty without it. I swore I would never wear any when I was four. I could not wait for people to ask me my age. I could hold up two hands. I thought that was pretty cool.

When I was seven, my father took me on bike rides. I did not understand why he told me when I grew up I couldn't marry him. I swear I would never like any other boys. When I was seven, I could not wait for my 10th birthday because when people would ask me my age, I could up all of my fingers! I would be in double digits and I thought that'd be pretty cool. When I was 10, my friends and I would play pretend. I did not understand why the older kids would always be on their phone. The real world is not as much fun as my imagination. I swore I would never be addicted to a screen. When I was 10, I could not wait for my 13th birthday! When people would ask my age, I'd be a teenager and I thought that would be pretty cool.

When I was thirteen, my sisters and I caught lizards outside. I did not understand why older people never went out exploring. There's a whole world out there, but they choose to be inside. I swore I would be an adult and still swing. When I was thirteen, I could not wait for my sixteenth birthday when people would ask me my age, I could say I was in high school! I'd be able to drive and I thought that would be pretty cool.

When I was 16, I started to understand why my mother wore makeup. I began wearing it everyday. I miss when the mirror was just for brushing my teeth and now I understand why I cannot marry my father. I wore makeup for the boys at school. I miss when they had cooties. When I was sixteen, I could not wait for my eighteenth birthday because when people asked me my age, I was an adult. They would have to take me seriously and I thought that would be pretty cool.

When I was 18, I started to understand why people were attached to their phones. Playing pretend was out and social media was in. I miss when play dates were about imagination. I understand why people stayed inside. The real world has no room for swing sets. I stopped exploring the forest. I miss when parks were better than parties.

I could not wait for my 21st birthday when people would ask me my age. I might get to go to a bar and I would be in college. I thought that would be pretty cool.

I am 20 now. I read a book by myself before bed. I do not know where my bike is. I'm too busy on my phone to look. I stay inside with my sisters and I wear makeup before leaving the house. I go on dates that are nothing like the fairy tales. My friends go to parties instead of the park.

Being 21 or 25 seems much different than being 20. I understand why adults can't wait to have kids. Part of it is so they can relive their childhood. They think they wasted their time growing up. I miss my childhood so much, but I can't go back in time. So instead I can't wait for my 35th

birthday when I can read to my daughter before she goes to bed. I can go on bike rides again with my son, catch lizards with my daughter and laugh when she asks why mom wears makeup. I'll use my imagination and put my phone down to play pretend and smile and when my son asks why he can't marry his mom. I can't wait for my 35th birthday – people won't ask me about my age. I think that would be pretty cool.

## Four Elements

*By Reyshell Hernandez Diaz*

It was Phoebe's first day at a new school – Redwood Middle School. That morning while getting ready, she checked the time and noticed that she was late for the bus.

She ran out the door, and seeing the bus had already passed by, she exclaimed, “Great, now I have to walk to school!”

Running as fast as she could, she accidentally stumbled on a rock and fell in a puddle, but got up and kept running.

Finally, she got to school eight minutes later. Luckily, Phoebe had an extra pair of clothes just in case she needed it. Quickly she went to the bathroom and changed out of her muddy clothes, and went to class.

“Today, we have a new student. Please make her feel welcome,” Mrs. Eastman said as Phoebe walked in the classroom. “Good Morning. Nice to meet you!” said the teacher.

“Good morning.” Phoebe said back quietly. “May you introduce yourself to the class?” Mrs. Eastman said.

“My name is Phoebe.”

“Ok nice to meet you Phoebe. Can you please have a seat next to the girl with the braids?” Phoebe put her stuff away and went and got a seat next to a girl named Kealsey.

The teacher was teaching class and suddenly the girl next to Phoebe started talking to her quietly.

“Hi, my name is Kealsey. Nice to meet you!” Phoebe waved back.

“Want to be friends?” Kealsey said. “Of course!” Phoebe said back with excitement.

Mrs. Eastman called her out for interrupting the class and gave her an hour of detention. While in detention, she saw another student there, who never talked or made a peep.

When Phoebe got back home her mom was still working. Afterwards, she went to her room and started writing in her diary.

“Dear Diary – today was my first day of school in Redwood Middle school. Everything was going wrong at first until I met this girl named Kealsey who asked me to be her friend, and even though I got detention for being loud and interrupting class, I’m glad I now have a friend at school.”

Phoebe closed her diary, changed her clothes, then did her work and went to sleep. After some time, Kealsey and Phoebe became best friends and at last Phoebe told Kealsey about her capability.

“You have *Fire Powers*?!” in a loud noise. “Shhhhhh, You can’t tell anybody, can you promise me that?” Phoebe shot back.

“I promise I won’t tell anybody,” said Kealsey.

The next day Phoebe walked down the hallway feeling self-conscious because she could see and hear everybody whispering and pointing at her. Phoebe was looking for Kealsey until she saw her.

“Why does everybody keep pointing and whispering when they see me?” Phoebe said.

Before Kealsey could say anything a boy said “Here is the freak with *Fire power*,” while laughing and soon everyone joined in with him.

Some kids heard what was happening and wondered if it was true. The kids decided to find out, so they went to talk with Phoebe.

The kids searched but had no luck finding Phoebe. They went running to the bathroom along with Aria (the girl from detention) while the boys stayed outside.

“Is somebody here?” said Aria. “Are you ok?” Aria said.

Without answering Phoebe looked at her and noticed that it was the girl from detention.

“Hi, my name is Aria. Nice to meet you. I remember seeing you at detention. Can you come outside with me please? I have some people you might want to meet.”

Phoebe stood up and went with Aria outside. There she saw two boys, “Meet my friends Kai and Akamu,” said Aria.

“We heard you have *Fire power*, is that true?” Kai said.

“Well I guess you already know so I might just tell you the truth. I do have *fire power*,” said Phoebe.

“You probably didn’t expect this but we all have powers like you. I have the element of Earth, Kai has the element of Water, Aria has the element of Air, and Phoebe has the element of Fire,” Akamu said.



Soon after they became friends and made a club called *Four Elements*. The four of them did some investigation on why they had powers. One day they went to the library to search for some answers.

There they found out that Hephaestus is the God of Fire, Zeus is the God of Air, Poseidon is the God of Water, and the God of Earth is Gaia. They were happy because they found something that has to do with their power and how they got it.

One day when Phoebe was home, somebody knocked on the door. When she opened the door she saw a box outside with her name on it. She took it inside and opened it and there was a weird book, called *Basic Elements*. She called her friends and they met at the library.

Phoebe told them that this book came in the mail today.

“That's weird, did you order anything?” said Aria.

“No” answered Phoebe.

“Let's read it,” suggested Kai.

“I think we should read it also,” said Akamu.

“Ok, fine by me, ” said Aria.

“The biggest asteroid yet hit earth and caused the end of the world. Dust and smoke rose in the atmosphere preventing sunlight from reaching earth and that caused the temperature to drop down making it almost impossible for a living thing to survive this event. Then, 2000 years after the world ended, four Gods were sent on a mission to create a new world with their elements: Fire, Water, Earth, and Air. They all combined their strength to get the mission done. Before they left, they all decided to entrust their elements with four fortunate humans: Phoebe, Aria, Kai, and Akamu. When they finished reading the book they found the port of their source of power.

## F.R.E.N.E.M.I.E.S.

*By Cylie Jones*

July 11, 2021 was my first day at Livingston Elementary. I was lonely at first until I made friends with this girl named Zy'Hanna. We became really close but things started to change after this new boy, Ty'shaun, came to the school. Since she and I both liked him, I decided to let her date him - and if they ever broke up, I would not flirt with him or get back with him.

July 19th: Dalove, London, and Miya were the new "It Girls" at the school. Every girl at the school wanted to look like them, (and be like them) and everybody wanted to date them, but that all changed.

One day as I was getting lunch, Dalove walked up to me and asked if I could sit with them. I looked at Zy'Hanna who said, "Go for it".

So I did. As I'm walking over there, I see Zy'Hanna and the other girls making fun of me because of the way I was dressed. Everyone in the whole lunch room took pictures! I ran out of the lunch room to the bathroom and ate my lunch there. On the bus ride home, I pulled out my phone and got on *Instabook*. I was shocked to see that I turned into the laughing stock of the school!! Once I got home I ran into my room...and cried.

The next day I walked into the school confident as ever. When lunch hit, I walked over to the table with all the cool kids, sat down, and started eating.

Then Dalove said, "Um, what are you doing here?"

"I'm eating my lunch."

London, Miya, and Zyhanna started laughing, saying that I'm the new member of their group!

Later in Science class, Mr. Wakins put us in groups of three, to do a project. Dalove, London and I were in the same group, and during our working time, London brought up that she was going skating, and asked, "Cylie, do you wanna go skating with me on July 23rd?"

I said, "Sure! I'll ask my mom." But when she said Ty'shaun was going to be there, I told her I would have to think about it.

London said, "OK."

A couple of minutes later the bells ring, and as I'm walking out, Dalove asks, "Do you need a ride home?"

"No, it's okay. My mom's here," I replied.

We said goodbye. Fast forward to July 23rd. London tells me not to forget about the skating party. I tell her okay, I'll see her at 5:00 p.m.

After I got ready, my mom drove me there. I said hello to London right away, but as I'm walking in, Ty'shaun is behind me and I turn red as a tomato. London notices me, and taps Zy'Hanna who looks back and whippers something to London. Then, Zy'Hanna rubs shoulders with Ty'shaun, which makes me angry! So I march to get my skates and put them on.

I started skating and I fell. I skated the whole time and at the end of the party, my mom didn't come and get me or answer her phone. I was freezing! Ty'shaun was still there, and asked me if I needed a ride. I tell him yeah, so he says no problem.

While we were in the car, he asked for my number, so I gave it to him, and once I did, we were at my house.

When I got home, I went right up to my room and texted Ty'shaun. He asked if I liked him. I told him yes and he said, "Why not tell me?"

"I didn't because I promised Zy'Hanna that I would not get with you," I said.

"Zy'Hanna does not matter. I like you," he said.

I had to think about my promise I made with Zy'Hanna, but I really liked him, so I said, "Okay we can be a couple, but keep it a secret."

Ty'shaun agreed. The next day at lunch, I walked to sit next to Ty'shaun, and I see Zy'Hanna looking at me all weird, just to make me jealous.

She walks out. That's when I realized I messed up, but I didn't care because of all the things she did to me. Later in Mr. Loeo's math class, he announced that our homework was due tomorrow. So Zy'Hanna stood up and asked if she could work with Ty'shaun on her homework, since it was too hard for her to understand.

Mr. Loeo went with it, and replied, "Sure, Zy'Hanna." So, she went to sit next to Ty'shaun.

I sat by myself watching them laugh together, which made me mad. I got up and yelled out her name, "Zy'Hanna!"

Zy'Hanna turned around slowly, and walked up to me and said, "If I don't!"

I sat back down, and the bell rings for Social Studies class with Ms. Steph. As Ms. Steph was talking, I was trying to whisper Ty'shaun's name, but he couldn't hear me. The room got silent and I said Ty'shaun's name too loud, so Ms. Steph gave me detention at the end of the day.

Later, I walked to the detention room. I sat down and began writing the, "I'm Sorry" paper for Ms. Steph. After serving time in detention, I was walking home and I ran into Zy'Hanna, who gave me a dirty look.

July 30th was Homecoming time. I went to the dance with Ty'shaun ,and Zy'Hanna was not okay with it. She tried to do anything she could to stop us from going together, like ruining my homecoming dress.

But it didn't work. At the end of our school year, me and Ty'shaun were still together.

## Gabel Road

*By Evie Vargo*

“Well, tell her, why don’t you,” said my older, and now, honestly, quite annoying brother who I’ve lived with in the same house for over 45 years. My grandniece, Maya, was sitting beneath my feet, looking up at me with smiles so sweet, and her eyes were so bright and inquisitive, it was hard to say no, however mad I was at my brother. I knew that my brother had only brought it up because he knew it was a touchy subject.

“Tell her the story,” he said.

I turned in his direction and sighed, sat Maya down next to me in a huge chair, and I started my tale.

“It was the summer of 1968, Cleveland, Ohio. Rock and roll bands were at their peak, the hippie movement was getting bigger, the fashion was bold and bright and the world was beginning to become a better place. (This is also about the time global warming came into place, but us boomers don’t really like to mention that part.) Me, Diana, my brother Jake, and our younger brother Rick...”

“Who’s Rick?” Maya rather rudely interrupted me. I didn’t scold her because she’s only four, which, other than a teen, is the max rudeness era.

“If you would just let me finish, I would tell you,” I snapped. I felt bad, but she didn’t really seem like she could tell.

“Okay, well, as I was saying, we were huddled up under a bench, lost in a sea of trousers, GoGo boots, and mini skirts. This wasn’t the fun kind of lost, like a fun little adventure away from mom as she shops. This was the sad, scary, nothing-to-do but sit here and feel useless kind of lost. But, there was no one that was going to come for us.

“You see, we had just lost our entire family in a fire during the Hornby family reunion. My brother rushed to get everyone out of the house, but before he could do that, the door to the room my siblings and I shared caught aflame. Jake screamed and yelled as he rushed to help us climb out of our second story window and run out onto the fire escape. He just wasn’t loud enough. And, before you say that I wasn’t being very helpful, just remember that, at the time I was only five, and Jake at the age of 14 was much qualified to do something in this situation, not to mention little Rock, who was only 7 months old at this point.

“Jake knew that if he went to someone for help, they would just put us in foster care. So, he walked us around 10 miles to a city park, and laid under a park bench.

“As the hours passed and the morning sun turned immensely hotter, we huddled up under the bench. We were lost, and alone. But not the fun type of lost and alone, where mom lost you in the park, and you have a fun little adventure. No, this was the sad, desperate, and lost type of alone.

“As night fell and the sky got darker and darker, Rick began to cough about, and at one point threw up black soot all over Jake. It was clear that he was sick, but what could we do about it?

“It was quite late in the day before something notable happened, but of course, this may have been the most memorable day of your grandpa's life, because this was when your grandma walked by. Of course, Jake was embarrassed because the most beautiful girl he had ever seen just walked by, looked down at him, and he had thrown up all over his shirt, and his eyes were all puffy. But, either way, Jake talked to her, told her his situation, and we ended up walking home that evening with her and her little sister to her house on Gabel road.

To be continued...



## Grief and Flowers

*By Savannah Smith*

### Grief

Grief sucks  
Knowing you couldn't do anything  
That what happened can't be made right  
I know that  
But I've given myself peace  
I know what happened  
It happened for a reason  
Even after four years I'm still healing  
Because it's normal  
It's grief.

### The Flowers

As I looked at the flowers  
I realized hours had passed  
But I wanted them to last  
The flowers were beautiful  
And colorful  
Even in the cold spring  
They bring happiness.

## Halloween of Friendship

*By Dalilah Lytle*

Once upon a time in October, it was the day before Halloween. Everybody loved Halloween, especially Bobby. Bobby was an American kid with brown hair, a blue sweater and gray pants. Bobby had a friend named Sahar. Sahar was a Muslim. She wore a purple Hijab, a blue dress and she had black hair.

On the day before Halloween, there was a competition to see whoever had the scariest Haunted House. Whoever did win, won a supply of Starburst, Hersheys, Twix, and a badge for the best Haunted House ever. Bobby and Sahar wanted to win so badly, because they loved candy so much.

Sahar had told Bobby she couldn't celebrate Halloween because it's against her religion. This made Bobby sad because she probably wouldn't be able to set up the Haunted House with him.

Turns out she couldn't.

However, she could help with getting decorations. They got the decorations and set the house up. Some of the decorations they used were fake spiders, cobwebs, fake skeleton bones, and some black rubber rats. A creepy black cat, too. It ended up being so realistic and spooky.

The people that ran the competition came to each Haunted House. Bobby was nervous. Finally they got to Bobby.

They won!

Bobby celebrated by himself, excited to go tell Sahar that he could not have done it without her. Bobby shared some candy with Sahar; they both enjoyed the smell of sweet Starburst, Hersheys, and Twix. Happily, they both enjoyed their candy and friendship.

## Help...

*By Jessi Carr*

There were two friends who were visiting a new city, and they were like we need to find something to do. So, they Googled fun things to do in that city. They found a VR escape room.

Immediately, they're like we have to do this! They book a room and they go. When they show up, the whole place is empty and they're the only two people there. Now they're really excited.

The person who runs the place greets them and sets them up. They put the VR headsets on and press start. The two friends booked the scariest escape room. Immediately they're stuck in this game that is absolutely terrifying! But it's no big deal right? Because it's just a game. But about 10 minutes into the game it gets a little too terrifying. Through their headsets they're like, "Hey do you want to get off? I'm kind of freaked out!"

They both agree, except the headsets won't come off. They keep yelling for the person to come and help because they can't figure out why the headsets won't come off, but nobody answers them. Now they're panicking because they're stuck in this horrifying game. Forever!!

To be continued.....

## How We Stole 15 Billion Dollars

*By Arihana Bartley*

*Makaylah served 5 years in prison and had some plans for a fake friend.*

“Hi Makaylah!”

“Hi Arihana... you okay?”

“Yeah okay... Where do you wanna go?”

“Take me to 748th street.”

“Whoa! I know that street! That's the President's street. Why do you wanna go there?”

“Okay, listen. The President set me up for a crime I didn't even do. I want to get back at him so that he sees I'm not the one to play with.”

“Oh, so... we're here.”

“Okay, so we need to check the whole house...wait but how? He has so many guards!”

“Well, he's not even here. He is out in Japan to see his grandma. So his daughter is here, and is going to get 15 million dollars. It's the perfect time to do it.”

“Okay let's find that door so we will know where the 15 million dollars will be, okay?”

“Yeah! Oh yeah, take pictures of every room.”

“Got it boss.”

“Wait, but how will we get past those guards?”

“We will act like the F.B.I., okay?”

“We will say there is a killer in this area, and we need to check this house to make sure he is not in here.”

“Well okay, I...guess.”

“Great! Now let's go.”

**5 minutes later...**

“Hey you! What are you doing here!”

“Shoot!” Makylah thinks.

“Hello Sir. There is a killer in your area, and I need to take a look at this room. It's for your own safety.”

“Well that's weird I didn't get a call saying there was a killer in this area.”

“Well there is, and I know that if you're wondering because I'm the F.B.I., so please let me do my job.”

“Yes s-sir I-I'm sorry! I-It will n-not happen again! Also, if you're lying we got our eyes on you.”

“Crap! How do they even pay for this stuff? I can't even pay for that,” thought Makaylah.

“Okay, now let-me-do-my-job!”

“Okay Sir! Let's just check this room.”

**After finding the money...**

“Okay Makaylah, how in the world do we get past those lasers?”

“Arihana, listen, I have two things to say to you: one, CALM DOWN! And two, we need a team first.”

“Hey, are you still into hacking?”

“Yes!”

“I need you to hack their cameras and their communication so we can not get caught while trying to steal the money.”

“And the lasers?”

“That's where the team comes in. We need a good gymnast who can really dodge objects that get in the way.”

“I know just the person okay!”

“O-Okay? But may I ask who?”

“Her name is Lacey, and she is really good at a lot of things and can probably get past those lasers with no problem.”

“Okay, now can you call?”

“What's her name again? Lacey? Okay Lacey I got it.”

“Now let me call her,” I say. “Hello? Lacey can you meet me at 64th Avenue?”

“S-Sure I guess?”

“Okay, see ya when you get here!”

“WHOA! You good at obstacles?”

“Yeah. May I ask why you wanted me?”

“We will tell you soon. Just get in the car, okay? We need a team first then we will tell you!”

“Thanks, now we need a person. We need someone who can hack the cams – oh we have her.”

“Okay now I'm scared that Arihana might kill me.”

“I won't. Now what do we need?”

“We need someone who can distract the guards.”

“I know the perfect person!!!”

“YEAH!! Now let me call him. Hiya Santiago, I need your help now. Can you meet me at 64th avenue?”

“Sure, I...guess.”



“We called you here because we need your help to steal 15 million dollars.”

“I’m in!”

“Okay, now you all have your own part in this, so I’ll call you in the morning about...maybe 6a.m., so y’all be ready. I’ll then pick you guys up.”

“Okay, bye.”

“You ready? Now y’all can get past those lasers and cameras. I did my part and now I’m going to sleep.”

”Okay, thanks. Now, is anyone close to me? I’m guarding the money oh...flip!”

“WHAT’S WRONG ARE YOU OKAY!?!?”

“Yes, a guard is coming. So, Arihana, please turn on the lasers. I have to hide behind the money! Okay, they’re gone. I’m safe for now.”

“NOW come on...wait! ARIHANA what in the world are you doing in the vents?”

“Here, I got the bag because the crew woke me up, and I don’t have anything cool to do. So, I had to help you so here you go. Now let’s go! SHOOT!”

“WHAT?!”

“They’re coming!”

“Okay grab onto me let’s go!”

“This feels weird.”

“Arihana, Lacey!!! G  
Get out there now! ARIHANA!! Get off her! ARIHANA! Santiago go get Arihana!”

“I’m already on it.”

“Lacey, you get in the car! Arihana? Arihana! Get off her now! Grab their taser now!”

“Shut up.”

“What did you just give her?!?”

“Sleeping gas, duh! What else can I give her?”

“Oh I’ll show you.”

“Ugh! what the heck?!?”

“Makaylah! Come help me now!”

“Coming right now!”

“Lacey stay in the car!”

**6 mins later...**

“Here, go put her in the car. I need to clean this up, and get some of this blood off me.”

**6 mins later...**

“Okay I’m done.”

“Are we big time criminals?” Lacey asks.

“Yeah.”

“Arihana are you alive?!?”

“She woke up?!?”

“Where am I?”

“Arihana, it’s us Lacey, Makaylah, and Santiago.”

“Why does my whole body hurt?”

“You’ve got sleeping gas in you right now.”

“Oh. (yawning) I’m tired.”

“Don’t you dare go back to sleep. I will slap you.”

“Okay.”

“We got the money!”

**THE END**

## In the Stars

*By Javeyha Hill*

Hey, I'm Ivy! I'm in the sixth grade. I love stars. Today my friends Sage and Rose and I are going into the outskirts of space at 8:30 p.m. I'm so lucky that my best friend's dad works for NASA and was able to get us on this trip. I'm so happy. I'm about to call Sage and Rose.

"Hey guys!" I said.

"Hi," said Sage and Rose. "Are you packed and ready to go? We have a half-hour left before we leave for the launch pad, so start getting ready," I said.

"Yay! We're here! Let's get on the rocket ship," we yelled.

Once we strapped in, the countdown began.

TEN, NINE, EIGHT, SEVEN, SIX, FIVE, FOUR, THREE, TWO, ONE.... BLAST OFF!!!

My whole body got pressed against my seat. When I looked at Rose and Sage, they looked very afraid. Their faces were like smashed pancakes from the force of the take off. I knew we had made it to space when my legs and feet lifted up and I started floating. I asked Sage and Rose, "Are you okay?"

They were both in awe of what they saw outside.

"Guys, that star looks so eccentric or odd," said Rose.

Sage said, "Do you all see what I see? Something's over there!"

"Maybe we will see what it is on our way to the moon." I said.

"It's TIME TO GO ON THE MOON!" we yelled.

We had to prepare for the moonwalk. It will be exciting to feel the moon's surface under our feet. We decided to explore on our own.

"Let's split up and come back an hour later," said Sage.

An hour later... Sage and I came back to the spaceship but Rose was nowhere to be found.

“Where is Rose?” Sage and I asked.

“ROSE!” we shouted.

“Let’s go look for her.”

“What is that green thing over there?” wondered Sage. We walked over to the green object and it was an alien. It had a big head and big black eyes and was green with long arms. In his arms was Rose!!

“Help me!” she screamed. The alien made a noise that sounded like it said, “NO!”

Before we knew it, the alien and Rose were in his UFO flying away into the next galaxy. Sage and I ran back to the spaceship and tried to chase after them.

To be continued...

## Jackson Gets on the Baseball Field

*By Kiko Mightowl Molina*

A group of people went to the baseball field. Jackson saw them walking and wanted to play baseball. So, he asked his mom if he could go to the baseball field with the group.

His mom said, “Yes, you can go.” He got on his bike and went to the field and when he got there he saw the group of people.

They said, “You are not old enough to play with us.”

He called his mom and she said, “I’m at work and I’m sorry, but I can see if your dad can go up to the field.”

His mom called his dad and his dad said, “I’m at work and I’m sorry, but call your big brother.”

Then he called his big brother. The brother yelled, “I’m at my school, CALL YOUR SISTER!”

HE HUNG UP ON ME! How rude, Jackson thought.

Jackson called his sister and she answered. She said, “Hello.”

He said, “Can you come to help me get in the baseball field because there are people bullying me?”

She said, “Well , just give me a second, okay?”

Jackson said, “Okay.”

A few moments later, she pulled up in her car. She got out and said, “Where are they at?”

He said,” Over there,” and pointed at the field.

She went over to the field and turned back because one of the bullies was her friend’s boyfriend. He recognized her and started to panic.

She goes back to her car and picks up her cell phone. She immediately dials her friend. As she is dialing, the boy is running to her begging her to stop the call. Her friend answered the phone and she said, “Hello.”



She tells her friend everything that happened. Her friend begins her journey heading towards the baseball field. Her friend approaches the boyfriend and is ready to speak.

The friend said to let Jackson play. He said why and she said, "Because he is just a kid so y'all shouldn't bully a little kid."

The bully said, "Fine, you can play with us, Jackson, for an hour or so."

They got along and they said that he was good at baseball.

He said, "Thank you."

A few hours later he went home and thanked his sister.

## Jimmy's Chocolate Tacos

*By Sharrod Craig*

Jimmy was terrified of running out of his delicious chocolate tacos. Jimmy is a very social senior in a very special high school for kids that have behavior problems. Jimmy is shy sometimes, despite the fact that he struggles with infrequent destructive and violent mental breakdowns.

An assignment in Jimmy's high school is for all the students to sell food for the poor people of Columbus. The students got to choose their own food they wanted to sell. Jimmy originally chose to sell tacos but he wanted to try something new – like tacos with ramen, or zucchini, or dragon fruit, or chocolate. Jimmy chose to use the last idea which he thought most kids would like, even some adults. Chocolate tacos would be his choice but it didn't sound right.

“Chocolate tacos,” he said. “That doesn't sound like a good name.”

He thought about it for a while, but after an hour of thinking he thought of a name - “CHACO'S!” He yelled out the name of his delicious tacos!

The next day, the students were sent out for Spring Break, which was going to be the time for the students to start their assignments that they were assigned. Everybody that was doing a job that included a truck, got a free one because the school that Jimmy goes to is a very rich school. Jimmy got his taco truck that day. On the side it said, “COME GET YOUR TACOS!”

Jimmy knew one of those words had to go, so he spray painted “COME GET YOUR CHACOS!”

Jimmy knew that this would be a very successful process. While he was being all optimistic, Jimmy had forgotten to get ingredients. So, after an hour of sitting in the truck thinking about good things that could benefit the truck, he remembered to get ingredients for his chacos. With that he was on the road to buy ingredients.

“First stop is Walmart,” said Jimmy. At the Walmart, Jimmy found two of his ingredients – chocolate and taco shells. At the second store Jimmy went to, he ended up finding taco meat, seasoning, and cheese. Jimmy returned to his truck feeling good about his project.

“This is going to be the most successful thing I’ve ever done,” said Jimmy.

He packed his truck with all the ingredients. But he felt like something was wrong. He turned around and saw a hazel pair of eyes watching him.

“AYDEN IS THAT YOU,” Jimmy yelled! The hazel pair of eyes disappeared into the shadows Jimmy was flabbergasted.

Confused and mad, Jimmy walked outside to his new and improved Chaco truck. Seeing this, Jimmy's mood completely changed from mad and confused to happy and excited. Jimmy hopped in his Chaco truck and he was on his way. But he saw Ayden, his arch enemy at his school.

Ayden was absent the day that their teacher announced the project. So, Ayden had been watching Jimmy and had been copying off of what he was doing. Jimmy proceeded to have a mental breakdown when he saw Ayden had a taco truck, too.

“I’m going to kick him, that little copycat!” Jimmy ended up selling 671 Chacos that day. This can’t possibly go any better.

Ayden’s success was not going so well as he realized that he made a mistake. He had started his taco process after Jimmy. That revealed that Ayden was a RECEIPT THEFT. Although Ayden got caught, he still kept copying Jimmy with his knock off “Chaco Tacos,” which put him in jail.

Jimmy got rich, Ayden is in jail, this couldn't possibly go wrong . . . . right?

Stay Tuned for Chapter Two

AYDEN’S BACK

## Kylie and Kaylie at the Park

*By Kaylie Howard*

Once upon a time Kylie and Kaylie were at the park. Kylie has brown hair and blue eyes and always wears hoodies. I have brown hair and I also have blue eyes. I always wear leggings. The park has shiny swings and a big slide. There were birds chirping and kids screaming.

The girls were playing on the swings and having fun. Kaylie dared Kylie to do a flip off of the swing.

Kylie wants to do a flip off the swing but is too scared. She doesn't know if she will be able to land it. She is scared she might get hurt.

Kylie goes to do the flip off of the swing and she falls. She feels sad, kind of mad, and hopeful she will do better next time.

Kylie gets back up and tries again. Kylie continues to try to land the flip off of the swing. Kaylie is proud that Kylie doesn't give up. Kaylie said I'm proud of you

After continuing to try to land the flip off of the swing, Kylie lands her flip. Kylie now feels happy, excited, and proud of herself. Kaylie cheers her on and they continue to play at the park for the rest of the day.

## La Historia De Gerrard El Futbolista

*By Gerrard Pablo Rodriguez Castillo*

Habia una vez un niño que le gusta el fútbol era color blanco tiene los ojos cafés el pelo es negro el niño estudia mucho fútbol como manejar el balón como hacer jugadas como meter a los otros.

Mi papá si tiene trabajo pero no puede pagar el fútbol pero cuando sea grande yo le ayudaré con mi dinero.

“Yo quiero jugar fútbol”, Gerrard dijo.

Abuela necesito tu ayuda, para que me des un consejo. Dijo Gerrard.  
Cuando estés en la cancha concéntrate, en la cancha

Todos los que están en el estado siempre graves esto en la cabeza nadie está en el estado, dijo la abuela

“Cuando te ganen zancadillas levántate,” dijo la abuela.

Dijo Gerrard, “gracias abuela voy a tomar eso en cuenta.”

“Mi abuela me dijo ten esto en cuenta dice mi abuela”, dijo Gerrard.

En mi historia pasó que yo quería jugar fútbol y le dije a mi abuela que me daría un consejo y le dije que gracias estuvimos en los momentos malos y buenos.

En el momento feliz cuando mi abuela me dio el consejo y yo cumplí con mi palabra, y le doy las gracias a mi abuelita. Dijo Gerrard

Yo una vez con mi abuela y me gusta jugar con mi abuela Me gusta jugar con mis primos.

## Left Out

*By Victor Stanley*

One day a little kid by the name of Pete was playing outside with his friend Max. Pete threw a football and hit Max in the head when he wasn't looking. Max got furious and full of anger and steam. He pushed Pete to the ground and ran back to his house. Pete asked, "Are you okay, Max?"

But he didn't respond. He just walked off in the distance.

A few weeks later, Pete saw Max playing with his new neighbors and he felt left out. But little did he know it would get worse from there.

Another few weeks had passed, and his birthday was happening. It was early in the morning and no one was awake. He thought when they woke up they would get a cake and have his party but the complete opposite happened.

Two hours later everyone was awake. His family members showed up and he thought they had his cake. But his grandpa took his sister, brother, and cousins to Applebee's. He wasn't allowed to go because he said there wasn't enough room in the car, but his mom and dad had a car. He asked if he could have his mom drive him, but she didn't want to waste gas. He told them it was his birthday and he wanted to go. They told him they didn't care. That made him feel crushed.

He felt as if no one loved him and everyone hated him. He ran up to his room and started crying. He was crying tears for four hours until he stopped crying. He started watching TV and his brother and sister got back and his grandpa took his cousins home. His mom told him to quit watching TV and to go clean his room. He got mad and frustrated because he already cleaned his room.

He watched as his family laughed and giggled watching TV. He wished it was just a dream, but unfortunately it wasn't. He finished his room and went downstairs to tell his mom. She said go to sleep. He went upstairs and saw that they were still watching the movie happily like Pete wasn't even there.

He woke up the next day and went downstairs. His mom said good morning he went to get some cereal. His mom asked him what he was doing. He said getting cereal. She said no because she's making eggs and pancakes.

"Go sit down and wait for the food."

She brought pancakes, eggs, bacon, and sausage. She told him they were going somewhere.

### 2 Hours Later

Pete and his mom, dad, sister, and two brothers arrived at Dave & Buster's. They went inside and his mom told him to cover his eyes. They went in and he opened them and he saw a table with



birthday decorations. He asked his mom why they didn't celebrate the day before. She said that Dave & Buster's was closed and they didn't have any decorations, so when they went out to eat at Applebees they just went to buy some decorations.

The End



## Life of a Baseball Player

*By Trinity Wade*

It is the first day of tryouts and I am scared. My palms are sweaty and my heart is racing. There were not a lot of other people at the tryout; only two girls and nine boys. It is 5:15 p.m. and tryouts start at 5:30 p.m. We have 15 minutes. I am not trying to panic so I take a deep breath in and a deep breath out. I tell myself, “You can do it, you can do it, YOU CAN DO IT!”

Then the coach yells, “It’s time to start!” I grab a basketball so we can start. The coach blows the whistle. Rrrh! I stand on the black line and dribble the ball. Then I run back and forth and make a shot. In my head I’m like “yes I made it.” I was so happy I made it! I didn’t want to embarrass myself. Now it’s 5:45 p.m. I am doing so good so far...until I fall! I looked down and my shoes were untied. I am so embarrassed. I ran out of the gym and called my mom to come and get me. She came and got me.

We were in the car and my mom asked, “Hey what happened?”

“I tripped and fell and I was so embarrassed. I had to get out of there! I ran right out of the gym doors.”

“What? How are you going to give up so easily after you have been talking about this for so long? You can’t give up now! You don’t even know what they thought of your amazing skills!” mom said.

“But mom, I was so embarrassed, I fell in front of everyone! I know they were all laughing at me!”

“Let me tell you something. No one cares more about what is happening to you than they do about what is happening to them! I bet no one even saw you fall! But I bet they saw you run out of the building!”

“Mom, you really think no one saw me trip and fall?”

“I guess I can go back tomorrow. Do you think the tryouts are still happening tomorrow? Do you think the coach will let me try again?”

“You can’t let something so simple like tripping keep you from your dreams,” mom shared.

“OK.” I said.

### THE NEXT DAY

The next day, at the end of the school day it was time for tryouts again. I am so nervous. I have to talk to the coach. I walked into the gym and over to Coach Critter.

“Coach, I’m back. I am sorry for running out of your tryouts. I tripped and fell and I was nervous that everyone would start to laugh and I wouldn’t make the team. Please let me try again.”

“Miss Wade, please do not run out of the gym again. I will let you try again today. Magnificent job at tryouts yesterday by the way. Keep up the good work.”

“OK! Thanks Coach!”

We raced through suicides (that’s when you have to run up and down the gym a bunch), jumping jacks, laps around the gym, layups, dribbling practice, and scrimmaging practice. I made one three-pointer, two two-pointers and one layup. I was so happy that I went, it was so fun! I was glad I had made sure to tie my laces extra tight this time. As I walked out of the gym to my mom’s car, Coach Critter came over to me and said, “Welcome to the team, Miss Wade.”

## Lost Phone

*By Katalina Butcher*

Once upon a time there was a boy named Max. Max was 17 and had brown hair. Max loved to play on his phone. He really liked Roblox the Best.

One day, he lost his phone at school. It might have fallen out of his pocket. He felt sad. When he got home his mom was mad. His mom was mad because he lost his phone at school. His mom was so mad that she grounded him.

So the next day Max went to school and he sat at his desk. He was thinking about his phone. When, all of a sudden, it was just sitting in his desk the whole time. Max felt confused. He picked up his phone and put it in his book bag so it was safe. When he got home he showed his mom and was ungrounded.

## Ms. Amnah

*By Riley Jeffers*

Ms. Amnah is a 5th grade teacher at Highland. She was teaching her class. She smelled nice, looked nice. She was light skinned and she wore a blue shirt and blue jeans.

Ms. Amnah got in a car crash on Tuesday. Ms. Amnah's back was hurting, she was worried. The kids were worried and got split up to different classrooms. The kids were thinking, was it a big accident or a small accident, was she okay?

What if she wasn't okay? What would happen to our class? Would we be split the whole year? Would Mr. V have to teach us? She wasn't here for a day she couldn't teach. The kids were split up in different classes.

Ms. Amnah was scared about what was gonna happen to her car and her back.

Riley asked, "Ms. Amnah, why weren't you in school? Are you okay?"

Ms. Amnah replies, "I'm okay and the reason I wasn't in school was because I got in a car accident and this guy hit the back of my car."

Riley replies, "Are you gonna be in school on Thursday? Cause we got split up into multiple classes and your door was locked."

Ms. Amnah replies, "Yes I will be here on Thursday."

Riley replies, "I'm glad you're not hurt and you'll be here on Thursday and start teaching again."

She comes back and she tells the class what happened to her and her car. She also told us how it happened, and we were relieved that she was ok. She started teaching again and continued teaching for the rest of the school year.

After a few days, she started feeling better. Her back wasn't hurting her much anymore. Her shoulders were still hurting. She is working on renting a new car until her car gets fixed. She rented a new car so she can get to work and teach us until she gets her car fixed.

She was sad that she got in a car accident but happy she could come back and teach us.

## My Favorite Day

*By Gavin Lester*

*Arthur the player in Red Dead Redemption 2 has to progress all through the game.*

### Chapter 1

You live in the snowy mountain in an old mining camp with his gang of outlaws. The leader and right-hand man have a big price on their heads.

### Chapter 2

Arthur and the gang go to the heartlands; the camp has more things than the first camp.

### Chapter 3

You and your gang go to an area. They have never been there; they find information from the grays and wait. Arthur goes and gets information about the grays.

### Chapter 4

You and Charles go to an old mansion to get everyone out of the new camp.

### Chapter 5

After the downfall of a bank robbery, Dutch, Javier, and Micah land on an island called the New World. You stay in a building covered in moss vines and more.

### Chapter 6

After everything has gone down, the Dutch leader is going insane. So, Arthur and the gang go to rob a train. They go, and it fails. John gets shot, and falls off the train. After, the gang went to stash the money. So, no one can get it. After you save Abigail, you go back to the camp in the caves. You try to tell the gang that the gang rat is Micah. He has been ratting out on the gang until John finds his way back to camp. Holding his revolver up to his shoulder were he was shot when the gang picked a side. The Pinkertons' show up and start shooting at the gang. So, you and John go to the woods, but you have a decision to go back for the money or help John get to safety.

Arthur dies.



## Chapter 7

John gets to safety, and is trying to get money. He is delivering food to Pronghorn (a farm), so he gets it by hitting someone in the face.

## Chapter 8

You get a farm, and build your house. Your house is made out of wood. The farm is built. You and Charles build the house. Afterward, most of the gang went out to find Micah in the mountains.

## My First Day at American School

*By Ruth Kameni Tayo*

Ruth was a small teenager at 11 years old. Her family was preparing to go to the U.S.A to have a better education and life.

“Ruth, Noe where are you? Mama said. I have breaking news for you!”

“We are coming mommy!” they replied. “We are going to America on Saturday, December 23, 2023.”

“That's so great! Noe we will go to the U.S.! We will see daddy,” said Ruth.

On the 23rd of December in 2023 at 3:00 a.m. the family was preparing to go to the airport Royal Air Maroc.

That night I didn't sleep because I was so excited to go to the airport for the first time. It was very long but we saw my father's friend's children. I asked my mother if they would go to the United States with us. She said, “Yes.”

Noe said, “That's great!”

We got inside the plane at 6:00 a.m. When we took off, I was excited. Some hours later, I was sleeping without a dream. This was because my dream came true. I didn't sleep too much because it was uncomfortable. We arrived at one part of the Sahara Desert MAROC. The place was very luxurious. We waited 4 hours for the next plane to arrive. The second plane was also luxurious. We could have a tablet that is part of the plane. I asked my mother if they have wifi.

She said, “No Ruth.”

This time I didn't sleep too much because I was busy watching videos. When we arrived in the U.S., the place was very beautiful. When we arrived at the airport we were waiting for our luggage. When we finished, we went outside and saw my father and my father's friend.

After that day, we went to Maryland to spend Christmas together. We waited one full month to go to school. The first day I went, I saw Mia. She was looking at me strangely as if I was not part of the school. But, when I said I was an African, all was clear. I had three best friends, Arihana, Moriya, and Mokala. I played with them sometimes, and sometimes I did not. I was asking myself if maybe Mia was a true friend or if maybe she didn't like me because she did not always want to play. One day, I was playing with a ball and I saw chalk. I wrote, “I don't have any friends. Please be my friend.”

People saw that I was really alone and I wanted friends. I now have friends. Now very soon it will be time to go to middle school and my friends will miss me.

“Hi! Ruth, have you found a new school?” Auriana asked.

“Yes, I replied. My father has found a new one for me and my brother. So, I must prepare myself to go to middle school.”

This is the last day of school and Ruth must separate from her friends and start a new life.

“Goodbye my friends. Even if I don't see you again, you will still be in my heart.”

The moral of this story is that you should always think positive.

## My Little Sister

*By Mailine Elizarraga Robles*

One overjoyed morning, I woke up grateful knowing that my new baby sister was coming home from the hospital! I woke up my brother and our family friend that was babysitting us to get ready for the baby's arrival. Once my parents and the baby arrived, I was walking on air as I saw my baby sister's eyes open for the first time.

We went upstairs and put my sister on the bed and started to pray.

"My dear God, please bless our family now and forever. Thank you for blessing us with this new, healthy, and beautiful baby. Amen," we would say.

As she grew one, then two, and three, she grew to be a gorgeous toddler. Every birthday I would do my best to get her toys, clothes, or anything she desired. Of course I couldn't get her everything, but with the money that I had saved I was able to buy her a baby doll.

I would pay all the money in the world just to see her adorable little smile. I love the way she tries to say my name, Mailine, but she calls me Maggie.

"Maggie! Maggie!" she would call out.

"What?!" I would say. "Come play with me! Let's play Elsa and Anna!"

I was exhausted from school but the look in her eyes dared me to play with her. There we were playing Anna and Elsa.

"Hi Elsa" said my sis.

"Hello Anna, are you ready for the big party at the palace?"

"Yes I am," replied my sister.

When my friend Mia came for a visit, my sister ran to Mia.

"Hi Mia," she said.

My sis and Mia are best friends. Then one day, we went to an open house at my brother's and I's school. My little sister met another of my friends, Zaylee. Zaylee and my sister immediately started to bond and became friends. Zaylee adored my sis and my sis loved Zaylee. My sister would always come to me when I was sick, she would get me her blanket, she would kiss my cheek, and she would be by my side.

I loved her since the day she was born and that will never change. Something I learned about having a handsome brother and an adorable sister is that they may be annoying sometimes, but

no matter how hard things get or how painful things are, you will always have them by your side to love you, care for you, and to support you. That is the beauty of having siblings.

## Nehemiah and Tyy

*By Nehemiah Estep*

Tyy is a 5th grader. He is new to the school.

He walks into class. He sits down and starts his work. Tyy wants a friend. The problem was he was being bullied. LeBron was cursing at Ty and calling him names.

Nehemiah comes to stand-up for Tyy against the bully.

Nehemiah goes up to LeBron and says, “Stop bullying people!”

LeBron stops and leaves Tyy alone. Nehemiah and Tyy become friends.

Nehemiah and Tyy play together at recess.

When someone messes with a friend, you stand up for them and they walk away. Just ask if they want to play and go play.



## Quackers and Suzy

*By Kalyn Goff*

On a sunny day, Quackers the duck and Suzy the chick went to the park. Quackers is a little black duck who likes the pond. Suzy is a little white chick. Suzy likes the pond, too. Quackers and Suzy went to the large park and went to the open field.

Quackers and Suzy wander away from the field at the park. They were looking for butterflies, and the butterflies kept flying further and further away.

Quackers and Suzy look around and don't recognize anything.

"I am scared," said Quackers.

"Me too," said Suzy.

They both hugged each other tight and shook in one place. Quackers asked, "What are we going to do?"

"I don't know," said Suzy.

Quackers and Suzy look up and see the shadow of a wolf and get scared. As the shadow gets closer they realize that the shadow looks familiar. Then they recognize the wolf as Mr. Wolf, their neighbor.

Mr. Wolf takes them home to their parents, who are happy to see them. Their parents hug them and are glad to see them. They were worried and were going to call the cops if they were not able to find the children.

"Mr. Wolf, you saved our children," said Quacker's mom.

Suzy's mom said, "We are so grateful."

Mr. Wolf said, "Just being a neighbor."

Quacker's mom and Suzy's mom warned their children to not wander off from the playground again. Quacker and Suzy agreed that it is not a good idea to wander off.

## Shark and His Adventure

*By Christian-Michael Russell*

In a forest there are big trees and animals like the sharks, the bears, the squirrels, and fishes. And lots of water for animals to drink. The animals meet the shark.

Shark flows into the forest drinking pond. He is confused as he swims around the pond. The other animals stare at him super silently; as he zips and zips around scaring the fishes. He does not see the animals and continues looking for where he came from.

The animals bully him and keep telling him to get out and go away somewhere.

Bird says, “Go Away Shark, you do not live here.”

Squirrel says, “Yeah what Bird said, we agree that you don’t belong here.”

“Why are you being so mean to me?” asked Shark.

“Because like we said, you don’t belong here,” said Bird.

Shark was super sad and didn’t like the mean comments being said to him.

The Big Bass tries to stop them from bullying him but they don’t listen. Bass said, “Stop bullying that shark. In the water we swim around and help each other.” Big Bass tells Shark, “Here is the entrance to the ocean, you can follow this path.”

Shark says, “Thanks! I will follow your instructions.”

He follows his instructions one night and falls down the river. He is scared. He is going to get super hurt. He falls and hits his head on a little rock and holds his head. Some sharks hear him splash and rush to him. His mom and dad rush over and hug him because they finally found him. They had been looking for Shark for two whole days. He cries because he is happy he found his parents again. He finds his parents and relatives and hugs them all.

He is finally happy to find his parents. He cries because he is happy to see them. He tells them about his bullies and they tell him not to worry. They lead him to the ocean and he follows them. He sees the home that they lead him to. He enters the home and is happy.

They welcome him to their home and give him shades and a cheeseburger. He is very happy and makes lots and lots of friends. The bird and the flying squirrel see how cool Shark is and regret sending him away. The Big Bass is joyful that Shark found his family again. Shark parties with the other sharks all night. The next morning he is thankful to have found his home.

## The Amazing Aaron

*By The Amazing Aaron*

I was born on January 29th, 2013. I have two older siblings, a brother and a sister. When I was one, we moved to a new house and I also learned how to walk. When I was three, the first word I spoke was “mom.” I started school at Livingston Elementary when I was five and I made one friend and we were friends until the fourth grade.

One day I had to go to a new school for fifth grade so I had to say goodbye to all of my friends and my two teachers. Now, I am in the fifth grade at Trevitt Elementary. I have two teachers and a City Year tutor. The difference between Trevitt and Livingston is that Trevitt has no fights and Livingston has more fights.

The similarities of Miss Stewart and Miss Tomlinson are they both have blue eyes and blonde hair. The difference is that Ms Stewart is a fourth grade teacher and Ms Tomlinson is a fifth grade teacher. Ms. Tomlinson is a fifth grade teacher and I do have fun in the fifth grade, but I don’t have a lot of friends. I hate all people, well not the people that hate me, but one person hates me the most, but I still have fun. We play Buckets and Kahoot and we do math rotations and we also do reading rotations. This is the end of the Amazing Aaron. Bye! =)

## The Beach

*By Adrianna De La Rosa*

Once upon a time there was one bunny named Pet and a cat named Bella. Bella's fur is black and white Pet's fur is brown and white with a fuzzy little tail.

One day the two friends went to the beach. The yellow sand felt like tickles under their paws. They saw the sun shining on the light blue water and it was warm. Under the water Bella and Pet saw seashells and starfish.

Bella is so excited to see the seashells, and Pet is so excited to see the starfish. Bella swims towards the seashells, and Pet swims towards the starfish. Both Bella and Pet look back and don't see each other. They both begin to worry that they lost each other. Then all of the sudden they bump into each other and start to argue.

Bella says, "Hey, watch where you are going. You are disturbing the seashells."

Pet says, "You watch it, you're disturbing the starfish."

"Watch your tone with me," says Bella.

"You watch yours," says Pet.

Bella and Pet continue to argue until all of the sand creates a blur. Now they can't see any of the seashells or starfish.

"Look what you did," both of them say at the same time.

They realize that if they continue to fight they will not be able to see either. Pet says, "Wait what if we both agree on something that is in the ocean that we both like."

Bella says, "Oooh I do like the sea turtles."

Pet says, "I actually love sea turtles."

Both Bella and Pet swim out a little farther to look at the sea turtles. They liked how they swam close to the coral reef but did not touch it. They also liked how other creatures followed them. They especially liked the green color of the turtles.

Bella and Pet returned to the beach where they dried out in the hot sun. They walked home and talked about how much fun they had at the beach looking at the sea turtles together.

# The Black Gloomy Creature

*By Briana Crabtree*

## Chapter 1

The year was 1995 on Wednesday, November 1. It was fall and gloomy in Ohio and 19 year old Jamie was asleep. She got woken up by a noise, but she went back to sleep because she thought it was her brother. It wasn't.

She got woken up by a noise saying her name "Jamie...Jamie...."

She woke up yelling. Her brother ran into her room and said, "Are you ok?"

She said, "Yea – I'm ok."

She forgot about it and went back to bed.

When she went back to bed, she got lifted up to the ceiling. The noise did not come from the floor, it came from the ceiling! Then, a big black gloomy figure with big white eyes popped out of nowhere. He said it was the perfect lift-off and then he laughed "Ha ha ha!"

Surprisingly, Jamie survived and he disappeared. When she woke up her brother wasn't there, so she sprinted out the house looking for him. She screamed for help but no one heard her, so she spirited around the block looking for her brother and yelling "Jason! Jason! Please come here."

She ran around the block again but this time she ran into the black gloomy. He murmured, "Ha ha ha, I'm your brother."

She ran to her friend's house but no one was there. She ran into her friend's house and got the car keys and went to the airport. She got a ticket to the next trip to New York and when it was time to board the flight, her ticket did not work. She ran into the plane when the guy wasn't looking, but what she did not know was that the guy's name was Jason and he was the black gloomy figure.

She was scared when she looked at his name tag, but she told herself to just forget about it. She shouldn't have told herself that. He knew what she told herself and it was the perfect time to get her, but he knew that he should not do it because there were a lot of people by him and if he used his powers on the plane, it would kill him. Jason was not being controlled by himself.

## Chapter 2

Jamie was at her new house and she saw a boy walking up to her door. He knocked on the door and Jamie answered. The boy said his name was Victor and she said, "Hi Victor."

Victor asked about Jason and she said, "He is trying to kill me!"

Victor said, "No way! He told me about some shadows or something, but I didn't believe him."

Then she said, "I saw shadows too."

So Jamie and Victor go looking for Jason because they think they can fix Jason but they are scared because they don't want to get hurt by Jason. Well, Jamie does not want to get hurt. Well, don't get me wrong Victor does not want to get hurt, but he is not as scared as Jamie. She keeps saying things like, "What if he hurts me?"

Victor keeps saying, "It's ok. He will not try to hurt you when we get him out of the shadow thing. He will be ok and so will you."

She said, "But what will happen when we help him?"

"Well I might have to give up my life to save a friend's life," Victor said.

Victor said it was getting late and he wanted to go home.

### Chapter 3

Jamie woke up to knocking on the door. She grabbed a log from the fireplace and opened the door for Victor, but she hits him with a log. He gets up and she said, "Sorry."

He said, "It's ok. Now we've got to find Jason."

"She said, "Ok."

They went looking and saw him. They got him! Victor had him in his arms and Jamie reached in his chest. He hurt her and she woke up from her sleep and jumped up out of the bed yelling. Jason came in the room and asked if she was ok.

She said, "Yes, I saved you. Well, me and victor saved you."

He said, "What? Victor is at home and maybe sleeping. We have school tomorrow and what do you mean you saved me?"

She said, "Nothing it was all just a dream."



# The Dog That Went Savage

By Jordan Campbell

## Chapter 1

Jordan has a dog named Bella. She likes to play outside at night time and she likes to have bedtime stories read to her. She has a favorite blanket and a favorite nighttime book. On hot and sunny days she likes to go to the beach. One day she went savage.

“What do we do?” Jordan asked.

“I don't know?” Mom replied.

“Wait, stop. I might have an idea,” dad said out loud.

“What is it?” asked Jordan. “I want my dog back.”

“I don't really know, but this idea might work.” Dad said.

Jordan said, “Okay I trust you, but can we hurry? I just want to cuddle with my dog.”

“Okay let me think...I have it. I think we should dress up as dogs and act like we've gone savage too.”

“Dad, that's a brilliant idea. If we don't find her, at least we have some good memories.”

We went in the car driving around to find her in dog costumes.

“Bella! Bella!” we all shout.

“I think we found her,” said Jordan.

“I think that's her too, ” said Dad. “Stay here. I don't want anybody to get hurt.”

All of the sudden Bella went really savage, too savage. Dad was trying to keep us safe.

“Stay back, stay back,” Dad kept on shouting, but Bella bit him.

“OHHH, do you think Dad will go savage too? I don't know. I guess there's only one way to find out but I'm not going out there.”

“Why not?”

“Bella might bite all of us if we don't do something there is only one thing to do,” said mom.

“What is it,” asked Jordan?

“We might have to let her live the rest of her life like this.”

“You really think so, ” said Jordan.

“I'm sorry but I'm afraid so.”

“I'm going to cry,” Jordan said.

“I know buddy. It's hard. Nothing will make this up.”

“I'm going to cry for the rest of my life and all the days that I live.”

“Jordan come on, we have to keep on fighting. Even when it's tough. We're tough as rubber, remember? Our catch is if nothing's tough as rubber they are not tough at all.”

“Enough! I am tired of fighting. Nothing can get through this, she was my friend!”

“I know but even through the toughest days we have to keep on fighting. You and me.”

“No I'm sorry I'm tired of fighting. I will probably go back to my old days and those days standing on the road drinking a bottle of ranch singing the blues with the harmonica.”

“Come on this isn't you, you wouldn't be this depressed.”

“I know but she was my friend.”

## Chapter 2

I called my sister who is a veterinarian and medical doctor. She had the day off and she said she had a plan.

“I can go out there,” big sister said. “And give Bella something to make her fall asleep and get healthy.”

“You'll bring my friend back? That means I won't have to sit on the side of the road drinking a bottle of ranch singing the blues with the harmonica! You would do that for me?”

“Of course, I love you and I would never want to see you like that. So who's in?” sister said.

“Wait, I thought you said that you were going to do it, not us.”

“I guess you're right I tried to trick you guys for real.”

“This is not playtime, this is my dog for God's sake.”

“Okay, I’m going.”

Sister gets out of the car and walks up to the dog. The dog is in so much pain.

“Hi girl, remember me? This will only hurt a little bit.”

A little scream comes out from the dog's mouth.

“Now we just wait,” sister says.

“How long do you think it's going to take for the medicine to work?”

“I don't know,” sister said. “But good thing I’m a doctor and I work with pets and humans. I love pets and I love working with humans.”

I wonder if it works, yet it has to take time.

“Wait, it's working,” said Jordan.

“Really? Let me see that's inside effects and it's working at the same time.”

The dog is back to normal.

“Now hold on,” sister says. “There might be a side effect.”

“What does the side effect do?”

“She still might bite and there still might be a high chance of other pets going savage.”

“Can't you fix it?”

“I'm afraid not, but let's keep it in our prayers that it doesn't happen ever again. Now we can go home, but wait we forgot about Dad uh-oh... drive!

We're home, no chaotic mess around here. It's time to lay down, but what if that comes back? I'm going to take a rest because I've been driving around for so long my legs are tired, everybody's tired and they fall asleep until the next day. We are a normal family again, except that's not real. Who am I? Going to play video games with my baby little sister if she gets her grades up. Again, she's been doing really good.

## The Experience of DOH/SSS

*By Nazarae Stinson*

It was September 11, 2023. My class was going to Dreams on Horseback. This was my first experience riding a horse and probably my class's first time too. I felt so nervous, what if I got kicked or flew off the horse? I was so scared. Luckily my teacher told me, "I'll be there with you the whole way making sure you don't fall."

"Thanks," I said. "You're the best."

We went downstairs to the cafeteria. There we were about to get on the school bus. It was so big! What if we crashed, or worse, what if someone had a panic attack? What if I had a panic attack? We all go on the bus. I sat by my best friends, Ny'asia and Ra'janae. They have been there since day one.

But back to me, it took us twenty minutes to get there and I was devastated to find out that my friends and I had been split up from each other. I had to go to SSS/Stepping Stones Stables while they went to DOH/Dreams On Horseback. SSS is associated with DOH, so it's kind of the same thing.

But anyways, I was sad that I had to get split up with other classmates that I wasn't very close to. We got to stepping stones and they gave us snacks. Ok, I thought in my head, it's going ok so far, at least we get snacks. So we moved into the arena and it was pretty chilly... brrh.

We introduced ourselves to each other and they told us the rules. The one rule I was concerned about was "Do NOT Go Behind the Horses." Oh no, what if I accidentally go behind the horse, that would be so embarrassing. I made sure to stay with my teacher the whole time and held her hand.

"I'm scared," I said. "I don't wanna get injured."

"Don't worry, you just have to be careful," she said.

"Ok," I said. "I'll try to be careful."

We walked in the room with the horses.

"OMG!" I said. "They are so big!"

"Ms Tomlinson," I said. "I want to go back to the room."

"Ok," she said. She took me to the other room.

"What's wrong, Nazarae?" she said.

"It was so scary," I said.

“You're having a panic attack and you need to calm down.”

“I don't know if I can calm down.”

“Breathe,” she said.

“Ok, I'll try.”

We went back to the room with the horses.

One of the workers said, “You can pet one if you like.”

“I don't know if I can yet.”

“Ok,” said Ms Tomlinson.

We went back to the room with the teachers.

“Ok,” said Ms. Casedy. “The first thing we are going to do is to pick up horse poop.”

“What? Pick up horse poop? I don't want to pick up horse poop! Can I skip this activity?”

“No, we all have to do it, at least try it.”

“Oh my gosh,” I thought in my head. “Why do I have to do this? It's so unsanitary! Ms Tomlinson, can I skip please?”

“Sorry, but you have to do it! I know you don't want to. I wouldn't want to do it either, but you have to participate.”

I rolled my eyes and walked away. Everybody ran to the shovels and grabbed one while I just sat in disbelief thinking why did we have to go on this specific field trip? I grabbed a shovel and went into the stall with all the horse poop...and boy, did it smell! We finally were done. We scooped up all of the poop and took it outside and there was a bigger thing of poop. There was poop everywhere.

We went back inside to the room past the arena and sat down. Finally, we were done. I felt so relieved.

“How do you all feel?” said the teacher.

“Happy!” said all of the students.

“How about you Nazarae?” said the teacher.

“I feel disappointed.”

“Oh, well that's fine.”

We got on the bus and went back to school. I was so relieved that we were back. Then we walked back upstairs and it was the end of the day. I grabbed all of my stuff and left. When I got home I said, “Mommy I did not have a good time at Dreams on Horseback.”

“Why not”, my mother said. “

We had to pick up horse poop, plus the horses were so big” I said.

“Ok but sometimes you have to face your fears,” mom said.

“Ok,” I said.

### **Six Weeks Later**

I've gone on 5 more field trips and I'm on my 6th one and I feel confident. I think I'm ready to ride the horses. We get down stairs to the cafeteria and we see the bus pull up. I feel happy. We get on the bus and I sit next to my friends knowing that we're going to eventually split up. We pull up to DOH and drop everybody off including my two best friends. Here we are!

When we get to SSS, my heart starts beating fast.

“Breathe,” I say to myself.

We get off the bus and walk into the arena. Still chilly as I remember. The teachers bring the horses into the arena.

“Be calm,” I say to myself.

“Nazarae you're up first.”

“Ok,” I say.

I walk to the stepping stool to get on the horse. Oh no, my butterflies are coming back! What if I fall off?

“Positive thinking,” my teacher says to me.

“Ok” I said.

I take a deep breath in and a deep breath out. I hop on the horse and pet it to make sure it stays calm. Be calm horsey.



I say, “You need to breathe, don't worry it's ok.”

The horse rides all the way around the arena. I feel calmer than I was before.

## The First Day

*By Aria Campbell*

It was 6:30 in the morning and Lilly heard the birds chirping, so she decided to get up. She could smell the hot fresh pancakes so she got ready and headed down stairs and ate. She ate pancakes, drank orange juice, gobbled blueberries, and strawberries. When she was done, she went upstairs and got ready for her first day at her new school. But when she picked out her clothes, they were too small! So she asked her mom if they could get new clothes because school didn't start until 8:30 in the morning. When she asked, her mom said, "Yes."

When they went out to the car it broke down! So they had to walk but thank goodness the clothing store was across the street so they didn't have to walk too far. When they got to the clothing store, Lilly found an outfit and put it on. It was a new pair of jeans and a t-shirt. She loved it, but it was 9:01 so they rushed out. She didn't know she left her bookbag at the changing area!

She was rushing to get ready for school. By the time she got to school the teacher said "Why are you so late it's your first day?"

But she showed Lilly around the classroom and her desk. It was a big room and had beautiful decorations. Lilly loved it! But only one thing was wrong, she left her book bag at the clothing store. She was worried because all of her important belongings were in it.

A girl named Emma started talking to her. They talked the whole day and became best friends. Emma made Lilly feel comfortable about leaving her bag at the store.

"No big deal," Emma said.

Emma was right, in the grand scheme of life, it was not a big deal.

## The Forgotten Library

By Joshua Momoh

There was an ancient library that no one went to. The townspeople rarely went inside because it was very old, and no one went in. But twelve-year-old Emma Stonehenge knew better than that. She loved mysterious things that occurred and had always been drawn to how the patterns formed on the dusty old floor that someone other than she had never touched or cleaned.

One rainy afternoon, Emma decided to check out the library, so she opened the oak door to the library that was never opened. The air smelled full of mystery and mostly secrets.

The Librarian there was one of the Keepers of the Forgotten Tales. Her name was Mrs. Cheryl Burnetttsin, named after the first guardian of the Forgotten Tales. As a little child, Mrs. Burnetttsin started to work at the Library when she noticed some of the tales she read were kept from others. She was happy that now there was a new girl who was Emma, the one who would share the stories with other people.

“Welcome dear. The library has been waiting for you since you were born,” Mrs. Burnetttsin said confidently.

Emma’s eyes widened as she said, “Me?”

Mrs. Burnetttsin nodded. “You’re the chosen one of the Keepers of the Forgotten Tales. Every century, a child is chosen to protect the lost stories within the walls of the library,” she said excitedly.

Emma's heart raced, as she got more interested in what Mrs. Burnetttsin was talking about. “What stories are you talking about?”

“Stories that are throughout the times of history,” Mrs. Burnetttsin said. “They need to be heard again for normal people unlike you to know them.”

Emma explored the old shelves that fell when she touched them. Each book held a whisper that wanted to be revealed to the world. She suddenly pulled out a book called, *Starlight Chronicles*. As she read, words and objects started revolving around the book which is about a star seeking its way home on a long journey that takes the star time and to space where it belongs.

Suddenly, a dark shadow appeared and looked scarier than the tiny annoying rat on the floor which was disturbing Emma while she was reading. The person with the shadow was no other than the Story Destroyer Emily Stonehenge, Emma's sister who hated stories and never liked mysteries like Emma did.

“And look who it is, looking for books to read and mysteries?” said Emily, dropping the book Emma was reading.

“Get OUT right THIS INSTANCE!” Mrs. Burnettsin screamed, louder than a dying swarming bacteria. So, Emily was walking out and then said, “You just wait for me to destroy those useless stories.”

Days turned into long weeks. Emma read many books about forgotten tales, mermaids who took pearls from the ocean and never shared, clockwork dragons, and lost cities down, down, down, beneath the sea, getting closer to the coral reef. She met a character who wanted second chances of being revealed to the people.

One evening, Emma went to the library and discovered a hidden door behind a cobweb-covered tapestry that looked very interesting in Emma’s eyes. Beyond the tapestry, Emma saw a stellar observatory – a room that was full of moonlight. In the center of the observatory, standing on a crystal pedestal was a single, shimmering, light feather.

Mrs. Burnettsin appeared. “The feather of imagination,” she said calmly. It grants the power to rewrite the long, lost, forgotten stories.

Emma hesitated about why she saw this and said, “Why me?”

“Because you believe,” Mrs. Burnettsin replied, “You see the magic when others see dust.”

Emma touched the light lovely beautiful feather. Visions flooded her mind about a world where dragons danced with fireflies watching the monochrome rainbow, also about forgotten lovers who met at twilight, and laughter that always connected broken hearts and put them together with peace.

She began to write the stories that flooded her brain. Little did Emma Stonehenge know that she was about to become very famous. Her tales that were in her mind spilled out on the paper – the ink created nice patterns with stardust that shined. She drew the townspeople, (who ignored the library) gathering around, listening to the forgotten tales and stories. They listened to Emma, (who was telling them about the tales and stories), and they shared it with other people. And so, the Willowbrook festival was born.

Emma’s stories won people’s hearts – the tales of the lonely lighthouse keeper who danced with the whales, the lost cat who found forgotten poems, and the ghost violinist who played melodies full of love.

After using the Feather of Imagination, Emma kept it for good luck in her career of storytelling and her writing career.

When the grand prize was announced, Emma’s name echoed throughout the town loudly and proudly. She stood on top of the float, grabbing the feather of imagination. Mrs. Burnettsin smiled and said, “You’ve breathed life into the forgotten library.”

Emma's award was not a trophy or a check full of money, it was a promise of never letting the forgotten stories become forgotten but always to be remembered. And so, Emma continued writing and writing with the feather of imagination, and her words turned magic into reality.

The Forgotten Library turned into the Willowbrook Library, its shelves allowing tales to be discovered. Emma knew she was more than a keeper; she was a free dream, a guardian of imagination, and a great discoverer of the forgotten library.

And in the quietest moments, when the moon peeked inside the discovered door, Emma always whispered, "Thank you Mrs. Burnnetsin. Thank you for believing in me."

*"It's not the end, it's only the beginning. Always believe in yourself no matter what happens like you once did and always find your true path in life..." - Emma Stonehenge*

## The Friends We Make Along the Way

*By Taryn Henslee*

Bryson and I, on a hot sunny day and with cool winds, saw people playing tag and freeze. The sun was shining, and it was a beautiful day outside.

Bryson asked me to go to the park.

I said, "Okay."

So Bryson and I went to a park and had fun.

Bryson said, "Let's go play basketball."

I said, "Okay, why not?"

We rode our bikes to Rose Park to the playground and we were having fun riding together. It was always fun to do that when we had time to ride to the playground. If it was only me, then I would feel scared.

There were teens there and we asked if we could play one-on-one with them. They said, "yes" so Bryson got out his basketball and said, "If we beat you in a one vs. one can we join your basketball game?"

We both said okay, but Bryson said, "No."

"We like how you play. If you can beat us all we will give you \$10," Sam said to me.

I said, "okay."

I beat the teen by 3 points and then the teen got mad and walked away and said we can join his big game.

At Rose Park, we joined the game. The teens were okay with us joining them in basketball. Me and Bryson felt so happy as we played.

Sam said, "If you can beat me in a game, I will give you \$10 dollars. If you beat me in a one-on-one. No dirties."

I said, "Okay."

The other teens said, "Okay we will all give you \$20 if you can beat Alice and Sam."

I said, "Sure, why not?"



I played for hours and as the day ended, the teen said, “If I beat him in a three vs. one, he will give me 30 dollars.

So, I said, “Sure, why not?”

I play against Sam and Alice. I won and Sam said, “You are a really good kid.”

I said, “Thank you!”

After the three vs. one, I won!

He said, “A deal is a deal,” and he gave me the \$30.

Then Alice said she has never seen any kid like me that can beat all three of them. She became my friend and we played for days after school. It was so fun when we played together.

Alice said, “You are really good at basketball. I will give you \$40. If you can beat me in a game – me vs Sam and Alice.

I said, “Okay.”

1 hour later I beat them by one point and they gave me the \$40. I got on my bike and left.

The end hoped you liked it. I made \$100. That day me and Bryson were so happy. The teens were also happy, but a little sad. We said thank you and left. Bryson and I felt so excited.

## The Girl in the Woods

*By Ruby Ace May*

Once upon a time, in a galaxy far, far, away, there lived Zink. He lived a simple life with his sister, Umber. But when the residents of CrabClaw Island start to go missing, his simple life becomes much more interesting.

There had been an old folktale about a witch. A witch who could change the shape of her body. The shape she used the most was what the residents of CrabClaw Island were seeing before they died. Many of Zink Kindheart's friends were going home, and never being seen again. He was worried, as any 12-year-old boy would. His sister, though, was terrified. She knew the tale of Nora Skinwalker, and she knew her form.

"Zink," she called to her brother softly.

"I'm coming, Umber," he called, getting out of the bay-window in his room. "Come on- ACK!" she started.

"Umber?" Zink yelled down the stairs, worried for his 15-year-old sister. "UMBER!!!" he screamed as he jumped down the steps.

He saw broken glass with a small amount of glowing liquid on it. He also saw a small trail of the odd glowing liquid. He ran as fast as he could while following the trail until he found a small clearing in the woods. As he looked up from the trail, he saw a dirty, disturbing, little girl covered in the same liquid. She was holding Umber in one hand and a knife in the other. Umber seemed to be bleeding the glowing ooze. Suddenly, Zink remembered where he had seen it once. Umber had been cutting a project for her homework, and she accidentally cut her hand. But instead of dark red blood, she was bleeding something glowing.

"Huh? What's wrong with your hand?" Zink had said as he came down the stairs in his home.

"Nothing." Umber had said as she quickly wrapped her hand with a bandage.

Zink directed his attention back to his sister and the girl.

“Hisssss,” scowled the girl. Suddenly, Umber woke up. Her eyes were glowing white. She grabbed the girl by her strange necklace and ripped it off. The girl collapsed and fell fast asleep on the damp ground. Zink quickly noticed that she was no longer a small girl, she was a blood covered witch! He looked at Umber for an explanation.

“Let’s go home.” Umber said quickly as she dropped the necklace near the witch. They walked home together, in silence. But the necklace was still waiting, waiting for another to find it and return it to its owner...

The End...Or is it?

## The Holten Bears

*By Vincent Griffin*

George is on the court with Aiden and Lucas. Their team is the Holten Bears. Others are playing basketball all around them. They hear families cheering and shoes squeaking. They can smell the other players' stinky feet.

They are in a basketball tournament. It's the final game.

The Holten Bears want to win. They are playing the Far East team. George and Lucas started scoring. Aiden passed to George then he passed to Lucas. Lucas took the shot and he made it. Three points for the Bears!

The Far East team started coming back, they started scoring. Two of their team members passed the ball to Terrell and he made his shot. The Holten Bears are beginning to lose the game. The team is feeling hurt because they are beginning to lose. The coach then says, "Put in your effort!"

Aiden says, "Yeah let's do this!"

"Yeah like Aiden said, let's do this!" cheered Lucas.

George is feeling sad and he says, "I don't think we can beat them."

Coach says to George, "I just want you to do your best. You can beat them by feeling confident in yourself."

George says, "Okay, I can do this!"

Team says, "Pass to George, he can do this!"

We have eight seconds left on the clock. Aiden takes the ball out and passes it to George. George dribbled down the court, but someone got in his face to block him.

George ran up and stopped, then he jumped back to the three-point line and shot it. The buzzer goes off, everyone gasps not sure if he made the shot. But the ball spins around the rim 4 times and it falls in the net.

The whole crowd was exhilarated and burst into celebration! The Holten Bears just won the championship!

The team runs over to George! Everyone is so excited about winning. They pick George up on their shoulders because they are so proud of him. Then, they line up to dap up the Far East team. They all said "good game" to each other.

At the end of the game, they grab pizza and drinks to celebrate. The boys talk about the game.

Aiden says to George, “I’m proud of you buddy.”

George was happy and said, “Thanks.”

George went home feeling proud of himself because he helped his team to win.

## The Homeless Dog

*By Terence Blair*

Once upon a time there was a homeless dog. The dog was in the dark. It was scary cars going left to right. He stayed in his box every night, the dog was black and white.

He was small, his name was...his name was...he had no name.

He was living in a city. The city had lots of cars. The city had lots of restaurants. The city had many lights/buildings.

He was having a hard time living because he was afraid of getting food/water. The cars were so scary to him because he could get hit by one. He could smell people's food. He could see people's food. He could even hear the people enjoying their food.

He was afraid and sad he couldn't go anywhere. In the city he stayed where he was and hoped people would come and give him food/water. He hoped someone would give him something, but no food, no water, no home, no love, no nothing.

That's why he stayed in his box. The dog met someone that gave him a plastic sign that said, "pls help me i need food--water and love."

Nobody helped the dog because they were so busy doing stuff.

The dog stayed where he was every day. One day he met a man that gave him food/water and the dog was happy. The dog decided to follow the man. The dog walked 1 meter, the man noticed and looked at the dog and started to run away. The man ran across the street. The dog followed him and the man got off the street. The dog was still on the street, But when the dog looked to his left, boooom a car was about to hit him!

The car was about to hit him...but the car stopped? The man picked up the puppy and adopted him. The man brought the puppy home. The puppy didn't know what his feelings were. He was happy, scared, and confused; he did not know at all.

The car was a jeep. It was blue and navy blue. The man had a big beard. He had nice hair and green eyes. He was strong and the puppy was confused.

The puppy was taken to the man's house and the man's name was Steven and the younger boy's name was Sai.

Sai named the dog Fluffers and together the family lived happily ever after.

*A note from the author:*

Credits:



Made by terence.  
Produced by terence.

Main character homeless dog/Fluffers.  
Side characters Steven, and Sai.

I worked hard on this, I hope everyone likes it.

## The Kidnapping

*By Makaylah Keaveney*

It was like any old summer morning as Naomi had awakened from her sleep. She was showered with love from her cat Ramen and her phone was being texted. She snuggled her kitten and checked her phone, and she said, “Hmm? Why is Kubo so upset with me? I did nothing at all?”

She thought nothing of it, but boy was that a mistake. She brushed her long luxurious blonde hair, brushed her teeth, got dressed, and went downstairs for breakfast.

Momma was already cooking breakfast. Momma said, “I’m making your favorite for your first day of 6th grade my dear!”

I said, “Thank you, Momma,” and I slunk into my chair. Little did I know, Gwen and I were about to have something terrible happen.

As Gwen and I walked to school, a van pulled up beside us. We didn’t think much of it because we lived in a safe neighborhood, or at least we thought so. As the masked people grabbed us, we struggled to get away. Their gender was not able to be seen. They forced us into the van and we could hardly breathe with the rag over our mouth.

They drove off. I remembered I had my phone with me! I tried calling 911, but they caught me and threw my phone out the window. I cried out in fear and felt hopelessness. The car stopped. They dragged us into the woods to this abandoned treehouse that was falling apart and wouldn’t even be able to withstand the rain. There was little food and barely enough water for us both.

As the weeks went by, the rope that tied us up, fell off, and the tape for our mouths was no longer sticky. We went to the door of the treehouse, but it was locked. We slept for the night and snuggled close. It was cold that night. As I look back in the past, I still have shivers running down my spine..

### Being Buried Chapter 2

I walked through the cemetery, I noticed a grave being dug and a coffin open. I looked down, and I got pushed into the grave. As I struggled to breathe, I begged for air while the grave was filled. I wonder who would do this. I’d never gotten into fights or arguments. So, who would have done this? As I quit my breathing, I was crying at that point. I tried so hard to breathe, to get out...

I died.

I’ll miss you Kubo, Naomi, and Gwen.

### Kubo’s Nightmare Chapter 3

I woke up in the middle of the night to the sound of my parents arguing, again. I was so tired of all the fights. But then my dad said it, the words I feared the most...he was leaving – forever.

He wouldn't come back for me or for anything. I hated my mother, and she hated me. It was because of respect. She didn't respect me, so I didn't respect her, it was simple. I was wondering why dad wouldn't take me. I loved him and he loved me. We were inseparable, but I guess it's because grandma hated me and that's where he was going. But, I'm not sad or upset, because I knew my dad wouldn't leave me with her.

All my mother did was drink after my dad had left. She became abusive mentally. It was always about her. When she got pregnant, she threw the baby on me. I was only in the 6th grade, and I had been an only child my whole life! I did all the research I could. I fed him. I changed him. I did ALL of the house chores. I even named him! I sacrificed my whole life for him, and he didn't even call me mama. He spent all his time with his real mother, and I was the one who took care of him his whole 6 years!

I was in my junior year of high school. My mother said I was being over-dramatic, but I don't think so. I packed my things and moved in with my dad. I also found out that Liam was buried alive. I called Naomi, but her phone was broken I guess. So, I called Gwen's phone, and surprisingly she answered. She said they needed help, and that they were locked in a treehouse at Crusty Peppa National Forest. I went and I was miles into the woods when I saw a severed head. I almost threw up, but I didn't. I kept walking and I saw the treehouse, and I called out their names. I heard them scream, "Up here Kubo!" I grabbed a rock and got the lock off. I opened the door and grabbed them in a hug. We all cried. I told them that Liam died. We all cried, then eventually went home.

I took Gwen home first since she lived closest. Her mother thanked me. Then, I took Naomi home and her mother cried rivers. I understand it considering they've been missing for a month. When I went home I was exhausted and slept. The next day at school I walked with Naomi and Gwen. I wanted to make sure that my best friends were safe. At school the whole school had a welcome back party in the gym. After the longest party of our lives, we went home and had a sleepover. We watched horror movies all night and ate popcorn and ice cream! It was honestly the best night of our lives. Though it would have been better with Liam there...

### Gwen's Obsession Chapter 4

As I watched the movie, I noticed I liked Naomi and Kubo. I asked them out at this restaurant. I know we are only 14 and 15, but I did it! They both said yes and kissed my cheek. We hung out more often then. We watched a lot of anime together too. We watched my hero Academia, Demon Slayer.

## The Legend of the Cadejo

*By Alice Torres*

The Cadejo is known for his white fluffy fur and blue eyes. The black Cadejo is known for his black fur and red eyes. Antigua, Guatemala, is also known for all of the legends and being the first city of Guatemala.

The black Cadejo came to the earth and found the white Cadejo and they looked at each other. They just ignored each other but that was the white Cadejo's biggest mistake. He would never have thought that the black dog was his biggest enemy.

The black Cadejo started to guide people to die, the white Cadejo noticed that and went to the black Cadejo but it was too late, and they started fighting. But, the White Cadejo thought about what he could do.

Finally nobody won or lost but they got connected in two different bodies. But the same creator. Then that was one of the best reconciliations in Guatemala.

Now the Cadejos are trying to protect people. The black Cadejo scares people for their bad decisions. The white Cadejo is guiding people to their destiny.

Now the Cadejos are surrounding Guatemala to make it a better Guatemala. But that was a good thing. Because it was God's best decision.

## The Mean Sister

*By Madison Hall*

Once upon a time there was an orphan named Jacey, with straight black hair. She is 12 years old. Her mom died during childbirth and her dad left her as an infant. Jacey lives in a foster home and has a mean sister with brownish hair. The sister's name is Cassie who is 14 years old. The house is a two story, white house with bricks. In the front it is very detailed with plants, flowers and lights.

Jacey wants to get adopted by a loving family. Jacey wants 2 parents, a little brother and sister, she wants to go out and get friends instead of being bullied by her sister. She wants to be treated with respect. Her parents won't let her go out because she's too young. Jacey wants normal parents and not strict ones. She wants to have fun exploring the world.

However, where she lives now is crazy and different from where she used to live, her sister Cassie always pushes her and messes up her room. Jacey can't get any privacy. Cassie always gets her in trouble and then her parents yell at her. She thinks it's not fair. Cassie always tries to take her stuff, she thinks it is weird and unacceptable.

Jacey gets bullied by her a bit and finally stands up for herself by saying, "Stop bullying me! If you keep doing that, I'm going to tell mom and dad and you'll get in trouble! I'm sick and tired of being bullied. I just want a normal family. I just want to live a nice, happy, and lovely life. I just want to have friends, but I can't do that because of you! You bully me, get me in trouble, steal my stuff, mess up my room, and eat my stuff when I tell you not to. You even stole the earrings my mom gave me. I don't wanna be here."

They talk about it and they're good.

"Well you can always tell a teacher, if you tell a teacher you're getting bullied it doesn't mean that you're weak, it means you're just doing the right thing and not the wrong. You do you. Be you, be yourself, and don't listen to other people just because they're in the wrong," Jacey said. "You have to do your own thing. This is your life not theirs, live it. There's no reason you should let other people tell you that you can't be cool or be popular or something. You can be popular by doing your own thing and that's what makes you successful in life."

"Thank you Jacey. I'm sorry for everything I did to you. If I stole something, I'll give it back – your clothes, your earrings...and I'll even tell mom and dad that I got you in trouble on purpose."

They hug it out.

"I'm sorry that I've been treating you like that, Jacey. And mom and dad are strict because their last kid died from running in the streets, letting him play outside. That kid was my brother and that was the worst day of my life. But it doesn't mean they should treat you like that. I'm sorry Jacey. We will be a better family for you. Mom, Dad, and I won't do anything stupid ever again. I promise."

“I hope that's true Cassie. I really hope it's true because I just want to be cool, chill sisters! Maybe we can remember this in the future and laugh about it. I hope we become better sisters and laugh about stupid things always and forever.”



*First Draft:*



**COLUMBUS  
CITY SCHOOLS**  
Emerging Writers Competition



## The Missing Book

*By Jayden Caralampio*

Once upon a time there was a kid named Jerry. Jerry had dark hair and he was a good kid at school. He got A's in every subject, but the other students failed some classes. His school was so old because it is made out of wood. Jerry lost his library book and he had to return it. He was so worried that he was going to get in trouble. Jerry was trying to remember where he left his book at, so he went to check his classroom.

Jerry looked everywhere in the school, but he could not find his book. He went to his classroom and asked his teacher Ms.K.

“Ms.K, I need your help!!!” said Jerry.

“What happened?” said Ms. K.

“I lost my library book.” said Jerry.

“OH NO!” said Ms. K.

“And I need your help because if I don't return my book by today, I will not be going to the library anymore,” said Jerry.

“Ok, Jerry I will help you to find your book,” said Ms. K.

So, Ms. K and Jerry went to search for Jerry's missing book. They searched everywhere in the school. They searched the lunch room, but did not find it there. They went to the office, but the secretary said, “There is no book here.”

Ms. K and Jerry were worried they would never find this book.

While Ms. K and Jerry were searching for Jerry's book, Jerry remembered that maybe he had his book in his classroom. So Ms. K and Jerry ran down the hallway, slid around the corner and burst open the door to the room! Jerry frantically started to take everything out of his desk. Then he found his book!

The solution is that Jerry found his library book in his desk so he went to give his book to the library teacher. Ms. K was so happy for Jerry and he was so happy and excited because he returned his book. Now Jerry is so happy because he returned his book. And now he is allowed to go to the library.

## The Movie...

*By Santiago Richarson Ruiz*

Today, we got two tickets for a movie. We saw one of my old friends, and then went to go to his house to play games. My other friend had to do something with his family. They got a new car. Finally, we went to watch the show. It was so funny, and me and my friend went to go get something at the mall.

We went shopping for like three hours. We went to get some new shoes for my brother. Then, I got some food for my friend. They were happy at last. After the mall, we went to the trampoline park.

We did some flips. We saw the basketball court, and my friend and I played basketball. I had 2 points, and my friend had 1 point and scored another point. My other friend scored 20 points. After basketball, we played some more. We had a lot of people on our team. We were going to win the game.

I went back home to play football with my brother. After football, we went inside to watch another movie with our family. The movie was so funny. We had popcorn for the movie, and my brother went to get more snacks from the gas station. We got a lot of drinks for the movie. We watched the movie Shrek, and it was 2 hours long. The funniest part of the movie was when Shrek was very green like grass.

## The Princess

*By Micaela Lewis*

Once upon a time there was a little girl who lived in the woods. The woods were big and spooky.

Her name was Kyla and she was really pretty. She had long hair and blue eyes.

Kyla lived there because she ran away from her home. She was forced to marry a bad man who looked very scary. Kyla was scared so she ran away right before the wedding. She got lost for 10 years and now she owns the forest. She goes wherever she wants.

One day a boy ran in the woods. He was so handsome that when she looked at him she fell in love. He looked at her and he fell in love too. Kyla had to meet him.

When following him, Kyla ran into the man she was supposed to marry.

“There you are,” he said. She ran. He chased her.

“I am going to find you and sell you for money!” He growled.

She was scared. She knew she was a princess, but did not know that meant she would be worth money!

“STOP!” yelled the handsome boy. He swooped Kyla off her feet and they ran off together. They lived happily ever after.

## The Scary Birthday Party

*By Arianna Dotson*

Alieca was turning 11 and it was her birthday. She invited her friends Lily and Sydney and her sister Laurie. They brought gifts and they played truth or dare. Then, one of the dares was to go in a room and make it dark and say “bloody Mary” three times, and she would come out of the mirror and then she chased them around the house with a bloody knife. They found a hiding spot and she found them! Lily screamed, “Help me! I am being chased by bloody Mary!”

“Hmm,” I thought to myself. “What if I was to go out there and help find her a hiding spot?”

But, I sat in my spot because I did not want to be chased by bloody Mary with a knife.

And then they opened gifts and they sang the birthday song, “Happy birthday to you! Happy birthday to you, dear Alieca!”

We then cut the cake and ate some cake. After Lily ate her piece of cake she said, “Who wants to go outside and watch Alieca hit her pinata and get candy?”

Then out of nowhere bloody Mary came out and chased us all around the yard! All of us found our own hiding spot, and she said, “Come out, come out, wherever you are.”

We were all scared for our life. We did not make a Peep at all. We were too scared to even move.

Then Lily yelled, “We’re over here!”

She said to be quiet or else we will be dead. My parents were on vacation in Florida and she still was talking.

I got out of there! I was not going to be dead on my birthday! If my parents came home to their kid dead they would be sad.

I looked back because I heard footsteps and I saw bloody Mary with her knife running after me. I ran up onto some old lady’s porch and banged on her door. She opened the door and said, “Why are you crying?”

I explained and she let me in her house to call my parents to tell them that they needed to come home, but they did not answer so I left a voicemail.

I told the lady that my friends were still at my house and that I needed to get them because they were in danger because they did not follow me even though I told them to follow me. They were not in danger but they did not want to come but I said to come. They said no and I said that I did not want to die because I’m too young to die.

That’s when my parents came home and they asked what happened and why there was a voicemail on the phone. I said, “Because you guys did not answer the phone!”

They asked why I called and I said, “Because you guys need to come home because my friends need to go home because they don't need to be here if bloody Mary is here! I don't want them to die because their parents would be sad if they found out that their kids were dead! I would be sad if my kid died, so I don't want my friends to die. They are too young to die!”

Then bloody Mary found my parents and killed my mom and dad. I was able to get to a hiding spot and Lily came looking for me. She found me and ratted me out and bloody Mary found me.

I ran as fast as I could and I said, “Whew! I finally lost her. She is finally gone! Hopefully I don't run into her again.”

Then me and my sister were the only ones left in the house. I could not find Lily or Laurie or Sydney and we were looking for them everywhere all day and night. We filed a missing persons report and the cops sent out an Amber Alert everywhere. Everyone started looking for them. We even asked for a whole entire search team and everyone wanted to help me and my sister look for them. I was relieved that they wanted to help us find my friends!

## The Snow Globe

*By Lailaa Williams*

I woke up in a frigid cold place and I felt like I was in a cave. I saw gummy houses when I woke up though. It felt very odd, so I got up and walked around to find out what was happening. Well when I got up, I saw really unreal things like gingerbread houses, gingerbread men, snowmen and other Christmas characters. I went to knock on one of the gingerbread houses nobody answered, so I rang the gushers candy doorbell, and I heard a family walking towards the door. A gingerbread character answered. He called for his wife while looking shocked at me.

She came to the door and she said very loudly, “You’re a human!”

I answered while looking at her kid pulling their arm off, “Um...yeah, is your kid okay?”

They both looked at me very confused.

“Stop Jacob, put your arm back on, we barely have any icing left to stick your arm back on!” she said. “Come in quickly!” she continued while pulling my shirt with her graham cracker arms.

Everyone is freaking out while I should be, I’m literally sitting on a gummy bear couch. I’m so confused right now

“How are you here right now?” said the gingerbread man.

“Tom stop, we should introduce ourselves before we start making assumptions. Hi my name is Jessie, and this is Tom, but you can call us Mr. and Mrs. Reed.”

I walked outside to get some air and when I looked up, I saw a couch, a TV, a Christmas tree, and presents that looked familiar to me in my living room. Then, I realized it was all my stuff in my living room! I looked at each Christmas character outside walking, and I ran inside. I felt so unwanted because I knew I didn’t belong here in Candyland City.

Mr. and Mrs. Reed tried to calm me down by asking me if I wanted to go to a place called the Candyland Fair. I said, “yes” because I needed to have some fun and get everything off my chest. We got in the gummy bear car and drove there. When we finally arrived at the Candyland Fair, it was a zoo. There were so many Christmas characters and their kids running around and having fun. We rode some roller coasters. It was so much fun! Then, finally we were walking to the last ride. We got on the ride. It was very fun. We were spinning, going in circles, and going up and down.



Their son Jacob was having the most fun. He started putting his hands up and saying, “Woo! Woo! Woo!”

Then something weird happened. I woke up.... but I still heard “Woo Woo Woo.” I turned around and realized it was my alarm. It was all a dream. It wasn't Jacob saying “woo” it was my alarm. I tried to make myself go back to sleep by slamming myself into my bed, but it did not work. I needed to do something!

I went outside to catch some air and somehow I still felt like I was under a cave. It was still very frigid. I had a lot of things on my mind. What should I do? Should I tell my parents? No, they would think I'm crazy. Am I still in my dream and is this whole thing a dream?

To calm myself down, I went to get a drink of water. I went back and I sprinted to my snow globe in the living room. I saw Mr. and Mrs. Reed, Jacob, and me on the roller coaster and everything else we did! It was weird. This doesn't feel real. I was trapped inside my snow globe!

It wasn't a dream. It was real. I took a huge look and noticed something really weird. It looked like someone scraped their finger across the snow in the snow globe. I can see Jacob making a snow angel and his parents waving and looking up. I also notice every character is smiling and surrounding words that say, “See You Next Year!”



## Titanium Man the Origin

*By Timothy Kimbler*

The sounds of snores come from Bryan's desk.

"Hey, hey, hey, Bryan," said Jake. "Well, they just opened the gates at the abandoned power plant."

"Jake, we are not going in there," said Bryan.

"Come on, Jessica will be there!"

"What? You didn't tell me that, but after school."

"Ok."

((ring ring))

"Well let's go!"

"How 'bout dark?"

"Ok, my parents should be asleep."

"Should we be doing this Jake?"

"Jessica just wait for Bryan, ok? It'll be fine."

"Hey I'm here! I had to walk through the creek. Let's go!"

They hop over the fence.

"Uh jake..."

"What, Bryan?"

"I'm stuck!"

They grab and pull.

"Now let's go!"

"Hey, I thought the gate was open! Well, the construction guys fixed it. Look at this! What is this vat full of gooey stuff? It's green and it's sour."

"What the..."

“Hey! Stop touching the merchandise. I don’t need brats poking it.”

“Well, you don't own this place.”

“Yes I do. Now leave!”

“Ahhh Jake!”

“Bryan!”

“That was acid”

“Yes, now leave and never come back.”

Jessica and Jake run away.

### **29 years later**

Swishy swashy clump clump clump...

“What the heck?” says Bryan. “The last thing I remember is I got pushed in that green stuff. Why am I naked and an adult? Why does my voice sound like this? There are some clothes.”

He takes a walk and runs to the graveyard.

“What? Jake? Jessica?”

Looks at gravestones.

“No, no, no. This can't be happening.”

### **9 months later**

“Hey sir, come with me. Why are you turning me into the cops?”

“No just drink this if you don't want to come with me.”

“Why?” Chug. Chug. Chug.

“I’m tired!”

thud

“Welcome!”

“Where am I? A superhero facility?”

“Why, when you fell in that acid 29 years ago, your DNA changed and the liquid that you drank activated your meta powers.”

“Ok...”

His arm turns into a machete.

“Now, here is your costume. Try it on.”

“It's too baggy.”

Suit tightens. And he turns into Titanium Man.

“Perfect – is it stretchy?”

Arm turns into an elephant.

“Yep.”

**1 year later**

Pow bam swoosh punch

“You will never catch me titanium man.”

“Oh yes I will!”

titanium whiplash sing grab

“Oh no!”

“Titanium man, this is your last day on this puny planet.”

Woosh punch clanc dodge tlantel chon

“I landed a punch, uh...”

Falls up against the wall.

“Well, it looks like I was right!”

Kick, Titanium man falls off the side of a building and lands on a car.

*In memory of Bryan Lugsworth he was a great man and a hero who loved this city. May his soul rest in peace.*

Waaa sniff sniff chul chuk chuk

Now that he has been buried, we shall leave so he can rest.

(Plot twist in the last year, he had a son who will take on his fathers job in 29 years.)

**29 years later**

Chuck finds a letter from his dad. When you are 30 you shall tack on my name and suit - Titanium Man. If you are reading this, I'm dead. I left it here on the top of the fridge for you to find, honey. Come take a look at this.

## Training My Dog to Go Potty

*By Bryson Dallas Parker*

Gunner is a pit-mixed brown dog. Gunner is 10 weeks old at a home with two floors. Gunner chews on stuff like on shoes. Mom gets mad when Gunner chews on shoes. Gunner loves it when Bryson comes home from school. After school, I play with him. I play Fortnite on my Xbox and he goes to sleep too.

Bryson is training Gunner to pee and poop outside. I'm taking Gunner outside to train him. Every time Gunner pees and poops outside, he gets a treat.

Gunner keeps on pooping and peeing on the floor. But now I take him out three times a day – morning, evening, and night.

I put Gunner outside to pee and poop. I forgot to let him out! Then Gunner poops on the floor. Then Gunner peed and pooped outside and my mom was happy.

And this is why you have to take your dog outside every two hours a day. I'm happy and my mom is happy and Gunner loves to go outside because he chews on the grass. He loves to chase me around the yard and he plays with my other dog shadow.



## Trapped in the Past

*By Zack Hardy*

This is the story of how Roman and his siblings got stuck in the past for half a “year”.

Barging in the room Roman says, “Guys, why isn't time travel real?”

Maverick, “Bro - it's very obvious why time travel isn't real! It might only be possible in a region of spacetime that is warped a certain way, that's the only way I can get it into your head.”

Roman said, “But isn't there a way we can make time travel a thing in this ‘part’ of this region of spacetime?”

“Probably if your name is Einstein, you probably can bring ‘time travel’ to this space,” said Maverick sarcastically.

Roman said, “Well, I'm still going to try and build a time machine, with the resources we still have to hopefully build one.”

### **TIME SKIP - 8 HOURS**

“I've got the design down, but then again, I'm tired,” said Roman.

Maverick said, “I told you it would be useless, so you just wasted 8 hours of your life for no reason. This is disappointing.”

Roman said, “Watch me succeed in time travel, I'll try to prove to you that time travel could be possible!”

“Can y'all shut up, I'm trying to sleep?” said Alison. “So stop being so stupidly loud.”

Maverick said, “Roman. . .”

“Now go to sleep, we're gonna go to the store tomorrow, to get food,” said Alison.

Roman and Maverick said at the same time, “Yes ma'am!”

All of the siblings went to their separate rooms. Looking out of his window, Roman saw a shooting star. He made a certain wish that might change his future for as long as he can remember, it's still morning.

Roman yawns, “WHOA, WHAT IS THAT?” Roman is shocked to see a huge machine in the middle of the living room.

“Well you need to ask yourself that – you woke up at night and built! So how do you expect to transfer this to your room by yourself?” said Maverick.

“But I don't remember doing that at all, plus it would take multiple years to build something like that machine!” Roman said in disbelief.

“We can possibly try it out, because it has a door to it,” said Maverick calmly.

“Nu uh, I am not getting into that thing, because it was built by Roman. So it has to malfunction some way or another!” Allison said.

“Me and Roman will get you three \$100 gift cards to Target,” said Maverick trying to persuade Allison.

“Wait, I will-” Roman was about to say, but Maverick covered his mouth in time to prevent Roman finishing his sentence.

“Fine, I will go. BUT if we get stuck somewhere we’re not supposed to be, then I’ll beat both of you as SOON as we get back,” said Allison. All three siblings get into the time machine and hit a button that sends them back to 160 million years ago to the Jurassic Era. As they walk out of the time machine they see a prehistoric world of dinosaurs.

“Look what you two did!” said Allison.

“Well, we didn’t know this was going to happen! So it's not our fault!” said Roman.

Both Roman and Allison start arguing while Maverick inspects the time machine to figure out how to go back to present time.

“Get down! It's a group of Allosaurus!” said Maverick. They got down and watched as the carnivorous pack of dinosaurs left the area.

“Probably hunting for the Stegosaurus which is a spiked herb,” Maverick said, before he was shushed by Allison.

“No one wants dinosaur facts while we are stuck in the past, bro!” said Allison. “Now find a way to get us back home – you brainiac!” said Allison again.

“Well it may take a year, but while I figure out how to get home, go hunt some Coelacanthus so we don't starve overnight,” said Maverick.

So the siblings got to work and fulfilled their duties. Allison and Roman found wood and brought it back to Maverick to make a fire.

Maverick then says, “It turns out we will have to wait a ‘year’, so we’ll have to survive off Coelacanthus and wait for Maverick to find the materials he needs for the time machine.”

### ABOUT 3 MONTH LATER

Allison looks at a cave with a flat rock that looks like it would be a little comfortable, so she heads to the rock and sits on it and watches as Maverick and Roman argue. But then, as Allison turns around, she looks at a man with a club. It was a Caveman! She screams loudly which alarms the caveman, and the caveman starts chasing her around the cave as her brothers try to help her get away. A small dino flies down towards them. It was a Microraptor looking for trouble. So the siblings are getting chased by two predators of the Jurassic period. The siblings manage to escape from them but they are out of breath.

“Did we lose them?” said Allison.

“Why did you have to aggravate them Allison...?”

The siblings kept living the same way for 9 months, just staying out of the way of any cavemen or dinosaur, until one of the weirdest things happened in the last months.

“We need different clothes, these clothes are all torn from all the thorn bushes we had to cross to get the berries, but at least it was worth it,” said Maverick in a happy tone.

“Hey what's that over there guys?” said Roman, walking towards a bed.

Roman runs up to it and jumps on it as his two other siblings stay behind watching him. As Roman jumps onto the bed, he feels himself sinking into it further and further until everything is black.

“Guys? Guys, I need help!”

But then Roman wakes up in a cold sweat in his bed...it turns out he was only having a dream.

He still had on his black plaid pajamas, remembering being with his brother, playing pretend and, “building a time machine”.

## Trouble

*By Dhahabo Mohamed*

Once upon a time, Layla and Dhahabo were in a car. Layla has black curly hair. She is four years old. Dhahabo is eleven years old and has curly brown hair. The car they were riding in was electric and the car color was white.

Dhahabo was playing a game on her phone, then Layla took Dhahabo's phone. Dhahabo got mad at Layla Dahabo and asked for her phone back, but Layla said no.

Layla said, "No, I'm not giving it back to you!"

"Give it back before I hit you! Dahabo replied.

Mom said, "Stop hitting your sister! And Layla, give the phone back to your sister now!"

Dhahabo replied, "She better give it back with her ugly face."

Mom said, "Give me the phone right now! I'm done with you and your sister hitting each other."

The next thing was mom had to pull over into a driveway. She got into the back seat to stop Dhahabo and Layla and stop the big fight that they were having.

Mom said, "Dhahabo, come in the front seat now!"

Layla cried because she was hurt.

Dhahabo was still mad that she didn't have her phone. Mom took us back home. My sister had to tell my dad on me.

Dad said, "Why did you hit your little sister? You are older so you shouldn't be hitting your sister."

My mom gave my dad the phone so he could decide how long I would be grounded from the phone. My phone was taken away from me for at least a week. Every time I get into an argument with my sister, I know that my phone will be taken away for a longer period of time.

In the end, Dhahabo learned that each time she hits her siblings, she will be given the consequence of being grounded from her phone. She has decided it will be best to keep her hands to herself even if her younger siblings are picking on her. She realizes she must be the bigger sibling.

## Two Friends Cat and Dog

*By Keyla Orellana*

Cat is 12 years old and in the 6th grade. She has white fur and she always wears a blue bow in her hair. Dog is a German Shepherd who is also 12 years old and in the 6th grade. He is tan with white splotches on his fur. He always wears a yellow collar that says “Dog”.

Dog and Cat leave home and walk down the street towards school. Dog and Cat always walk to school together. They have walked to school everyday together since Kindergarten. There was one time when Dog had the chickenpox, and Cat brought his homework to him. And there was this other time that Cat got Cat Scratch Fever, and Dog couldn’t see her for a week. Cat and Dog go through their day until lunch. At lunch, trouble begins.

Cat yelled at Dog for taking an apple from Cat’s lunch.

Cat said, “Why did you take my food?”

Dog replied, “I wanted some apples.”

“You can go get them at the lunch cart, there are plenty,” said Cat.

Dog said, “Huh? I did not know that.”

“Now you know,” said Cat.

Dog and Cat are leaving the lunchroom when they walk into Snake. Snake is a bully. Cat and Dog know that they should always stay away from Snake.

Snake says, “Hey, watch it!”

Dog and Cat reply, “So sorry, Snake.”

Snake chases Cat and Dog down the hallway to a dead end. Where will Dog and Cat go?

All of a sudden Bird appears and carries Dog and Cat to safety. Dog and Cat end up at the exit to the school. They both run home constantly looking behind them to make sure Snake is nowhere to be found.

Dog and Cat make it home safely. They tell their parents about Snake. The parents go to school and talk to the principal about Snake being a bully. Snake had detention for three days, and he promised never to bully again.

## Working Hard

*By Jarius Brown*

On Monday, Jr was at school, diligently learning and striving towards his goals.

“I remember going to Highland Elementary when I was younger,” he remembered his mom saying that morning.

“It was a pretty impressive building, almost like a giant compared to the other schools in the area. But once you got inside, it was just like any other school but with three floors! Classrooms, hallways, and a cafeteria,” said his Mom.

Jr was a multi-talented individual who excelled both in the classroom and in helping others with their work. It's great and unique to see such diverse skills in one person. However, he was tempted to be at home playing his favorite game. The game he liked best was Fortnite on his Play Station 4. Jr tried his best to focus.

At school one day, some individuals approached him and distracted him from his work, which went on for about an hour. They decided to distract him by talking to him in every single way possible. Even though he was being pulled away from his learning, he knew his priority was to ignore these distractions and stay focused on his education. He stayed focused because he ignored so many people that he finally got to the end of the day...3:15! The school day ended, and Jr was free to go home and enjoy well-deserved rest and recreation.