

Reflections

Literary Magazine

2021-2022



Abyss of Imagination

Cover By
Samia Naveed

Theme By Marine Eshak

**Thanks to Sayreville Middle
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Vice Principal:

Ms. Silvia Rego

Vice Principal:

Mr. Gregg Jegou

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Assistant Superintendent:

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Board Secretary:

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Table of Contents

Anime/Manga

Photography

Poetry

Art

Short Stories

Quotes/Hashtag

Fashion

Memes

Food

Breakout Rooms

Galaxy

WE ARE GLAD TO PRESENT...

THE LITERARY MAGAZINE

OF THE YEAR

2021-2022

THE EDITORIAL STAFF

But before we do present our wonderful works, please take a few moments of your time to read this piece on an important issue facing our town.



Why Sayreville Public Schools Needs An Infrastructure Upgrade

By David Le

#CooltheSchools

Sayreville Public Schools is a great school district for students to obtain a public education by dedicated teachers. Unfortunately, the school buildings and infrastructure could really use some updates and better facilities to meet the demands of the 21st century in a fast moving world. The schools are good places for children, and they can and should use renovations and upgrades for the demands of the modern day. Students are spending around 7-8 hours or so in a school building 5 days a week, for around 180 something days a year, and better facilities could improve the morale of students depending on grade levels. The district really needs these upgrades, as it has been underfunded by the state Department of Education for the past 20 years. The arguments that will be made and information/facts are taken from this presentation here with the link provided on the next page.

You can read this article and look at the presentation for yourself during, after, or before you read if you are reading this online.

<http://www.sayrevillek12.net/common/pages/DisplayFile.aspx?itemId=96530958>

Here is another link below on the district's website discussing the referendum.

http://www.sayrevillek12.net/board_of_education/referendum

The Sayreville School district is planning on adding improvements and renovations to the public schools in the town. These are said to be worth around 97 million dollars or so in total. This will be paid by the taxpayers throughout the years, and will not be in one lump sum. The amount of taxes that the taxpayer will pay will decrease into the years around 2030 or so. If this resolution is approved by the people on October 4, 2022, then the school district will also receive state aid ...

...to help offset the costs to the taxpayers. Personally, I believe that these renovations are important and should be implemented into the schools. At schools across the district, there will be improvements to the buildings, such as installation of HVAC systems (Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning), replacement of roofing, replacement of windows, and code compliance matters. The costs of these measures will take a lot of money, and nothing is cheap nowadays. Changes will not take place immediately, and they will take time. I will state the costs in each section so you will not be surprised if I was to do so in the end. Even though the prices might seem high and make you discouraged, please do not be, as this will be influential in our school district for the months and years to come. I will break down in parts about these renovations and also talk about why this needs voter support, and why you/your parents, and adults should vote for it, because if we do not do it now, we will pay the price for it later, literally.

HVAC is extremely important given today's circumstances, and the possible situations that might occur in the future. Heating is important in the winter, as you would not want students being constantly cold if the temperatures were near 0 or in the teens. Ventilation is also very important as clean and fresh air has to be cycled in and out to provide teachers and students a safe place to learn and live in. Based on the photos that are provided to the voters in this presentation with the link in the beginning, the ventilation and HVAC system can really use upgrades to the infrastructure to have a better place for students and faculty. How much will this cost, the presentation above states that the cost will be around 77 million dollars (again, this is an estimation). Please keep in mind that HVAC is very expensive due to the installation parts, taking into account that each and every system has very complicated gadgets, measures, and all other technical stuff that is not cheap. The schools throughout the district will receive HVAC upgrades, ...

...there will be replacement of exhaust fans which have purposes such as ventilation and removing hot and contaminated air, so air can come into the spaces from sources such as vents, windows, and doors. Again, this reemphasizes the point that ventilation and the circulation of air is important in today's world. Control systems will also receive upgrades, as well as electrical services that have relation to the HVAC upgrades will be affected. The places in the schools that have cooling systems will not be upgraded, and the HVAC upgrades will only take place in places that currently do not have cooling systems.

There is more than just HVAC systems that will be upgraded. The roofs at some schools will be replaced. Replacements are not just done just for the sake of doing so, it can be done because the roofs are old, or because of wear and tear, and/or safety purposes to the occupants of the buildings. Not all schools are covered with roof replacements though. Samsel Upper Elementary will receive a complete roof replacement, there will be ...

... partial replacements at Arleth Elementary, Sayreville Middle, and Sayreville War Memorial High. The plans also state there will be replacements of skylights at Wilson Elementary. The pictures provided in the presentation show there is some degree of wear and tear of the structures. The roof replacements will cost an estimated 5.7 million dollars.

As part of the infrastructure being redone in this plan, windows will be included in the replacement plans. Windows will completely be replaced at Wilson Elementary and Samsel Upper Elementary. There will be partial replacements at Selover, Truman Elementary, Sayreville Middle, and Sayreville War Memorial High. The pictures provided can indicate that the infrastructure has gotten aged and can use replacements. Windows will cost around 13.8 million dollars in total. Also, another factor in this referendum is that there will be code compliance upgrades and measures put into place at Selover School, which will take 1.1 million dollars. ...

... In total, all of these projects will be around 97.4 million dollars for all of the upgrades and replacements I covered in the above sections.

What will be the financial impact on the taxpayer of Sayreville? Since households in the borough are not the same, the average home was assessed at around \$146,000. Based on this estimate, taxes will increase by around \$26.33 a month and 315 a year in the fiscal year 2022. Keep in mind that taxes will decrease by year leading up to a retirement of debt in the fiscal year 2030. A fiscal year is from January 1st to December 31st to give some context. Also, not every home is around \$146,000 per the assessment, there are household values that are above or below this estimate, so all tax rate increases might not be the same, as the more wealthy persons should pay their fair share and not the low income parts of our city. In the FY (fiscal year) 2030, debt will decrease to \$13/month.

(continues on next page)

... The presentation states here,

Maturing debt in FY 2030 will decrease the net impact of the new debt on the average home assessed at \$146,015 to approximately \$13/month and continue to decline each year thereafter.

Note, I am not a financial expert and I do not have a lot of knowledge when it comes to this whole stuff in finances (considering I am a middle school student at the time of writing), so you might have to do some research on this yourself. The NJ Department of Education might approve up to 40% of debt aid in the district's referendum on projects that are deemed to be eligible for the NJ DOE debt aid. The tax impacts here are calculated as all of the projects in this referendum being eligible for state Department of Education aid. On slide 13 (or page, or the term that is used to describe it), there is a chart outlining the costs to each school for the referendum upgrades.

(continues on next page)

So why is this so important to approve this measure later this year in October? It is simple. The burden of the taxpayers. The reason is that if we do not pass the referendum in October, then there will be work on this project to implement the changes in our schools, but we will not receive state aid if we approve of these measures after the October 4th voting date. Therefore, if we as a city do not approve this referendum on October 4th, 2022, then we will need to bear the brunt as a taxpayer to cover the costs of these projects. There would be no state aid whatsoever if we do not pass this on October 4th and we do so on later dates. If we do not pass this in October, then the projects will be bid on over periods of time, which will cost the school district more money in the long term future. Why go down this path if we can approve of the referendum in October, and not need to go through the financial pain of the city, the district, and its residents. The American taxpayer is suffering enough due to the COVID-19 pandemic, inflation, and the ...

... recent events overseas causing the costs of living to increase. If we do not approve of this referendum by the people, then we will be leading to more financial suffering for the Sayreville taxpayer. This referendum will take effect in the schools with infrastructure upgrades in the next few years. If we don't vote and approve of this now when there is the possibility of tax aid by the state, then we will pay more taxes later on. Do not think that this is expensive and will raise taxes. Taxes will be increased even further in the future to cover the costs of these projects if the people of Sayreville do not vote in approval of the referendum on October 4th.

There are also reasons why now is a good time to get this referendum passed for infrastructure development and construction. There is the probability that the state of NJ can help the district get up to 40% of debt aid, as there is no guarantee there will be debt aid in the future, hence why the taxpayers would need to pay the full costs of this project if the referendum is not ...

... passed on October 4th. There will also be little/minimal tax impacts on the city's residents since debt will be retired. The presentation also states now is the time as there are "historically low interest rates" (not my words, these are from the presentation). If we are to approve this referendum on October 4th, than when the construction phases start, building all of these projects together at similar time periods will also be positive for the financial situation, opposed to having to bid on projects if the referendum does not pass, and that would cost the school district more money in the long term. The referendum for the school infrastructure upgrades will also decrease the costs of maintaining the systems and the buildings for the future as opposed to not taking actions and steps to upgrade our schools. We can save money on school building maintenance in the future by supporting and passing this referendum to upgrade the school infrastructure.

(continues on next page)

Something important to note is, there are 3 phases stated for this plan. Passing this referendum does not mean that we will be getting the replacements and upgrades to our schools immediately. The phase 1 plan calls for designs to be done in the time period of October 2022 to February 2022 (assuming this is approved and passed by the people), and the construction process for phase 1 would be in March of 2023 to December of 2023. The plans for phase 2 calls for the designing to be done in August of 2023 to January of 2024, and construction for that phase would be in February of 2024 to December of 2024. The final phase calls for designing in August of 2024 to January of 2025, and the construction of this phase would be done in February of 2024 to December of 2025. Keep in mind that we are talking about replacements such as roofs, partial replacements to plenty of schools, and complete replacement to one school building, HVAC installations, window replacements, and code compliance measures in place at one school, ...

... so this would make sense to have long construction times and not everything can be done at one, making sense on why this is split up over a time period of a few years.

So why am I writing this? I am not writing this just for the sake of doing so. I am writing this to get the message out that we students and teachers of Sayreville Public Schools can really use upgrades to our infrastructure to improve learning and the safety/comfortable environments for the occupants of our school buildings. This will take time to implement. Everything is not done in short time spans, like how the saying Rome wasn't built in a day, and that this applies here as well. The improvements to the school infrastructure will not be done in short periods of time. This will take years, effort, and work to be implemented. The high costs and the amount of money that would be spent seems to be high, but the district will get help from the state if we approve this measure on October 4th for our schools. ...

... The NJ Department of Education can help our city with up to 40% of our debt in our projects, and thus relieve the amount of taxes the residents will have to pay in the years to come. Keep in mind that taxes will increase, but won't be big amounts like a hundred dollars a month (this will depend on incomes and household values). Even if you are a parent reading this in Sayreville, and you might have your children graduating from our schools by the time the new infrastructure improvements are up and running in our schools, please do not think in a way where your family would benefit from this, and why vote for it. No, this is a type of thinking that people can consider selfish. If you are not a parent in Sayreville, then please highly consider supporting this referendum. By doing so, adults without children in Sayreville who vote in favor of the referendum and help support this measure, and they can help make their voices heard to improve the school infrastructure for people they do not know. If you are in this ...

... type of group of adults in Sayreville without children attending our schools, please support this. You can make a difference with a few votes. Even though you might seem to have only one vote and only being one person, you are not useless in doing so. By voting for this referendum, a person in Sayreville in general will improve the livelihoods of students and faculty in the schools. People can do acts of kindness for humans they do not even know, and this is a way to do so. Please vote for this referendum parents, even if they might be exiting the school district via graduation (or other situations), you can help improve the school buildings for the future generations to come. Parents with existing children going to the schools, by voting for this referendum on October 4th, you are contributing to your child's education, even if they might have graduated by the time everything is finished (if the referendum passes). Parents make sacrifices for the well being of their children everyday, and this is a sacrifice every parent who have ...

... children going to Sayreville Public Schools should highly consider voting in favor for. The staff and faculty who live in Sayreville and work for Sayreville Public Schools should also heavily consider voting in favor for this referendum to pass. Teachers working for Sayreville Public Schools can work in favorable conditions compared to today's conditions if they vote in favor of the referendum on October 4th. If you don't vote for it, and you regret it later on, and if the referendum doesn't pass because most of the public voted against it, then the times of regret flood into people who think they should have voted in favor of the referendum. Do not take action against this referendum now, and regret it later. "Later" would be the time when the referendum can apply to the schools for improvements via the bidding stuff, and the taxpayers will have to pay for everything, instead of receiving some help from the state by passing it on October 4th. Do not take action against it now, and regret it later, because when "later" comes, it is already ...

... too late if we go down this path. Help students improve their learning with more comfortable environments, and higher morale in faculty with better conditions for them to teach students, giving students the education they are entitled to in public schools in conditions that are more positive than they are now. I am not saying the conditions are bad, but the conditions after the construction has completed for the schools (if the referendum passes) can be more comfortable for students and staff, giving them peace of mind being in Sayreville's public schools. So please, this is a thought every adult in Sayreville should consider. Help the next generation by voting for this referendum, improve the school infrastructure, and students can thrive in the 21st century. Vote for it now later this year, and you will support the students and staff at Sayreville Public Schools with infrastructure upgrades for the peace of mind of students and faculty/staff. Cool the schools folks!

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Save the date, voting for
this referendum will take
place on October 4th,
2022, from 2 PM to 8
PM. Every vote counts.
Every vote matters.

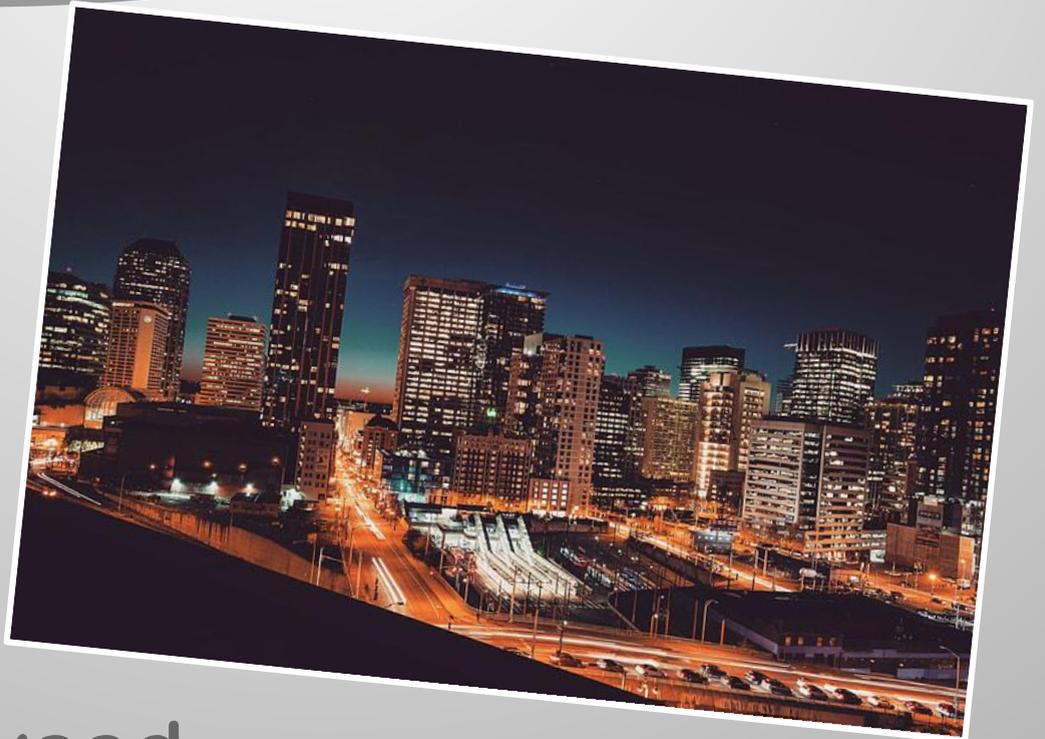
And now, we present to you, the
2021-2022 Literary Magazine!

Enjoy!

#CooltheSchools



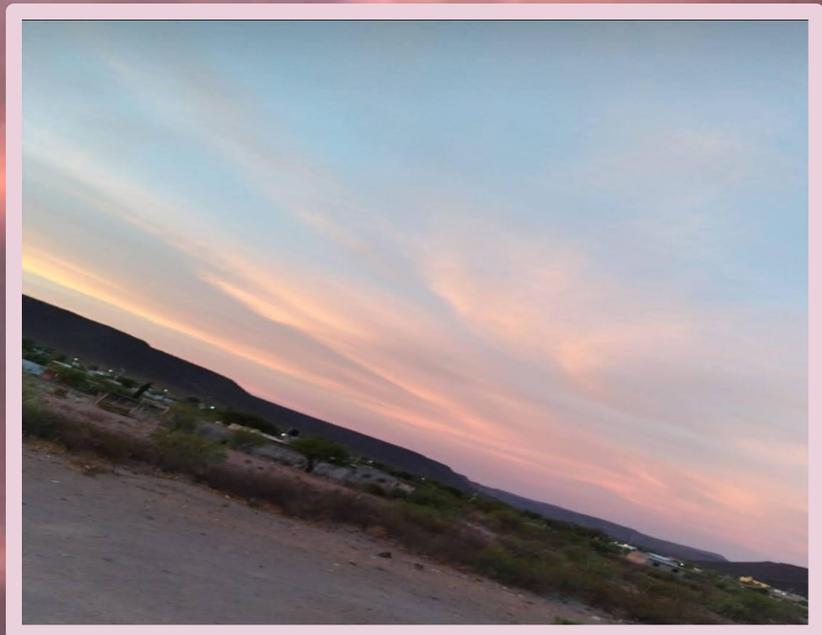
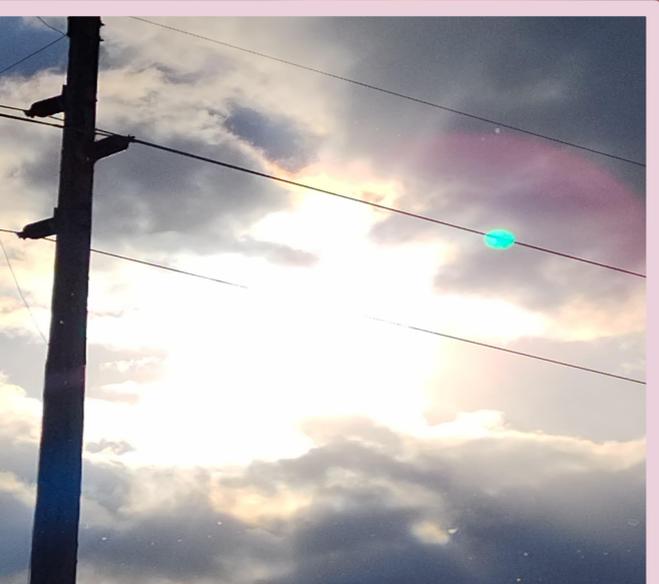
Photography



Samia Naveed



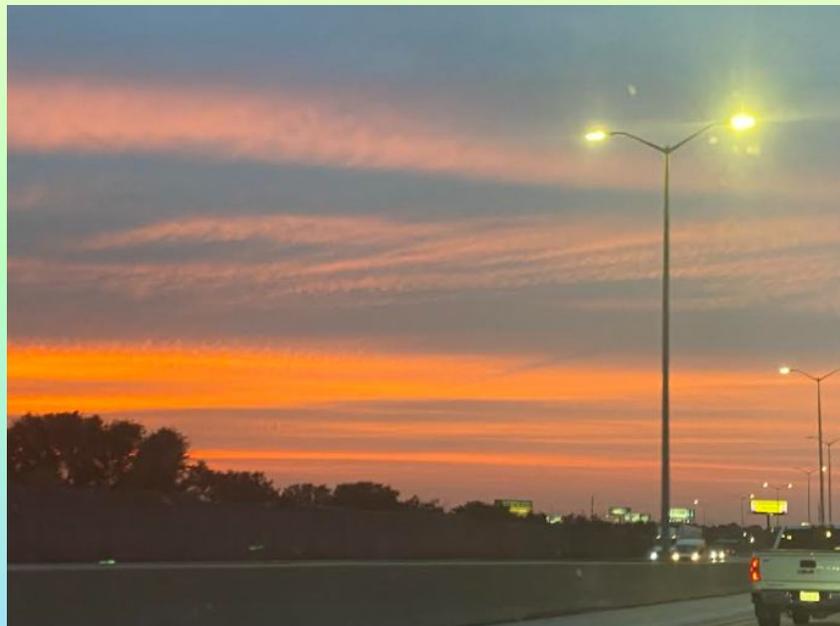
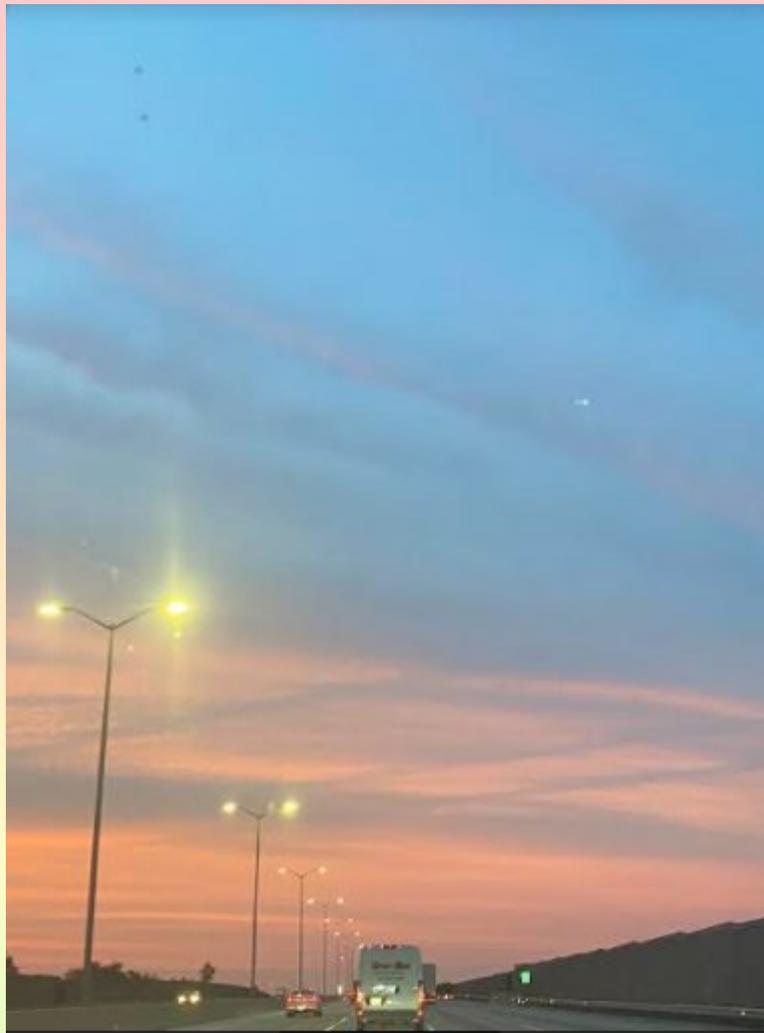
Let The Clouds Talk



Tamara Turner



By: Samia Naveed



COTTON CANDY SKIES

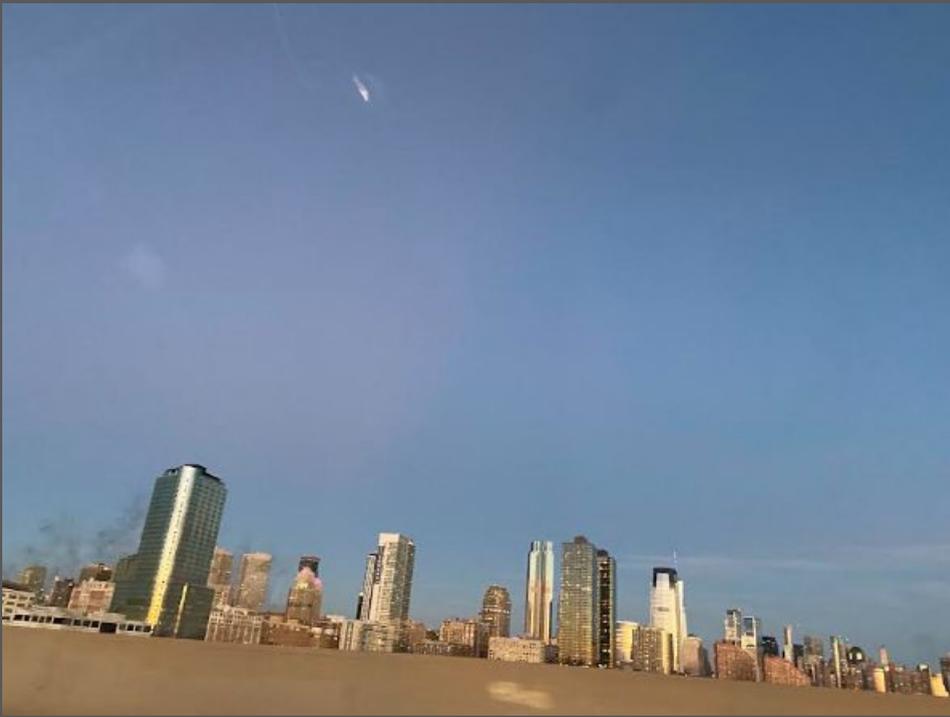
By: Samia Naveed



By: Samia Naveed



The moon at Six Flags!
Photo Taken by Samia Naveed



Cityscape
By: Samia Naveed



By: Samia Naveed



By: Samia Naveed

A GLANCE at NYC



By: Maira Naveed



The Moon

Photos Taken by Marine Eshak





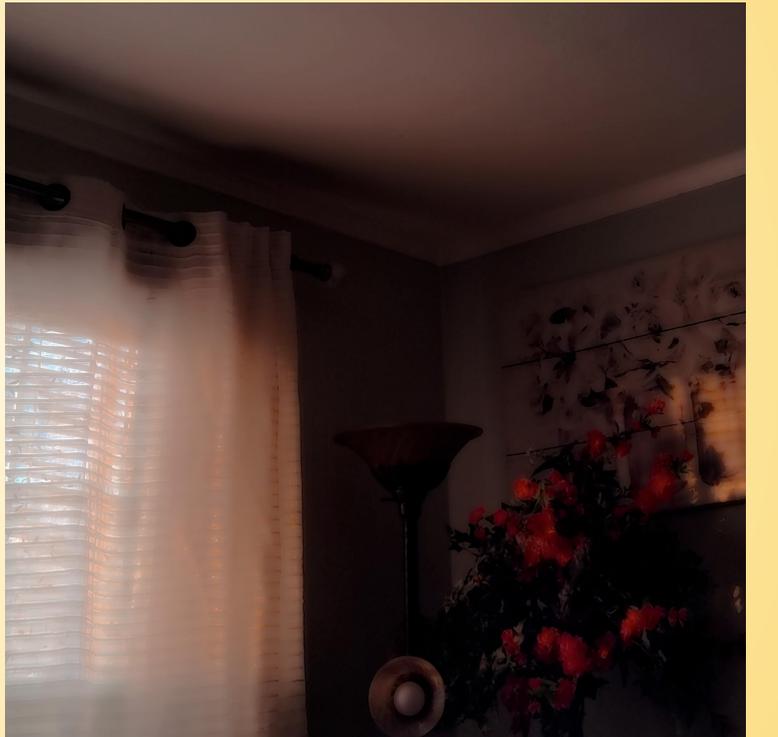
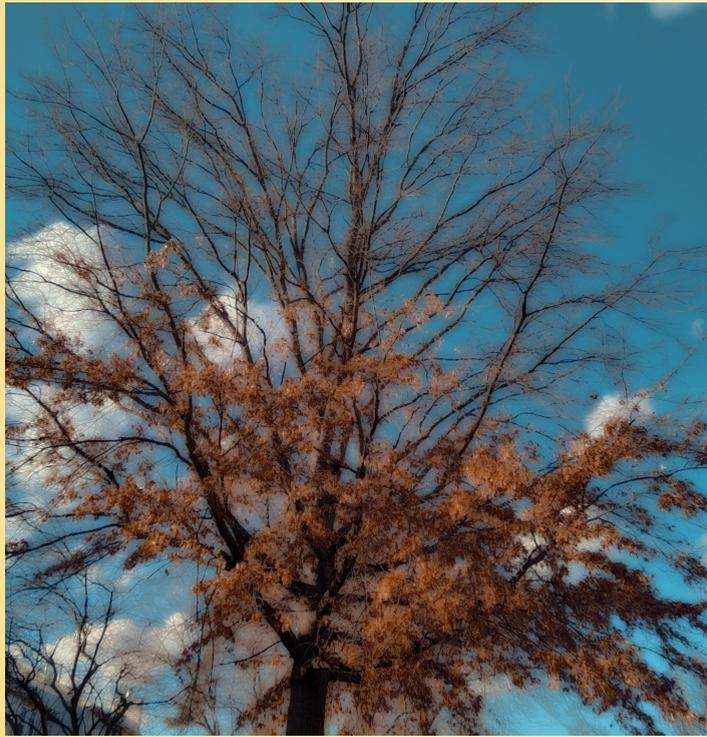
Mustafa Amjad

Tropical Iguanas

By: Jared Zivanovic

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Light Academic Vibes

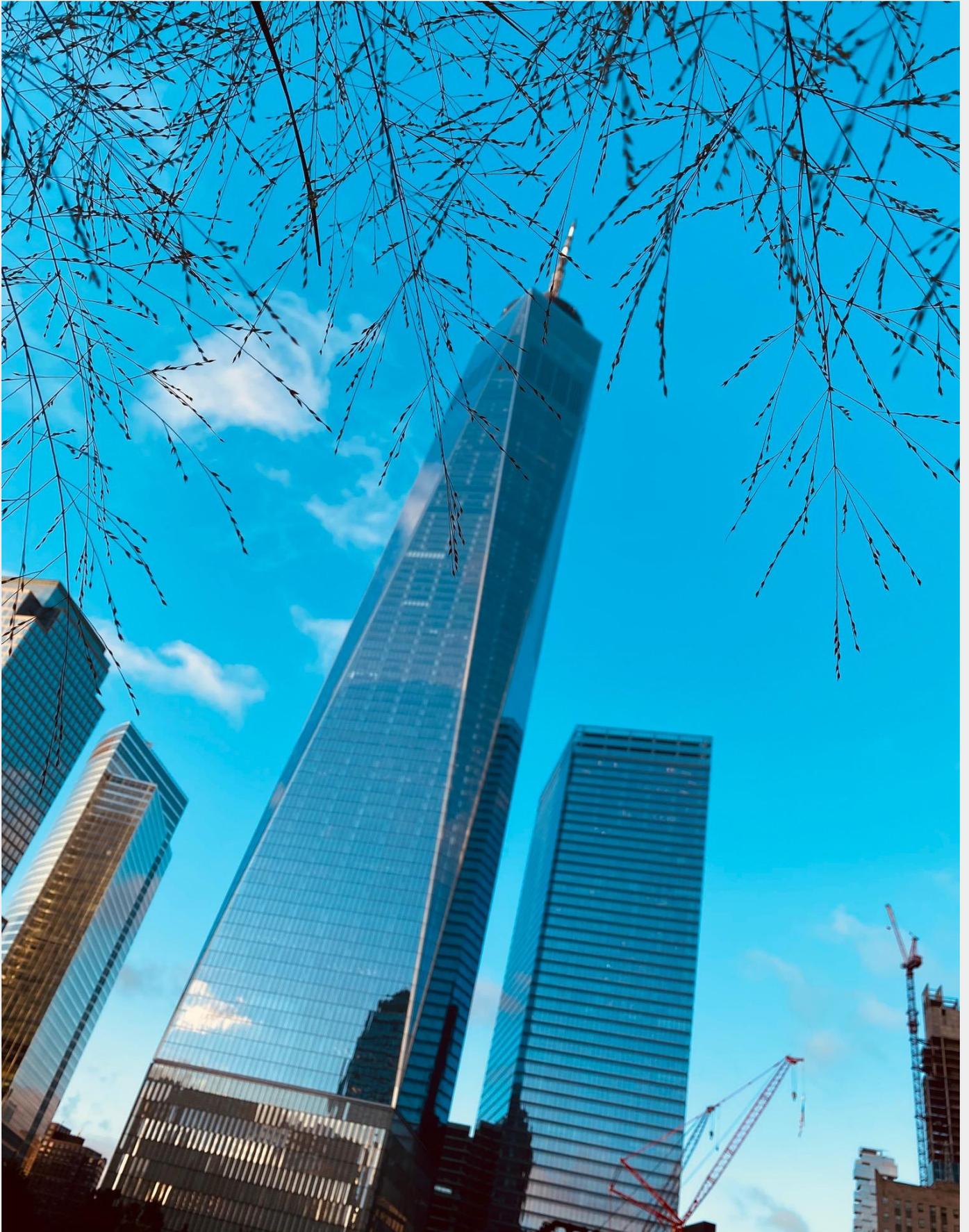
Tamara Turner

VIEW FROM THE FERRY



By: Maira Naveed

Good View of World Trade Center



By: Maira Naveed

Park Lights



By: Dishita Gupta

Lonely Bench



By: Dishita Gupta

***Welcome to the
Aviation Section of
our photography!
Features plenty of
photos from travels
as well as plane
spotting!***

***On a side note, [Flightradar24.com](https://www.flightradar24.com) is a great
online and a free source to track flights as well as
aircraft around the world that I use!***

By David Le



Rainy Day at EWR. United Boeing 757 landing (bottom).

By David Le





**Same takeoff, same
plane, two different
pictures.**

By David Le



The aircraft taking off here is an Alaska Airlines Boeing 737, the same one you saw in the last one.

By David Le

**By
David Le**



Approach to Runway 29 EWR + NYC Skyline.





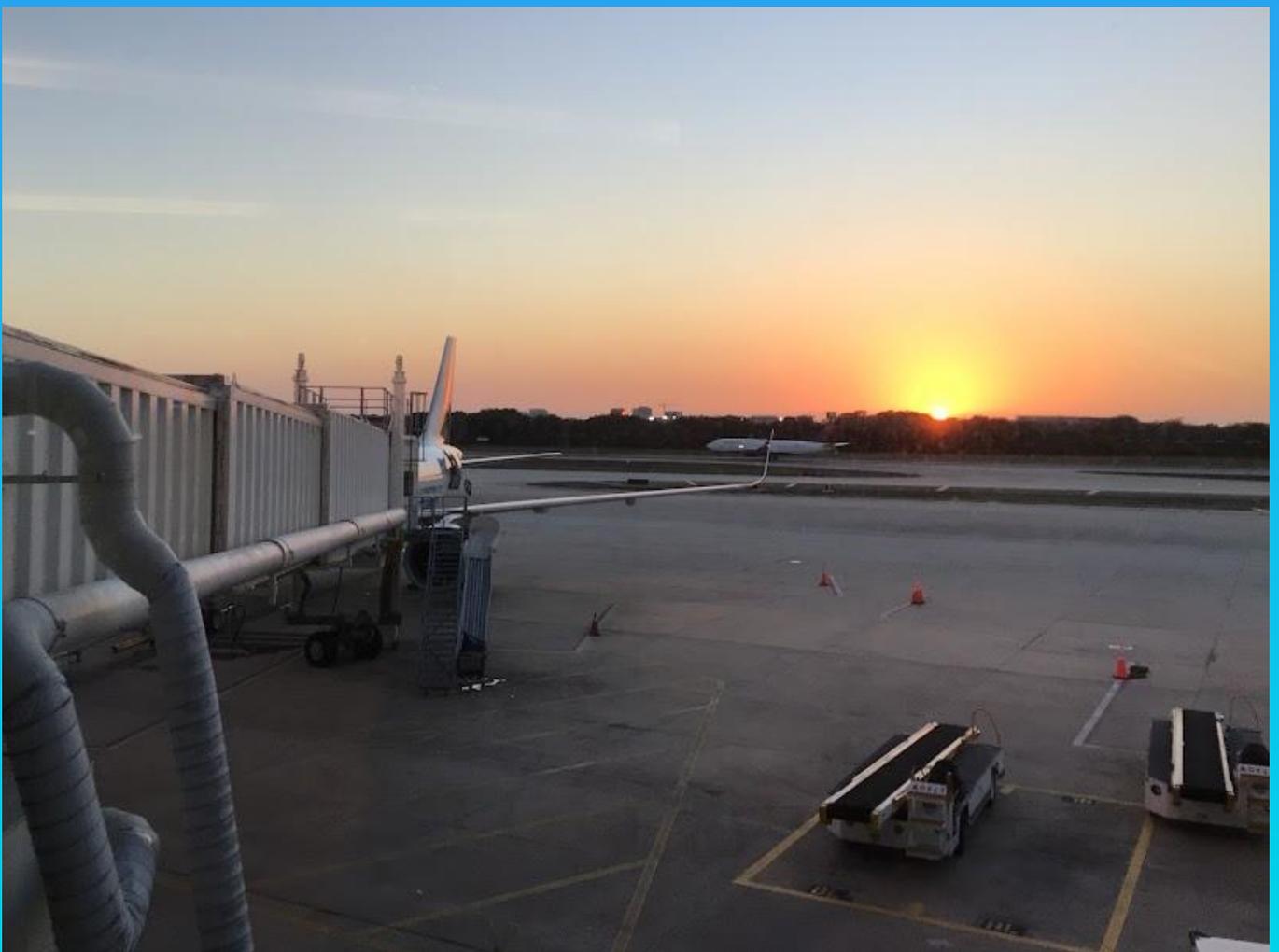
Takeoff from 4R/22L at Newark.

By David Le





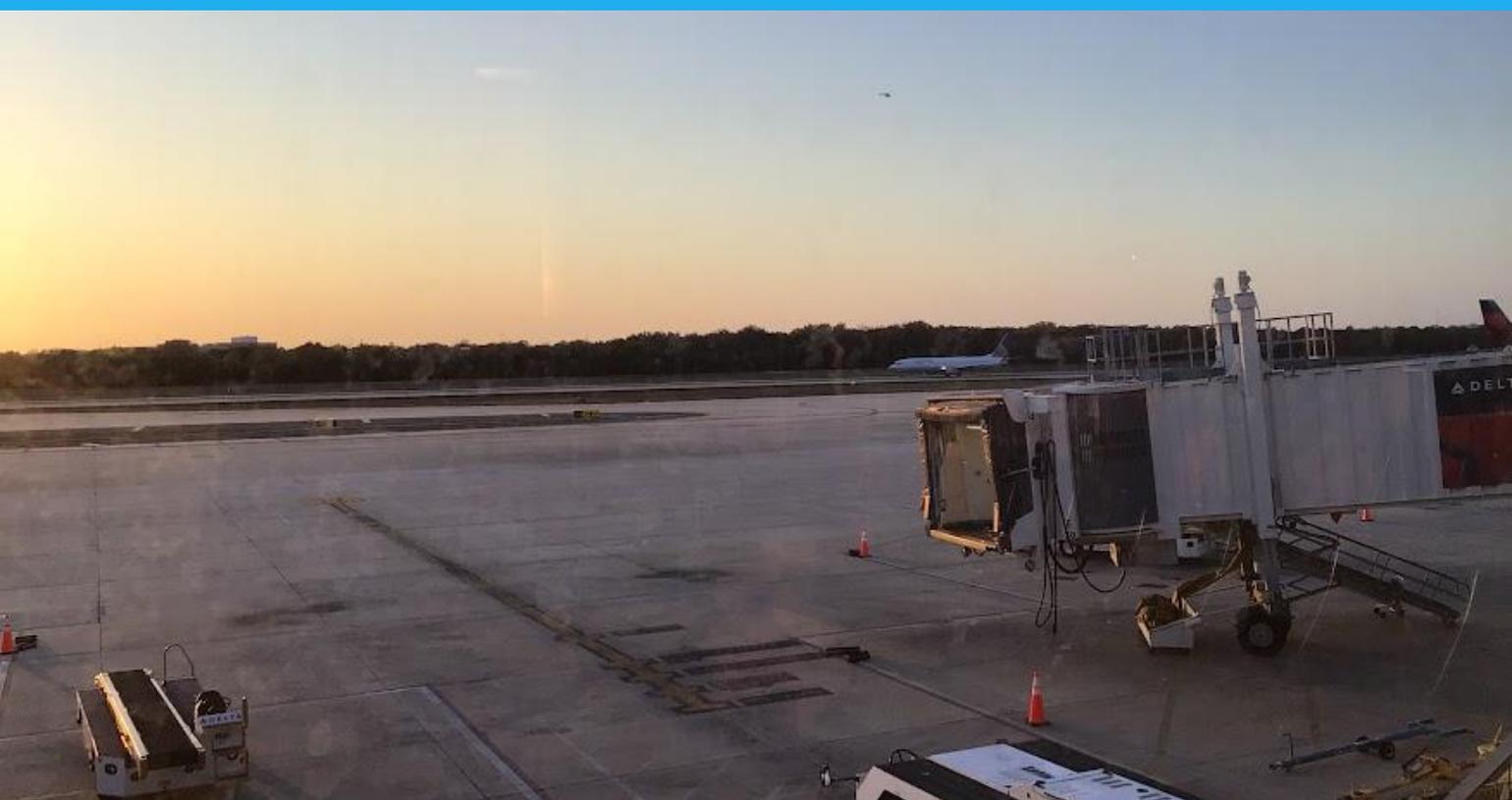
Tampa Int. Airport Sunset, Landing and Takeoff from 19R. By David Le





Sunset, Landing and Takeoff from 19R at TPA.

By David Le





Taxing on the taxiway and Final Approach.

By David Le





**Coming
down at
around 8:30
AM.**

By David Le

**Here's something interesting,
planes approaching Runway 29
pass right above your head
before touching down.**





More NYC and approach to Runway 29 at EWR.

By David Le





United Airlines, British Airways and Singapore Airlines long haul jets at Newark.

By David Le





United Airlines Boeing 757 Final Approach to 22R.

By David Le



United Airlines Boeing 757 crosswind landing at 22R. By David Le





United Airlines Boeing 777 takeoff from 22R.

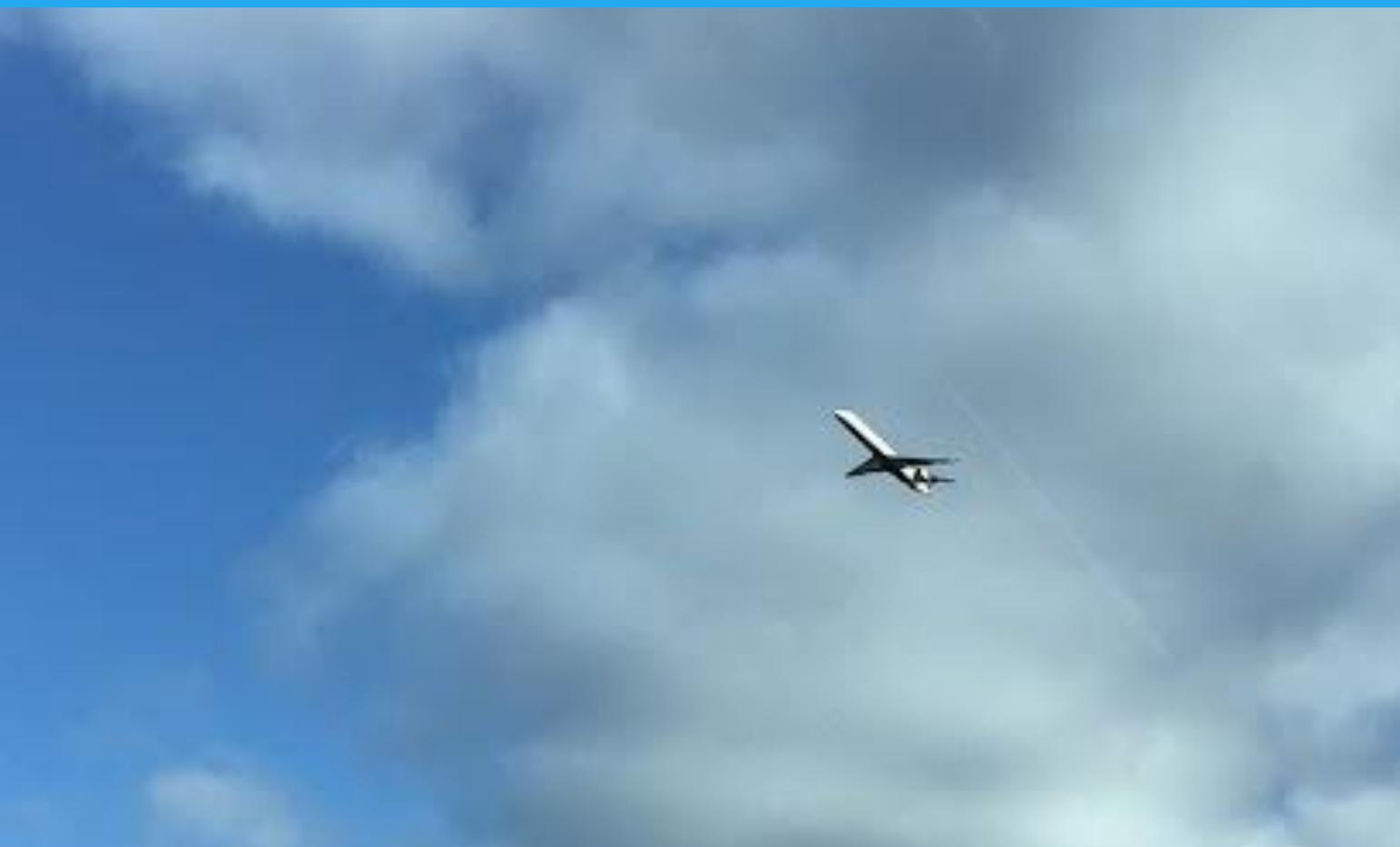
By David Le





Jets taking off from EWR's 22R.

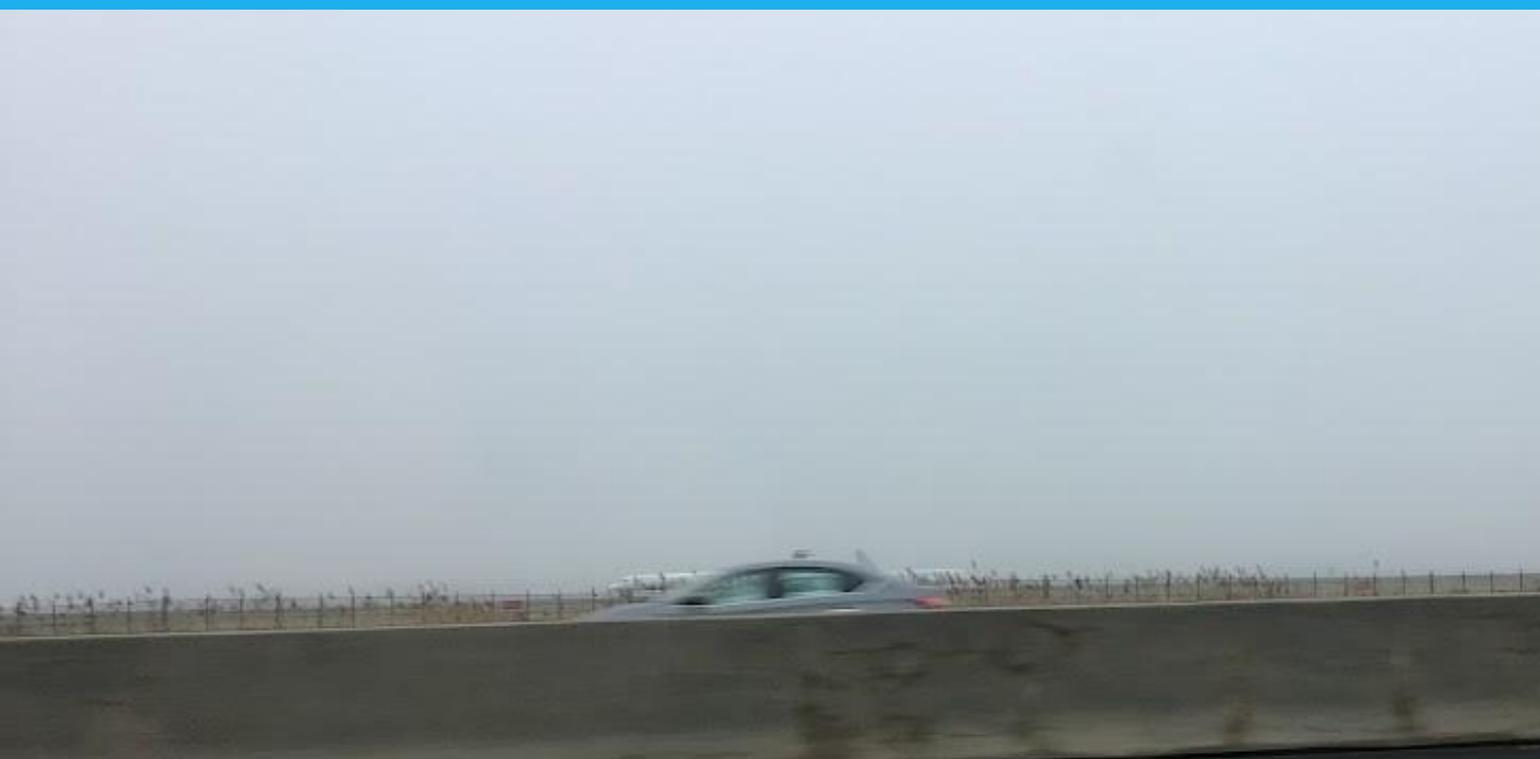
By David Le





United Jet preparing for takeoff+foggy EWR.

By David Le





Landing and Takeoff on your average weekend.

By David Le





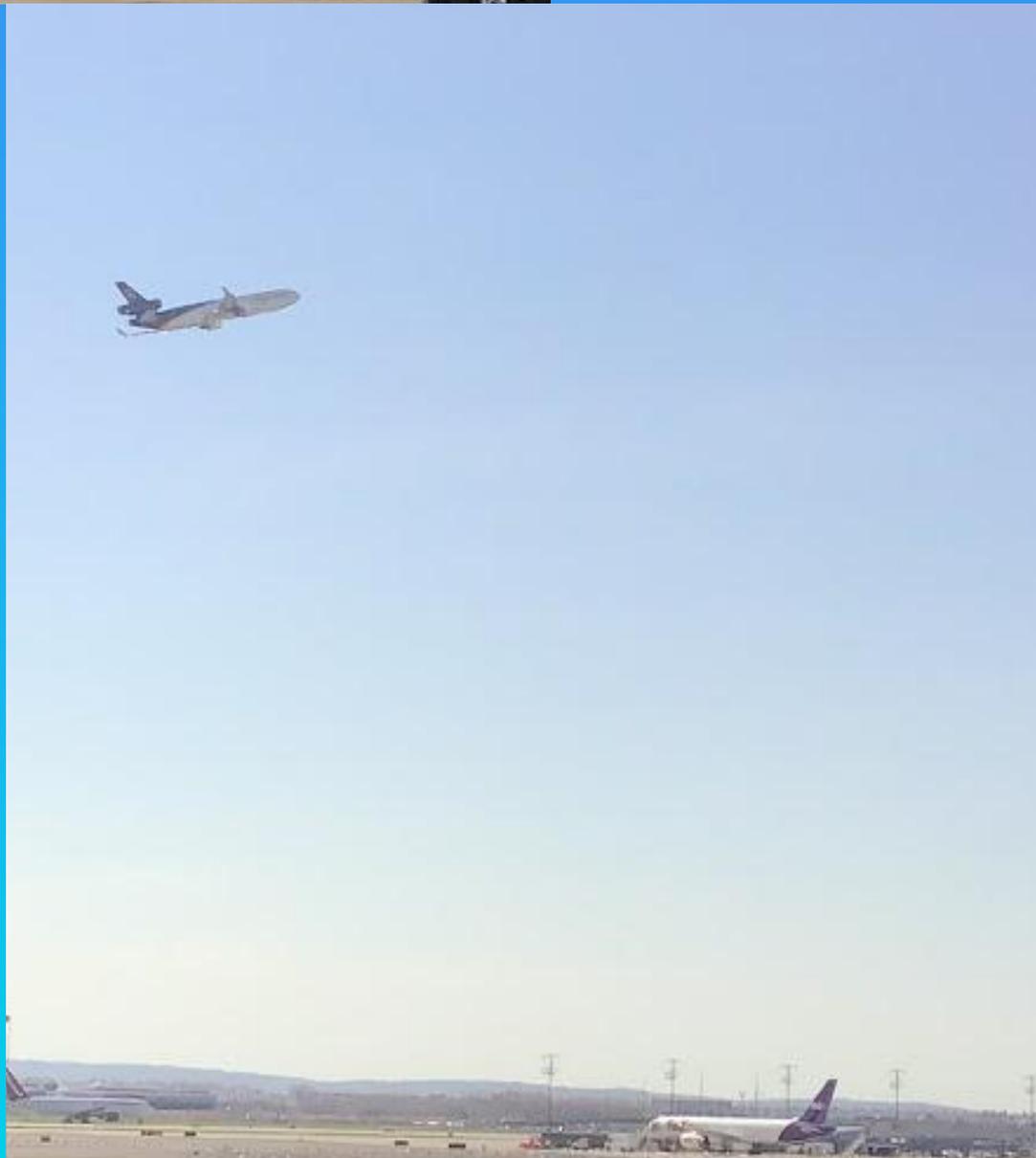
**United landing at Newark,
American landing at
Washington Reagan. By David Le**





**Fedex
taking
off
towards
South.**

**UPS
MD-11
taking
off
toward
South.**



By David Le



Each of these tankers can carry around
10,000 gallons or so of Jet A/A1

**American parked at gates/United just
arriving from London, UK (background)
Air Canada Express Embraer 175 (or
190) preparing for pushback.
Plus the cranes in the ports nearby.**

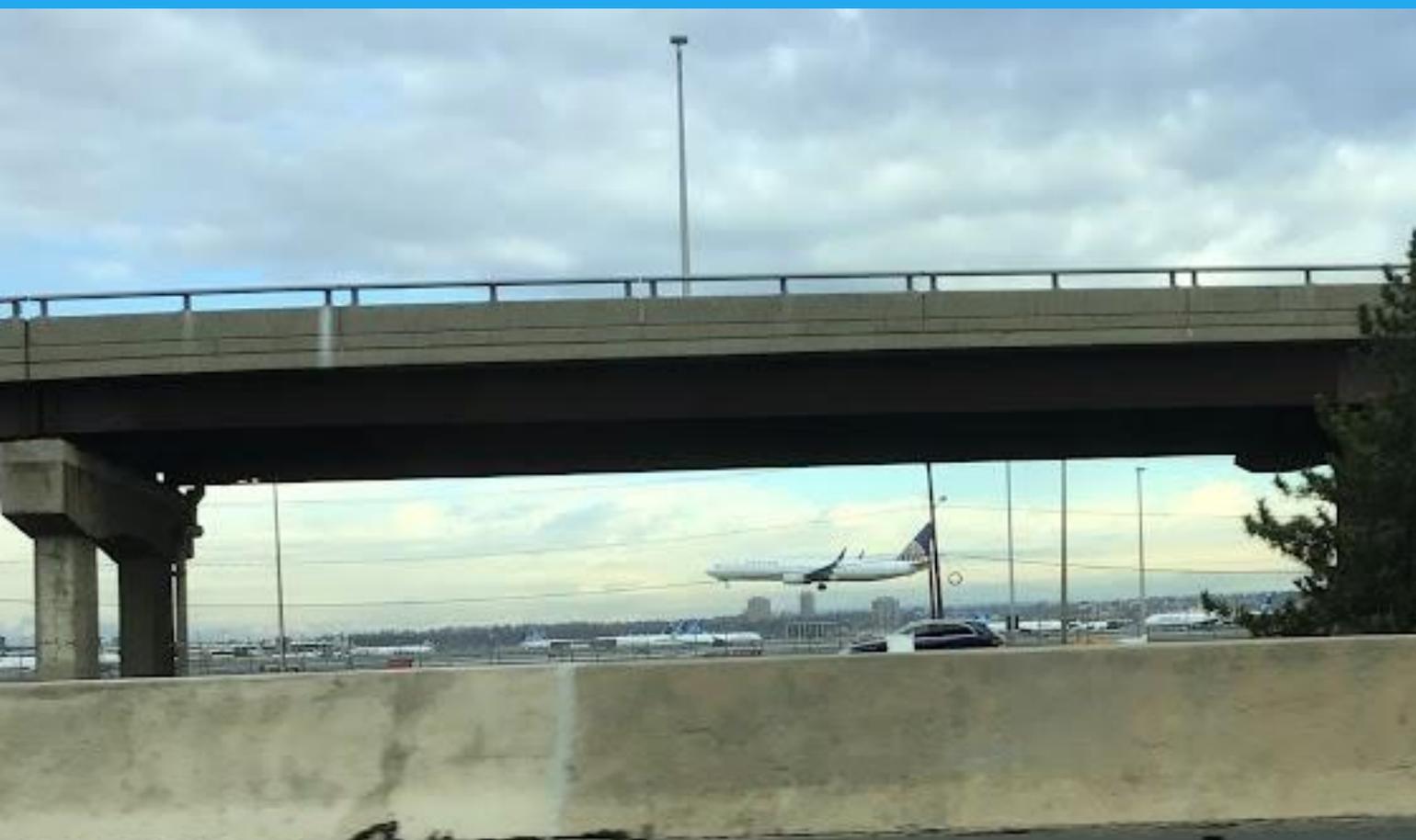
By David Le





**More photos, plus some
good timing.**

By David Le





**Jets landing on EWR's 22R,
just sitting on tarmac waiting
for takeoff.**

By David Le





United Airlines 737 (either MAX or -900) landing on Runway 4L, as my plane prepares for takeoff. By David Le





Takeoff from 4R, and that's the same United 737 from earlier that just landed.

By David Le





JetBlue Airbus A321 “David Neeleman” arriving at gate (top), and pushback (bottom).

**“Never a Dull Moment”
Airbus A321.
(right).**

**I believe that
JetBlue gives
their aircraft
names.**

By David Le



A side view of the Airbus A321-231 of JetBlue Airways during pushback.

By David Le





United Airlines aircraft parked at EWR on tarmac. Boeing 757 (closest one in globe livery), Boeing 787s (2nd closest in globe livery, farthest in new United livery).

By David Le



United Boeing 777 (top) as well as A320 (top right above wing), and United Boeing 787 Dreamliner (bottom), also seen is an Air India Boeing 777 (bottom).

By David Le





Taxiing past EWR's Terminal B, or the international terminal, notice bigger jets are parked here.

By David Le



United Boeing 777 in older globe livery with the on the tail. The livery is from Continental Airlines before the United-Continental merger. By David Le





**American Airlines Airbus A321 (top),
and two American Boeing 737s
(bottom).**

By David Le





**Spirit Airlines Airbus A321-200
seen here in the distinctive yellow
Bare Fare livery.**

By David Le



**Lufthansa “Queen of the Skies”
Boeing 747-8 at Newark. This aircraft
does service from Newark to
Frankfurt, Germany.**

By David Le





**United Airlines Boeing 787
Dreamliner landing at Newark in
older globe livery.**

By David Le



Something like a farm and fields in Maryland.

By David Le



Welcome to Georgia!

By David Le



**Some type of landmark
along I-95N in Florida.**

By David Le



Daytona Int. Speedway, The World Center of Racing. View from I-95N.

By David Le





Port of Jacksonville, FL. Leaving Florida sign.



By David
Le



National Museum of the Marine Corps in Triangle, VA.

By David Le



**Baltimore Harbor Tunnel
entrance heading
northbound. The tunnel
runs under Baltimore
Harbor.**

By David Le



Delaware Memorial Bridge entering New Jersey.

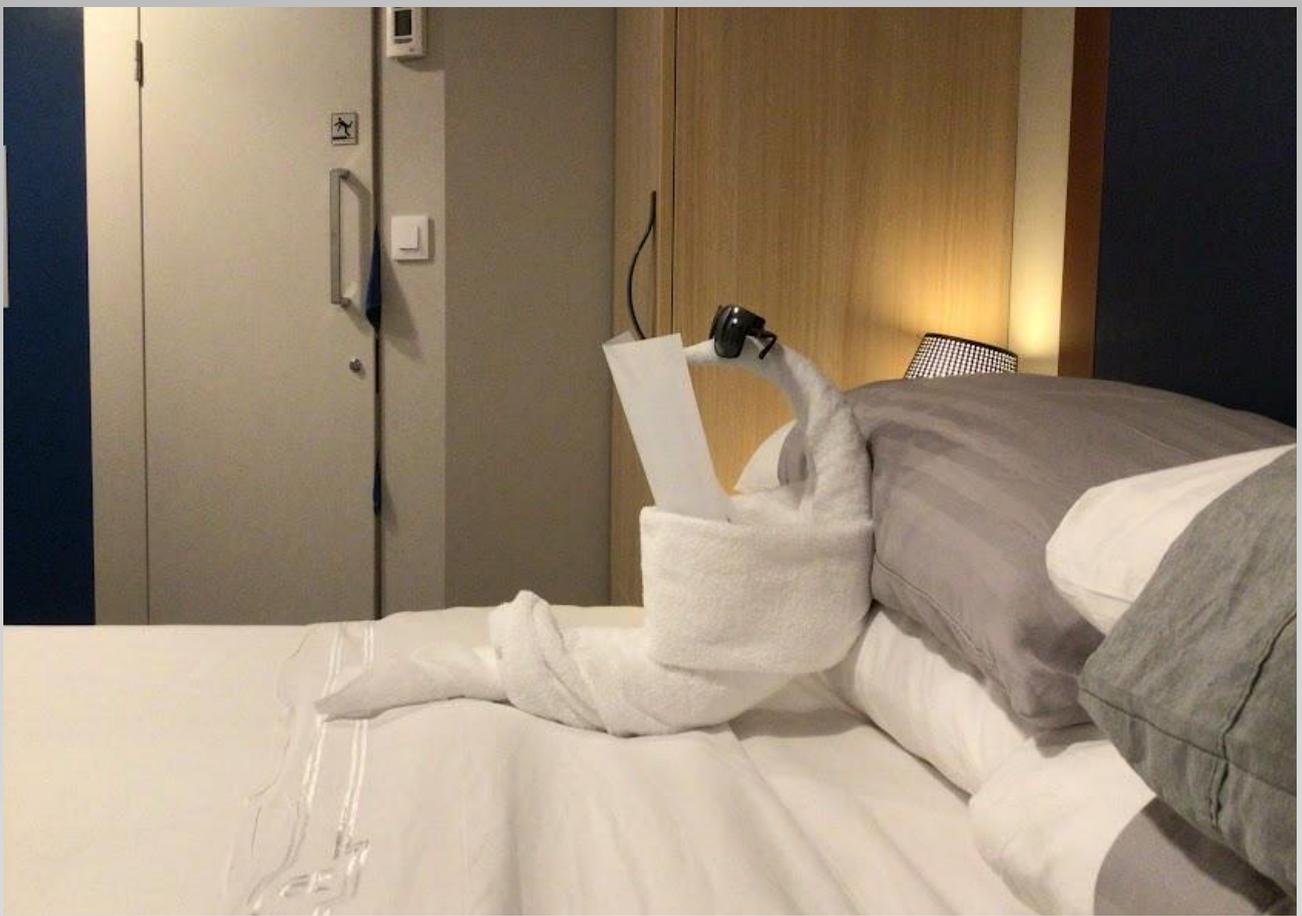
By David Le





Fact: the picture is actually looking towards Sayreville at around 4,000 to 7,000 or so feet. Landmarks: the river especially the bridge, and the small strip of land in the river. As well as some white roofs, Sayreville has plenty of industrial buildings and warehouses.

By David Le



Housekeepers sometimes make animals out of towels on cruise ships.

By David Le

This one's reading a paper, with sunglasses taken from my stateroom.





More towel animals, might be a swan or something like that.

By David Le





***View of
Central
Park area
from
balcony
on
Wonder of
the Seas.***

By David Le



**Central Park
looking down at
nighttime.**

**Balconies line
the space, and
there are a few
shops, premium
restaurants
(which you have
to pay for), and
beverage
stations. Don't
forget trees and
bushes as well.**

By David Le

***The picture above, looking through
the glass is the Royal Promenade on
Deck 5, my stateroom was deck 10.***





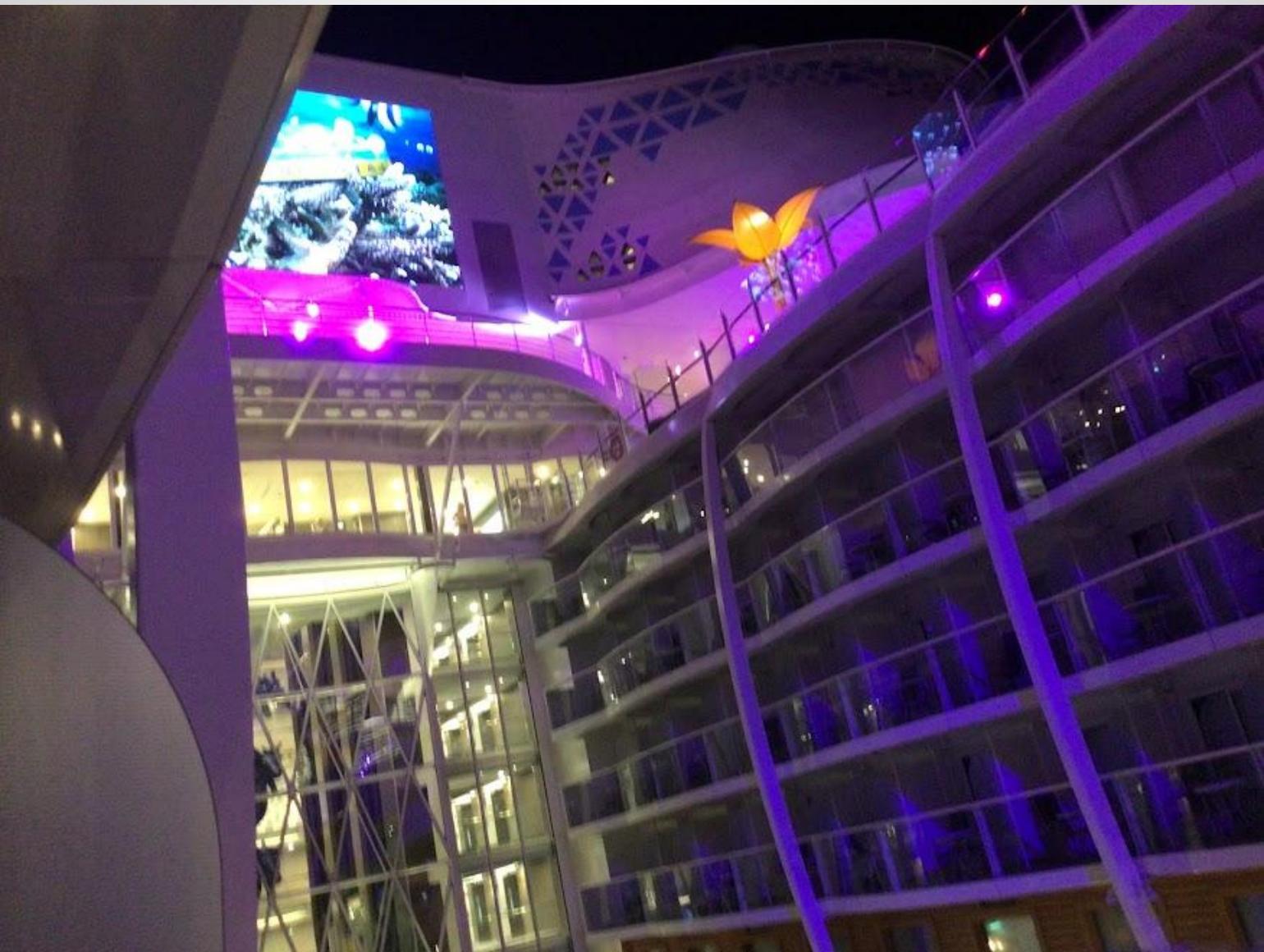
Each average stateroom (since there are suites for the ones who are higher ranks in the loyalty program, or who pay), has a bed, a couch that can be used as pull out bed (or just sleep on it and made with sheets), a TV, bathroom, drawers and cabinets, and a vanity like desk. And behind this picture is the door to the balcony looking at the Central Park area. Something to note, the ceilings in the corridors outside the door are rather short, probably 6 to 6 ½ feet or so.

By David Le

This is the view at night looking upwards to Deck 15, where the pool deck is and the ship's buffet is located. The screen can be used for outdoor movie showings.

Fact: Wonder of the Seas currently holds the distinction of the biggest cruise ship in the world at nearly 237,000 gross tons.

By David Le





*Winter, nothing else,
just winter, peace and
the clear road ahead.*

Aarya Gedam

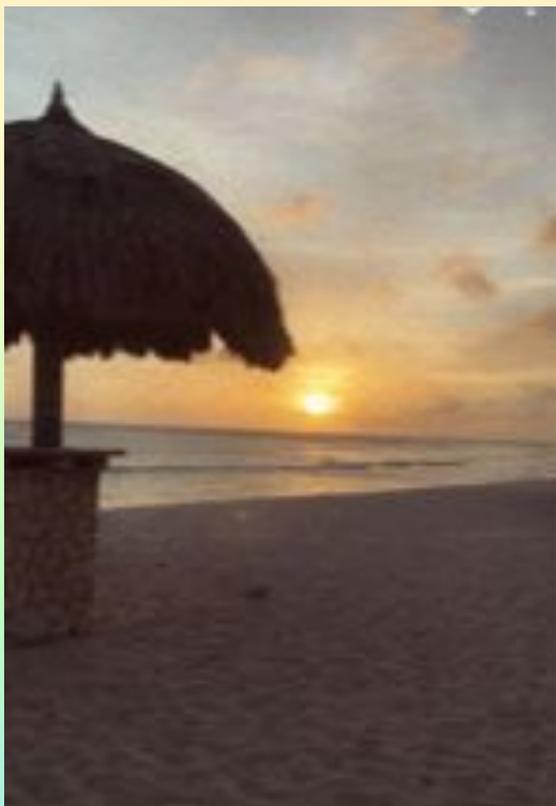




Aarya Gedam



Aarya Gedam



Isha Kanodia



By Mustafa Amjad

Washington DC police (Durango, truck, FPIS, and FPIU).



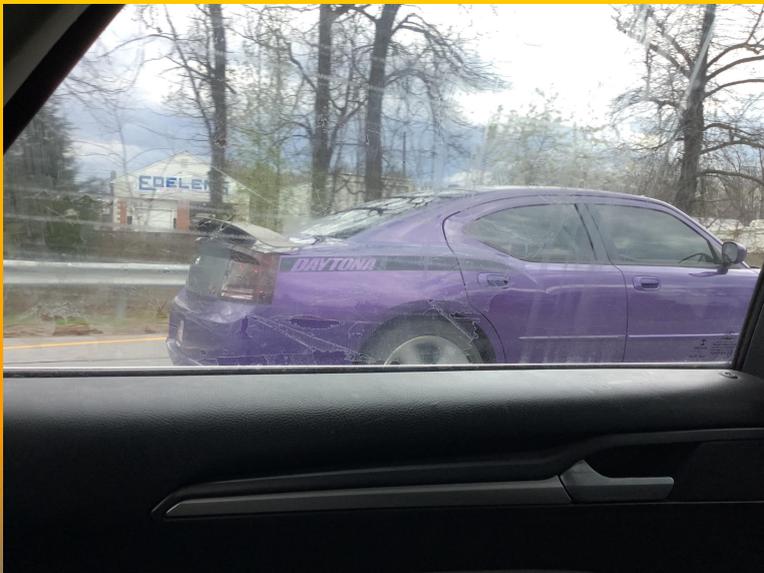
By Mustafa Amjad

Delaware/Maryland/Virginia state police and some County Sheriff's.



By Mustafa Amjad

Old Dodge Charger And Corvette C7.



Temi Taiwo





Poetry

Samia Naveed
& Vanya Anand

From, Hope
Gianna Roman

I am from the front desk in the office

From Hairspray and Old Spice

I am from the brown couch

The brown couch in which had been frayed and tattered
at the legs from canines in charge

I am from The Butterfly Bush

The purple tree which violet flowers bloom from in the
best times

I'm from music and empathy

From Jay and Kate

I'm from the sarcastic and strong-willed

From bad attitude and not doing what I'm told

I'm from the story which I will write myself, the rights
and wrongs I will learn from, the legacy I hold

I'm from Italy and Puerto Rico

The Homemade Mac and Cheese, Banana Bread, and
Empanadas

From the Tin man pop-pop who's heart ticks and tocks

The dad who brings home more dogs

And there above the fridge, was a old torn cookbook

Which holds all the secrets to the DeNicola family, and
will hold many more from the Romans.

The Tip of Thine Arrow

Marine Eshak

I be a bird. A bird from the loins of my enemy. Whom awaits the coming of food. A meal much awaited for the nourishing of our bodies and minds. But instead I come across the beast of animals, the rulers of the earth, whom forcibly have destroyed our settlements and homes for their liking. Now replaced by the bustling cities, our sources are scarce. And now, I fly above, gazing at the trees below, and the moon above. But the peace must not be restored, for what is this? A blade which hath run into my body? For what have I committed against thy? I watch myself fall to the ground, helpless, as my blood trickles through thine arrow. I have been condemned as a weakling, and tried as strong. I fall to the ground with an audible thump, as my wings relax. The subtle wiggling of a worm slows my death. Oh come little one! That I may endure another meal before I perish. But I can not move. For the arrow hath run into my heart. I slowly watch as the moon dims in the dead of night. I know my fate, as I have been impaled by man's arsenal. Which hath caused the death of an innocent little one. What have you done man? Why have you done this act? I no longer can think, for I have perished from this world by the tip of thine arrow.

Midnight

By Marine Eshak

The rustling and bustling of the city remains interrupted not nor by the falling of a pin or the crashing of a disastrous meteor from the deep expanse of space. The men rush to work as the women look after the wailing imprints they have left in the world to take care of the future generations. The store owners open their shops as their eyes follow everyone passing at the crack of dawn, worshipping the possibility that maybe, just maybe, one of those spectators would walk into their shops and purchase an item. Deep downtown, civilians take out a glimmering penny hoping that Lincoln would grant them luck as they scratch and tear at a lottery ticket, marveling at the near impossible idea that they could win millions. But when the expected occurs, they walk out morally destroyed, as the shops make profits off their losses. And finally, lunch arrives during rush hour. The sun gleams down at the city, reflecting it's light off large glass windows hanging hundreds of feet above the humans. The fast food restaurants are booming with business, as the exhausted stop by for lunch, only to return back to their jobs for the other half of the day. And finally, evening arrives, and the workers leave their jobs, barely able to look forward in front of them. When they arrive back home to their families, they are already fast asleep, not to be woken for another ten hours. The clock strikes midnight.

2022

By David Le

**The new year of twenty twenty two
The world entered without a clue
But one thing is certainly true and out of the blue
Darkness does not stick to paper like glue**

**Troubling times want to stay and not go away
And that's not okay**

**There are certain great tools to use in the array
And some look in methods that lead one astray
The night wants to last forever during the dark day**

**The world might seem just a tad crazy
Quarantine might have made some of us lazy
While the pandemic made a few kinda hazy
Yet we wait for light to bloom like a daisy**

2022

(continued)

Light is wanted at the end of the tunnel

But right now it cannot even pass through a funnel

**Dark times grips light with a firm handle and blocks
out the candle**

**Wanting to trap enlightening brightness in the
jungle**

Darkness wants to persist forever

Yet the world can come together

Different spectrums unifying to work for the better

Something important could be to never say never

Light wants to go out and bellow

**Though it has to travel through the dark consistency
of jello**

While the alerts might be on red and yellow

Great times are coming soon from the great cello

**It is clear that light shines eventually and says
“Hello!”**

***“As It Was”* by Harry Styles**

PopSonnet

by David Le

Not going forward, but going backwards

The force of nature pulls me back from thee

Myself desires thy palms out forwards

Wherefore we leaveth at that place shall we

No words, things go in our wanted path

The moment I know thou shalt be with I

It has come I stay in the aftermath

Our universe, just us and a fly

Thou know that the present isn't the past

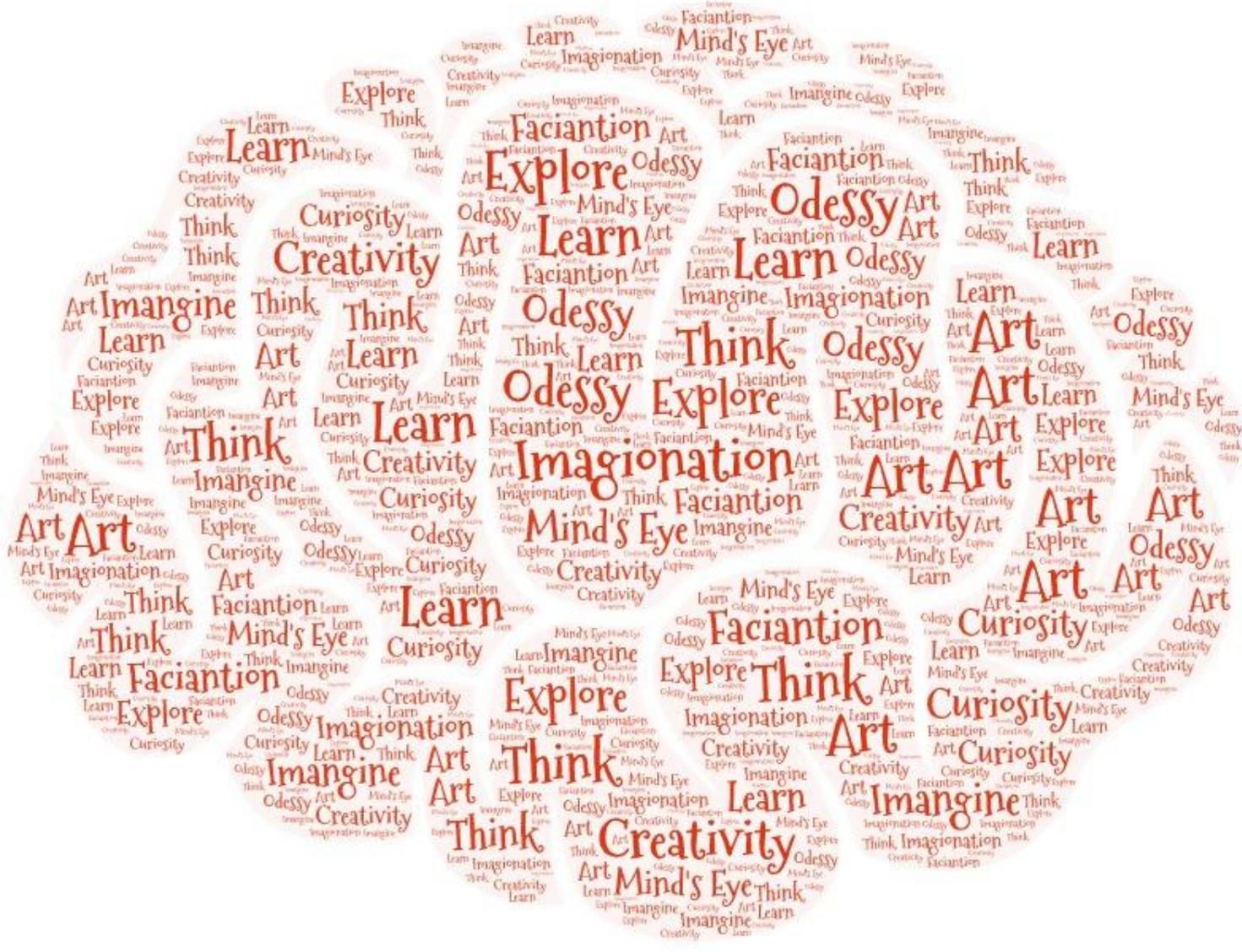
This world, just us, no other people here

Thou know the past is not in the forecast

Not the same as things were in our sphere

Know the reality is not the same

Pick up the phone, and it shall say your name



Poem By:
Vanya Anand

The Meaning of Cruelty

By Vanya Anand

We humans are deadly creatures
Lions, Bears and Tigers
Can not compare to us
We kill our own kind.
Have you ever seen
a leopard dine on
its own mortal?

We are cruel to other species too
Elephants, Monkeys and Cockatoos
We lock them up in cages
for our enjoyment
Those mountain lions in the corral
Are getting restless by the second
Those pigs in the corner
Are squealing in fright
That chicken over there
is feasting on human food

The Meaning of Cruelty

(cont.)

It is sad that we are cruel to chickens
We feed them chicken nuggets
That chicken does not know
It is eating its old friend
That has been cooked and fried
To our heart's content

We whip the baby elephant
and shock the white tiger
so we can have a circus

Do any of the animals in the zoo get
released?

No

Do any animals in the circus get
released?

No

Think Lions, Bears, and Tigers are
deadly?

Think Again



By-Andrea Kumah



By-Andrea Kumah



By: Samia Naveed





stuck

=THE WOMAN WOKE UP AND GAVE IT A

STARE

=THE GLARING ALARM CLOCK LEANING ON

HER CHAIR

=AGAIN AN AGAIN SHE WITNESSED THE

SIGHT

=OF THE SAME HAPPENINGS, DAY AND NIGHT

=AND SO SHE SAT THERE

=ON HER OLD ROCKING CHAIR

=TIRED, ALONE, WITH A BURDEN TO BEAR

Fell In Love With A War By: Kimberly Rincon

As the hands grasp onto my hair pulling me away

All while I stretch myself to stay with him

Once I open my eyes to see him

He's already given up

With a hand sneaking up at him

Almost grabbing him at a chokehold

I attempt my best to speak to him

To scream

To wail

But I cannot, my throat has closed up in fear and panic

One more inch

Let me embrace him

Tell him I'm here and not dead

Is it greed to want him by my side?

I've never been greedy about anything in my life

So can't I be greedy just once..?

I still remember how that night went

I came out of my false sleep

While Romeo succumbs to the poison

If only I had told him the plan when I could

None of this would have happened

Or perhaps we were simply in love of the idea of each other

This farewell is such a slight pain that I would say goodnight

to you till dawn...

Above those Mountains By: Justin Trivino

I'm finally here

I finally made it after all these months

It took courage, strength, and bravery

But I knew had nothing to lose

It was for my father, who was brave and strong

Told me I could conquer anyone of my dreams

When times were tough

I thought of him, who empowered me with his bravery

It was a battle between me and nature

We both fought fiercely to the end

She put up a good fight, but I was better

I was stuck and abandoned

Trying to escape free

It took many years, but I knew it would be worth it

I struggled, I cried

Sometimes I lay there and regret my decisions

But now, I am free

From them, who captured me

When I was young, I couldn't understand

I was locked away for so many years, it was tragic

I was isolated, from the outside world

I needed to see, what was beyond the mountains, above the clouds

I did it for my father, to escape from them, and to finally see,

What was beyond those mountains.

*When it's winter,
I put on my boots.*

*When it's spring,
I put on my raincoat.*

*When it's summer,
I run to the pool.*

*When it's fall,
I go to school.*

BY: AARADHYAA VATS

Haiku

Sand - A Haiku

Tropical Beach

A yellow, thriving sand blows whilst
brushing the waves tide

By: **Jared Zivanovic**



ART

Vanya Anand
& Samia Naveed



Vanya Anand



Henna Art Design
By: Samia Naveed



Henna Art Design
By: Samia Naveed



Painting By:

Samia Naveed



Painting By:

Samia Naveed



a Dela Cruz



Moony (aka Remus Lupin)

By: Vanya Anand



Prongs (aka James Potter)

By: Vanya Anand



If I love you was a promise

Would you break it

If your honest?

By: Vanya Anand

Song by: Billie Eilish

Credits to original artist

By: Myriam Andre





Justin Trivino and Original Artist

Romeo and Juliet

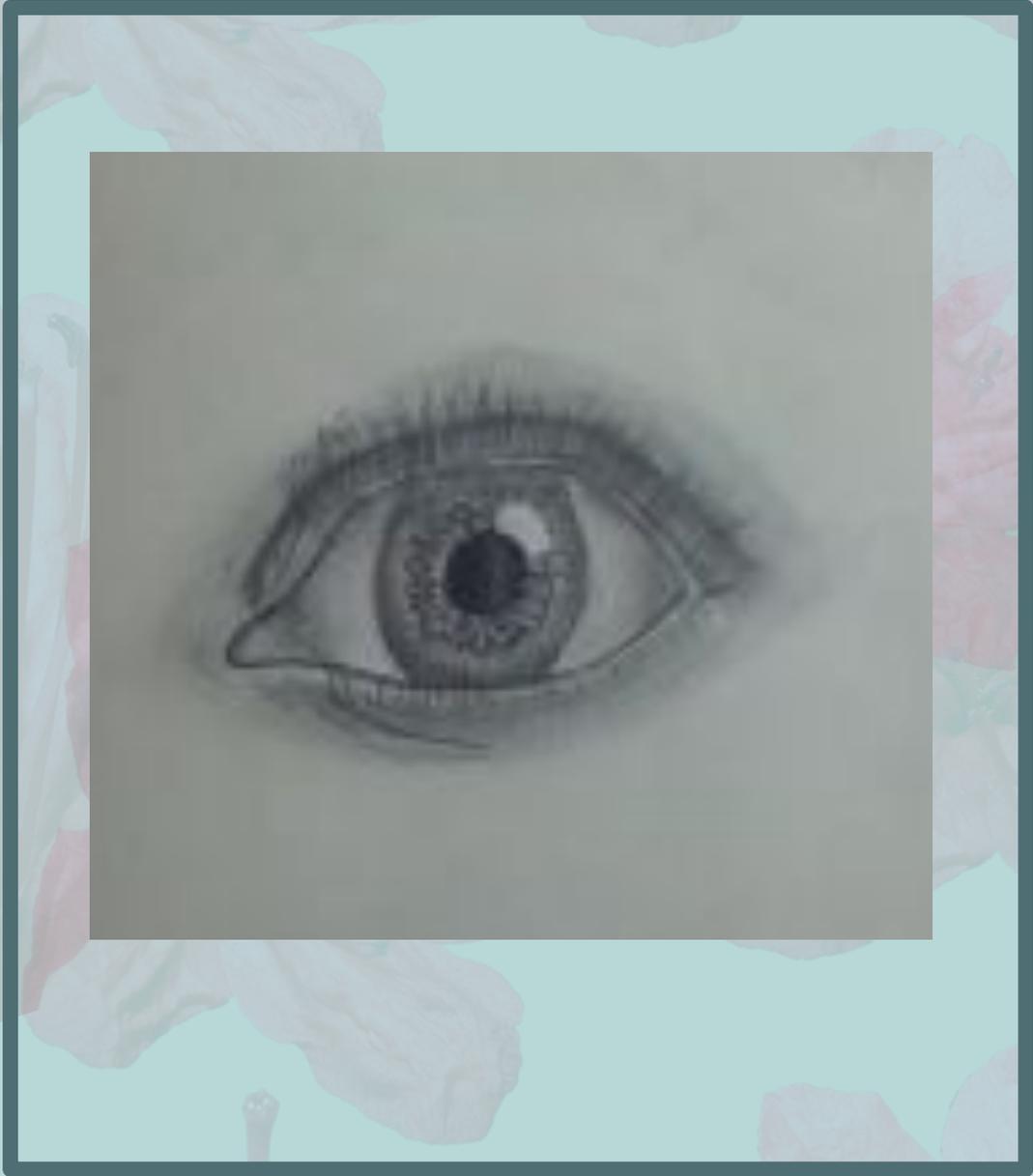


Kimberly Rincon and Original Artist

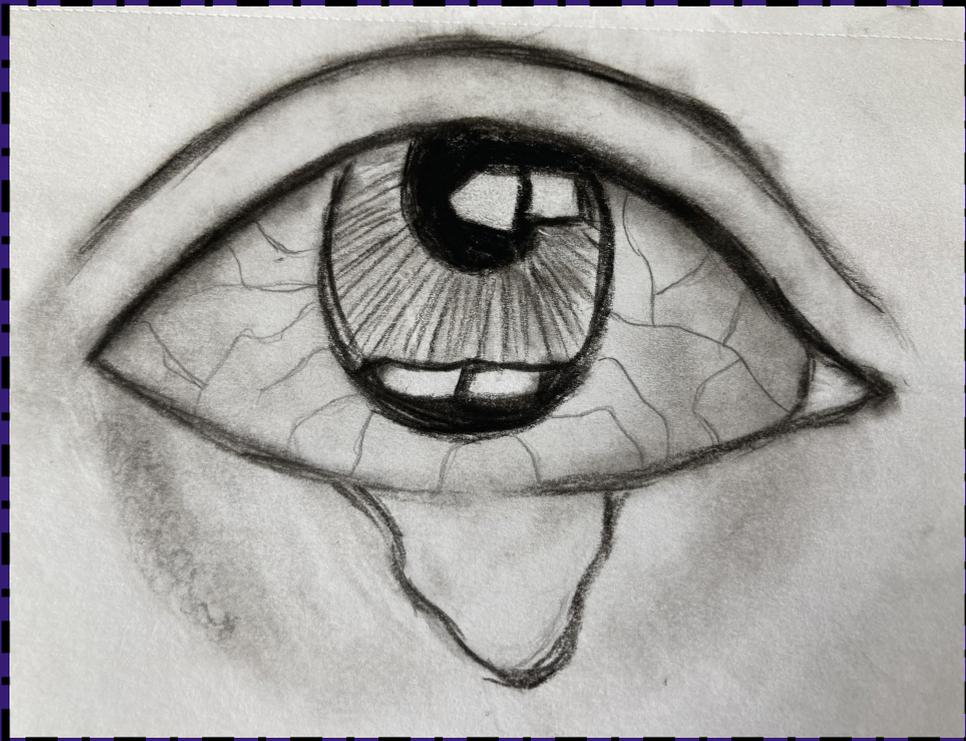
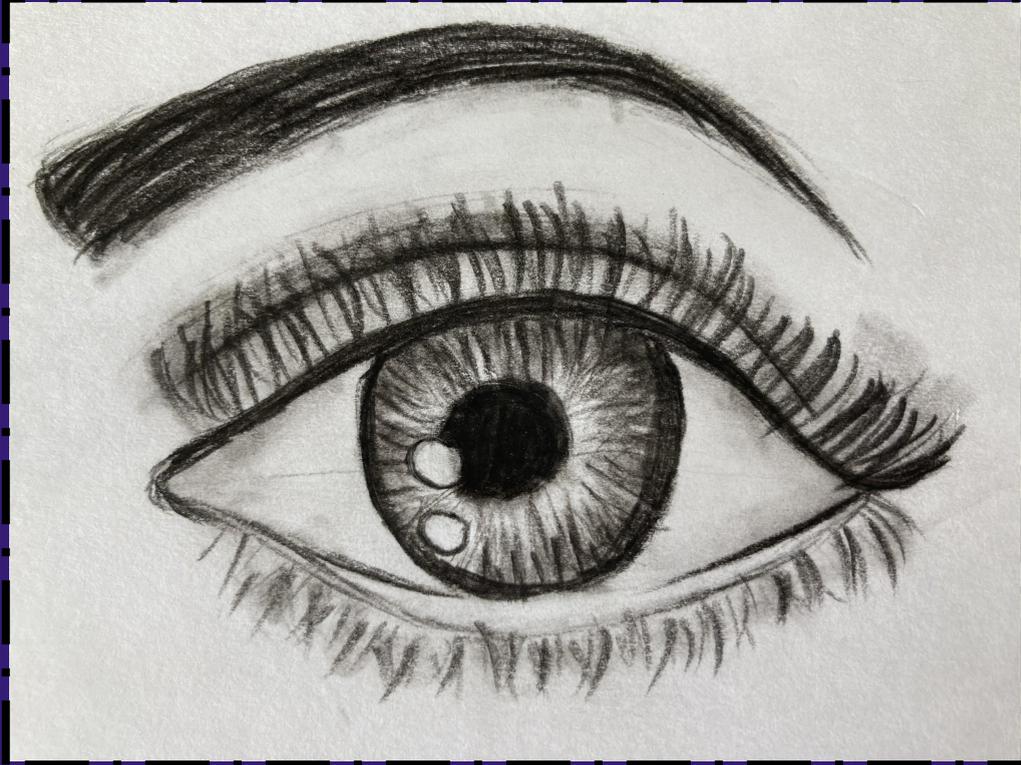


Sophia Dela Cruz

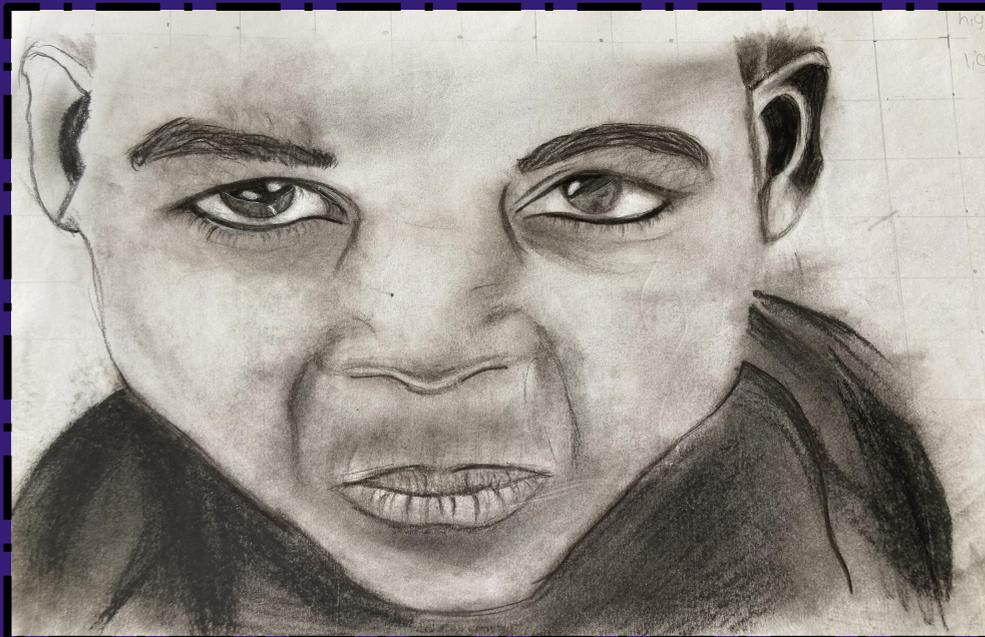
"Gary in the Forest"



Aarya Gedam



Tanvi
Agarwal

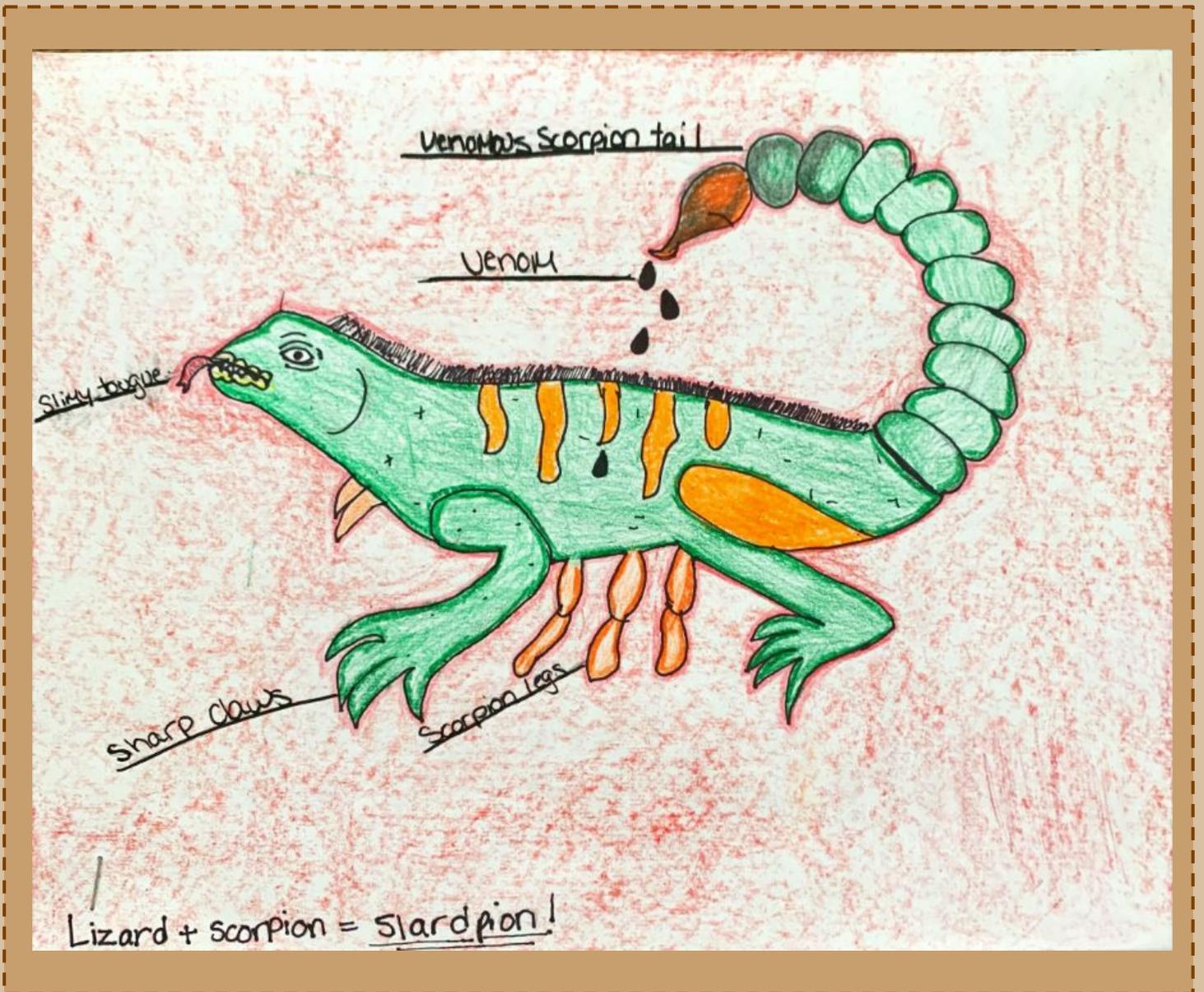




Myriam Andre



Sophia Dela Cruz



Julie - Victoria Alves
Slardpion
(lizard + scorpion)



Hannah Barsky

Camidow

(chameleon + black widow spider)

- Butterfly
- Bulldog Ant
- Cheetah



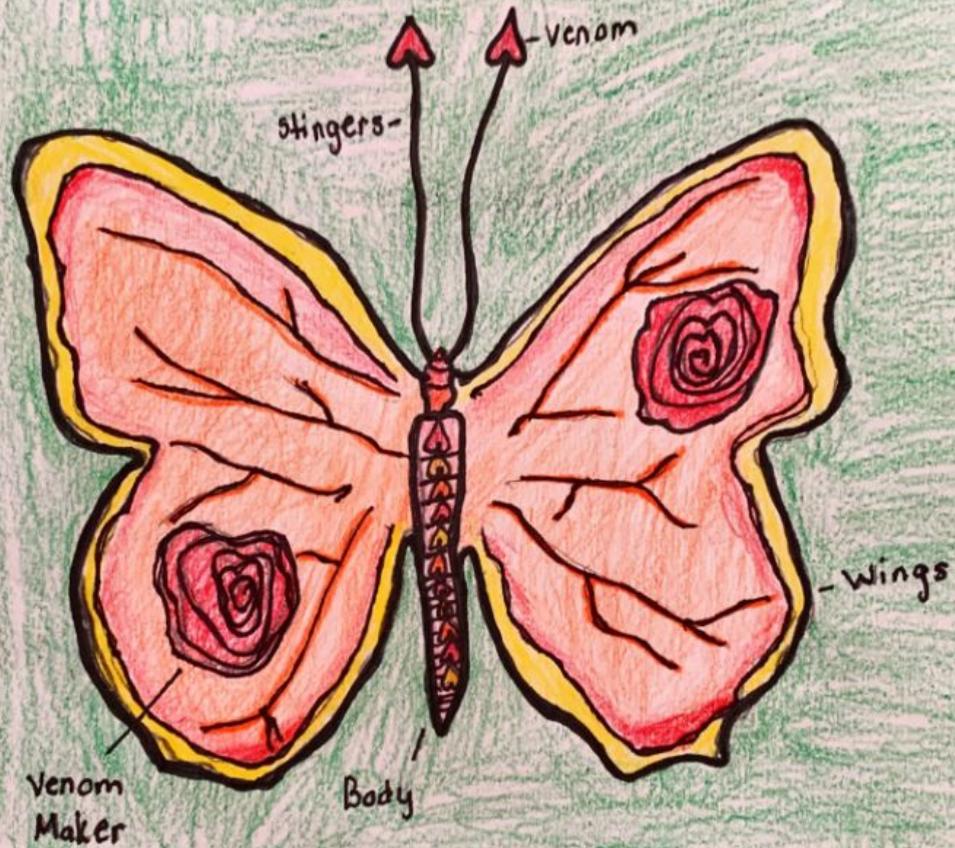
Bulltahnfly Ant

Vanessa Elliot

Bulltahnfly Ant

(butterfly + bulldog ant + cheetah)

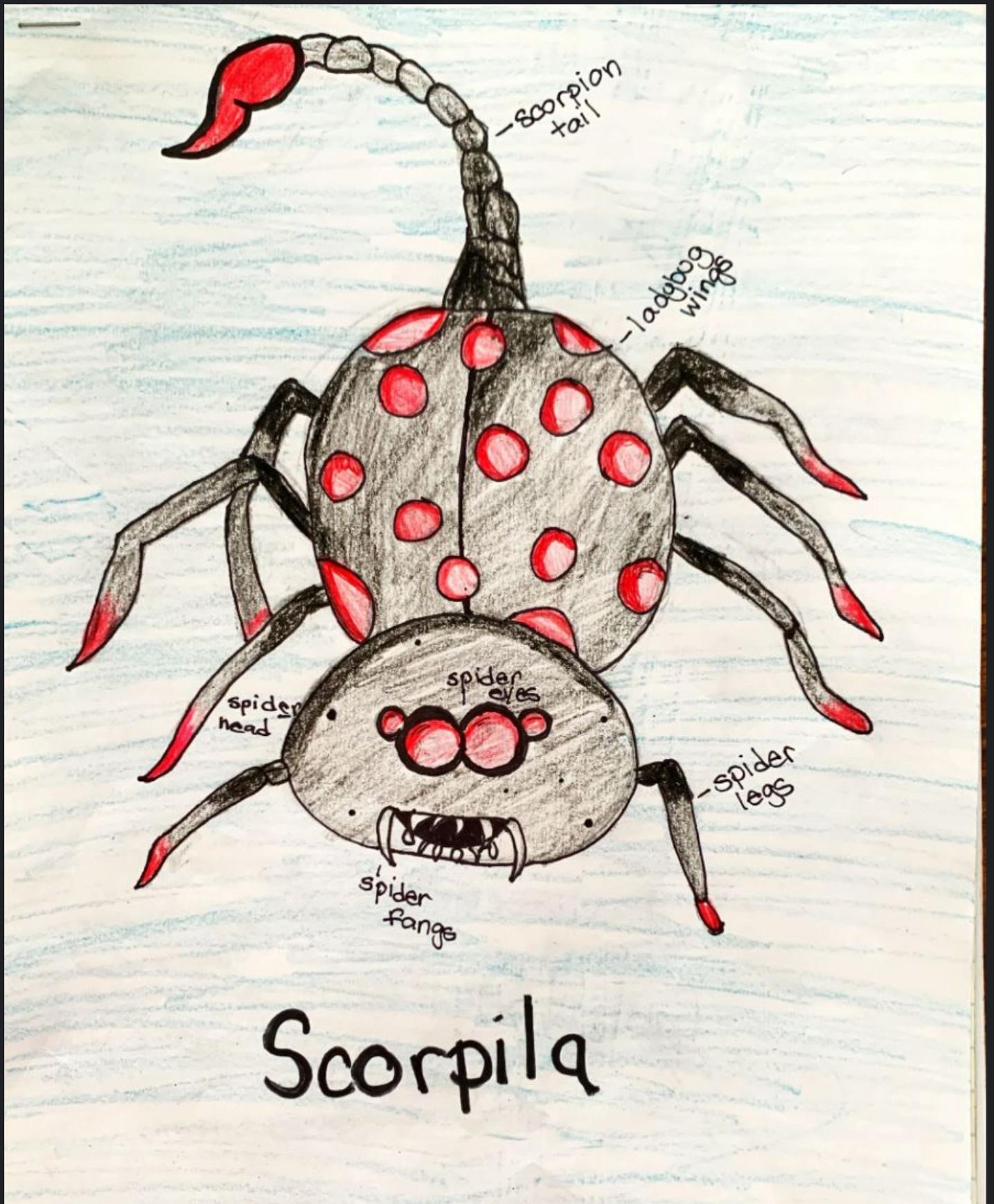
DRABULLY



DRAGONFLY + BUTTERFLY 

Lowry G.

Lowry Green
Drabully
(dragonfly + butterfly)



Scorpila

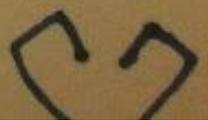
Gabriela Jimenez
Scorpila - Mutation
(spider + scorpion + ladybug)



Anime/Manga

Vanya Anand &
Samia Naveed

Aoi Chō



By: Cecilia Caruso

Vanya Anand



By: Vanya Anand

Is this all some kind
of sick game to you?

Of course not, I've thought
as much.

Well Naegi, seems you
and I are of the
same opinion.

How noble, a difficult
path, but noble.

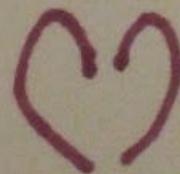
Have hope.

You're not off
the hook just
yet.



Ultimate
Detective

For Julian



By: Cecilia Caruso

*I'm in a field of dandelions
Wishing on every one
that you'll be mine*



Dandelions

By: Vanya Anand

Song by: Ruth B

Credits to original artist



Short Stories



Vanya Anand

Mustang Over the Years

By: Mustafa Amjad

Introduction

Ford's best invention. Well at the time. Now probably after the Ford GT of course. But hey, the most desirable muscle car of Ford, not the most desirable hypercar. *Anywho*, 1964 a legacy was born. Something we motorheads haven't forgotten, and we will never. That noise whilst shifting. That noise while rev bombing. It's just very pleasant and, in my opinion, the best pony car.

What made Ford make the Mustang?

So, what made Ford make this masterpiece, the answer is easy, not the most reasonable though. It was because they were going to go bankrupt and just overall ruined financially. They decided that if it had a nice body and noise and a good 0-60 (during that time the 0-60 was lower standards) it would get young male students to get it to attract women.

It makes somewhat sense, men would want to get popular and attract women, and a car (that at the time was considered as fast as a Bugatti Veyron) with so much HP and a v8 engine would definitely be a good attraction. I strongly agree with their reasoning.

First concept of the logo for
Mustang (1962)

Woah! 1962? Wasn't Mustang released in 1964? You might be thinking that, but they wouldn't make the logo *after* it was ready to be on the streets.

Plus, this was just their first *concept*. The logo was symbolic, it not only showed the speed of the flawless six inch legend, but also represented the U.S.A (United States of America). The logo was a galloping horse with stripes in 3 variegated colors. Red. White. Last, but not least, Blue. This, obviously, represents the colors of our glorious flag. The horse is way too self explanatory, it shows the speed of a horse. Counting how much Horsepower the 'Stang' has. They chose galloping horses, instead of calmly paced clickety-clack horses because a galloping horse has more speed will.

This, although, wasn't the finalized one as we know. It went through many years of changing, degrading, upgrading, polishing, coloring, and overall re-designs. If you've been living under a rock, I'll tell you the finalized logo (so far, that is), it's a silver horse, leaning on a 75 ish degree angle. I think all versions were very good, but I love the first gen the best.

MACH-E Inspiration

Ford's, well specifically Mustang's first electric car/Suburban Utility Vehicle (SUV).
How did Ford make this car?

We don't know exactly, but using statistics we can find out a big possible reason. What is a very reliable, good on gas, generic, and successful car company? Toyota! What is one of their big successes? The Prius. What does it rank from 2018 towards 2022? Averaging at 11th (8, 12, and 13 are the ranks I collected) and that's not even in just Toyota! You're probably wondering why this information is even relevant, well. This is how I think Ford Mustang got the idea, the Prius is hybrid and looks half sedan and half SUV. The Mustang is one of the most known in Ford, so they just slapped the two things together. It's a really nice combination.

The Mustang was a good seller,
Toyota's Prius was a good seller.
It's a no brainer to combine both.

MACH-E Features and attractions

What makes the mach-e
that good? For starters, it still
has a small detail that
attracts a lot of motorheads.
The taillight pattern. Now,
some easter eggs. Right under
the screen display, in the
center console, there's a flap,
right under it is the logo. The
logo matches the one on the
back.

You can't even close the door on your hand, this is because of modern technology that *Ford; Mustang* implemented into the MACH-E. The interior has a filter that filters out all particles less than 11/1000 width of the human hair. Lastly, on the electric motor, it says "Electric Ponies Live Here". This is a funny thing as Mustang changed the definition of 'Pony Cars'. I think the MACH-E has a lot of nice features and I love the easter egg(s).

Conclusion/Outroduction

From the 1962's logo concept to the now known 2019 ish logo and the 2021 logo.

I am still blown away by the fact that *Ford; Mustang* combined *Toyota; Prius* with it's best seller. I loved researching for the facts, as it was a big surprise. In retrospect, if I didn't decide to do a paragraph on this, I would have not looked at the MACH-E the same, when I seldomly saw it. In conclusion the Mustang, or more commonly known as the 'Stang', has evolved a lot over the years.

GLOSSARY

Rev Bombing - this is the act on a motor vehicle such as a coupe, sedan, or motorcycle of revving to max RPM's causing a very swifty rev

Motorheads - practically a car geek

Pony car - Pony cars are stylish, affordable, American cars that were generally built with mass production parts.

Hp - short term for "Horsepower" in what muscle cars' speed is commonly measured

SUV- Short term for Suburban Utility Vehicle, basically trucks and/or jeeps

Seldom- Rarely

... to negotiate with the suspects, there were too many armed **felons** in there with unarmed civilians. I doubt there were any **misdemeanants**, they wouldn't ruin their track record on this. I went back over to my vehicle, and called a phone that is in the building and I called in a sniper to set up on a nearby roof if things do go out of hand. "Hey man, I'm Corporal Michael De Santa, a negotiator with the CHP. Can we talk this out and end it harmlessly?" I say over the phone.

"Just leave me alone, I have no reason to live" he responds.

"Yes you do, if money is an issue we can sort that out?"

"I AM NOT HUSTLING ANY HARDER!" he slams the phone

When he slammed the phone we heard lots of noises inside, and we thought something happened. I ran to the **mobile command unit** (MCU) truck and called him from there. "Hey man, let's settle this. We'll give you money so name your price."

"I'm not going any lower than 60k for each of us and a safe train ride to Los Angeles International WITH NO ONE inside," he says sternly with no emotions.

"See, there we go. We can do that-" he slams the phone after we hear a gunshot. This was going to be hard, 60k each for 10 people is 600k. We decided to use fake money, and got a bus where we put about 5 trackers. We were able to fit 3 SWAT operatives in the cargo hatches. "Hey bro, we got your 600,000 dollars, and a safe bus. Before we give you the keys you gotta release the hostages."

“Why? So you can arrest me? This ain't my first rodeo fool. I'm keeping one hostage for collateral which will be released at the airport,” he says angrily over the phone, followed by 5 shots of gunfire. He comes out waving a fully auto glock in his left hand and AK47 in his right. “DO NOT COME ANY CLOSER OR I WILL LITERALLY SHOOT THEIR EYES OUT!” and then he pushes the hostages towards us and on the ground. “Anybody follows and I'll kill this hostage!” he screams and loads the hostage and his crew, and speeds away.

Little did he know, we had trackers on the bus, SWAT units hidden inside, and FBI HRT units to intercept them in the way. Quarter of an hour later, the FBI HRT staged their route and I was with them, and they finally stumbled in front of the FBI HRT.

“Click, click, click,” the cargo cabinets opened and the SWAT members got out. “Clack...BANG!!” The SWAT members threw a flashbang, got the hostage out of the bus and started yet another barricaded suspect.

”GET OUT WITH YOUR HANDS UP, YOU HAVE NO HOSTAGE ANYMORE, WE AREN'T AFRAID TO USE OUR GUNS!” Sergeant Gilbert Anderson yelled. Within seconds shots were fired, the driver (main suspect) fainted and still had his foot on the gas pedal. They drove into the river, and crashed. The bus caught on fire.

“GET OUT, YOU THE BUS IS ON FIRE YOU'LL ...

Glossary:

10-97: Police code for on-scene.

10-23: Also police code for on scene.

Seldom: Very rare

Felon: A person with a criminal record, specifically Felonies.

Misdemeanants: A person with a criminal record, specifically misdemeanors.

Mobile Command Unit: Abbreviated as MCU, this is a truck that is basically a police station on wheels.

FBI HRT: Stands for Federal Bureau of Investigation; Hostage Retrieval/Response Team. Which is one of the most strategic and tactical division in the FBI which is tasked with, hence the name, retrieving hostages safely.

Flashbang: A device used by tactical peace officers to neutralize a suspect without bodily or fatal injuries. It has a pin mechanism like a hand grenade but only it's non-lethal and it makes you ears ring and your eyes go blind for a few seconds. These are mostly used in hostage situations, barricaded suspects, kidnapping, active shooter, terrorist attacks, and robberies.

Trooper 10-41 Warrant Division

Sarge

By: Mustafa M. Amjad

“Alright, everyone accounted for?” I asked everyone as I was going to brief them. “Okay, so. We have Drew Martin charged with resisting arrest, and possession of an illegal firearm. I’m assigning 1-Adam-5, 2-Lincoln-9, 5-Adam-9, 2-Lincoln 3, and the rookies to Drew. You’re moving in with SWAT team alpha. Darrell Taylor will be assigned to all the other units. You will move in with SWAT team Bravo. Darrell is wanted for two counts of reckless driving, one count of evasion, three counts of assault of a L.E.O. Possibly armed, proceed with caution. I’ll move in with you guys, for Darrell.”

I was briefing the S.W.A.T team and all the warrant units. I had gotten some help with LAPD’s regular patrol units to help us as well.

It was mostly a quiet day. We had no signs of the subject. “I have eyes on

Darrell, heading westbound towards the Grand Senora Desert.” Trooper Kaloutz said over the radio. “All units respond code 3!” I am the Sergeant of the CHP:WD (California Highway Patrol: Warrant Division), so I was leading this. I rushed over but they lost him. We chased them down but had no chance. “Red Corvette C8, times one male, the suspect Darrell. License Plate: Alpha, Quebec, Yankee, Uniform, 98, Charlie.” Trooper Kaloutz proceeded to give the car description. We finally got a description of the car.

“Advise all units, multiple ALPRs on U.S 101 detected ...

... the license plate number: Alpha, Quebec, Yankee, Uniform, 98.” Dispatch sent an alert to all units on the case. We rushed over

“All units move in, I need SWAT team bravo, Detectives, and all Warrant Division agents that are available there CODE 3!” I announced over the radio, tac 1 channel. We rushed over and within two minutes, U.S 101 was flooded with bearcats, unmarked tahoes and suburbans driven by detectives, and Chevrolet express warrant agent cars, LAPD Air 1, and CHP Air 4.

“GET OUT OF THE CAR, DARELL. GET OUT FACING AWAY, COMPLY WITH THE ORDERS.” Senior Aircraft Specialist Rosa said on the CHP Air 4 speaker. He threw a smoke bomb to block our visual on him. “Suspect deploying some sort of gas bombs, possibly toxic. LFA?” SAS Rosa said on the radio. LFA stands for lethal forces authorized. This means we can use lethal forces such as bullets, tear gas, PIT maneuvers, etc.

“CHP 4, LFA on this vehicle. I repeat, LFA confirmed, suspect is endangering officers’ lives,” Dispatch told us. 2-Adam-21 went for shooting out the tire. The driver was, obviously, driving. Her partner unracked the shotgun and shot out the rear passenger side tire. The suspects’ car suddenly lost control and drove into the river. “All units be advised, the suspect drove into the river, he will jump out, be careful if he is armed.” Dispatch sent an alert to all units.

I yelled. “Driver, get out of the car and face away with your hands visible. I don’t give a care in the world if you’ll be covered in water. Get out.” The suspect ran the other ...

...direction, armed with a knife. "Dispatch show me on a foot 10-80. Suspect is armed with a knife, have EMS on standby for incoming GSW or taser shots. Heading westbound towards strawberry," I told dispatch. The suspect kept going and going, repeatedly looking back.

"You do anything to me, and I'MA STAB YOU!" The suspect threatened. "I'm serious, just leave me alone and no one will be hurt."

"We're beyond that point sir, just stop before I will have to shoot you. You have a knife and you're waving it around so that gives me legal right to shoot you," I made him aware. He didn't stop so I reached for my taser and pulled it out of the holster and pointed it at him. "TASER, TASER, TASER! TASER DEPLOYING!" I yelled before I tased the subject, it's department policy so officers know it's not gun shots because it sounds like a fire arm. "Taser Deployed, dispatch get LAFD here, flipped car, smoke coming out. Red Corvette C8, times one male, the suspect Darrell. License Plate: Alpha, Quebec, Yankee, Uniform, 98, Charlie. Times one suspect on the ground with taser needles, send 32's," I told and requested to dispatch. The suspect finally stopped moving around, a K-9 unit with LAPD came, and some other CHP:WD Units.

"If you move the K-9 will bite you, do not move!" Corporal Johanson with the LAPD K-9 unit said. The suspect was later escorted to the hospital for his trauma and other injuries that occurred in his car. Such as when his head hit the steering wheel very hard, and his twisted ankle. He was hospitalized for a couple months for surgery and then went to the I.C.U. He just got discharged and is now in the county Jail (Blaine County). That was my shift.

Gloss

LEO~This stands for Law Enforcement Officer, this includes county sheriffs, metro/city police, and state police officers.

Code 3~A police response code, code 3 means sirens and lights.

Unmarked~This is like undercover police cars, but it has a rambar and/or spotlights

10-80~Police code for Pursuit

GSW~Stands for 'Gunshot Wound'

I.C.U~Stands for 'Intensive Care Unit' which is a place in the hospital where people who are at great risk of dying stay, rather than regular rooms.

Trooper 10-41: Special Weapons and Tactics

By: Mustafa M. Amjad

“Rrrrrringg!” My work phone rang whilst I sat at the CHP SWAT office doing paperwork. “Hello, Sergeant Terance Calvin Carter, CHP SWAT. How may I help you?” I ask over the phone to the unknown caller.

“I wish to be anonymous but I know where Kermit Breckinridge may be.” The woman states. “If I tell you...I’ll be anonymous right? I don’t want to be put in danger with him.”

“Of course ma’am, just so you know you are being recorded on this phone as testimony and warrant, Kermit won’t find out it was you.” I said and she said that’s fine. “Are you sure it was him? What did he look like? Did he do/say anything to you? Can you tell us where he is?” I ask.

“Freehand Los Angeles, that’s the hotel he is at. He’s staying there in room 560, floor 3. The hotel is very busy right now, you may need to evacuate it. I work there and I saw him check in a little bit ago---Darn it! I said where I work, now you’ll tell him who did it.” She sobbed.

“Miss, do not worry we will not. Thank you for your help.” I say while quickly jotting down the area. “Detective Arnold. Arnold Blakely, get a warrant on Freehand Los Angeles hotel, alleged Kermit Brekinridge is there, I’ll send you the testimony from a worker there via email.” I say over the radio while sending an alert to my whole SWAT crew and I send the detective the voice of the worker. Got my gear on. I put on my Bullet Proof Vest, Taser and holster, Side Firearm and holster, got my ...

... MP5, rappel gear, helmet, boots, and my helicopter gear. I ran to Captain De Forrest Downer (not SWAT captain, just regular CHP patrol division captain). "Sir I think we might know where Kermit Breckinridge is...we got a call. We even have a warrant, I'm going to go with my crew with the chopper and land on the top of the hotel and get ready to rappel down if we can't get him to surrender. Can you send units there, he's very dangerous, we'll need half the department. We'll also need a ground SWAT team." I told him.

The helicopter whirs. We finally arrive on scene and land on the top. "Dispatch upgrade all c1 units to c2h and c3." I say over the radio. I got my MP5 and set up a rappel line, and slung my mp5 and window breaker tool. "Give me the signal to get my team in there when needed. Corporal Jackson, I know this is your first time leading your own team but you got it. If negotiation goes sideways then get in there, deploy a flashbang from a crack in the door, we'll swoop in, break the glass, grab the hostages, and rappel down to the ambulance to treat the victims. Do not shoot until the hostages are being brought down. We don't want to endanger them." I say to Corporal J. over the radio. I got the small window breaker tool and sling it then I put my MP5 sling back in the chopper. Jackson signaled to me that they were going in. "Green light, green light. Go, go, go, go!" I yell. We rappelled down. "SMASH!" The window cracked open as we broke in. About 5 chemicals were deployed by both my team and Jackson's. 2 flashbangs in a room, 2 tear gasses in the lobby, and one smoke bomb on the stairs. "Quick, come here. We got you guys, we are with the CHP SWAT team." I whispered. ...

... We got all of them out and they jumped onto the safe mat below.

“GET DOWN, CHP. IF YOU ARE IN HERE MAKE YOURSELF KNOWN!” One of the rookies declares, followed by gunshots. 1 suspect pronounced dead on scene. 3 apprehended. Another one fled. His team cleared the building while my team brought down the hostages to the ambulances. It was all good until- “BOOM! KAPOW!” a Mercedes-Benz G Wagon, black, was seen with two passengers shooting with AK-47s, yelling “You can’t catch me, I’m the gingerbread man!”

To be continued...

Trooper 10-41: K9 Handler

By: Mustafa M. Amjad

Atlast, it was 5:30. I got my dog some food and water, then outside for a quick job before my shift. At 6:00 I headed into my unmarked FPIS that I use to get from and to work. I have it so in case I encounter something on the way. I was at my office at 6:25, got my vest, holster, and duty belt then headed to the briefing room.

“Detectives..and any other unit working with this case such as SWAT and k-9 units,” Sergeant Roberts said in a gentle tone. “We have been alerted that Jason Alberto Maverick is back on the streets. You all know he has been issued a warrant from Nevada State Patrol after he led them on a chase across our border. His charges are the following: Kidnapping, Flight from a Police Officer, And Resisting Arrest. He is a convicted felon and the F.B.I has alerted us with tips citizens gave who know his whereabouts. He’s 5 foot 8, white male, black hair and a medium mustache with a beard.” We were being briefed on a suspect that is high risk and is on the loose.

Speeding up a bit after the briefing. County Dispatch had received a 911 call allegedly saying Jason A. Maverick was seen near Strawberry Ave, just near the Kids’ school. Two sheriff deputies were sent racing to the scene, they said they lost sight of them. LAPD Helicopter 51 was in the air searching for him. He reportedly had a 90’s red Mustang. We waited but still couldn’t find him. “Vroooooooooooooom” a mustang hauled through the intersection, it was red and looked a bit older than given description. Nonetheless, I pulled him over and issued a Code 5.

“Code 5,” I alerted Central Dispatch on the radio. “Red Mustang, possibly reported Jason A. Maverick. Roll me some 10-32’s.” Code 5 is an HRS (High Risk Stop) which is issued when someone possibly with a warrant is pulled over. 10-32 means backup-required. I told them my location and the street was flooded with LAPD and BCSO taurus’s, crown victorias, and explorers. I was the only CHP unit on-scene, I was taking s/c (scene Command) until S.W.A.T or S.E.R.T showed up. BCSO SWAT rolled in with two tahoes and one bearcat. A second CHP unit came and set spikes in front of the vehicle. The car was blocked in completely.

“Driver! Take the keys out and throw them out of the window!” I instructed him per regular procedures to insure officer(s) safety and subject/civilians. “Come out of the car and face the other way with your hands VISIBLE. Do it now! Pull your shirt up and slowly do a 360 degree turn. Do it now! Come back to the sight of my voice!” I directed him back and got him to the license plate. My dog barked in temptation to bite the suspect, which I wasn’t going to deploy unless the subject isn’t cooperative. I indicated to the next officer (2:1) to take charge from there. We all gave him cover, in case he was the suspect so we could arrest.

“Roll onto your stomach with your hands spread out” Deputy McKenzie said. “Cover me!” He turned to us to warn us. He walked up to him, holstered his department issued firearm, and cuffed him. “There’s a subject in the car, moving around..” Deputy McKenzie said while cuffing a man. “If there’s anybody in the car, make yourself known!” No one walked out.

He started cuffing him and frisking him-but then was when all the craze broke loose. The white male that we saw inside jumped out brandishing a long sword and stumbling. Deputy McKenzie dragged the male he was cuffing and got behind the B.E.A.R.C.A.T to handle the suspect (such as frisking him, telling him his charges, and just keeping him safe from the other subject).

“DROP THE WEAPON, THIS IS THE BLAINE COUNTY SHERIFF OFFICE’S SWAT TEAM! DROP THE SWORD NOW” Lieutenant Rosa commanded, with the BCSO:SWAT. “IF YOU DO NOT DROP IT YOU MAY GET SHOT, DROP THE WEAPON. NOW!” But he didn’t listen. He got into the mustang and ran off. I called in a 10-80 (Pursuit) and got another helicopter, BCSO:SWAT and LAPD:SWAT rushed behind it, I jumped in my car, unlocked the rifle so I can take it out if needed and pursued the vehicle.

“Can we get spikes set up on strawberry and martin please,” I called over the radio, a unit responded to the call and got ready to set them. We chased it and guided it to there, but the spikes were deployed too late to get his tires, “Spike strip unsuccessful, he’s driving erratically can I get permissions for a P.I.T?” I asked over the radio. P.I.T stands for “Precision Immobilization Tactic, and is a type of way to get a car off the road in a pursuit. It involves you slamming your front right part of the bumper on their rear left part (or the other side). My Lieutenant gave me permission so I got ready to do...both mentally and physically.

“Going for a P.I.T, move to the side,” I warned other units via radio and blipping my priority siren. I sped up and get my front bumper parallel to right behind his tire and turned towards the right. His car spun out and crashed on I-94. The car flipped over on its side, the glass shattered, gas was leaking, and the suspect was trapped. “P.I.T success, Alpha side glass shattered, gas leaking and surrounding the car. Close I-94 and roll L.A.F.D to my scene, dispatch.” I say on the radio.

Within minutes the whole interstate is closed, L.A.F.D’s sirens are blaring and they’re rushing to the scene. The suspect ditched the car, somehow, and ran on foot. “Suspect on foot, running westbound” I alerted all units and get Matt the k-9 out of the car. “Voraus! Voraus!” (pronounced for-ow-zz)gave him the command to bite him. He chased the suspect and bit him.

“THE K-9 WILL BITE, HANDS UP NOW!” my Lieutenant (Jackson), who was on-scene, warned the suspect. He resisted and didn’t comply, so we let the K-9 bite him. “Platz. Platz. Platz!” my Lt. called, this translated to “down”. He came back, and we got him in cuffs. “You’ll be going downtown now bud,”

After a long police report on it, I finally was back on the streets for another 5 hours. The journey continued. I got a call for a bomb threat on Grove Street, a rural area with lots and lots of gangs. I told them I'd be enroute, so I jumped out of the car. Put on my bulletproof vest with my m4a1 sling, and got back in the car. I got back in and headed to Grove Street, LAPD:SWAT and FBI:BS was there too. (Federal Bureau of Investigation: Bomb Squad, and Los Angeles Police Department: Special Weapons And Tactics.) I heard in the near distance, the Federal Siren AKA Q2B siren of the B.E.A.R.C.A.T from FBI and LAPD. When I first arrived on-scene it looked as if there was an active shoot out, with the FBI, Gang units, and SWAT personnel. "Show me 10-23," I called on the radio. Marking myself on-scene.

The gang units had heavy rifles slinged on, just a bit heavier and better than the one I had on me. FBI Bomb Squad came in fully suited with bomb suits, SWAT had a sniper set up on a helicopter high up in the air, and regular BCSO/LAPD was setting a perimeter. I took out Matt and we searched for bombs. We had some, what appeared to be dressed as, gang members walking around. We didn't have much evidence on them so we let them be, and Matt looked for the bombs. "Matt **alerted** on a bomb. I repeat, we have a bomb!" I told the bomb squad.

“You need to leave, we found a bomb on this street. We need you to evacuate,” Detective Rodriguez told the residents of the house that are noncompliant. They ignored him and went back in. “I mean it, NOW. Get out.” He didn’t listen, I took out my taser, pointed it at the ground inches in front of his feet while telling him he has to leave, no questions asked. He then left..but it was too late. We heard explosions, the bomb detonated earlier than predicted. We all ran back before the second explosion. “Peeeeeeeeeeeeehhhh” I pressed my panic button. No serious/fatal injuries occurred. And that was my last call of that shift, we’ll see what we get in the next shift.

Shining Star.
BY: Aaradhyaa
Vats

We were climbing the mountain, specifically Mount Tam. The three of us, Jason, Leo, and me. It was cold and icy. Jason and Leo were NOT wearing the best clothes for cold conditions. Jason was wearing a sweatshirt and jeans. Leo had jeans and a small hoodless coat. I on the other hand was wearing a silver camo Parka and boots with waterproof pants. Thank God I had brought along 2 extra parkas. Now they too were wearing parkas. Our hair was not any better. Jason's brown hair was powdered with snow. Leo had some ice stuck in his black curly hair. There was snow on my red hair too. My face was flushed. We had come here looking for a beacon. It was a legendary beacon. It was guarded by a powerful trap. We trudged through the snow. I had gone on some forced marches up mountains in school. But that didn't help with the snow. We had exactly... 24 hours to get the beacon. I was tired. My sweat was turning to ice. Pathetic.

“How much farther?” I called to Jason.

“Well I figured out that GPS does NOT work in mountains.” He called back.

“Well that's a shocker.” I muttered.

“Enough with the sarcasm, Hazel.” Leo sighed.

“ Me? Sarcasm? Take that back, Leo. Take it back right now!” I yelled.

“ Guys... stop fighting.” Jason said.

“ Zip it, Jason.” Leo said.

“ You zip it.”

“GUYS!” I screamed.

“Back out. Hazel.” They both yelled.

They seemed to realize that they were bickering over something that was useless. They calmed down a bit.

“Guys.. We need to go.” I said. I didn’t want to stop their so - called “Bonding Bromance” but I was freezing.

We continued uphill. Finally after what seemed like 5 hours we found the trap.

“Can we deactivate it?” I asked Leo.

He nodded his head and said, “ Yeah but I gotta do it. And anyone within 10 feet would... die.” He locked eyes with Jason and an understanding passed through them. Then the truth hit me like cold water. I stared at Leo and tried to talk him out of it. But I understood that no one could talk him out of it. Jason bent to tie a rope. I couldn’t read Leo’s face but I knew him well enough to read his emotions.

He was deeply upset but he knew his job. Jason stood up. Leo then goes to work on deactivating the trap. He stood up and grasped Jason's hand and shook it. He gave me a hug and then backed up.

“Go “ he said.

Jason wrapped his arm around my waist and jumped. There was an explosion. As Jason and I fell I struggled against him and swore. I cried Leo's name. When we landed. Hot pain rushed up my ankle. I had definitely broken it. But I limped to the beacon that had fallen after us. Leo would be considered a hero forever. I look up to the stars and saw words on the beacon.

Remember that I love you guys.

-Leo.

I looked up at the stars and whispered, “Live forever in the stars, my friend.”

The Coffee Couple



laurencrowe88/ Instagram

Tamara
Turner

“Oh my god-! You gotta be kidding me,”

“I’m telling you, that’s exactly what she said!”

The two couples’ laughter filled the entire coffee shop. Those bright smiles as they drank the coffees from their white teacups, one with cream and one without cream. They ordered that every time they’re on their little dates. I stood behind the cashier, staring at what I hoped to be me and someone I loved one day. But I knew very well that wouldn’t be me, not even when I’m dead. The American woman, slim and has a flat stomach. You can tell she doesn’t eat that much. The cleanest skin you can have for a girl with only tiny seed pepper-like freckles. She had her straight dirty blond hair into a ponytail, which really made her hair jump every time she laughs. Sam Collins couldn’t hold in another laugh. You can tell by the little tears filling up in her baby blue eyes. Instead, she smiled through her cup as she took another sip. The man, Jack Mills, well build, muscular at the arms. He probably has a six-pack.

To Be Continued

Tamara Turner

He's tall, me, and he could be a twin. Plus, that midnight black crew cut hair. I'm shocked he can rock on such a hairstyle. Not even I could do that. I watched them giggling, placing their hands on each other's hands, looking into each other's lovely eyes. Standing behind this counter sometimes makes me sick a bit, but at This isn't the first time they have been here. All lovey-dovey at the same table, and next to the large square window beside them. From where they were sitting, they could see the entire street covered with brown streetlights. You probably find it in those romantic movies. I hate it.

The first time, 'The Coffee Couple', that's what I and the rest of the staff called them, came here. It was one of those warm winter mornings, the Third of December. I was serving this one table, a woman and what looked like a very young baby, maybe? 7 months? Couldn't tell at the moment. The lady looked like she was in her 20s, kinda young to have a baby, if I would say. Poor woman, she looked tired. I was writing her order of strong black coffee with almond milk. Until I heard the bell rang, the coffee shop turned from comfy and warm to stressful and tired.

When Sam Collins walked through the door with her big black school bag in one hand, and her computer in another. She crashed into a table close to the door with a sigh of relief, sliding into the red chair. She looked like a mess in her baggy clothes and barely fixed hair. I'm guessing she didn't brush it this morning. She took out her phone from her sweatpants as her ringtone got louder, not fixing her position in the chair.

"Yeah, I'm in this coffee spot-" She got cut off from the person she was talking to on the other side. A few seconds went back in silence, and she replied, "Okay, thanks, baby. Again, this project is going to kill me," she said, holding the words *kill me* longer than she needed to. She hung up, placing the phone downwards on the table. Her head was laying right next to her phone. Both were probably low on energy.

Tamara
Turner

Seen

by: Aaradhya Vats

Knock! Knock! I sat on my couch unconcerned. The girl always leaves.

Knock! Knock! The girl has catlike movements. She has blonde hair. I suppose it's rude to ignore her like this but the girl wants something from me that I don't have: a cliché. Knock! I realized that I read an entire paragraph without absorbing it. Irritated, I flick back the page.

KNOCK! KNOCK!

I slammed down my book. Catgirl wants cliché? Well. Instead she'll get a mean lady. I open the door and scowl at her expecting her to back off. She came in and settled herself on the couch. (Did I mention she was catlike?) She took off her black backpack. Then her mother called, "Cecilia! I can't see you!"

Then Catgirl said, "I don't need to be seen, mother!"

"What do you mean you don't need to be seen? You are nowhere near old enough for that luxury ." I snapped.

;

I pulled open the door for her mother to see inside. I expected her to say, "You come back this instant, Catgirl" But instead she just nodded and went back in. What did she think I was? A babysitter? I looked back to see Catgirl look at me intently and curiously. I sat down and she said, "I would like to interview you."

"Fine, proceed" I said.

"What was your identity before the war?" She pounced.

"What war?"

"I think you know." She purred. She pulled out a book: *Spies in common sight: world war two*. I stared at her and laughed, doubling over. Then straightened and said, "I was a baby during world war 2! How old do you think I am!"

She opened her mouth to speak but I was on a roll, "And before you go on your next 'case' do some research!" Her eyes filled but she held them back. She gathered her stuff. I stopped laughing and said, "Ok. I'm sorry I laughed."

"Whatever" She muttered

We sat in silence.

This Halloween

Tamara
Turner

The only thing I can remember was getting ready to go to see my dad like I do every Halloween. I can hear children screaming cheerful treats or tricks, and doorbells ringing from miles to come. But the oddest thing about this is that I never heard our doorbells ever ring, not even once. Just nothing, not even my mom, who was supposed to come with me to see my father. I didn't hear. So I carefully tipped down the stairs, not trying to make any sound. Only hearing the stairs cracked like the bones in my body. I only saw my step dad on the couch through the railing of the staircase. I asked him where mom was cause she didn't come yet, and he didn't seem to care. He didn't even look at me like he always does. Couldn't care about me. So I just grabbed the flowers I had for my father and went outside.

As I stepped out, the rain dropped on my black hoodie and splashed me in the face, and the rest of the kids who were trick or treating that night already cleared the streets. Leaving just me and the streetlights shining brighter than the stars. *He always loved the stars.* But even though the night is cold and dark, with a smell of last year's candy in the air. I kept the flowers close to me as the wind blew harder and harder, strolling to my dad's grave. The gates rattle and creak at me, moving them from their slumber, stepping on the wet grass as the water sucks into my shoes and socks. I placed the chrysanthemums on his grave. "*Richard James, a good Father, Brother, Husband.*" The raindrop that landed on the petals made them shine in a way in the night. "*Look at you, kiddo! My shining star,*" I couldn't tell because I felt the tears were coming from the chilly rain, or maybe my eyes. I stood there, letting the hard wind hit my back, pushing deeper into my past. Of him. Of us. Together. Staring at the many dead flowers I have bought before, each year.

Many of them were chrysanthemums. He loved those. As the rain continued to soak my body, from my shoes to my hoodie. I said in my head to him, “

“I’m sorry.”

Chrysanthemums - The Flower of Death

Tamara
Turner

MY STRANGE BIRTHDAY

By: Aaradhyaa Vats

It was my birthday. My mom made me chocolate cake. Well actually it was for me, Mike, Ish, Zoey, and Tim.

They were coming into my room with cake. I have red hair, grayish eyes, and oval glasses. I blew out the candle wishing, I hope everyone was well.

I felt a pulling sensation in my gut. Then it was released. Everyone clapped. I grinned.

Dad came over and said, "Happy birthday, Kelly!"

I laughed and said, "Hey dad!"

Then Mike came over and said, "Hey Kelly! You're 13 now!"

"Yeah I can't believe it!"

Soon it was night and had everyone left. Before I knew it I heard Mom and Dad arguing in the kitchen.

"I can't believe you said that you said that! We are bankrupt." Mom yelled.

"Honey, you know that I didn't say that on purpose. Things just got out of hand. Stop blaming me!"

"Oh yeah. You are just cracking under emotionally challenged pressure."

"Me? Pressure? Yeah right!" Dad yelled.

"Please. You don't need to lie. You are lying to me and Kelly."

"Leave Kelly out of this."

I walked out the room and walked into the kitchen. They were so into arguing they didn't even notice me. Then I yelled, "STOP ARGUING! Please! You two are giving me a headache. If you want to argue, argue like civilized human beings."

Mom and Dad were staring at me in shock.

I walked into their room and saw something on their nightstand. It said.... No. Way. It said: **DIVORCE STATEMENT.**

I stomped into the kitchen and shoved the paper in their face and shrieked, "WOULD YOU CARE TO EXPLAIN WHAT THIS IS?"

I tore the paper in half, cut it with scissors, threw it on the floor, stomped on it, and jumped on it. I turned on my heels and went to my brother's room. He was five years older than me. He had the flu for a few days, and was in his bed, asleep. I sat at the edge of his bed. I stared at him. Patted his head and left the room. I decided to go to Ish's house.

When I got there, I knocked on the door and Ish's mom, Mrs. Patel, opened the door. I went up the stairs and opened her door and walked into Ish's room. I had to work on the yearbook with her. She hated being in front of people. Then suddenly ... something went wrong. I accidentally edited the yearbook and couldn't undo it.

"Oh my gosh! Kelly! What did you do?!" Ish said.

"I don't know! I wouldn't-"

"Oh please!"

"It's all because of that stupid app you gave me."

"You were excited!"

"You're just jealous that I'm perfect. SO what if I want to be the best."

"You're obsessed with being the best! It's weird Kelly!"

"Says the girl who's antisocial," I shot back.

"And what's worse than being antisocial?!" she said sarcastically.

"In a society? Nothing!" I yelled, "You can work on the yearbook yourself!"

I stormed out. I heard her yell, "Well I'm glad we can agree on that!"

I rolled my eyes. I stormed home and ran to my room. Great. Mom and Dad are arguing again. My day absolutely cannot get worse. And the next thing I knew, Mom was shaking me awake.

When did I fall asleep? Mom said that Ish had come over. Ish? No way I'm talking to her! But I opened the door.

"I'm soooo sorry! I wasn't thinking!" she blurted out.

I couldn't stand seeing her upset so I forgave her.

"SO are you still angry?" she said.

"Yes." I said.

She turned pale.

"I'm furious, but I forgive you." I smirked. She sighed with relief.

A few days later Mom and Dad made up and my brother got better! I'm glad my wish came true.

JDM Car Trip

Part 1

(We didn't rob nun')

Mustafa Amjad

“Vvvvvuuuuuur Com” my friend, Han, passed me in his MX5. I raced across a couple Hondas, Toyota’s, Mazda’s, and what appeared to be a couple Fords and went past all them in my RX7. I dodge all the cars, swerving left to right, as if I was doing a crossover in basketball. I suspected the first few Ford’s were undercover officers. But they didn’t have government official type plates. Then Smit caught up to me in his Nismo. Anthony caught up in his Skyline. The others were still behind. We were going to Utah by car to get some pictures then head to Japan via airplane. It sounds crazy, but it’s Summer and we want to enjoy it, plus, after Summer I was going to county sheriff academy and a couple of my friends were going to the Carribeans for med school. The other bunch were going for content creators, lawyers, or engineering/car mechanics. Meaning, after this Summer we’d be mad busy, so we’ll seldom have trips. We were all in our JDM’s, ofcourse.

“Hisss..guys there’s...hisss- lot of...hisss” Han said with the walkie talkie said with lots of static. We asked him to repeat it. “Cops. Lots and lots of them on the highway, over.” He finally said with no radio static noises. “Be careful, I got pulled over by a trooper, and Nile is getting tailgated by another...And he just got lit up”

“Roger, we’ll be careful. Thanks Han. Oh and, be careful Nile, over.” I replied. We slowed down and pulled into the Hess gas station parking lot. Whilst we waited for Han and Nile. The troopers blipped their sirens and went on their way.

We arrived at a hotel called “Mary Barry” to spend the rest of the night. We stayed up until midnight looking at some things to do and attractions in Japan;Tokyo. We woke up around 7:30, got dressed, got chocolate pizza and headed into our cars. “Why won’t this stereo work, man!” Andrew yelled out in frustration. He later got it to work perfectly. A little too perfect. We headed into Utah. The sign read, ‘Welcome to UTAH; LIFE ELEVATED’. We saw the red canyon that looked so eroded and weathered in the sign. We all rev bombed in apprection type of way that we got there.

Now fast forward, about a quarter of an hour or so after we got to Utah. “Who wants to grab some snacks then go pick up our dirtbikes, over?” I asked via walkie talkies. Most of them said yes. Therefore, I shared the location to the storage unit we stored our dirtbikes in and went to the nearest Walmart to grab snacks and beverages.

“*Click click. Vroom Vrooom*” Our kickstarters clicked and engines started. We traveled eastward in a forest. “Yes towing service?” Gurinder asked on the phone “Yeah can you tow about five or so cars to a ferry?”

We have the ticket but can't bring it there" He furthermore explained. The plan was they would bring it to Japan while we hang out a bit here then get to Tokyo. The ferry had higher capability and was only our cars as we rented it, so it would only take 25 hours for the ferry, and 14 hours for the plane. The plane, of course, wasn't rented so it was regular. "Vr Ooooooooooooo Tutututututu" our bikes roared. We headed towards the Canyon. We drove our KTM's up and down the red lava colored canyons. We saw Utah State Patrol Covered Ford F150's in the deserted area, roughly a quarter of a mile away. They didn't have their lights on or any other indication that they were detaining us, so we all went off in the other direction.

"Wehwohehwoh" the yelp siren of two of them blared while another five had only their lights, looking like they planned to box us in. "This is Corporal Martin with the Utah State Patrol we order you, the men on black and red dirtbikes, to stop them immediately! If you at this point do not stop them, you'll be arrested for Resisting Arrest! If you lead us to a chase, that's flight from a Law Enforcement Officer. We highly suggest you just cooperate with us." The Corporal spoke over his PA system. We cooperated and listened.

"This is Sarge Codiak, I want you all to listen to our orders carefully. Understood?" Sergeant Codiak also spoke over his PA system. "Keep your hands visible and take off your helmets..."-he waited for us to do so-"Now through your bags behind the canyon, away from my troopers and put on your kickstands.

Now get off and face away. Get on your knees and interlock your fingers on the back of your head. Do not move, if you reach for anything you *will* be tased, gentlemen."

We got cuffed and a K-9 Unit came from the local Sheriff's department. They checked our bags for bombs or weapons. "Now, I'm assuming you want to know why we're doing all this?" Master Trooper Collin finally said, breaking the silent stares. We nodded. "Yeah well, we had 5 '11 to 6'8 males rob the Raceway Gas station, guns were involved. We think that might be you, is it?" He interrogated. We all confidently told him we didn't. "Alright, License please" he asked politely but firmly. We gave him our licenses.

TO BE CONTINUED

Glossary:

- Seldom ~ Rare
JDM ~ Japanese Domestic Market, a car that wasn't made to be sold outside of Japan
- Trooper ~ An officer with the State Police (Or Highway Patrol) that has jurisdiction over the whole state *and* all sheriff deputies in that state and township officers in that state
- Rev Bomb ~ Going in a small gear (1 or 2) in a manual car or other motor vehicle and going to full RPM's making a big bang-bang noise

JDM Car Trip
Part 2
(Tokyo)
Mustafa Amjad

We went away. Popped some wheelies on the desert and kept on looking back to make sure the troopers didn't require immediate help. "Vrooom Vrooom," our dirtbikes roared. "Fffftutututututooh." Raj's dirt bikes stopped working, but after some jumpstarts it started working again. "Yo! Not to be Negative Nancy..." Gurinder said, "but our plane is leaving in one hour." We all freaked out. "We can still be there in time if we head there *right now*." He stated after a long pause. So we headed that way. Parked our bikes in the storage unit near the airport and ran to the airport. Running to it only took seven minutes, which was much shorter than expected. The process to get in took a long time, but we still had half an hour before our plane departed.

Last call for Turkish airlines to Japan:Tokyo!" a lady said on the airport speaker after the half hour we waited. "Fam, let's go already!" Rajput shouted as we were getting late. The flight was very comfy. When I say comfy I mean *COMFY!* We ate the salmon sushi they had and for a beverage I had Dr. Pepper. The others drank ginger ale, 7UP, Sprite, or coke. When we got ready to sleep, it was kind of hard to sleep. Although, we eventually got there, nonetheless.

As soon as we got to Tokyo, I knew we were. The futurism, the JDM's, smell of Durian, sushi, boba, and so much other stuff. It was crazily loud, the 'pappapaapp' of 350z's. The 'stutututututuuttutu' of r34's.

“Click click!” All of us took pictures of the JDM cars. We saw rx7’s, mx5’s, but obviously not any corvette’s, mustangs, or any other American muscle/supercars. We went to rent cars because the cargo ship that was bringing our cars had to turn back around, and couldn’t pass the ocean per *United States Coast Guard’s* orders.

“Vooootutuutututututu,” my Mazda RX7’s turbo kicked in. “STUTUTUTUTUTU,” the engine roared when we were pulling donuts. Raj had a Mazda Miata MX5, Gurinder rented a Subaru Impreza WRX, Han rented an r34. We all were pulling donuts in the parking lot, Tokyo Metro Police pulled into the parking lot with sirens blaring, and blocked us in so we couldn’t evade. “Young men, you’re foreign?” The officer asked. We all nodded. “You can’t be doing this kind of thing sirs.” The cop states.

“We have permission to, we rented this area from the owner and he gave us permission.” Gurinder explained showing him papers. He let us go and said we’re fine then. We hooned out of the parking lot then blasted the *Fast and Furious:Tokyo Drift* soundtrack and raced up and down the street.

GLOSSARY:

10-32: This is police code for “Assistance required.”

10-71: This is police code for “Shots fired.”

10-65: This is police code for “Armed Robbery”.

B.E.A.R.C.A.T: This stands for; *Ballistic Engineered Armored Response Counter Attack Truck*

Hoon: This is the act of hurrying out of a parking lot at dangerously high speeds in a motor vehicle.

SHOULD WE HAVE A DRESS CODE?

By: Aaradhyaa Vats

The question we are going to review in this essay is “should we have a dress code.” The answer I get from most students is: NO! And I admit that I would say no too. Let's be real, being in uncomfortable uniforms all day isn't the best choice of clothes. But many students and parents have a different point of view. In this essay we are going to be weighing the pros and cons of having a dress code. Should we have a dress code? By the end of this essay I hope to have answered that question.

Something good about not having a dress code is that if you ripped your jeans or have a hole in your sweatshirt etc. you will NOT have to pay for it. Another good thing about not having a dress code is that sometimes uniforms can be uncomfortable. You obviously can't study while you are uncomfortable. Let's look at the pros of having a dress code.

Believe it or not there are pros for having a dress code. This is a shout out to girls. First, if clothes have fringes on it students start braiding them or start playing around with them (or who knows what) and students get distracted. Uniforms do not have fringes on them. (This next one is not for girls). Next, students might think about fashion rather than school. Finally, people come from different financial backgrounds so students might judge other students based on their clothes. If everyone wore the same uniform no one would know another student's financial background.

If you asked me I would probably say that we should not have a dress code because It lets students make their own choices. I'm positive that people disagree with me but that's their own opinion.

An overview of the essay:

| No dress code | Dress code |
|---|--|
| a) If clothes are damaged you don't have to pay for it. | a) Students stop thinking about fashion and study more |
| a) More comfortable | b) students won't get distracted in the middle of class. |
| | a) Students won't know if their classmates are rich or poor. |

Which Greek God/Goddess Could Be Your Parent?

By: Aaradhya Vats

The thing in life is that you can't choose your parents. Not in this life. Never. Ever. But imagine if you could choose a parent that's a god. (And I am not saying gods are real. I am just saying to imagine.) I am going to tell you the pros and cons of each god. We'll start at the top with the king of the gods, Zeus. Zeus is powerful, impulsive, and passionate. If I were his son or daughter I could fly if he willed it. And flying is an awesome power. Plus, I could be a prince or princess since my dad is the king of the gods. At school I am at the top of the food chain. I could be prom king or queen, quarterback and all that good stuff rolled into one. But being at the top comes with a price right? As Zeus' child all of the 12 gods' eyes are on me. They expect greatness from me. That's a lot to live up to.

Next we have Hades, god of the underworld. You would be the princess/prince of the underworld. Princess/prince of the dead. But not princess-y (prince-y?) in a prissy way. No. I would be bad and mean if I want to follow after dad. If Hades were my dad I wouldn't be afraid of death. Death would be like my British servant. I might even learn to like living in the dark, without sunlight and flowers. But if I inherited my father's looks it would not be good. I don't think crazy eyes look good on me.

And finally. Poseidon. Water would be my servant. And I could be part mermaid, part human. If I hurt myself all I have to do is jump in the shower and I would be all fixed up. I could make fountains and waterfalls wherever I went. But he doesn't have the strongest relations with his family. In all I wonder - would it be so great to have a godly dad as opposed to a godly mom.

Potential Godly Moms

First up Artemis , goddess of the hunt and the moon and all around warrior woman. To be the daughter or son of Artemis is impossible. She is and will be a maiden forever- in other words , no kids and no family. Just her loyal pack of hunteresses. I'd be really good at archery. And she is a loyal mom, she's a woman of her word. She doesn't discriminate against mortals and immortals. All are welcome (though it's true she isn't crazy about boys joining her band of hunters) as long as you choose her path: to never grow up and be young forever. Like Peter Pan.

With Aphrodite, The goddess of love and beauty the perks are obvious. If I were her son or daughter I would be dazzling. If I'm lucky I might be as pretty as Helen of Troy. But then again I don't want to be so wrapped up in my looks that I sit in front of the mirror all day. Physical perfection can be pretty boring. And what if I didn't turn out gorgeous like her. That happens, you know. I might not inherit her beauty genes. I might turn out ugly or worse mediocre. That would be devastating. She probably is a pageant mother who pressures her daughter to be physical perfection- tan skin and white teeth and all that stuff.

When it comes to wisdom there is no one wiser than Athena. As her daughter I too would be wise. Also I might inherit her cool gray eyes. I will always have a plan , always know what to do. I would certainly be good in a crisis. If I choose to stay in the mortal world I could be the secretary of the state or, Scrabble world champion. I can tell Athena is a good mother. She looks out for her kid's interests. She is always trying to be a good mom. But it could be hard around a mom who knows everything. A kid should be allowed to have a secret or two.

Ares is the god of war, and he strives on rage and aggression. Ares is the adrenaline that pumps through your veins when you are mad and looking for a fight. If Ares was my dad at least I would know how to handle myself in a brawl. I'd be so tough no one would mess with me. But Ares' kids could be big, ugly, and mean. No thanks. And they aren't too smart. Ares is known for his brawl not his brains. In the book *The lightning thief* it says, "Even strength has to bow down to wisdom sometimes." And forget about organized sports: Ares would be the dad who screams at the sidelines and at the referee. And the fights we would get into. Ares and I would battle over my curfew and my lack of killer instinct.

Then there's Apollo, the sun god. Apollo is loyal to his sister. And I could ride his sun chariot sitting shotgun. I would be excellent at archery and at music. He is also the god of poetry. But I have a feeling that I will get tired of it. He can also see the future so it would be pretty sweet if that passed onto me.

And let's not forget Dionysus, god of parties and fertility. I could conjure up cherry coke slushee right out of thin air. Not a bad trick. It could make me popular at parties. But it doesn't outweigh being able to breathe underwater or flying a chariot over the sky. And if I needed a cherry coke slushee I could just go buy one.

And there's Hephaestus and , well , there are a whole lot of strange things about Hephaestus. A lot of strange stuff. Not to be shallow but he isn't really known as the most favorite guy on Olympus and I'm sure his kids won't be winning beauty pageants too. They are all burly from working in a factory. Yes he could teach me how to be a mason but I have zero interest in being a blacksmith. What I do have an interest in , however, is magical tools. Every magical tool on Olympus is made by Hephaestus. He made Hermes' magical winged helmet and sandals, Cupid's bow and arrow, and Apollo's chariot.

Since Hermes is the god of travelers and mischief, if I was his kid I could do all the traveling I ever wanted and know that my dad is watching , really proud. I could be the next Amelia Earhart, the next Marco Polo. He would encourage me to take risks and carve my own paths. And for a god of mischief and thievery , he's pretty wise.

Now who to choose? There are pretty good options: Mermen, flying, Cherry Coke Slushees. It's a hard decision. For dad's Poseidon sounds good. He can get me a pearl crown for my sweet sixteen. But for moms I would go for Artemis. The night sky and stars could be mine. Who needs pearls when I could have a necklace of stars around my neck. She would teach me bravery and independence and pride and nature. She is also childlike.

Heroes strive to prove their worth. To make a name for themselves. They want to be a legend many people talk about. Because in the end all they want is to be the twinkle, the star, in their parent's eye.

So who do you choose as your parents?

Illusions: Golden Wind

By: Aaradhya Vats

“Vic, turn back! It’s an illusion!” I yelled. I was exploring the Elemental Ruins with my sister Vic and 2 of my friends, Dawn and Derek. Apparently, there is a psychic force which creates illusions for unknown reasons. “VIC! TURN BACK NOW! VIC!” I yell again. She’s so focused on the illusion she can’t hear me. I go to yell again, but I hold myself back. I noticed something. I was the one being tricked! Vic was studying the ancient texts the whole time! Then who was that?

The figure that took the form of Vic vanished as soon as I figured out that it was fake. “Did you guys feel a breeze?” I heard Dawn ask. She had to be joking. We were UNDERGROUND. “How would there be-woah, that was weird. Now I feel it.” I respond. I glance to my right. Nothing. I glance to my left. A bright yellow sheet twirls around the room and passes by Vic. “I felt a breeze too..” She says shivering. I can’t take this anymore. I try running out, but a boulder slams down in front of me.

I turn around to see Vic running her hand across the wall. “I heard about the Legend of the Golden Wind in school 2 weeks ago.” Vic states. “I heard that you had to guide the wind to a thin crack in the wall. If you fail to do so, it will take control of you.” I’m shocked by this statement. “You literally have 2 IQs,” Derek says.

“Even if I do have 2 IQ, it’s more than YOU’LL ever have.” Vic responds with a grin.

“Vic, please stop telling Derek he has less than 2 IQ. He can’t handle facts.” Dawn adds in.

I think Derek is about to have a mental breakdown when the Golden Wind flies gracefully over him. It slid itself into a small crack in the wall and opened up some sort of loot crate you would see in games like Craft and Mine. “Guys, look. This is what we came for.” I say in disbelief.

4 Sparkling Gemstones shine brighter than the sun, which we haven't seen for 2 days. "Scarlet, Lime, Cyan and White. Choose wisely, for you will need it for the fight." Vic reads. She brought along her Ancient History Book, even though we said we only need survival resources. Maybe she was correct in bringing it. "What fight? I thought we were "Making History" you nerds."

Derek shamelessly says. "Yes, we are making history. Now would you pipe down before News 11 rejects us because of your dumb self?" I say with no regrets.

"I want Cyan!" Vic exclaimed. She carefully touched the bright blue gemstone.

SWOOSH! She was lifted into the air and the Golden Wind from before yanks the gemstone out of her hand! The cyan gemstone flew around her and a blinding light exploded in her position.

The gemstone fell to the ground with a loud CLUNK! "VIC!" I shout. No response.

"VIC!!!!!" Dawn shouts.

"Right here!" Vic emerges from the hallway. Her brown and beige exploration outfit was now Cyan and Ocean Blue. "Watch this! HURRICANE BLITZ!" She shouts. 7 blades of water emerge from around and slash quickly, with the 7th being a packed and powerful thrust.

"I want scarlet!" Derek shouts. He is lifted. The Golden Wind appears again, but doesn't yank the gemstone from Derek's hand. Instead, it swirls around him and then POOF! The gemstone falls to the floor again.

"Derek, be fast! Use your 1 IQ!" Dawn shouts. Derek appears. His exploration outfit is Scarlet and Crimson. "VOLCANIC ERUPTION!" He shouts. Embers shoot out in all directions, followed by a raging flame. Waves of lava erupt from the flame, growing more aggressive over time.

He shouts. Embers shoot out in all directions, followed by a raging flame. Waves of lava erupt from the flame, growing more aggressive over time. “The white looks more like a platinum color. I want this one!” Dawn yells. She rises, and the Golden Wind repeats the process of Vic’s transformation. The gemstone falls and Dawn runs up to me, her exploration suit a super light blue and a platinum white. “I have cool elemental powers too! TUNDRA ORB!” She shouts. “Dawn, please, for the love of the Mystic, DON’T USE THE ICE ATTACK INDOORS!” Vic says sternly. “S-Sorry. I never knew the power.” She apologizes.

Suddenly, the room starts to collapse violently. “OVER HERE!” Vic commands. We scramble over to a safe corner where we won’t be buried under rocks right after we promised the teacher not to do anything crazy.

“Fooled again I bet.” Dawn sighs. The rumbling stops. “I guess I’ll take lime.” I say. I grab the gemstone and see something crazy: a list of nature-based attacks. As I finish studying, I’m lifted up and feel weird, like my soul is being transported somewhere. As the transformation finished, I felt as if I had a new found power. As I emerged, I gathered my power.

“Nature’s Blessing!” I shout. A green aura surrounds me and I heal the wounds of my friends and sister.

“Thank you, Chris.” Dawn says thankfully. Suddenly, a door opens with a long staircase.

“Well, up we go, nerds.” Derek sighs. “I’m surprised you even know how to use stairs.” Vic responds. The staircase goes on forever.

“We have been climbing for 15 MINUTES!” Vic complains. I shrug and proceed up. After about 10 minutes, we learned that we have been walking down a corridor this whole time and the stairs were an illusion.

“Sacred Fire!” Derek shouts. Wow! He used his peanut brain to light the way! As we exit, I see something no one wants to see.

“Is that... no, it can't be...” Dawn gasps.

Illusions 2: Dusk Shadows

“This, this is impossible.” I say. “Are you seeing this?” The world was covered in darkness.

“Hydro Blast!” Vic yells. She sends a blast of water at the sheet of darkness in an attempt to get us some light. “Impossible! It bounced right back!” Vic shouted. “GET DOWN!”

Dawn commands. SPLASH! The beam barely misses me. “Guys... you might want to see this.” Dawn suggests. We look over the cliff and see tons of shadow figures stumbling across the fields.

“This has to be an illusion.” Derek says. This was no illusion. This was reality, and we have to change this. I take a step back. Another step. I go to take another step when...

“SOMETHING GRABBED MY ANKLE!” I yell. I look down. Nothing was there, but I still feel the grip around my ankle and can't move it.

“This is some illusion!” Dawn shouted.

After 2 minutes of me shaking like I was trying to get my VR character to have a mental breakdown, I can finally proceed forward. “Derek, we need a Flame Nova, fast!” I yell.

“On it! FLAAAAME NOVA!” He responds. He sends 6 flares into the sky and lights up about 3 miles in all directions.

“Thanks, this should be enough. Now we just need to get up high to see what's wrong.” I say. “I can do this! GLACIAL DASH!”

I heard Dawn yell. “Wait up!” I command. Dawn ran faster and faster up to the shadow. The figures fumbled and stumbled below. “Dawn, slow down!” I shouted. It was no use. She couldn't hear me.

She ran up, and up, and up. “Boop!” said Dawn as she touched the sheet of darkness. “Nothing happened.” Dawn complained. The path started to lose its sturdiness. crackK. craCK. crACK. CRRRRRRRRRACKKLLL! The path collapsed.

We both started falling. We were at least 10,000 feet in the air.

“GRAB MY HAND!” I yell. SNAP! Me and Dawn are now locked together. “Now, the magic happens!. VINE TETHER!” I shoot a thick vine from my wrist and tether over to a tree near a hill. WWW OOOOSH!

We landed safely on our feet. But we were by ourselves.

“Thanks, Chris.” Says Dawn brushing off her legs. We need to get to the others, and fast.

“No problem.” I respond. “Look over there, Dawn. Maybe they can help us return to Derek and Vic!” There was someone fighting off the shadow figures alone.

“They might need help! TUNDRA ORB!” shouted Dawn. She fired off a Subzero Ball at 10 shadows. BAWMP! The orb made contact with the shadows. The traveler turned around and made eye contact with Dawn.

“You... did that. Thank you.” said the Traveler. “My name is Torsha and I am a Guardian of the Mystic’s Cavern. If access is what you wish, it is granted.”

“H-hi Torsha. M-my name is D-d-d-Dawn...” She said, shaking. Dawn must like reading about the Mystic as much as Vic does.

“Hello, Dawn. Hello to you as well, Chris. I have been out here since the shadows started invading 4 days ago.” explained Torsha. “This is just an illusion of their true power. We need to-GET DOWN!” One of the shadows survived Dawn’s Tundra Orb and fired a Dark Pulse at us. “Stay back, I’ve got this,” said Torsha. “CHROMA DUST! Now, PHOTON EDGE!”

My eyes, as well as Dawn’s, were so wide they might’ve popped out. She did have the Chromalight power of the Mystic!

“As I was saying, we need to get to the sheet above us

and shatter it using my Lightning Buster combined with a Flame Nova. Sadly, I don't know anyone with the Crimson Gemstone." Torsha continued explaining. Then, I remember asking Derek for a Flame Nova to light the world!

"Torsha, we need to climb that mountain! My friend Derek can use a Flame Nova!" I suggest.

"Then that is where we will go. Do you have any way to contact Derek?" Torsha asks.

Then it hits me. I forgot to hook up the communication system!

"We don't. But right now, there's a bigger concern..," Dawn responded. I look at her, then at where she is looking. A portal opened up in the sky.

"We need to find an extremely sturdy shelter. The gravitational pull will decrease and the force that keeps us on the ground will lose effect. Wave 303 has found its way here." Torsha warns us.

I scan the area for a possible traveler set-up, but nothing can be found. Suddenly, I start to feel weird, like the gravitational pull is losing effect. What is Wave 303? How does Torsha know so much about shadows? But there is one question that keeps me thinking:

Where are Derek and Vic...?

Illusions 3: Seperated

“You think they’re ok?” I ask Derek whilst looking over the edge.

“I hope not.....” He muttered. I turned around and gave him a jab to the face. “OW! What the heck was that, Vic?” I glared at him. This was the worst way this pairing could’ve gone; for Me at least. I’m stuck with HIM while the 2 PEOPLE that have MORE THAN 1 WORKING BRAIN CELL just FELL off a 10,000 FEET cliff!

“Derek, I know you want to throw me off this mountain right now, but please. We NEED to work together to save Chris and Dawn.” I told him.

“Ok, let’s start working. Do you have any ideas?” Derek asks. I don’t, but there is one thing I can do.

“Past Vision!” I say. I see Dawn run off on her Ice path, Chris not far behind. Then I see them fall. “Stop!” I command. I see where they fall. “Derek, we need to go here!” I announce. I look back at him and he’s already in diving form. “Sir, you cannot dive off this mountain unless someone were to use psychic powers to break your fall. It is very un- DEREK NO!” I shout. He just dove off a mountain. I watch him fall, and fall. He stopped. Suddenly, the ground underneath me begins to shake. I try to keep my balance, but I slip off the mountain before I can.

I feel myself falling. I glance over and see Derek just slowly floating down.

“Oh, hey Vic.” He casually says. I try not to look down, but I do. I close my eyes. Suddenly, I stopped moving. I look at myself for a minute. A mystical aura. I float down slowly and see someone.

“Maybe you 2 kids should stop jumping off mountains. What are you trying to do? Get yourselves killed? Anyway, my name is Brycia. I am the chief of an army known as the Northern Blades.” she says..

I simply cannot comprehend what's happening. The Northern Blades are allies with the Mystic!

"H-hello, Brycia. M-my name is V-"

Vic, I know. I remember finding one of your studies frozen in ice 2 months ago." Brycia explained. She knew my name! And she found one of my study sheets on the Northern Blades, trying to find how they're associated with the Mystic. "Anyway, I'm out here looking for Torsha, my sister. I feel like we need to meet each other again."

"Uhhh, you guys should look up.." Derek says. Brycia looks up and a look of horror strikes onto her face.

"Get in that hole! This is Wave 404, and it turns off gravity, trying to bring people and objects into another dimension!" Brycia says. Me and Derek scramble into a hole.

"Brycia, are you coming? Get in here!" I shout. I shoot off a Solid Stream to cover us from floating into the Warp.

"Brycia, is that you? Brycia! BRYCIA!"

Ten 'till Glory

By David Le

“Ok Lewis, there’s forty five minutes left. Push hard, you could be catching the 33 by half a second a lap or a quarter of a second or so in a few minutes time. Approximate gap to the 33 should be around twelve to fifteen seconds. We might be able to get him in this stint,” the race engineer said. Refueling was done. Lewis stomped the gas and left the pit box.

There was no reply on the radio, but the two understood that the message was acknowledged. The team watched on as Lewis sped into the night, onto the track. Fifty five minutes to go. The team watched as Lewis’ onboard camera, a teeny tiny GoPro on the kart showed him getting up to speed in the treacherous conditions of the track. What does the future hold is all the team can wonder as Lewis sets out to do what he loves and likes best, racing.

The track was very wet after some rain showers passed through the area one hour before. Still, with Lewis’ ability in the rain. The 44 Mainpoint had a chance to hunt down the 33 Redware, win the race, and take the title for that year. In the pit box for the 44 team, everyone was watching nervously. The team principal, Wolfgang Drezeudus, called “Wolff” or “Wolff” sometimes, a tall man at six foot five, tapped his right foot nervously as he watched the timing screens for the gap to the 33 on the track. Lewis got out on track with a one second gap to the sister Mainpoint 77, who ...

... was set to take third in the championship. The Mainpoint team also ran another car in Class I, which was the 91, and that kart locked in their 4th place finish a round before. The 91 team was happy given the year they had to endure. Lewis' co-drivers and friends were all there, watching their friend try to hunt down the 33 and win the title. Now, with forty five minutes left, it was go time.

But what happened all before this? What was the precursor? Six months ago, the karting season in the state started. The defending champion was the team Lewis raced for, Mainpoint Racing. They had one big rival, Redware Motorsports. They had another business in auto sales, Redware Autogroup, which was rather successful. Redware AG took a venture into the world of karting last year and were quickly progressing up the ladder in terms of the silverware the team was bringing home each season. Now, in Redware's second season as a top class competitor, they had a chance to take home the drivers and teams title. Mainpoint ran three cars in the Class I category, Redware also ran three cars in the Class I category, getting success and challenging for the title. Redware possessed plenty of talent, but Mainpoint had loads of them, with the 44 of Lewis, Max, and Lewis's brother, Nicolas. The 77 consisted of Lewis' friend from school, Mika, a bloke who switched from Redware to Mainpoint the year before and raced full time, A British due named George, and a girl who joined the team ...

... for the endurance rounds, this was the same scenario for Nicolas, who drove part time in another car in the Class I for Mainpoint in the sprint races, which were two hours and forty minutes long. Those two teamed up for the sprint races in the series as sprint races required two drivers, while the enduros needed three. Nicolas and the girl finished 3rd in the sprint cup, which wrapped up the round before, and Mainpoint took a 1-3-4-5 finish in the sprint cup championship, while Redware took a 2-6-7-9 finish. Both teams ran an extra kart for two of their drivers for the sprint drivers, while an endurance driver from the 91 and the 4th Redware kart was in reserve and was learning for a future driver when they were older with their respective teams.

Mainpoint had a successful season, so did Redware, with each kart in except for one of the Redware's not taking a win in the season. The season consisted of 14 rounds, 10 sprint races and 4 endurance rounds, ranging from 6 to 24 hours. The 24 hour race kicked off the season, then came a 12 hour race as the next round, but that one took place one month after the 24 hour race, than a couple sprint races, than a 6 hour race, and a few more sprint races, than the season finale was the 10 hour race set to take place and decide the title. Both teams were really competitive in the Class I category. Mainpoint took top honors in Class II, the highest Redware Class II kart was in 3rd, and the title in that category was wrapped up 2 rounds before the ten hour endurance race.

The round before the endurance race, Lewis and Max's Mainpoint 44 raced to a comfortable victory, with the Mainpoint 91 taking 2nd, and the Redware 33 taking third. This meant Lewis and Max's kart was 15 points ahead of the Redware 33 heading into the season finale. In the team's championship, the Mainpoint extended their lead in that championship for a lead of 35 points, and the odds leaned in their favor after the other Mainpoint 77 took 4th, and the other two Redware's took 5th and 7th. The two boys decided to visit the team's headquarters/workshop to see the progress on a new update to the karts after they finished their homework.

“Good evening boys,” The receptionist at the front said.

“Hello,” replied Lewis. Max gave a friendly hello gesture, and the two boys walked into the shop area where a few other teammates from Class I and II were looking at iPads, most likely studying data and going over a few things. Another two were inspecting a kart fitted with the new updates.

“Hi Eric!” said Max to the chief engineer.

“Hello boys, how do you two do?”

“Good,” came the reply from the two boys.

“Good timing about you two coming down to visit, we just finished the new updates on the Class I karts, ...

... and it should give better reliability as well as better data feedback to us engineers while you all are on the track,” said Eric as he was clicking away at his computer, looking at some more data.

“What about the engines? Anything new on those?” asked Lewis.

“Yeah, kind of, you see we installed some new sensors and some other stuff that gives better data feedback to us and better response time to the gas pedal, so that should give you better acceleration, in theory. Anyway, it isn’t going to be that significant regarding a big jump in lap times,” Eric said, still clicking on his computer.

“Eric, have you put the new files in your cabinets yet?” his assistant Kevin asked. The new upgrades and information were located in a few file folders next to Eric’s workstation in the shop area.

“Oh yeah, I haven’t yet. Max, can you go give these to Kevin?” Eric requested, giving Max three folders with documents inside, “I’m also going to call the boss about the new updates later,”

“Well do,” Max said as he took the files and walked over to Kevin near the door to the hallway containing offices. The latter then took them and walked into the hallway, disappearing into the arrays of doors.

Nicolas came down to the shop a half an hour later after Lewis and Max, as he had some extra work to do to get some stuff out of the way earlier. Lewis and Max stayed for an hour and a half, reviewing notes for the track hosting the season finale and going over plans. The track was Lewis' favorite and rightly so as he excelled on the track, setting a lap record last year during qualifying en route to Mainpoint's first title. The three boys studied some footage of onboard laps from last year and tried to find some spots on the track to improve the lap time. There was only one new opportunity that was found with a faster tenth or two, but required some work and practice to consistently master every lap.

“Look at this, I think something that could be improved from my pole lap from last year is to turn in maybe a bit earlier and less steering at this turn, it might work I think, but we'll find out in 3 weeks,” Lewis said.

“I think we can try,” agreed Nicolas.

It was agreed by the 44 team that Lewis was driving the qualifying lap when it was time, and starting the race as well. Lewis would finish the race for the team, and Max and Nicolas would get his drive time in the middle of the race to meet his drive time requirements and help out, theoretically, this is what's supposed to happen. Plans can always change, and the team knew this.

Meanwhile, while the boys were studying, Eric called up the boss, Wolfgang Drezeudus, to inform him about the new updates on the car.

“Hey Wolf, we’ve got a few new updates that we told you about a few weeks ago at the last race,” Eric said.

“How do you do?” Wolf asked.

“Good, the boys from the 44 are also here in the study room,” replied Eric.

“Tell ‘em I said hi would ya?” the boss asked.

“Sure will. Anyway, a few new things that we got was that improved gas pedal sensor we’ve been developing since the middle of the season. We should have another tenth or so extra from better power delivery upon pressuring the gas,” Eric explained.

The three boys went back out into the shop area where the karts were worked on, and Eric said hi to the boys for Wolf. The boys then proceeded to do some inspections on their 44 kart, getting it ready to rock ‘n roll in a little under two weeks time.

“Hey look, this is new,” noticed Lewis. He paid great attention to detail.

“That’s the new engine sensor Lewis. I thought no one would notice actually. Great job!” praised Eric.

Max was inspecting the rear wing, and Nicolas was taking a few notes on his trusty notepad on some things about downforce and wing angles. Nick compared the angles from last year's race at the same track and this year's calculating more downforce might be needed with this year's horsepower increase by 15hp. Mika from the 77 came over, and Max and the former started talking about the karts. Nicolas continued to take notes and do more inspections.

Time passed, and the team members as well as engineers started to file out of the building for home, as it was almost time for supper. Work would continue the next day as the various improvements on the karts before the 10 hour race.

The next day on Saturday, the boys decided to spend their day at the team factory working on the cars, and also hang out, because why not, what do you gotta do anyway if you're just going to sit around, y'know?

Lewis and Max, as well as the former's brother Nicolas, also had their three friends in tow with them down to the factory that Saturday. Jean and Jayden, who recently moved to town, and another friend named Neal, who was a seasoned sim-racer, and also wanted to get some virtual track time on a circuit he was able to race on virtually the next day.

“Okay you three, ground rules, absolutely, do not touch any of our stuff in the shop unless we tell you too!” Max commanded.

“Yes Max,” said the twins. Neal already knew the rules, as he was a friend of Lewis and Max since 3rd grade, 5 grades later, friendship is stronger than ever.

“This place is cool!” said Jean.

“It is all right, so slay I gotta say,” Lewis replied.

“Y’all can go hang out in the rec room, we got some work to do until then. Have fun!” Max told them. Lewis, Max, and Nicolas went to the offices for a meeting about the race next weekend.

The twins and Neal went to the rec room, Neal settled into the simulator, and loaded up the Circuit de la Sarthe and a Porsche 911 RSR-19 GTE Pro in the factory car livery, so he could practice his skills on that track, which was good, but more practice means that he could eat the whole virtual race the next day. Qualifying was already done on Friday, and settled into pole by a few tenths, thus giving Neal a sense to relax and prepare for the virtual race on Sunday. Another friend, Maverick, joined the friends at the factory in the rec room and played F1 2021 with Jayden, while Jean was texting a few friends.

Meanwhile, Lewis, Max, and Nicolas met with one of their race engineers, whose name was Peter, and referred to as “Bono” after his last name, Bonnoton. Bono was in college and was working with the team as a full time ...

...member as an employee. They were discussing the race and any questions the driver had. They were also reviewing a few sheets of information. Looking at the weather, the four boys were surprised to see there would be some rain during the race, especially some orange level rain in the forecast during the latter stages of the race. This was surprising given that there was an expectation of rain, but not that heavy. The drivers from the 77 and the 91 also came in for the team meeting. The primary team strategist, James, also came to the meeting to discuss some strategies with the other team members. The strategy would be to pit all the cars at one time, assuming they are on the same lap in Class I. The meeting lasted for around 2 hours and the team dispersed to get some work done on the karts, and then try to fast track a last minute upgrade for the karts, so there could be better performance.

The new sensor upgrade with the engines was a success, and was better than the predictions made by the data engineers. The new upgrades planned for fast track development would affect the braking as the sensors would be improved, leading to better performance as the driver can tap the brakes a little later with improved response time to the brakes, which were not the best as the Redware karts. Performance-wise, Mainpoint had the technical advantage as their cars would usually be around two tenths faster on most circuits, though Redware was able to keep up ...

... in the championship at circuits with tighter corners, Redware had better days on those types of tracks. Anyway, most of the schedule tipped the scales in favor of Mainpoint, which was one of the reasons why they had a good lead in the championship. The final race at Road SeeThrough was a toss up in terms of technical performance.

“Well good news, we got the new brakes in time, so they're better and the Redware's should have more brake wear. We'll see how it goes down next week,” Eric told Wolff, and the latter was impressed with the logistical capabilities of the team, something that boosted morale.

In Wolff's office, he and their two logistic managers were ordering the tires that were allotted for the race weekend, and the budgets for the tires had money to spare, so the extra funds would be put towards development with the engine supplier, and Mainpoint was a factory engine customer of their supplier.

Meanwhile in the rec room, a few friends of the Class II drivers came into the room, and hung out with Jean, Jayden, Maverick, as well as his cousin Rose was also at the shop. The atmosphere was fun, and everyone had a good time, playing board games and using their phones.

“Look at what Rose posted,” said Jayden.

“Wow, that is very yassified,” replied Jean, ...

... scrolling through her Messenger chats with her friends.

The whole team spent their day at the shop working on the karts and other stuff that was needed next weekend. There was good progress on a wide range of fronts, and the team was confident about their chances heading into next weekend.

Since Jean and Jayden's parents were away on a business trip, they had the whole house to themselves, their two bedrooms, the master bedroom as well as its bathroom, the two guest rooms, one of which was used as both a bedroom and a storage room, and the three other bathrooms. Their parents were business entrepreneurs, specializing in pillows and bedroom products, their company, PersonalPillow, was a success in the local area, and now they were away in California pitching their products to executives, who might want to invest in them, build more factories, create more jobs, and make more profits, all the while the American consumer can enjoy great products made in the United States. The twins were given the ok to let their friends come over for a sleepover for one night. In total, the twins, Lewis, Max, Maverick, and Rose came over. Nicolas had some other plans with his friends, so went with those.

“Wow, this house is slay!” said Rose.

“Yeah it is big alright,” Jean told the others.

The friends familiarized themselves with the house. They were amazed at the size of the residence. They brought their bags over and stowed them away in the guest room. Jean and Jayden took their rooms, Lewis and Max would bunk in one of the rooms where there was a bunk bed, while Rose would take the other bedroom, while Maverick opted for the living room sofa, which could also act as a pull out bed. After they all got settled, they just hung out, and since the parents were away, Jayden decided to put some of his amateur cooking skills to use to make spaghetti. Their parents were part European and Asian. Luckily, the pantry had been stocked and their parents allowed the twins to cook their own things, as long as they didn't make a mess afterwards. Meanwhile, Lewis went to the kitchen to assist, while Maverick and Max were playing F1 2021 on the twin's console, which they were allowed to.

Maverick finally beat Max in head to head duel, as Max would win around three quarters of the time.

“L, bozo, ratio, you fell off boy!” Maverick exclaimed. He was feeling good after finally defeating Max.

“Yeah, have fun, consider into account who has won more times than you did in this school year starting from September,” Max said in a manner that seemed that he was okay losing, “Consider who is mid, you are. Counter ratio.”

“More like your mom,” Maverick said while looking at his phone.

“Yeah whatever. Next race then,” The two continued playing F1 2021 on the console as Lewis and Jayden were cooking. Rose was too busy listening to Harry Styles, and Jean was texting friends.

“Walk in your rainbow paradise (paradise)/Strawberry lipstick state of mind/I get so lost inside your eyes/Would you believe it?” Rose sang at the top of her lungs.

“Your singing is kinda mid, no offense,” Maverick commented as he was going around Circuit of the Americas.

“Oh really huh? Then I challenge you to a karaoke competition tonight after dinner,” Rose shot back while “Adore You” by Harry Styles was still playing on her phone.

“Ok then, let’s see how it will dominate. After all, I am taller than you,” Maverick coolly replied.

“Yeah, actually I’m an inch or two taller than you. So stop bragging,” Rose fact checked.

“Okay then,” Maverick responded, still turning his car around the track.

In the meantime, Lewis was preparing the ingredients Jayden called for as he was reading a cookbook he bought at the local Barnes & Noble bookstore.

It contained a lot of recipes that a person could want to make.

“Ok, so you know where the basement is right?” Jayden asked.

“Yeah,” Lewis responded, looking at the cookbook with him.

“Ok, Imma need this, this, and this. Should be and the pantry downstairs, and look for the door that's close to the pool table.” Jayden replied while reading.

“Ok,” Lewis replied. With that, he went to the basement.

Down in the basement, Lewis collected a few ingredients while Jayden started working on straining the spaghetti noodles, all the while listening to Juice WRLD. Jean became bored, so she decided to head down to the kitchen to help out and have a chat with the boys working on dinner.

“So what are you boys doing?” she questioned.

“Spaghetti, nothing fancy,” Jayden replied, chopping up onions.

“Yeah, just be careful or you’ll end up with a bloody finger like last time,” Jean replied, and tried to juggle a few tomatoes.

“I sneezed, okay genius? And also for the sake of our kitchen floor, please stop juggling or else you’re gonna make a mess, like last time,” Jayden reasoned.

“Imma go ahead and get started on the cookies for after dinner,” Jean announced. She also put down the tomatoes.

“Okay,” her twin brother replied.

In the living room, Max and Maverick were playing video games while Rose figured out how to set up the new karaoke machine Jean and Jayden’s parents had just bought. She was reading the manual and was somewhat confused. The solution? Play around and see what works, and not destroy or mess anything up in the process. It worked, and she was thrilled.

When dinner rolled around, the friends gathered around the kitchen table for Jayden’s cooking, which was spaghetti with marinara sauce, sprinkled with chives and also contained spicy Italian meatballs and some cookies Jean baked for dessert. She liked baking as a hobby.

“Gotta say, this is good,” complimented Max.

“Yeah, sure. He cooks dinner for the whole family sometimes, me, and our parents,” Jean stated. She then proceeded to take a picture of their dinner to post on social media, captioning the photos, “When your twin brother makes dinner... in a good way”.

After dinner, the friends all decided to have fun in the living room, hang out, and do stuff a normal teenager would. And the dispute was finally settled about who was ...

... a better singer. It was Rose.

“I told you. In your face Maverick!” Rose exclaimed.

“Yeah whatever, It was fun anyway,” Maverick commented.

Then it was showertime, and something interesting occurred. Jean was trolling Jayden in rather interesting ways. It started when she heard him singing songs in the shower, and yes, she could hear it from her bedroom, which was around 2 doors away down the hall. Something interesting she heard him singing was songs that are never on the radio, and this includes stuff that really isn't “mainstream” so to speak. She decided to record him, and show the others.

“Look at this,” Jean showed the others on her phone.

“Is that Jayden singing, in the shower?” Maverick asked, on the verge of bursting into hysterical laughter.

“Yas,” Jean replied in a very happy tone.

“What's going on?” Jayden asked, completely oblivious to the situation, “Something really funny?”

“Yeah, it's um, something I found on my phone,” Jean stuttered while trying to sound as innocent as possible, hoping that her twin brother wouldn't realize it was him singing.

“Okay, wait a minute, did you record me singing while I was in the shower, and you were outside the bathroom door?” Jayden asked, very amused at his sister’s antics.

“Yes it is!” she replied, bursting into high pitch giggling. In reality, someone could say this would break glass in a whole house.

“Jean, you will pay,” Jayden replied, as the rest were watching his singing.

After this, more singing, more laughter, and more battling, the friends finally went to sleep at a “usual” time for a teenager. One AM in the morning. “Normal” by their standards.

The next morning, something interesting happened. By “interesting”, it was somewhat wild. It’s simple. Simple, simple, simple. Jayden got his revenge. In a matter that was strangely unique.

The twins were occupying their parents’ master bedroom, which was a big bed and the two could fit with room to spare in the middle. They did this when their friends came over and when their parents were away on business. Jean settled into bed that night, pulled down her eyeshades, and was out cold in a matter of a quarter of an hour. Jayden however, was tossing and turning. Then he got his brilliant ideas. The plan? Get out of bed discreetly early ...

... in the morning, then ambush his sister with a crazy laugh when she wakes up. He would have to wait though for her to do so, but Jayden was prepared.

The plans were set, and Jayden would need to wake up at around 7:30 for this plan to have a chance. He knew his sister wouldn't wake up until around 8 AM most of the time when they both stayed up late into the night. Ask anyone, and they'll say he's a genius alright, arguably the smartest kid in their school.

At 7:30 AM, Jayden got out of bed and went into his morning weekend routine, personal hygiene, and changing into day clothes. Now he would just need to wait. Luckily though his sister woke up around 5 minutes afterwards he slipped out of the room. She noticed something was off, and she was right.

“Jayden?” she asked, her eyeshades still down. She lifted them up and saw he was gone. She was a bit tired though, so she lowered her eyeshades and went back to sleep, not for too long though that is. Around 5 minutes later, Jayden decided it was go time.

He discreetly slipped into the bedroom, walking with carefulness and precision, like if he was trying to avoid any creaks in the floor or any anti-personnel mines if there were any. He set up his position, kneeling right next to his sister as she was sleeping away, in “peace”.

“She’ll be in peace alright,” Jayden thought as he mischievously smiled to himself.

Waited, waited, and waited. He waited until, the chance came. He knew that he couldn’t mess this up. This was a really good chance to get some sweet, sweet revenge. Planning isn’t going to get a person anywhere unless it is executed with precision and seriousness. Really though, this plan wasn’t really serious, but just for fun and being an evil twin, just for the fun of things.

The moment came, and Jayden was sitting there, like a tiger waiting to pounce on its prey. This case, it was his own sibling that made it even more mischievous. And it was his own sister, his own sister that he was pouncing on for the kill. Well, not really a “kill”, but the idea can be made out of.

Jean woke up. And this happened next.

“Morning, morning. What awaits me today?” She happily asked herself as she was about to lift her eyeshades.

When she did, Jayden did a crazy maniacal laugh.

“HeHeHeHeHeHeHeHeHeHeHeHeHeHeHeHe!” was the obnoxious noise Jayden made for some sweet juicy revenge with a high pitched voice. A loud scream erupted from the master bedroom. Lewis and Max were a bit mystified by what in the world was unfolding in the master bedroom.

“The world is going on up there?” Lewis questioned while taking a sip of his black tea, looking on Instagram.

“Heard a scream. Let's see what in God's name is going up there,” Max replied. He then put down his phone and the boys went upstairs to see what shenanigans were happening.

Upstairs, Jayden was enjoying himself, while Jean was a bit surprised afterwards about just occurred.

“You all heard what just happened?” Lewis asked as he popped his head into the room where Rose was in. She was still in bed, looking through her phone.

“Yeah. Pretty sure it was Jean, considering she has very high squeals, just sayin’,” Rose replied, now getting out of bed.

The three now went over to the master bedroom, where they saw Jayden drinking tea and really enjoying themselves. Jean was very amused, and Jayden was very quick and telling the others about what just happened.

“Fact, Jean just got pranked. By who else but me!” Jayden exclaimed.

Jean just nodded her head in a sense of losing to a rivalry.

“Well thank God my glasses didn't break,” Maverick remarked, just coming into the room, ...

... “We should be all grateful we didn’t go deaf with that.”

“Ok, I think we can move on from this, um, yeah, lets uh, go down to have breakfast? Shall we?” Jean said in a voice where she was trying to make everyone forget what just happened. Of course, no one would.

Later after everyone consumed breakfast, a friend of Jean, Jayden, Maverick, and Rose came down to hang out for the day.

“Hi Camila!” said Jean, “We were expecting you today, but not this early.”

“Hi everyone! What happened with you and Jayden’s thing of his?” Camila questioned.

“Oh yeah, come inside and we’ll give you the full story,” Jayden told her.

A few minutes later:

“Wow Jean, how did this happen?” Camila wondered.

“Okay, so here’s the scoop. So yesterday, I recorded Jayden singing. You saw the video yesterday, so you know what it was, or at least what it was supposed to be. So apparently, Jayden wasn’t too happy I guess? And yeah, here we are now,” Jean explained.

“I see, what a cool way to get revenge though,” said Camila. Meanwhile, a loud cloud of rage erupted ...

... from the cousins.

“No!” Maverick then went on to say some stuff someone really shouldn't. Let's leave it at that.

“Maverick, watch your language,” his cousin said as she gave him a light punch to his arm.

“Yeah I know, but how though?” he questioned, in an absolute state of shock. They were playing some Mario game where people chose characters and were fighting each other on weird maps.

“Well I'm glad I won,” Rose exclaimed, taking delight in her cousin's rage.

The friends all hung out at the house for the day, then it was back to business on Monday, school, and of course, preparing for the race that weekend.

Two days after Sunday, Lewis, Max, and Nicolas returned to the shop to keep working and preparing for the race. Nothing eventful, the track wasn't really far from the shop, only around 20 minutes or so. The events would begin on Tuesday as the team would start set up day and get everything in place, such as the garage area, pit areas, as well as trailers and all other logistic things. The tires would be delivered at the track itself.

Meanwhile, the new upgrades were all in, and since ...

... the same specifications of cars were used again next year, the benefits could also be reaped in a 4 months time for the 24 hour season opener.

Tuesday came, and after school, the boys headed for the track, around 30 minutes on bike, but biked to the team's headquarters and got a ride with the team. Luckily, their homework that day wasn't a lot.

"In around 2 days time, we will be racing for a title. How exhilarating," Max announced.

"Yeah, our title and the team's as well," Lewis added.

"Yes boys, and I have great faith and trust in you all," their race engineer, Bono said. Usually, a 10 hour race would be split between two race engineers working the radio taking shifts, a 24 hour race would need 3 or 4, teams choice.

Around 15 minutes later the car arrived at the track, a sprawling motorsports complex near their town.

"Here we are guys," Bono announced.

"Right, let's start setting up. The logistics already got here before us around 15 minutes ago," the boss said.

The team started setting their pit area and small hospitality area for guests, such as the other friends who were coming along Lewis, Max, and Nicolas. The hospitality was decent, and they were on par with Redware's.

It contained couches, seating, and refreshments such as water and iced tea for the mid-October sun that would be beating down on the track for a little over 6 hours.

Now obviously, a track full of expensive and sophisticated equipment isn't be open for anyone to go and do what they want, there was good security at the gates and patrolling the area, and people would need credentials to get in, or could face penalties and fines for violating the security codes put in place by the track authorities. Everyone was confident about security. The last major incident happened a few years ago, when teams found their car tires all slashed, sand in their fuel tanks, and brake lines cut. Thankfully though, no one got hurt but there were a few nasty accidents in the practice sessions and the race. They never found who this person was, so security was increased to protect the grounds.

“Hospitality is set up tomorrow on Wednesday, and now we are setting up our garage areas, they are around 75% done. Might be a little chaotic this weekend since there are more karts than usual for the season finale after I looked at the entry lists, so we've brought some extra spare parts,” Eric told Wolff.

“Tell the boys I said good work, extra sodas and sparkling apple cider on me for everyone if we win,” Wolff replied.

The karts were all unloaded in one piece, and placed into their garage areas. The Class II karts were nearby and the Mainpoint kart slots were right next to each other, increasing the simplicity and convenience. The hospitality areas for the team were bigger than the average team with a one class operation since Mainpoint ran operations across two classes, and had a codeshare agreement with another team in Class III as a team for future Mainpoint drivers.

After the day's work was done, everything was almost set up, the garage slots were almost done setting up, and work on the hospitality started as it was 25% done. Work would continue on Wednesday and be completed that day.

Wednesday came and went. Everything was set up, and it was now a waiting game for Friday. Practice sessions would start at the time Lewis, Max and Nicolas left school on a regular day, so they were pulled out of school during 7th period for the free practice sessions. 4 in total, 2 on Thursday, and 2 on Friday, and one practice sessions of those was after qualifying in the nighttime, as the latter stages of the race were run in night time with limited aluminations from the track lights, meaning that the drivers were to depend on their headlights for lights through the dark. Wednesday was uneventful, other than the fact Jean, Jayden, and Maverick as well as Rose made a surprise visit and hung out with their friends as the set up was almost finished.

The race would be at 12PM on Saturday.

“What are y'all doing here?” a surprised Nicolas asked.

“We came to see you all, and to get some good access here while it's still empty, because Saturday is going to be wild and way too crowded,” Jayden replied, “Where's Lewis and Max?”

“Over there,” Nicolas replied, and then went off to do some technical analysis for the race with the other engineers.

“Hi there!” Lewis greeted.

The friends all waved at each other, and spectated the work Max and Lewis were doing, calculations as well as some adjustments.

“Wow, so complex. Racing isn't a sport, it's just an activity,” Jayden stated.

“Wait, what?” a dumbfounded Max asked.

“Racing isn't a sport. Like, you're just driving a car basically, like push pedals and a steering wheel. C'mon!” Jayden countered.

“Hello? Are you aware how complex and hard it is?” Lewis questioned.

“Yeah, it's just a wheel, and pedals, like I could literally jump in that thing, strap myself in, and drive,” Jayden said.

“I agree, racing isn’t a sport,” Maverick added.

“Yeah whatever, you people really don’t understand the physics and scientific technicality of racing,” Lewis said, continuing to work on the kart.

“You’re using words like ‘scientific’, ‘complex’, ‘technicality’, and all of that stuff so we can be convinced?! Not happening Lewis, not happening,” said Jayden.

The group continued debating if racing was a sport, and ultimately, the argument ended without a decision, but was something interesting to talk about in the future.

Thursday came, and the only thing there was from this word onward was tension and excitement for who would walk away that weekend with the title, in the drivers and teams category.

After the trio were taken out of school by their parents, they were dropped off at the team headquarters not very far away, and the team transported everyone to the track for free practice 1 and 2.

“We’ll see how it goes, should be the superior team, though keep in mind that they might have tricks up their sleeve, like how we have,” Eric cautioned the drivers and the mechanics, “Honestly, I think Redware is expecting us to have upgrades for this race.”

45 minutes later, the drivers of Mainpoint were suited and booted, ready to rock and roll to tackle the free practice sessions. The main focus of FP1 was getting to grips with the track and the upgraded kart and race simulation towards the end. FP2 would be used for more race simulation and using FP2 for pit stop practice as well as driver swap practice.

“Lewis is going first. Then Max, and Nicolas after, got it guys?” Bono explained to them. The boys nodded and Nicolas gave a thumbs up. The other two would chill in the pit box while Lewis would get on track.

“Well this is comfortable,” Max complimented on the pit box that the team had more their drivers and crews. Mainpoint had good finance reserves, and invested in the performance of the karts as well as hospitality for the guests of their young drivers, crew and driver comfort in the pit lane and garage kart slot area as well for morale.

“Right Lewis, how does it feel?” Bono asked after the latter made a few laps on the track.

“Good, might want some rear downforce, rear is stepping out going onto the back straight,” Lewis replied.

“Okay then, will take note of that,” Bono said as he was writing down on his notepad he always had with him.

30 minutes later, Lewis came in, a pit stop was executed, and Max was the new driver, the trio had a ...

... relatively similar driving style.

“Okay Max, how is the kart, how is the kart?” Bono asked.

“I like it, I heard Lewis said that more rear downforce, so I’d say more adjustment on the rear wing. Engine is good. The boys and girls at the factory did a great job! Gotta say,” Max told his engineer.

“Okay, we’ll do that, so Nicolas will do one short stint, then we pit him and we adjust, then we run it like that for FP2 as well. Sound good?” Bono questioned.

“Yep, thats good,” Max told him, “Tell Nick about this too.”

“Well do,” Bono replied. This was an issue with the 77 and 91 too, both karts would like more rear downforce.

After free practice 1, the 44 topped the timing sheets with a 1:32.84, and the 77 came 2 tenths after, and the 33 Redware was 4 tenths behind. The 91 was a a few hundredths behind the 33 Redware, and the other Redware was two tenths behind the 91. Another car from Class I, the AutoNation Racing 60, split the Redwares, and other cars filled the bottom.

The Class II Mainpoints also dominated the timing sheets and all three were in the top three, while the ...

... Class II Redwares were very far off, with their highest car in 6th. Redware had plenty of work to do to find more speed.

Free practice 2 showed similar results. The Mainpoints dominated the top of the timing sheets, while Redware was clearly struggling. This gave confidence to the Mainpoint team about their chances, but were also cautious about the state of play since they were expecting a response from Redware from the race pace. The fastest lap from this session was a 1:32.25 from the 77 Mainpoint, and the 44 took second with a tenth off, and the 91 was closer to the sister cars, only 0.15 off the 44. Very close indeed. The highest Redware took 4th, and also finished 6th and 7th. Redware was very surprised of where their pace had gone and were dumbfounded. Everyone was surprised, including the Mainpoint boss.

“I don’t think their karts are like this for the whole weekend. They are better than this,” Wolff remarked.

“Oh yeah, for sure,” another senior engineer commented, “They got some tricks up their sleeve they ain’t revealing.”

Friday came, and free practice 3 was at 3:30 PM, while qualifying was to last from 5:30 PM to at least 7:30 PM due to the bigger field than a usual race.

Free practice 3 had good results. Mainpoint took 1st with the 91 with a 1:31.93, a 32.01 with the 44, and the ...

... Redware 33 found the pace to take third 3 tenths off, while the 77 Mainpoint took 4th, a few hundredths off the 33. The other two Redwares took 5th and 6th, while the rest of the order in Class I filled the rest of the spots. The rear wing adjustments for Mainpoint helped solve the downforce problems the drivers were talking about the day before, and everyone was satisfied that they could extract some extra lap time with the adjustments.

In the time between FP3 and qualifying, Lewis and Max's friends all showed up in support of them.

“How are you guys?” Maverick asked.

“Going great, we got good results in free practices, so we're feeling good for qualifying, which happens in around an hour,” Max replied.

“Yeah, our karts got top 5 all of the time baby!” Nicolas boasted.

“Well good luck on your qualifying guys,” Jean wished.

“Thanks, hang around, have some fun here, hospitality's all set up. They got our feeds from our GoPros on the karts, and some other data as well such as timing and position. All other stuff essential to a spectator there as well. Have fun!” Lewis told the others.

A half an hour later, Lewis and Max (only two ...

... drivers were needed for qualifying) suited and booted themselves for the qualifying session. First went the Class III karts, since they were the slowest by around 7 seconds a lap compared to a Class I, and around 4 seconds slower on the track compared to a Class II. Class III qualifying went by without a hitch, there were only yellow flags for someone who had blown a tire and the tire carcass was all over the surface, thereby creating a safety hazard to other karts.

“Hey look, our partners in that class took pole. Good for them, they worked hard over there for sure,” Lewis noticed.

“Oh yeah, that team is an up and comer, we put some money and resources into them, they might as well dominate the title next year in Class III. I’d put my money on them,” Max added.

“Yeah I agree, and you won’t be putting money anytime soon cause you’re a 14 year old,” Nicolas stated.

“I know,” replied the former.

Then it was time for qualifying in Class II, as the classes were split up into different qualifying sessions since there were more cars for the season finale. All three classes turning out laps at once at the limit would be too chaotic and dangerous. Of course, there is a limit on how many cars can be on track at once in the instances in races where there was a regular sized field, and in those races, Class I ...

... and II would do qualifying together. Sometimes it got a little dangerous.

For instance, last year, two Mainpoints got caught up in a whole mess at one of the sprint rounds last year. What happened was that a Class II kart was on a hotlap, and blew a tire. Now, that II kart blew a tire right in front of one of the Mainpoints, who was also on a hotlap. This caused the Mainpoint behind to slam into the rear that Class II and that latter had a destroyed fuel tank, as well as a damaged gearbox which had to be replaced, as well as damaged rear right suspension and drive. The Mainpoint came away with damaged right front suspension and steering issues. Anyway, it was able to limp back to the pits, while the Class II had to park up near a marshall's post. The other Mainpoint that got involved? That drove over a few bits of debris and blew a tire, and it was able to slowly but surely back to the pits for a change of tires and inspection. Lucky for this one, it had already completed a hot lap and was in a cooldown lap to head back to the pits. A little thing can cause a lot of chaos, as another Class II kart spun onto the grass to avoid the damaged Mainpoint and the destroyed Class II that originally started the whole mess.

Back to the main thing, it was time for Class I qualifying. In Class II, the Mainpoint operation in that class took 1-2-3, while Redware Class II's were way off ...

... the pace, only taking 7-9-12.

“Let's rock and roll boys,” Bono told them, “Good luck!”

Qualifying started, and the 44 got on track. Everyone spread out as they all started the qualifying runs. 20 minutes of tension ensued. Everyone was pushing themselves and their karts to the limit in the quest to grab pole position for the race the next day.

“He's coming to the line now,” the boss, Wolff remarked, “A 1.31.57? That is one heck of a lap!”

Meanwhile in the Redware pit box, they were stunned by the lap Lewis had just put in and had set the benchmark with 7 minutes left. He came down to the pits and was also amazed by the effort he just put in. They were confident that it might have been the lap of the year.

“Lewis, you might be surprised when you hear this,” Bono told him over the radio.

“What is it? That was a good lap I gotta say,” Lewis asked.

“It's a 31.57, and the 33 is 6 tenths off that. You are 3 tenths ahead of the sister 91,” Bono explained.

“That's what I'm about folks” an amazed Lewis said.

The curtain was coming to a close for qualifying, as all the karts and teams set out for one last effort to ...

... try to take pole. Max was a reserve driver for qualifying in case Lewis couldn't make it, and the former was glad that Lewis was available, as he knew that was a monster of a lap that he couldn't replicate.

All the karts crossed the line as the checkered flag flew on the front straight. Lewis wasn't able to go faster, but the effort he put in before was good enough for pole by 2 and a half tenths over the sister 91. The 33 Redware took 3rd, 3 tenths off the 44 Mainpoint. The 10 Redware took 4th, and the 77 Mainpoint took 5th. The 11 Redware rounded out the top 6 as the 8 other cars in their class fought it out below in the top 10.

The team was delighted at pole position, and having a friendly kart start alongside made things better. The race would start at a rolling start, all karts were lined up two abreast and only separated by classes, close up to each other's tailpipe, and would wait for the green flag as the leader would try to get the jump on the kart alongside in 2nd to try to lead the field into turn 1. Class I and Class II would start together, while Class III would start the race around 20 seconds later and race their own race.

“Great job you guys,” Jayden complimented afterwards at the hospitality area, as Max and Nicolas joined them, as well as Bono.

“Thanks man,” an exhausted but delighted Lewis replied.

“That was one lap for sure,” Jayden told him.

“Well at least your tires weren’t gone in qualifying. Unlike ‘other’ times,” Max joked as he made some air quotes.

“Well, we got some work to do, so guys can go and do whatever you need. See you all first thing on the morrow!” Nicolas told the friends.

The friends all waved and said “goodbye” as Lewis, Max, and Nicolas went to a team meeting at the pit boxes for some work with the engineers as well as a quick briefing with the boss along with all the other Mainpoint endurance drivers.

After the team drivers briefing. Lewis, Max and Nicolas went to the kart garage area for a briefing with their 2 race engineers.

“Forecast, rain, clouds, and sunshine. Very mixed. Should stop with an hour left, according to what we are seeing today,” Bono told his drivers.

“That's great,” Nicolas sarcastically said.

“So how long is the sun out before the clouds come in?” Lewis asked.

“Um, should be towards hour 6, or 4 hours left where the clouds roll in and rain comes down. Might be a bit chaotic so whoever is driving during that time has to be on their toes,” said Bono.

“We do have technical superiority it seems, though Redware found some pace during qualifying,” the other engineer, whose name was Jason, remarked.

“Good to know, thanks,” thanked the former.

“Rain, is it the heavy or moderate side of things?” questioned Max.

“From the latest forecasts we have, moderate to heavy, could be light to start things off with the rain, but it’s going to get worse, stays that way for an hour, so don’t be surprised if they call a safety car out for karts all over the place. Should improve with around 3 and a half hours left, and stop raining with an hour left. So we finish with a dry sky but a wet track,” Jason told him.

“Well that’ll be interesting,” remarked Lewis.

“Well boys, FP4 is later, so hang around, it’s going to be interesting,” Eric reminded the boys.

At 6:45 PM, FP4 started and this was nighttime running, the sun was going down, and this was some crucial practice as the sun would be directly in someone’s eyes at a ...

... few points on the track, making driving a little difficult and in a few ways, somewhat dangerous. FP4 ran for two and a half hours, a half an hour longer than the regular practice sessions held during the daytime.

During this session, the 44 Mainpoint did work for driving in the sunset and properly adjusting the settings for the rear wing to try to keep a competitive speed while making sure the kart wasn't in a bad shape for nighttime. Night brings a cooled track, as there is no sun, and the tire temperatures could be a little lower than daytime, making out laps very treacherous on cold tires.

After free practice 4, the Mainpoint Class I's were able to get proper adjustments in for nighttime running. The fastest lap of the session was a 1.32.05 by the 44 Mainpoint courtesy of Max. The 77 came second a tenth off, while the 33 Redware took third with a 1.32.45 and the 77 Mainpoint with a 1.32.51. The two other Redwares were behind the 77, very close behind. Redware seemed to extract some pace on Friday.

“We are looking good for tomorrow,” Wolff told the team at the practice debrief, “Keep it clean tomorrow and try to minimize the mistakes. We can take home the drivers title in Class I, so be your best when it matters most everyone.”

After everyone left the track and it was deserted when ...

... 9:30 PM rolled around save for security, Lewis' brother was exhausted from the day's events. He took a shower and took personal hygiene routines and was out cold not even 5 minutes after laying down in bed.

Lewis and Max gave their friends a quick summary of the day, and they were happy and excited for their guys. They were the current title holders, and were seeking to defend the crown.

The trio would have to wake up early at 7:45 AM to get ready to go to the track and get everything in order. They would need to be at the track by 9 AM for drivers briefing with the race director, and another team meeting. Warmup would be at 10:30 AM, and the green flag dropped at high noon.

The next morning, Lewis, Max, and Nicolas got a ride to the track by their parents. They all met up and got down to business and preparing for the race. In a matter of a few hours, the race would start with Lewis taking the green to lead away the field down to turn 1.

At the driver's briefing, the race director Edward told the drivers about rules and anything else that had to be covered.

“Track limits, the white line with the kerbs, no wheels touching it, that technically has to be off the track, so I wanted to go over that before any of you guys here asked.

And also, any places with gravel, same thing, white lines or off the track completely,” The race director said.

10 minutes later: “Any questions?” Edward asked, “None? Right then. Good luck everyone! We got a few titles being decided today, so we got plenty of action coming our way for the next 10 hours folks!”

At the team meeting, it was brief, a few words by the engineers and the boss, wishing all of the Mainpoint drivers in Class I and II well, and hoping that they were walking away with the title in 11 hours time.

Warmup was a few minutes after. Lewis took the kart out of the pits for some testing and a few laps for warm up before bringing it back to the pits for the race buildup. Jean, Jayden, Camila, Maverick and Rose were all with their friends in the pits, hanging out before all chaos broke loose in a half an hour's time.

Soon, the non essential spectators were all cleared into the team hospitality areas for the spectating areas on the stands.

“Time to rock and roll guys, just keep it clean and keep focused. That's going to be key,” Bono said to Lewis after taking him aside from the others for a quick chat.

“Yes, let’s hope this goes well. Just gotta avoid the mess in turn 1 if one ensues, we're in the front row so it ...

... shouldn't be too bad," Lewis said, "Well it's time for me to strap in and get down to some serious business here."

"Lets just hope no one's gonna drill up into your gearbox going into 1 Lewis," Max hoped.

Lewis strapped himself in for the 2 laps before the green flag dropped. The karts all drove out for the formation laps before the green flag dropped. They were all trying to weave around for tire temperature and waiting for the formation of 2 abreast for the start.

A lap and a half later, all of the karts were forming up for the start, very cramped and close as they were running around the bend of the last turn to get to the restart/start zone. Class III would form up to start around 20 seconds behind the Class I and II, who started at the same time and were all compact and crowded.

"Good luck mate, green flag's coming up in 4 corners. Remember, get the jump on the 91, they'll hold the Redwares while we go ahead," Bono told Lewis.

Lewis' 44 and the sister 91 lined up and Lewis got a good jump on their sister kart, taking the flag as the 91 followed close behind. The 33 Redware fell back a spot while it's sister Redware 10 took 3rd going into one. The Mainpoint 77 was 5th and the rest of the Class I order fought it out behind. Some chaos ensued as a Class II kart ...

... had been spun after another one contacted the rear going into 1 a little too hot with cold brakes. A few karts had to weave around to dodge the chaos. Meanwhile as Class I and II were racing away, Class III took the flag and raced away, little chaos for them as they got a clean start and a clean run through turn one, no one spun or crashed.

The 44 sped away from the 91 going into sector 2 as the 33 and 10 of Redware fought it out a corner behind. The Redware engineers were telling them to keep it clean and not do anything that would jeopardize the title chances of the 33, such as making a risky dive bomb on the first lap.

The first few laps went by without a hitch or anything notable. It was rather quiet as everyone settled into their race and there were only a few battles going around, most notably the 33 and the 10 of Redware, eventually, the 10 let the 33 by to try to catch the 44, who had the 91 to buffer. As a result of the battling, the 33 was 3 seconds behind the 91, and 7 seconds behind the 44 as the two Redwares were also held up by a slower Class II who had to pit for a flat tire after contact on the first lap.

The first hour was rather uneventful, the Redware 33 was stuck behind the 91 by 2 seconds, and the 44 Mainpoint was 7 seconds ahead of the 33. Meanwhile, the 77 Mainpoint who qualified 5th was catching the 33, meaning the latter had to take care of not losing the position to the 77, ...

... all the while catching up to the 91. Eventually, the first round of pit stops came, and the 44 maintained the lead after the stops cycled through. Running order after 1st hour, 44, 91, 33, 77, 10, 60 (AutoNation team), 11, and the rest of the order, 01 (Middler Motorsports, MM) 02 (MM) as well as a few others, making a total of 12 Class I cars. During the pit cycle, Lewis was the driver out, and Max was the driver in.

“Welcome to your first stint Max. Keep it clean and we’ll be fine. Alright?” Bono informed his driver.

“Yes sir. We should have the lead over the 91 upon exit right?” Max asked.

“Yeah, we should, they are pitting next lap or two, so they aren’t going to overcut us since the gap is too big it seems,” the former informed.

“Alright, that's good to know, thanks man,” Max replied.

“No problem,” said Bono.

The 44 got out on track with a lead of 4 seconds over the 91, and a lead of 9 seconds over the 33 Redware. A half an hour later, a full course yellow was called for debris from a puncture someone from Class III had. This bunched up the field and the advantage the 44 had was erased. 5 minutes later, it was restart time, the 44 got a good jump on the 91, who got a clean start as the field raced down to turn 1. The 33 was overtaken by the 77 upon the restart as the ...

... 11 was overtaken by the 01 Middler kart for P7. The 11 stayed put in 5th as the rest of the pack fought it out. Green flag running would not last long however, as a Class II kart experienced an electrical failure as there were no lights on and the kart had to pull over near a marshall post, bringing out another full course yellow. Upon the restart the running order in Class I stayed the same as the 44 sped away. The next cycle of pit stops came, and Max would stay put.

“Box box, box box,” was the command received by Max over the radio by Bono. Saying what the engineer said was a phrase to dive into the pits.

“Copy,” replied Max. The ensuing pit stop was good, no mistakes.

Meanwhile, a Class I kart pulled behind the wall due to something that seemed to be an engine problem, as they were running very slow and had speed similar to a Class II kart.

Pit stops were done, and the same running order continued. The Mainpoint's taking control while the Redwares had to play catch up in order to get back into contention. Meanwhile approaching hour 3, Lewis stopped by the friends at the team's hospitality area for a chat and to hang out. Lewis didn't expect to drive until 4 hours later when it was raining. All drivers of the teams had minimum drive times and maximum drive times, as well as a ...

... limit on how much one could drive during the first 6 hours for the purposes of safety, as this was down to fatigue and energy levels, which could create a safety hazard for the driver as well as the other karts around them.

“How are you guys?” he asked, taking a sip of an energy drink.

“We're good. Great job!” Jayden complimented.

“Thanks, so what are you all doing?” asked Lewis.

“Eh, just hanging around, playing games, using our phones. Stuff teenagers do,” Jean replied, “Oh my goodness, look at this Rose!”

Rose became very interested with Jean's content, and the girls were full of energy looking at something on social media.

“Okay,” remarked Lewis as he slowly nodded his head, “Anyway, I'm gonna hang around for a bit.”

“They got good stuff for the guests,” Maverick told Lewis.

“I wholeheartedly agree,” Lewis said as he took out a muffin from the fridge nearby as well as a bag of chips.

On track, nothing much happened other than an off track excursion for a Class III kart after nearly losing it under braking. Hour 3 came and went, then hour 4 arrived ...

...with 7 hours left, the pit stop cycle was rather interesting to say the least. Max brought in the 44 for a regular full service of 4 tires and fuel, plus a driver change, but the driver swap is where things went awry.

“Okay Max, you are the driver out during this stop, Nick will go in,” instructed Bono.

“Copy that, bringing her in now, I gotta run to the loo after I get out man,” was the reply.

The regular service with tires was a little difficult, the jacks went up, and the crew got to work, but during the driver swap, Nicolas accidentally tripped over the air hoses for the wheel guns for the wheel nuts, each tire had one nut in the center. He tripped and something might have broken, as the nut wasn't getting off the first time the crew member tried to take off the wheel. It was the right front tire that was the issue holding the kart in the pits.

“What the?” the tire changer questioned. He was confused, looked back at the hose, and saw some of the hose flying around due to a partially broken air line. “You got the spare wheel gun? I need it now, stat.”

Another team member behind the pit wall handed him a spare wheel gun to take out the wheel, costing more time than usual as the wheel nut wouldn't come off on the first few times.

“Nico you good bro?” the team member asked. This person was responsible for helping the driver in and out of the karts, doing their seatbelts and adjusting the seat if needed, such as a taller or shorter person.

“Yeah I’m good, let’s get in now,” Nicolas replied.

Nicolas was strapped in as fueling was almost done, only then did the right front tire come off the suspension, and a new wheel was put on. This had cost the 44 the lead as a result.

“All right Nicolas,” was a new voice on the radio, Jason had taken over radio duties and Bono was resting after a few hours of working, “Unfortunately, we have lost the lead because of the wheel nut and equipment issue, but we lost it to the 91, and the 33 is still behind, so that's the good news. I think you did trip over the wires though since we were just straightening them out when you tripped. No worries on it, so I’ll update you on the current stakes at play when you get out on track in regards to the 33.”

Nicolas pulled out around 4 seconds after the 91 pulled out of it’s pit stall, and listened to the message Jason said as he was cruising through the pits at the speed limit. Of course, a kart can’t just wildly go into the pits, a small and narrower road compared to the track, and if there’s full service going on if a kart loses control at high speed in the pits, lets just say that wouldn't end too well.

Upon getting up to speed, Nicolas struggled a bit on cold tires, having to turn over the wheel at a greater angle to turn the corner or risk going off the track. He got better lap time as the tires started to warm up. The 44 was 5 seconds behind after Nicolas' out lap. The 33 however, was only a second and a half behind, making the situation for Nicolas a bit interesting.

“Oh this'll be fun,” said Lewis, who was now in the pit box with the engineers as well as the boss, who set up his post with the 44 team for the race.

“It will be indeed, Nico's under attack sooner or later, the 33 has more tire temperature and might pounce,” replied Wolff, “Jason, can you also tell him that the 33 has an advantage of a lap's tire temperature?”

“Sure thing,” replied the headset clad pen chewer.

“Nicolas, the 33 is behind you as I said before, and they got an extra lap of tire temperature, so expect things to get a little spicy. Watch out because he might pounce on you,” warned Jason.

“Ok then, thanks for the heads up,” Nicolas said, just going across the line to start a new lap.

A lap later, the 44 came under attack from the 33, Nicolas was able to fend their championship rival off over time as the tire temperature increased on his Mainpoint 44.

“Okay, that’s good work there. New personal record, 34.57 Nick,” Jason informed his driver.

No reply was needed, as the 33 had to fall back to conserve some fuel to try to jump the 44 in the pit stop cycle, staying behind at a certain distance to try to make this plan work.

Back at the 44’s pit box, Lewis and Mika, who came over for a bit, were chatting about the race. All of the Mainpoint pit stalls were compact and located right with each other.

“Well this is getting interesting alright,” Mika said to his teammate.

“Yeah it sure is, it looks good for us now, but clouds are coming in soon, so that’s gonna spice things up here,” noted Lewis.

“The boys at the shop did a great job man,” Mika complimented.

“Word, we are freaky fast, just look at my lap from pole position. I did implement a slightly different line than last year, so I did improve, plus we had extra power this year,” Lewis said.

The chat continued for 15 minutes, the girl from the 77 joined them as well as another reserve driver who is in attendance.

Back on track, Nicolas was able to pull a gap of 2 seconds over the 33 and the 91 was still in the lead, but was running their race to keep the lead and hand it over to the 44 if needed. Hour 4 was coming to a close, as the midway point of the race rolled around.

“Well would you look at that, the sun's disappearing, and shall the dark hours arrive,” a concerned Wolff looked at the sky and said.

“Hey when are we expecting rain, I’m seeing the first clouds here,” Nicolas asked over the team radio.

“In around an hour, two hours at the most, it’s coming soon,” Jason answered.

On track, a big incident occurred. The AutoNation 60 was battling the 10 for 6th place, AutoNation was fighting it out to get 3rd in the teams championship, while the 10 was battling for points so it could try to take top honors in the teams category in Class I.

Going into the esses section of the track, the two karts were side by side, fighting it out to the death it seemed. As they were going through the last section of the esses complex, the 10 hit the kerbs a bit too deep and lost control, spun into the Class III kart the 10 and the 60 were lapping, which got turned and chaos ensued. The Class III kart received some damage from the 10 and 60 spinning ...

... but was able to continue, another Class II was unable to avoid the carnage and drove into the backwards facing AutoNation, taking terminal damage in the process. Some liquids were on the track as the 02 from Middler spun going through the area and received a puncture from the sharp debris lying around. The 10 wasn't able to continue and parked up a short distance away, while the Class II kart involved and the AutoNation 60 had to retire on the spot. This is what drivers have to deal with when there is multi-class racing with karts with different speeds.

“Heads up Nico, there's some carnage going on in turns 5 through 7 it seems, George just went through and nearly lost control, and they got some red yellow striped flags down there as well as double yellows,”

“Copy,” Nicolas replied. After passing through the carnage, he reported something else on the radio, “Jeese, the 60 has the front right suspension knocked off and plenty of frontal bodywork damage, and there's some chaos around here with some oil lying around.”

“Alright, we'll pass that on, and you are coming in when the pit lane opens for Class I and II. I will notify you when to come in,” informed the engineer.

Soon, Nicolas pulled in for the pit stop to begin 5 hours left of the race, this was going to be his last stint, and ...

... would get out of the kart so Max would drive as soon as the rain poured. Pit stops for the Mainpoint team were without a hitch and were smooth. The Mainpoint team was relieved that the 33 wasn't able to take the opportunity to pit before the FCY was thrown, which closed the pit lane until race control opened it up for service to Class III, then Class I and II. Anyone who got into the pits but wasn't servicing when the FCY comes out, they could still do full service, but if an FCY is thrown and a kart is has not entered the pits, the kart must do a drive through as service during FCY before race control allows it would result in a drive through penalty to be served 3 laps after the restart.

The Mainpoint drivers behind the pit boxes where the engineers and essential personnel sit such as the spotter were talking about the recent crash.

“Look at this,” pointed George to the others at the onboard feed for the Mainpoint 77, “That AutoNation is gonna have a hefty repair bill.” All of the karts were equipped with small GoPro cameras to be used for onboards by the teams and the people at the track.

“They are going to have to get that fixed in time for post-season testing, so those guys over there have plenty of work to do. You got to feel for them though,” the girl from the 77 said.

“Yeah that’s bad alright. Last time I had an accident of that magnitude was around, what, 3 years ago, 3 years ago Max?” Lewis added.

“Yeah, it was 3 years ago when we were racing in Class II,” answered Max.

“You look like you’ve ran a million miles today, get a Red Bull or something and relax for a bit,” Lewis advised.

“Okay, gonna go grab a drink, any of you want anything?” said Max.

“Can you get me a pop? Thanks,” the girl from the 77 asked.

“Okay, then, anything else?” asked Max for a final time. The others just nodded “no” and Max went on his way.

“Lemme rewind this to show something, essentially, that Class III kart got sandwiched between the 10 and the 60, and the ‘bread’, if you will, the ‘bread’ pieces spun while the ham was fine, somewhat ironic,” George noted.

“Crickets chirping,” Lewis sarcastically noted. George just rolled his eyes in a friendly fashion. Nothing negative or hostile.

The mess on track was cleaned up and the pack was waiting for the restart, the safety car accelerated and pulled into the pits, while the 91 slowed down to bunch ...

... up the pack so that the safety car could pull away and to try to get a jump on the 44, which also had to get a good reaction time or else it could be swallowed up by the 33 for 2nd position.

The restart was clean, no mess, no nothing. The 91 got a good jump, and so did the 44 on the 33. The top three filed into turn 1 and sped away through the esses as some overtaking happened behind them. The 91 held the lead as the 44 followed closely behind. The 33 fell back as they had moderate pace all weekend, compared to the Mainpoints, who were superb and didn't put a foot wrong so far all weekend.

At this point, the championship chances for Redware in the Class I teams category was looking bleak as the 10 had retired, the 11 was running in 6th after it fell back as it had to do a drive through since the kart didn't get into the pits in time before the yellow was thrown, and couldn't do service or be penalized with a drive through, costing more time on track.

“It seems Redware is going for the drivers title now. They lost one kart already, so I'm not surprised,” the boss told the engineers.

“Well we gotta be on our toes for the next four and a half hours,” Kevin, an engineering assistant remarked.

Jason's shift was coming to a close, as Bono would take over when it was around three hours left, where Max would do his final stint of the race and Lewis would jump in to finish the race, with the win hopefully.

Nicolas was pulling away from their chief rival and half an hour into his stint, pulled a gap of 5 seconds, the 91 was only three seconds up the road from the 44 and the gap would stay there and it didn't seem the 44 was making inroads to get the lead anytime soon. Maybe the rain could change the running order. Some action was happening down the order in Class I, the Middler 01 had overtaken the Redware 11 for 6th, making the championship hopes in the team's category for Redware even more bleak.

Plenty of battles were happening in Class II and II throughout the track, as the karts and teams were jockeying for position to get points and try to finish at the top parts of the class standings by season's end. Elsewhere, the 44 and 91 were running a quiet race as the 33 dropped to 4 seconds behind the 44, seemingly struggling to keep up with the Mainpoints in the dry track conditions.

The sunset was happening, not for too long though, as the ominous clouds started rolling in for the race's closing stages. Soon, the sun disappeared behind the dark clouds as came and the skies for a troublesome tense overcast. The teams were all using their weather radars and looking ...

... at the skies to see when the first drops would fall. Bono stepped off the elevated pit box where the kart's engineers sat as well as the boss for this race, and held a few papers of information in his right hand, as his left covered the remaining parts of the bright setting sun to take a good and personal look at the clouds. It seemed that the perfect storm was brewing for a dramatic end to the race.

“Oh no,” he remarked.

“Hey Kevin, how are we looking with the weather?” asked Eric.

“Around 30 minutes or so, then the heavens open up on us,” the assistant replied, constantly monitoring the instruments. The pit boxes for the teams were all tense, as it was only a matter of time.

Four and a half hours left, and this is when the heavens opened up with their lovely songs of beautiful destruction.

Chaos unfolded as a few karts slid off the track as the rain poured, a big incident at turns 10a and 10b occurred as a kart from Class II slid through the kerbs on the inside, effectively cutting the corner, and took out another Class II and a Class III that was being lapped, and two others spun off into the gravel as the slicks had no treads. This was when pit lane went crazy. Everyone had been expecting the chaos, just who could capitalize the most was the question.

“Box Nicolas, be careful on entry there,” Jason commanded.

“Copy, they got a mess down at 10a and 10b bro,” Nicolas told him.

“Yes we know, hurry though, because they might throw the yellow right before you officially come in. The 91 isn’t going to make it as it just crossed the line, and the 33 is too far back,” informed the engineer.

Nicolas was able to box for wet tires and more fuel, as Max got in and Nicolas got out after doing a triple stint. He was exhausted for sure, but still had some energy left.

The 91 had passed pit road by the time the accident occurred partly due to a strategy mishap, and the 33 was too far back, they tried beelining for the pits but it wasn’t successful, and had to drive through the pits without service. The 77 was also not able to pit because they were halfway through the track when the yellows came out. There were only 2 other karts in Class II who were one lap down that got to pit because of where they were when the incident happened, this was going to be a long cleanup for sure. The other Redware, the 11 spun into the gravel at turn 9 trying to avoid the mess and lightly hit a Mainpoint Class II that had spun off due to lack of grip, on slicks with no treads in the pouring rain. Someone could literally take a shower outside.

“Great, we lost the Class II #3, though they will get recovered to the track again, at least the #4 is running first, good thing they were able to pit,” Wolff said.

“Yeah the 4 is going to go down a few laps while they get the karts out. Essentially, their race is ruined. They were running good though in 3rd in their category, but at least their 2nd place in their standings are locked in,” Eric added, “What a shame.” He was shaking his head with non-critical displeasure.

Pit road opened a lap after the FCY was deployed for the Class III karts for service, then Classes I and II, everyone in Class I had to pit for wets except for the 44 and the two lapped karts in Class I, not including the one that that pulled behind the wall for service after engine troubles.

Because of the full course yellow for the accident in turn 10a/10b, the 91 fell back to 3rd after Redware pulled the stops on the 33’s pit stop to take 2nd. Mainpoint knew the challenge was from here on out. Max would drive two stints until around 2 and a half hours left, then Lewis would come in to finish.

“Yeah, they want to give us a run for our money alright,” Eric said.

“Then to the underworld with it then,” the boss defiantly said.

The clean up took around twenty five minutes to clear all the debris and fix some tire barriers that had been displaced with another accident down in turn 1. Some karts had to retire, while others were able to be recovered by the marshalls onto the track, albeit a lap or two down.

“Restart in a few corners, keep it clean,” Jason told Max.

The restart ensued, and the 44 kept the lead while the 33 and 91 were fighting over 2nd, as the 77 soon joined the fight to try to outnumber the Redware kart. The Redware 11 dropped back to 7th due to their earlier mishap in regards to the caution and pit stops. In 5th and 6th was the 01 and 02 kart of Middler and the rest of the pack fought it out.

The rain poured and Redware seemed strong in the rain, as they were pulling away from the 91 and 77 with a gap of one and a half seconds by the time 3 laps were done after the restart. This was a little concerning as the 44 was fast, but the gap was closing a little bit to half a second, and the fight was on with four hours left. This continued for around another hour, though the 44 was in the lead, and the 91 and 77 were left driving with each other three seconds behind the Redware 33, and the formers had to drop back due to struggling in dirty air behind the 33.

“We are going to pit Max in one lap,” Eric told Jason, who then relayed this onto Max. This a change in ...

“Box box, box box,” was the command Max received over the radio to pit for new wets and a splash of fuel with around three and three quarters of an hour left. This was a strategy gamble the team took with all three all the Class I karts. Roll the dice and see what lady luck deals.

Pit stops for the three karts were without a hitch. Bono was now working the radio for the 44 as Jason was finished for the day. The plan was that the Redware team would run on the stop every hour strategy for new wet tires and fuel, and continue, the Mainpoint strategy was pitting the karts off cycle to be different from the Redwares, as they were trying to have a faster lap time now with fresher tires by pitting earlier than the normal stop cycle, and also spend less time as in a few seconds on pit road for fuel, since the tank still had some to spare given that they were only running for around forty five minutes compared to a full stint of around an hour. This was a gamble that was somewhat risky, but was worth taking as Redware now had a rocket engine in rainy conditions.

Redware saw the strategy the Mainpoints were now putting up, and knew that they could be in trouble later on at the latter parts of the race.

The rain poured and poured, and around twenty minutes after the restart with around three and a half hours left, another incident at the esses happened as two karts...

... from Class III spun and were stranded in the grass, prompting a full course yellow to be thrown for marshalls to recover the karts onto the track. Fifteen minutes later, the green flag was waved as the field restarted under the floodlights of the pouring rain of the cloudy night.

Lewis was preparing for his stint to finish the race, and paid a visit to the friends, who were in the Mainpoint hospitality area. Luckily, this area was covered by the elements with a very durable tent roof, and clear side covers which protected from rain traveling into the hospitality area via wind.

“Very comfortable here, eh?” Lewis asked.

“Yas,” replied Jean.

“You guys still going to win the race?” asked Maverick.

“Yeah, we should, because we’re off strategy compared to the Redwares, so we think this should give us an advantage later on,” answered Lewis.

“Well good luck!” Maverick hoped.

“Thanks man, hope you are enjoying the hospitality here you all,” said Lewis.

“They got good things to eat with the snacks and light meals. Credit to your guys,” Rose complimented. Lewis nodded at her comment and went on his way to change ...

... into his racing overalls.

Lewis went to Jason at the pit box for a quick briefing before he jumped in to finish the race.

“Alright, you are taking the reins ‘till the end,

Around two and forty minutes left, Max pitted and got out as Lewis hopped in to finish the race. This was now the time period where a normal sprint race would start, and this was a sprint to the finish indeed. Pit stops were coordinated and clean, and Lewis got back out two seconds behind the Redware 11 now running in fifth. as it hadn't pitted yet, and would fall back down the order after the pit stops cycled through for the actual running order.

All of the Class I karts pitted and the real running order was figured out after the regular stopping Redwares pitted, the 33 was in the lead, and the Middler karts of the 01 and 02 were on the same strategy, nothing fancy needed for them, they were looking to finish in third in the teams championship.

Running order with two and a half hours left in Class I, Redware 33, Middler 01, 02, Mainpoint 44, 91, Redware 11, Mainpoint 77, another two karts with the Leopard Motorsports, the 18 and 19 on the lead lap albeit twenty five seconds down from the 33, two others behind the 19 slugging it out, and another kart 15 laps down after it pulled ...

... behind the wall with an engine issue early in the race, the rest had either retired or were behind the wall. There were 15 Class I karts in today's race. The 77 had fallen back during their stop behind the 11 as it got held up in traffic on the in lap, costing time. The Redwares and Middlers were yet to pit, but Mainpoint would take the lead when they did. The strategy for Mainpoint was to try to catch the Redwares with older tires at the end, and try to use the advantage of lighter fuel load and fresher tires (since the theory was that Mainpoint would pit with forty five minutes left for a dash to the line) to try to take the lead from the 33, who would stop with a little under an hour left and take on an almost full load of fuel, and would also have more tire wear than the Mainpoint 44 at race end as it would be running longer on the same set.

“This strategy gamble should pay off,” a crew member back at base informed the Mainpoint crews at the track.

“Copy, thanks man,” the chief strategist, James responded.

“Are we looking good?” Wolff asked.

“Yeah, team back at HQ ran a few simulations, they show that Lewis should catch the Redware at around, I'd say twenty five minutes, and should pull the overtake with around fifteen left, the 91 could catch him as well, though it's going to be close,” James explained.

“This will be dicy indeed,” Wolff calmly said, popping a cracker in his mouth as he said.

The race was now a strategy gamble with the Mainpoint and Redware teams rolling the dice to test their luck. Redware was looking at trying to salvage the driver’s title as hope was all but lost in the team’s category, given the 11 was running in a low position, the Mainpoints were running in good points positions, and the 10 had retired after the “ham sandwich” accident.

“Box box, box box,” was the message Lewis received. He was instructed before to keep a decent pace behind the Redware 33 and not push too much to save some fuel, and trying to fight the Redware with around two hours left was a little purposeless as Lewis would get caught up in dirty air, and fall back even more.

The next round of stops came, the Mainpoints pitted with around an hour and forty left, as they fell behind the Redware’s upon exit. The 77 was able to get past the 11, who had an off track excursion after contacting a Class III car it was lapping, forcing the 11 to pit for a puncture, and they topped up on fuel as well, dropping the 11 down to eighth. Only the Mainpoints were running off the regular strategy, everyone else was doing the one hour stop idea.

The Redware 33 pitted after with fifty five minutes ...

... left for its final stop, falling behind the yet to pit Mainpoint 44 in the process. Lewis would have to play catch up in the rain using the tire and weight advantage to his gain. The 33 would be theoretically struggling with worn wet tires towards the end, compared to the fresher tires on the 44.

A few battles were going on in Class II, as the top three in that category were fighting it out for the win, there were others in fifth and sixth in that category dueling for the position. The drivers would have to do this lap in, lap out, and keep in mind, these are young adolescents. Class I consisted mostly of drivers in the age range of twelve to sixteen.

“Push hard now Lewis, the 33 has just pitted, and he is now behind and might be stuck in traffic, we could capitalize on this,” hastily informed Bono.

Lewis put in a few good laps around the track to try to capitalize on the clean air while he was running out front before stopping for the final time.

“That's our Lewis,” Jayden happily said, looking at some telemetry from the timing screens that spectators could view.

The three girls were chatting away, paying little attention to the race until Camila got involved in the conversation whether racing was a sport or not. Max was with his friends during this time.

“Bro, are you for real? Racing is a sport, okay? It is a ‘competition’. We go out there and drive our butts off to win and have glory. We compete out there with twelve to fifteen other karts from our same category depending on the weekend, and we strive to win, unless something bad happens,” Max ranted to the others.

“You just sit in a car, push two pedals, and use a steering wheel,” said Jayden.

“That’s a basic thing, but we have more intricate and delicate details we use to get the best performance,” Max explained, “Plus, I’m pretty I’m pretty sure I would beat you, just the two of us, head to head qualifying.”

“Ok then, that's great,” replied the former, “Jean what do you think about all of this?” His twin sister just put her hand out to his face as a sign of ignoring him, still talking to Rose about other stuff.

“Jayden’s got a point here, it’s really easy, like you could take a car and drive, then that could be considered racing,” Maverick added.

“Yeah, I could be ‘racing’ by riding in the car when my parents drive,” Camila chimed.

“I don’t think you guys get the point, we are racing in a sanctioned and professionally organized championship with actual prizes and competition on the line here,” said Max.

“Ok Max, ok,” Maverick coolly replied.

“Yeah, we don’t go out there for nothing folks,” argued Max, “Anyway, the race is coming to a thrilling end here, let's sit down and watch if we can win.”

The other two girls, Jean and Rose, just chatted on and used their phones, completely oblivious to the other conversation and texting a few other friends. They weren’t bored though, having non-racing friends at the track for company.

Back on track with forty five minutes left, it was go time, the perfect stop was needed here by the crew of the 44.

“Box this lap, pit confirm please?” Bono asked.

“Confirm, box this lap,” was the reply.

Lewis came in for the final stop. Around a minute later, the 44 was cruising down pit road at the speed limit. The pit crew for the 44 had pulled off a perfect stop that was efficient. The Mainpoint team anxiously waited to see where Lewis would end up on track, hopefully not stuck in traffic.

“Well let’s hope for the best,” James nervously said. No one knew if this strategy would definitely work, only thinking and theories persist until the real results come, literally.

Lewis emerged from the pits onto the wet track. ...

... The rain had become light and was about to stop in around a half an hour, a little longer than predicted since the storm system over the area had moved further north. The track complex received more rain as a result.

After his outlap, Lewis was eleven seconds behind the 33, and would have to drive the wheels off of his kart in order to get a crack at overtaking the Redware for the lead of the race as well as the driver's championship. Everything depended on this stint.

Fifteen minutes went by with half an hour on the clock, the gap decreased down to around seven seconds, Lewis undoubtedly was catching the 33 as Redware became more worried each lap, they had placed their best driver in the 33 to finish the race, and Lewis had a brick wall in his way of the title. The Redware 33 was now starting to feel the pain of worn tires and being stuck in traffic, while the 44 was lucky enough to breeze through the congestion at easy spots on the track.

“Twenty five minutes, gap down to four seconds, the 33 is stuck in a traffic jam of Class II's battling in their category,” Bono informed Lewis.

The Mainpoint 44 was taking advantage of a lighter weight and getting a little lucky with the traffic to run down its title rival.

Redware was now very uneasy about their title chances and was now instructing the 33 to push hard as it could, as the 44 was closing fast by around a quarter of a second a lap.

Twenty minutes left, the fireworks have been placed, and the switch is set, the 44 has caught up to the 33 and a battle of the best of the best, only with the Mainpoint's with the advantage of a lighter car and more tire life. The sister 91 had stayed close behind the 44 and was also ready to pounce on the 33 for a higher position after the 44 was able to pass the 33, if they were able to that is.

“Woah, this is going to be interesting,” Jayden commented back at the Mainpoint hospitality area. The friends were now tracking the timing screens and Lewis' onboard as everyone was anxiously waiting for the next thing to happen, if both cars were to retire right this moment, then the 44 would win as they came into the race with the championship lead. Lewis wasn't keen on the championship fight ending in a crash, he was more into the battle for the prestige and keeping things clean for all parties involved.

The friends watched as the 44 and 33 dueled it out for ten straight minutes. The 44 tries going down the inside at turn one, doesn't work, going around in an audacious move through the esses, doesn't work and costs Lewis time, regroups himself to catch back up again and continue battling. The two karts produced a show for the people ...

... at the track watching who would become the Class I champions this year. With ten minutes left, Lewis made his move, around the outside of the 33 at the esses after the latter was slowed down while lapping a Class II kart, the 33 fought back though, and retook the lead going onto the back straight. These types of battling continued.

“Man this is a battle for the ages,” Maverick stated.

“Word,” Max said.

With seven minutes left and on the next lap, Lewis tried another move going around the 33 at the final corner going onto the pit straight. It worked and the move stuck, the 33 tried to take back the lead, but couldn't. Everyone was on their toes to see what would happen next.

The 33 dive bombed down the inside at the turn right before going onto the back straight, and the Redware kart took the lead, not before Lewis pulled in behind for the slipstream, and used the advantage of the 33 ahead of him punching a hole in the air for faster speeds, and went down the inside at 10a and 10b. He was able to pass him for good, as the 33 kept fighting back but to no avail.

When the 44 passed the Redware kart for good, the 44's pit box and the Mainpoint pit boxes as well as the hospitality area erupted into cheers. Lewis would now have to hold onto the lead for the next six minutes.

“That's what I'm talking about!” Wolff exclaimed as he gave James a high five. The strategist was also pumped up.

“That was exhilarating!” said Jason. Bono however, kept a straight face as the attention now shifted to the 91 battling the 33 over 2nd. Redware now knew that their title chances were slipping away by the second.

“C'mon, c'mon, you can do it,” Jason hoped as the 91 was battling the 33. One lap later, the Mainpoint 91 had overtaken the 33 for second, and Redware's title chances seemed to be all but gone. The 77 was too far back to get involved and try to take the final podium spot.

With two minutes left, the 91 pulled off the move to overtake the 33 for second. This was met by cheers in the Mainpoint pit boxes.

Max, Jean, Jayden, Maverick, Rose, and Camila all went to the trackside to watch the end of the race, as Lewis was now bringing it home to clinch the title for the season. The next five minutes were flawless from Lewis. The track was now drying and some karts were struggling for grip with treaded tires. Lewis however, was unmoved by the challenges and drove it home to the finish.

“Final lap, final lap, bring her home now,” Bono told Lewis.

Jean pulled out her phone and started recording the track and the finish line, as well as the final turn, waiting for Lewis to appear and cross the finish line for the title. Everyone is very relaxed at this point.

A lap later, Lewis pulled onto the main straight, and the Mainpoint team were cheering as he crossed the line, swerving close to the right side wall dividing the pits and the track and flashing the headlights as a gesture of celebration. The 91 crossed the line two seconds after.

“Get in there Lewis, we are the 2021 season champions in both driver’s and team’s categories!” a relieved Bono informed Lewis.

“Great job team, great job this year everyone! The kart was absolutely fantastic today! Woo!” an excited and exhausted Lewis celebrated.

“Lewis, it’s Wolff, absolutely fantastic driving. You are the best of the best. We are the driver’s and team’s champions this year!” the boss said to Lewis.

“Ha ha, thanks boss, great work this year too,” Lewis replied.

Lewis’ friends and co-drivers celebrated an epic finish to a great year for the Mainpoint team. Everyone at the Mainpoint HQ were all delighted as their strategy gamble had paid off in the end.

“Great job guys!” Jayden exclaimed.

“Yes, it is a great job indeed,” Max complimented. Nicolas as well as the friends were all celebrating the victory.

The Redware boss came over to Wolff and they had a few words, with the Redware team principal congratulating their counterpart on the championship victories, and Wolff wishing Redware the best for the future. The relationship between the two teams was very friendly.

Soon, Lewis pulled into the pits after the cooldown lap. He was greeted by the excited team and his friends celebrating the championship victory.

“Woo hoo! Great job Lewis!” The friends cheered and were all in great moods at the delight of their racing friends winning the title.

“You did a fantastic job mate!” shouted Max. Lewis and the former hugged each other in a gesture of teamwork and friendship paying off.

“Oh gosh, two time champions baby!” Lewis cheered. He also hugged his younger brother.

The team celebrated as the champions trophy was presented as the team celebrated late into the night, where everyone finally went home at 12 AM after the race finished at 10 PM. The offseason is now coming.

In the days after, the team was still jubilant from their victory and now started to prepare for the next season, which was only three and a half months away.

Some might say that man and machine can be pushed to the brink and the limits to achieve great things.

At the race start, this was just all a wonder. Now, that wonder has become a reality.

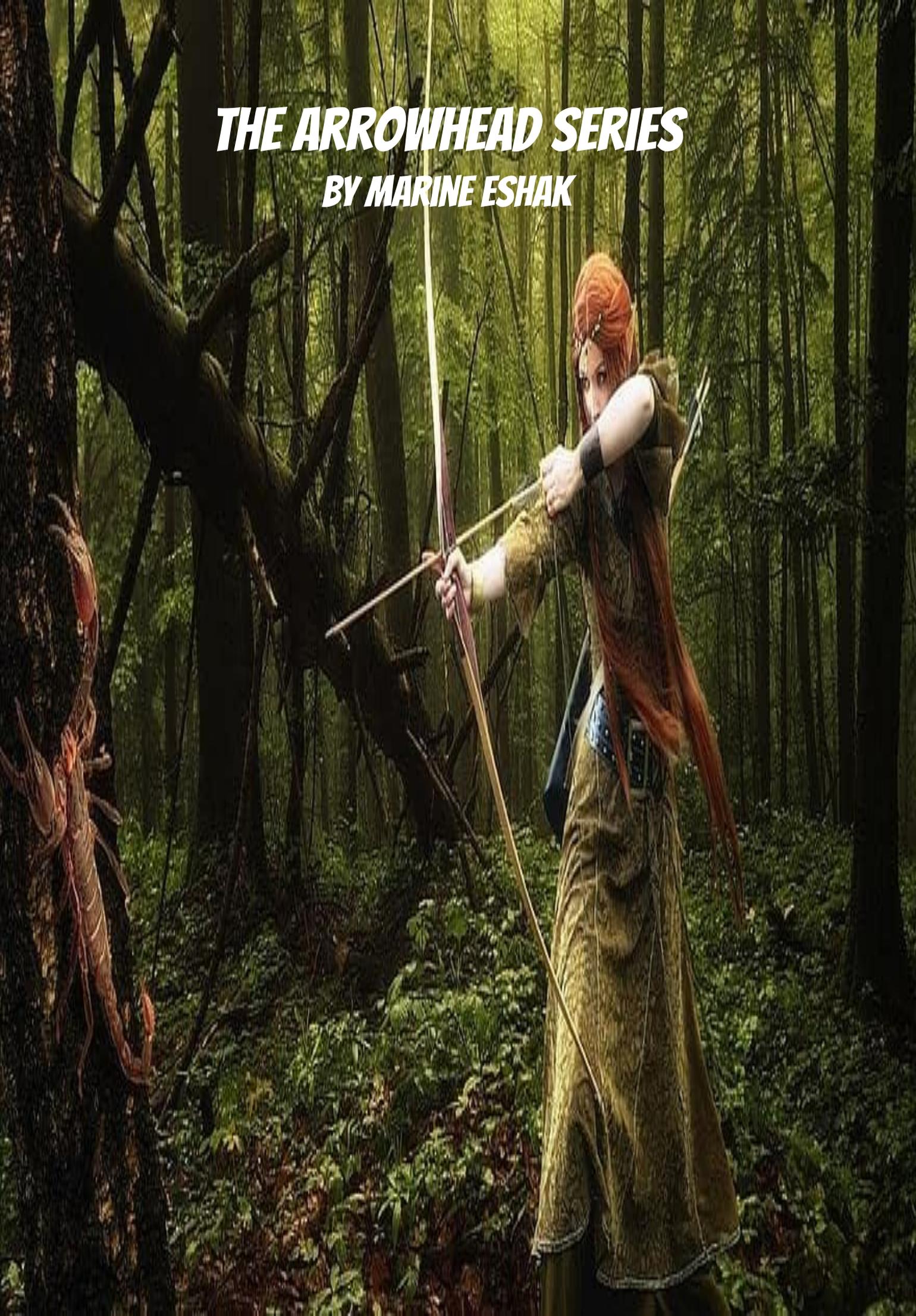
A quick word: To sign things off, here's a quote from my favorite Formula One driver, Lewis Hamilton.

“For all the kids out there, who dream the impossible. You can do it too man!”

- **Lewis Hamilton**, 2020 Turkish Grand Prix after winning a record equaling 7th Formula One World Championship.

THE ARROWHEAD SERIES

BY MARINE ESHAK



“Can I help you sir?” She asked.

“I’ll ask what I ask, and you do what you do.” He said.

“Yes sir.” Arrowhead said, scared.

“Give me your power stone.” He ordered.

“No!” Arrowhead screamed.

“Or else.” The man said.

“Or else what?” Arrowhead inquired.

Sinema had heard Arrowhead’s screams and came to help her sister.

“Leave her alone, or I’ll finish you off!” Sinema yelled through the trees.

“Oh look what we have here, another freak.”

“Hey, don’t call her that!” Arrowhead screamed.

The man took out a bow and arrow, and pointed it at Sinema. Her face froze, as she looked into the very point of the steel head hanging off a string. Arrowhead tried snatching the bow out of the man’s hand, but his arm jerked backward.

“I’ll repeat myself, give me your power stone!” He yelled sternly.

“Don’t!” Sinema yelled.

“Very well.” The man said.

He tied Arrowhead to a tree and took a look at Sinema.

“I won’t let a little twerp get in my way of victory!”

With one word, he fired an arrow towards Sinema.

“No!” Arrowhead yelled.

She tried freeing herself from the tree, but the knot was too tight. She looked over at Sinema, just as the arrow ripped through her stomach. Blood splattered on the nearby trees, just as she fell to the ground.

“Sinema!” Arrowhead yelled through the air.

The man walked over to her body, and scraped the power stone from her chest. He took a glance at Arrowhead and walked away calmly, into the deep expanse of the forest. She looked around and found a rock with a jagged edge, and she managed to pick it up with her feet, and undid the knot attaching her legs to the tree. Finally, she wiggled free and ran over to Sinema.

“Sinema, please wake up!” She yelled.

But there was no response. The howling wind muffled the slight noises of leaves running through the forest ground. Her hair flipped and tossed in the breeze. Sinema’s eyes opened the very slightest and her mouth worded a small phrase.

“Remove the arrow.” She whispered.

“No Sinema you’ll bleed out!”

“Do it.” She ordered.

With frosted tears in her eyes, she gripped the arrow and ripped it out of her stomach. The gaping hole left there leaked dark red fluid onto the ground.

”Sinema no!”

Deep inside of her, Arrowhead knew her death was inevitable without the power stone. Her heart could not function properly without it. Arrowhead covered the hole in her stomach with a leaf and the rope from earlier.

“Sinema, you are going to be fine.” Arrowhead said, just as her mouth gaped open.

“Sinema! No!”

It was too late, she ran out of blood and her life was over. Arrowhead let out an agonizing scream through the forest, just as the birds above flew into the air, startled by the noise.

That night, Sinema was taken to a memorial site, where she was buried in a stunning gold coffin.

“Only the best for her.” Arrowhead had told the man at the coffin shop.

A red robin landed on her burying site, but Arrowhead paid no attention to it. she walked away when she couldn't bear it anymore.

“I will avenge you, Sinema.” Arrowhead murmured, just as an arrow plunged into her back.

The Meadow of Happiness and Calmness

by

Eklavya Gaholt

Silence.

She felt nothing but emptiness. She remembered her mother giving her to the scientists. She knew she was different. But why was she in this meadow?

She was slowly forgetting everything. Even her own name.

She got up and began to walk, maybe she could find a way to leave this meadow.

“HEY! What do you think you’re doing?” said a voice.

She shrieked and turned around to attack whatever was talking to her. But there was no one there.

“Wanna be best friends?”

She looked down and saw a little teddy bear. It was floppy and lifeless. Yet, it was talking.

“W A N N A . B E . B E S T . F R I E N D S ?”

She looked at the bear in confusion, she had forgotten a lot but she still knew that toys could not talk.

Nevertheless, she began to talk, “U-um, sure?”

Her voice was raspy and it sounded very parched.

“Great! My name is Sir Teddington the Third! What about yours?”

She began to blush out of embarrassment, she had forgotten her own name. She began to think about something, anything to name herself.

She looked down at her t-shirt and saw some words.

Experiment Zero.

She began to speak. “M-my name is Zero.”



“

Quotes/Hashtags

”

Vanya Anand

“Smile always even when life goes sideways”
-Tamara Turner

“Do something now. Time waits for no one”
-Tamara Turner

“Never Give Up”
-Samia Naveed

“You do not find the happy life. You make it.”
- Vanya Anand

“Think happy Be happy”
- Maira Naveed

“Stop snacking on others’ rights and freedom.
That’s what food is for.”
-Mustafa Muhammad Amjad

“My past doesn’t define me. My innocence is
not ignorance.” -Aaradhyaa Vats

“ Avoid being something you’re not.”
-Aaradhyaa Vats

“If you believe in something so much you would
search for it until the day you die, it IS worth
it.” -Aaradhyaa Vats.

"Family comes first" -Aaradhyaa Vats

"Love means waiting"-Aaradhyaa Vats

"You don't drown by going in the water. You drown by staying there."

-Aaradhyaa Vats

"If there is one thing I've learned so far it's that you can't give up on your family. No matter how tempting they make it."

-Aaradhyaa Vats

"Forget the future. Live your life."

-Aaradhyaa Vats.

"Failure is not the opposite of success... More like a part of it." -Aaradhyaa Vats

"Don't be so serious. If you are you will live a very boring life. Only be serious sometimes." -Aaradhyaa Vats

"I know it's Monday but it's a new day of a new week. And anything can happen."

-Aaradhyaa Vats.

"The life in front of you is more important than the life behind you." -Aaradhyaa Vats.

"Don't follow your dreams. Chase them."

-Aaradhyaa Vats

#I'mLimitedEditon

- Andrea Kumah

#KeepSmiling

- Vanya Anand

#Bombers

-Samia Naveed

#NeverGiveUp

-Samia Naveed

#KeepMovingForward

-Maira Naveed

#LifeisPrecious

-Aaradhya Vats

being different isn't a bad thing



it means
you're brave
enough to be
yourself
- Luna Lovegood

Vanya Anand

Young girls are told you have to be the

Delicate

princess

Hermione

taught them

that

they

can be the



Warrior

Anand

-Emma Watson

Vanya Anand

The weak do not exist, only the strong

The strong survive.



We

Survive

Temí Taiwo

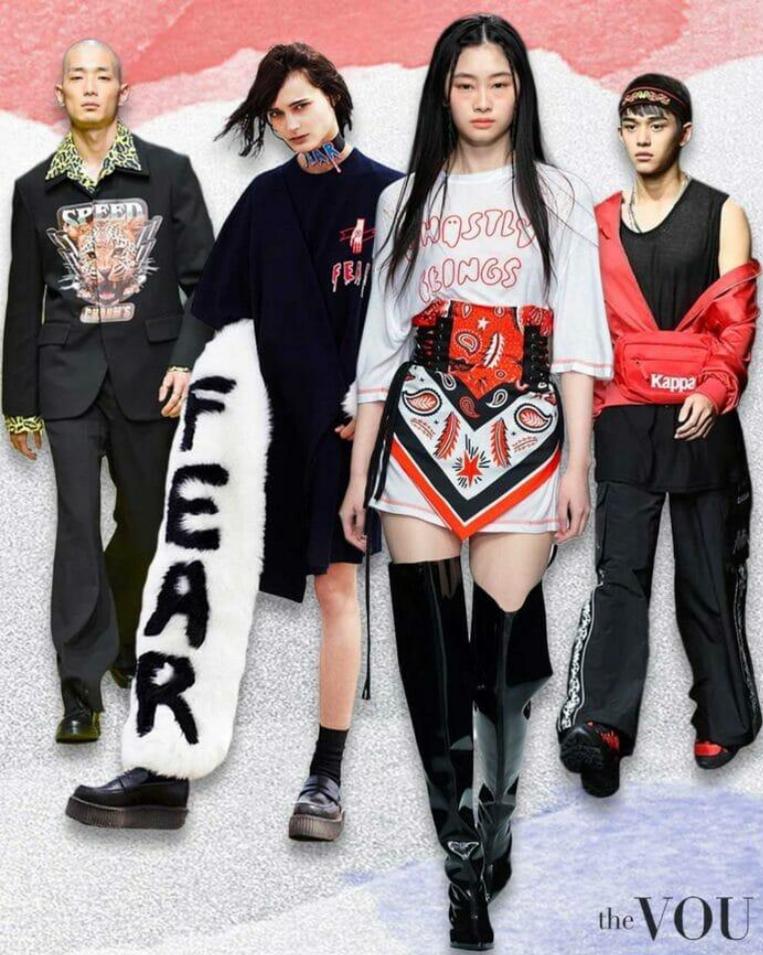
Fashion outfit Collages



**Samia Naveed
& Vanya Anand**



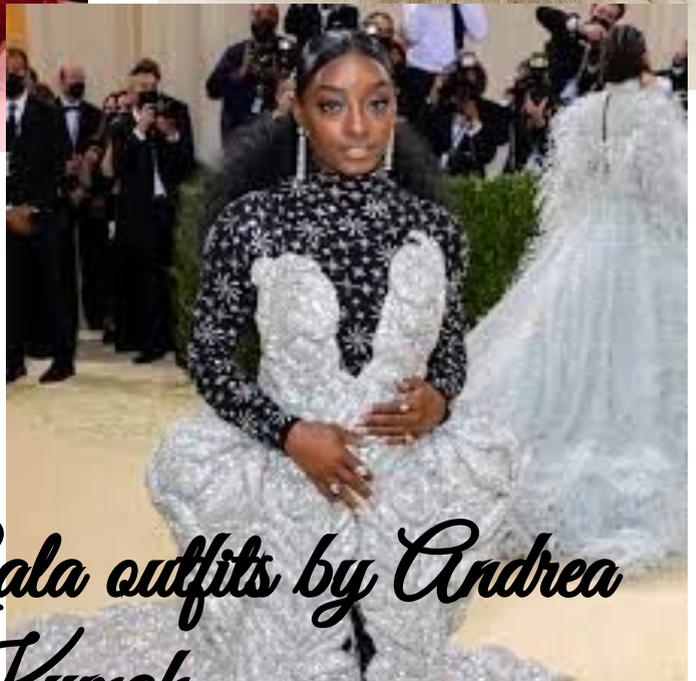
**A Ghana Outfit Collage
by Andrea Kumah**



Korean Fashion
By: Temi Taiwo



**Traditional Indian
Fashion Collage**
By: Samia Naveed



Gala outfits by Andrea Kumah



Middle Eastern Clothing Fashion
By Samia Naveed

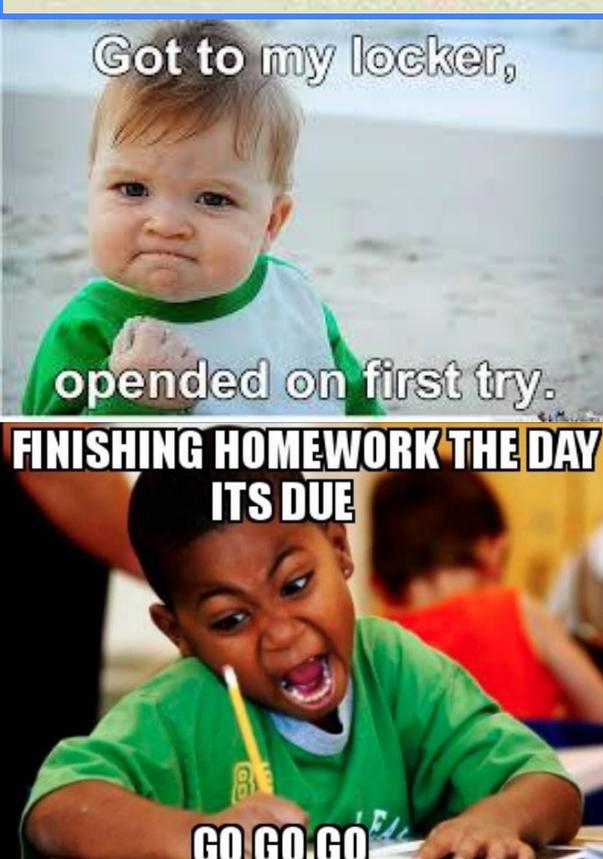
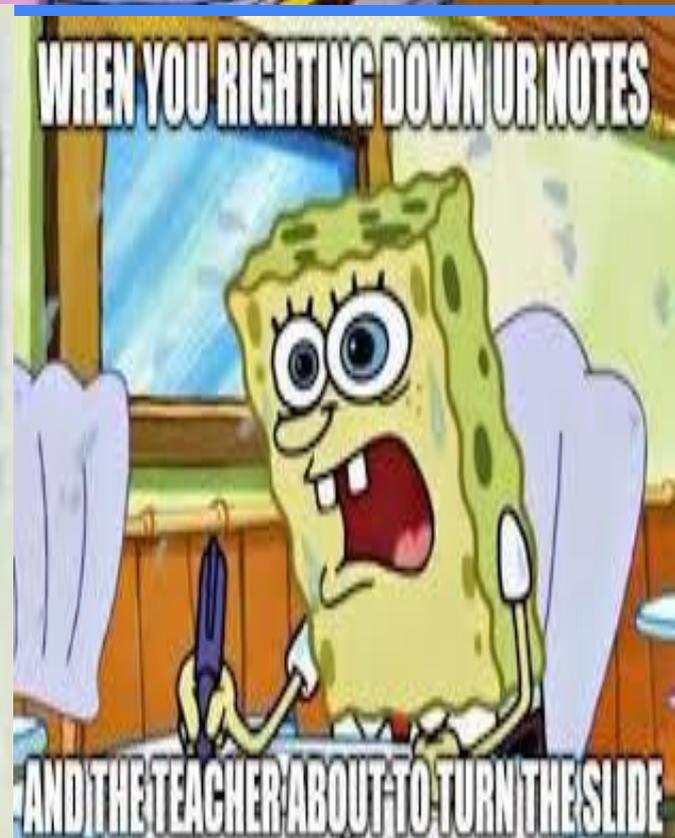
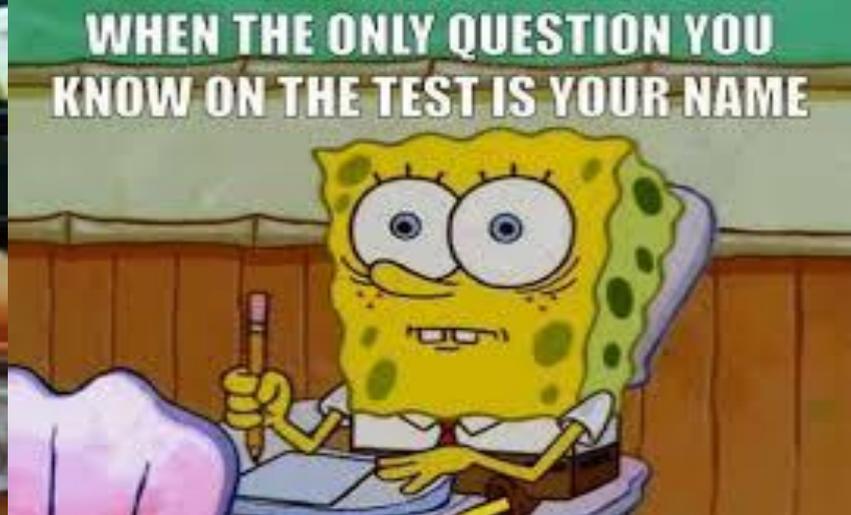


Paris outfit collage by Andrea Kumah.

Mememes



A place to get a good laugh.



When u enter wrong class



CHILDREN MUST ALWAYS WEAR A SEAT BELT

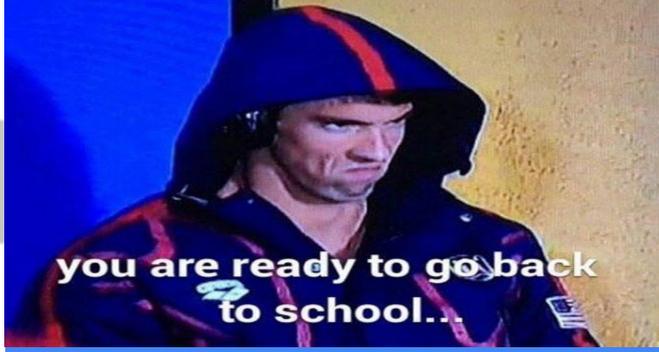


When your teacher uses your assignment as an example for what to do right



EXCEPT IF YOU PUT 50 OF THEM IN ONE VEHICLE

When someone asks you if



you are ready to go back to school...

When you close the fridge door and hear some stuff fall and leave it for the next person



SHOUT OUT TO OLD PEOPLE FOR

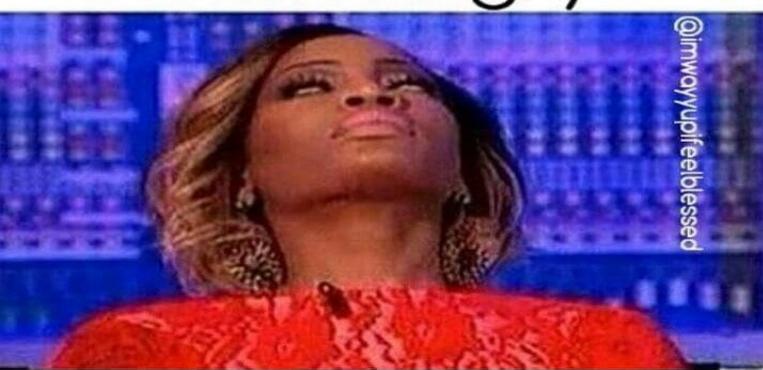
**GRADUATING HIGH SCHOOL
WITHOUT GOOGLE
WHEN YOU WAKE UP**



when it's bedtime
and your kid says
"I'm hungry"



When a mom walks into playgroup
with full makeup, a blowout, and
nice clothes



Breakout Rooms

**A section for deep thoughts and relaxation,
made especially for you.**



Concept by Temi Taiwo

Cover by Vanya Anand
and Marine Eshak

Hey everyone!

Welcome to the breakout rooms!

Now, what I want from you guys to do is to get a **empty** notebook/journal to write in.

Write down what you are feeling right now.

Are you happy? Are you sad? Or are you feeling **something** else?

Now get off the computer, and **all** technology you have on you.

Oh you're back!

How are you feeling **now**?

Welcome back to the breakout room everyone!

First, get the notebook you wrote in from the **previous** session.

Write down what you are feeling right **now**.

Are you tired or energetic or feeling something **else**?

What hobbies do you do that make **you happy**?

Why does this make **you happy**? Write it down in your notebook/journal.

What music do you like listening to?

What does this music make you feel like?

Why do you feel this way when you listen to this type of music?

What are you doing right **now**?

Are you doing something that makes **you feel happy**?

If so, **why**?

By the time you finish reading this short passage, I am sure you will start thinking about things differently.

Is there a deeper meaning to dreams?

What is the moment you felt like you were on top of the world?

If you won the lottery, what would your “today” be like?

What are you holding on to that’s holding you back?

Do you “work to live” or “live to work”?

If you didn’t know your age, how old would you “think” you are?

How do you measure success?

What is something you do that’s different from everyone else in the world?

Do we have control over technology or does it control us?

Temí Taiwo

Hello everyone and welcome back to the breakout rooms!

In this breakout room, we will focus on curing your stress.

First, take one very deep breath. Than, exhale slowly. Do you feel better already?

If not, than open a window and smell the fresh air of mother nature! Than close the window and take a deep breath, exhaling 5 seconds after. Than answer the following questions in your notebook or a piece of paper:

What do you feel now?

Are you better than before you started?

Look around you, find one object that makes you happy, and hold it close to you.

Do you feel better now?

I want you now to get a cup of water and a bucket or large bowl. Pour the water in the large bowl, and listen to the sounds the water makes as it drops. Do you feel a connection to the sound? Does it make you relaxed. If so, why?

Galaxy

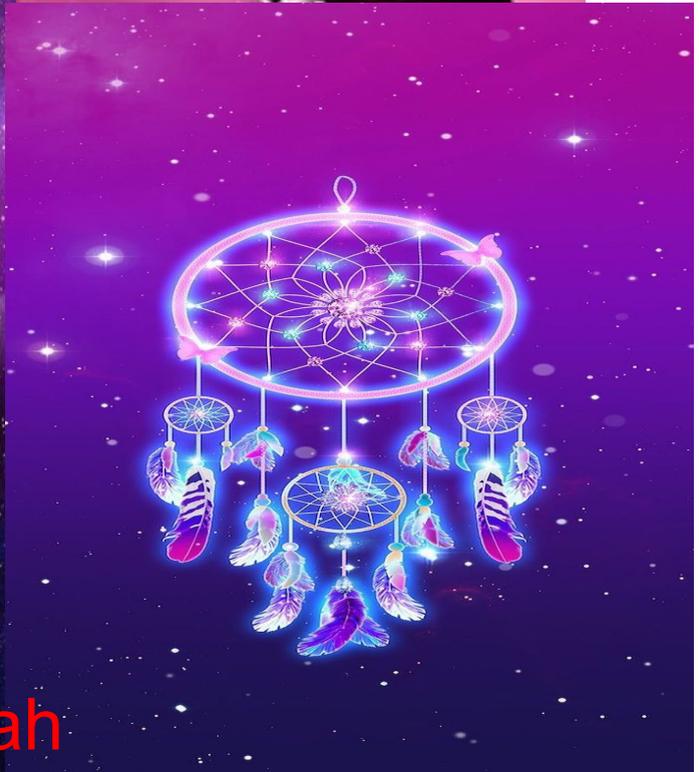
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Wolves are not bad or evil, they are simply predators attempting to survive in the only way they know how. Like us, they try to get their food in the easiest and safest way possible. And at times, this means they will kill domestic livestock, but this is not as common as many people think.

Aaradhya Vats

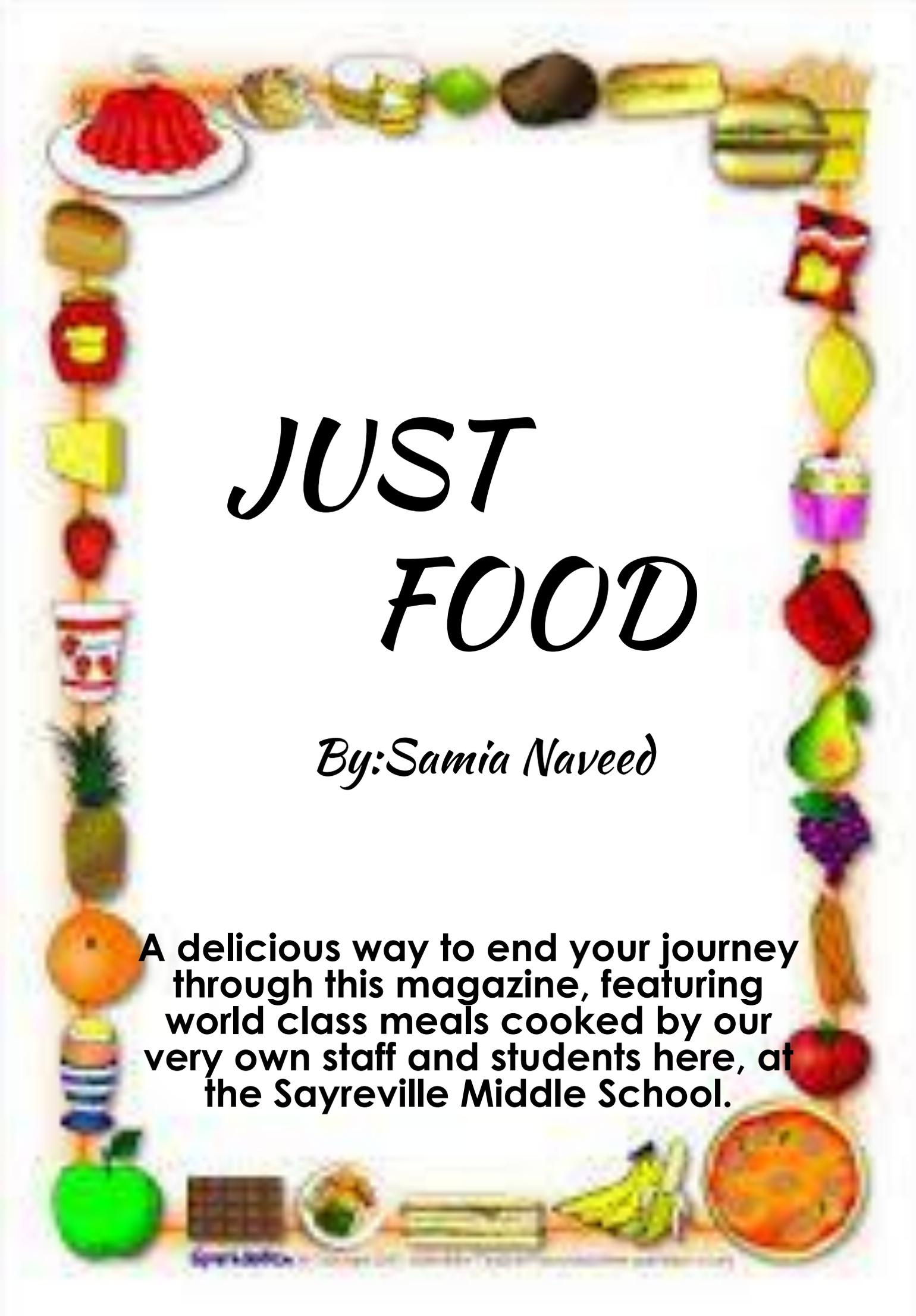


By Andrea Kumah



**From
google.**

By Andrea Kumah



JUST FOOD

By: Samia Naveed

A delicious way to end your journey through this magazine, featuring world class meals cooked by our very own staff and students here, at the Sayreville Middle School.



Mr.Longo

London Broil with grilled bok choy,
sauteed onions and mushrooms, and
roasted potatoes



Mr.Longo
Holiday pumpkin pies



Mr.Longo
Fried spinach pies



Mr.Longo
Mozzarella Carozza



Mr. Longo
New Years Eve Party Pizzas



Mr.Longo

Authentic Belgian waffles. It is made from a dough, not batter. The sugar pearls are what make them incredible.



Mr. Longo
Pizza at the Longo
house!



Mr. Longo
Shrimp
Risotto!



Mr. Longo

Purple potatoes, purple rice, and purple carrots. Can you guess the theme??



Mr. Longo
Fresh pumpkin pancakes for
breakfast.



Mr.Longo
My version of Chicken Tikka
Masala with Naan.



Mr. Longo
Bruschetta



Mr.Longo

Chicken & vegetables over Fresh Ramen
and garden Bok Choy seared in sesame oil,
garlic, and topped with roasted sesame
seeds.



Mr. Longo
French Toast



Mr. Longo
Tomato Focaccia Bread



Mr. Longo
Beef Ramen



Mr. Longo
Tacos I made on Cinco de Mayo.



David Le

Dinner consisting of rice, meats, green beans, soup with a spinach like vegetable, and green tea ice cream. Please disregard the other items on my kitchen table. In a way it is "somewhat" of a mess.



David Le

Some jello I helped make with my parents a long time ago. This was in a "solidation" stage of sorts, after the jello mixtures and the flavors are all poured in. Contained a few different flavors, don't remember which ones other than coffee, anyway, coffee is good ... other than the fact it makes you have poor sleeping habits ...



Justin Trivino

A plate a Ria Mar consisting of prime rib, french fries, seasoned potatoes, breaded chicken, garlic shrimp, and meatballs.
(Glucose)



Rohit Gummadi

Fresh hand pulled noodles(my best attempt) stir fried with some mini meatballs i made



Rohit Gummadi

I made crème brûlée and got to play with a blowtorch.



Rohit Gummadi

Fancy Thai food I had at a
restaurant



Angelica Oriol

I made yummy french toast and pancakes over the weekend for breakfast!



Angelica Oriol

I made chocolate chip cookies over Winter Break! (with extra chocolate chips!)



Jasleen Sembhi

I made homemade pizza for dinner today!



Jasleen Sembhi

My brother and I made homemade
buttermilk pancakes 🥞

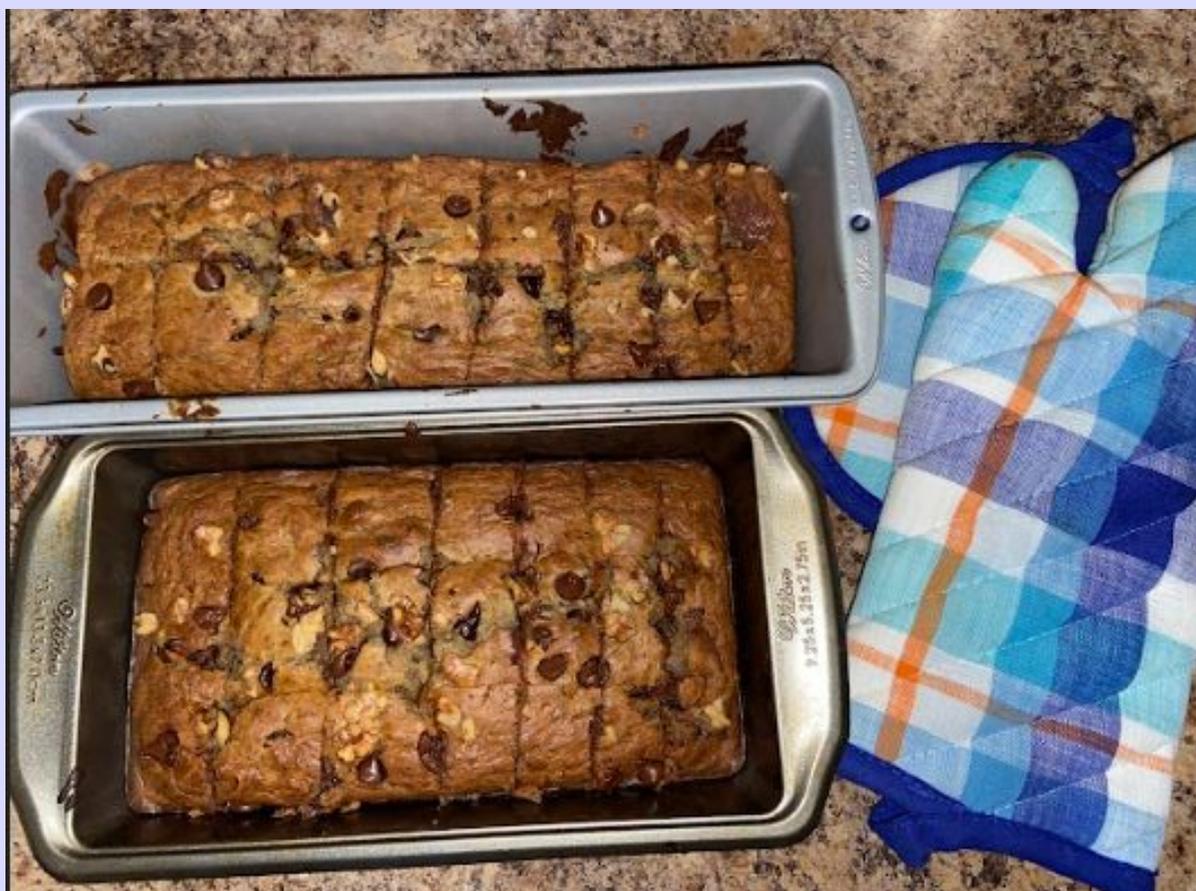


Shriya Patel

Hi guys, it's Shriya and Rosie! we are Mr. Longos students from last year and here's the dessert from Rosies confirmation today!



Samia Naveed
Salmon



Samia Naveed
Homemade banana
bread with chocolate
chips & nuts



Elizabeth Macholl
I made fried oreos.



Elizabeth Macholl
Hungarian Beef Goulash



Temí Taiwo

Simple Bowl of Ramen

Ending Message

Hello everyone, we hope you enjoyed our Literary Magazine for the year of 2021-2022. Our hard work was devoted to putting together such a masterpiece for every one of you to read and enjoy. But rather than the submissions being a bunch of words on a slide, they are so much more. They tell story of each and every one of us. These works are from the minds of brilliant students building their own future this very second. When you read someone's work in this magazine, you take a part of them with you. You understand their thinking and their style from the words and art they put down on the slides. We hope that you have been inspired and motivated by our work, and we look forward to doing it all over again next year!

Sincerely,
The Editorial Staff

