

Sawyer H... Age 12 Grade 7

## The AirBnB Slasher

Jack arrives at the house. He grabs his things and brings them inside and looks around for his room. He finds his room and there is a King sized bed, a huge bathroom and there is an attic above. There was a basement, there was the main level and the upstairs where Jack's room is. Jack goes down to the main level and tries to open the door to the downstairs but the door is locked, "That's weird" Jack said to himself. He walked away and didn't think about it.

Jack was making lunch since there was no good food on the long plane ride. As he was making the food he heard a loud noise coming from his room. He washed his hands real fast and then went upstairs to see what the noise was. The attic door was open so he tried to close it back up but it would not close. He decided to nail it shut with a hammer and some nails that were in a big tool box out in the garage. After he did that he went back to cooking. After he was done cooking he ate and then went out for a run. After Jack got done with his run he went back and heard the same loud noise that came from up stairs. He went upstairs and the attic door was open again but Jack was wondering why it was much louder than last time. It was the ladder that came out when the door opened but the ladder broke off and fell to the ground hitting the wooden floor. I wonder how the door opened back up. I thought that I closed that thing for good. It was about night so he got ready for bed and then eventually went to bed. He went to bed. Jack woke up to the noise of creaking noises. He got out of bed and he could hear them get louder and louder like it was getting closer to his door. Jack went back to bed thinking it was just the house. The next morning he got out of bed and went downstairs as Jack

went downstairs he went over to the basement doors. As he turned the doorknob the door opened a little. I thought that this was locked. Jack, there was no light switch so he just shut the door and went to go make breakfast. Jack had to leave that afternoon because he was there for a basketball tournament and was going to leave for his first game. Jack got back from his game several hours later. It was about night. Jack walked inside and went to take a shower. As he was taking his shower the power went out. The light in the bathroom shut off. He was sitting in a dark bathroom. He got out and changed and then he opened the bathroom door really quickly and then he was in the middle of the hallway. He was at the end and he started to walk down the hallways to the stairs. He got to the stairs and started to walk down. Jack thought that the power switches might be down in the basement. He got to the main level and went to the door and it opened. I can't see a thing down there. He slowly walks down so he doesn't fall. He gets down there and he feels a box on the wall and tries to open it. It opens and he feels for a switch and he feels one flipped it. The power went back on and he went back up the stairs.

He got ready for bed, he turned the lights off and went to bed. Jack forgot one thing: to lock the front door. He went up to his room and went to bed. He woke up in the middle of the night to the sound of the wood creaking. He got out and went to the door and opened it. He didn't see anything in the hallway. He went to the end and looked down the stairs. He walked down 1 then 2 steps then he could see it. He could see someone walking around in the living room looking through things. Jack stood there frozen. He was so freaked out he had no idea what to do. Was it a home invitation Jack was thinking while standing there looking at the guy. I got an idea, Jack said. Ok I can do this, I will quickly run to the back door than run outside to the forest. Ok 3...2...1... jack runs to the back door are runs. He looked back and saw the man running after him. Jack runs to the forest. He runs out a little bit and then Jack takes a turn and goes to the neighbors house. He gets

to their house and bangs on the door as loud as he can. They answer and Jack tells them to call the police and that someone is in his house. They call the police and it takes a minute for them to get there. They get here, They are two cop cars that had two cops in each car They ask whats wrong. Jack says that there is a person in his house. The cops say ok and they walk into the Air BnB. Two of the cops go down stairs and the other two go up stairs. The cops that go down stairs start looking around looking in every little spot. They don't find anything so they start to walk back up the stairs. The cops that go up stairs and start to walk slowly down the hall to the first room they look in where there is nothing. They go to the room that Jack was staying in and look around. They see the attic and decide to go in there. The attic had monitors showing live feed of every room of the house. They get out of that room. They go looking in the last room and they start to look around. When one moves a box they find a man hiding. They get him and bring him to the front yard. They put him in the car. The cops tell Jack that he was the AirBnB owner and that he has been watching you the whole time. Jack was speechless; he was so scared. He asked to go down to the station. They allow him to come with them. Jack goes to the station and they ask questions. After they are done asking questions. They take him back to get his things and that they could let him stay somewhere else for a bit. Jack gets his things and leaves. Jack says to himself I wonder what he was going to do. Well never mind Jacks says to himself, I don't really want to think of this. I just will never rent an AirBnB ever again.

Kira De

Colorado

5

14 years/8th grade

### The Girl and her "Maksed Friend"

Friday October 25, 2019 4:30 PM

Hi! My name is Lillian. I am 14 years old. I was born on March 5th 2009 and I am a very curious person. I know everything about everything! And welcome to my Daily journal, This is my first entry! I just got home from school and Today was good. I talked to all my friends and hung out with them but school in general was not. School was extremely difficult. We had these placement tests to see what classes you will end up in next school year which were super boring but anyways we had the test in every single class except for my electives of course but even there we had to take a test based on what we learned. I'm pretty sure I failed them but oh well! Oh and also my friend gets to come over to go shopping today and my friend has long Black hair and ocean blue eyes but Anyways. I'll check back in tomorrow.

Saturday October 26 2019 3:33PM

Hey! I'm just laying in my room and I heard this random noise from my closet and I'm currently home alone. My parents are out shopping for dinner (we didn't have food we took the last for lunch. And when i mean we i mean i took food then i took some to my friend ). But anyways back on topic should I look in my closet to see if anyone is there or will it be ok? Maybe something just wasn't on my wall correctly and It just fell causing it to make a loud noise. I don't really want to know if something is in there. I know I'll go and grab a bat. Best idea ever. Sooooo... I just walked down the stairs to get a bat and I heard another noise. I start to shiver and my heart starts racing. I could literally hear the pounding of my heart in my ear. I was so frightened. What if someone is actually here? Like what am I supposed to do? Whatever, I need to man up and check. I stand in front of my closet as I start to count down 5...4...3...2...1. I open the door and look around but yet nobody is there. Maybe I'm just scared because I'm home alone. It's okay, I'll check back in tomorrow.

Sunday October 27, 2019 12:00PM

Hey! So it's five days until Halloween and guess what... I just got my costume And I'm going to be a character from the purge so I got a mask with the cool neon blue and my friend yeah the one with the long black hair she got the same one just neon pink and they both included glow stick that have and X on the eyes and the neon glow sticks that makes a big smile from ear to ear with lines going through the smile witch is like really creepy but anyways I also got like the pretty white dress that I could put fake blood on to give it a really cool effect that goes with the mask And I also got these like 3 inch boots that are knee high that are also white that way I can also put fake blood (most likely going to be a blue to match the mask) on the boots to also go with my mask and my dress! But that's all for today! See ya tomorrow!

Monday, October 28, 2019 6:30PM

Hey! So I had sports today so I got home extra later today but anyways during practice you are not aloud to be on your phone obviously so as usually after practice I check my phone to see if I have to walk home or if my parents are here to get me, So I looked at my phone and I got a weird text from a random number the text stated "Hey I know you at practice but I want to

hang out you have any freetime?" and I don't recognize the number so should I respond or not? You know I'll respond back so I respond with " who is this?" That's a pretty normal response and then 30 minutes go by the 1 house to 2 to 3 they never responded. I guess I'll just ask my friend tomorrow if they know that number! But anyways lillian logging out see ya tomorrow!

Tuesday October 29 2019 5:00AM

Hey! Its me lillian so I check my phone as soon as I woke up about to get ready for school and they person who texted me yesterday,, never replied so I don't really know what to do about the number But anyways to make things even more terrifying when I woke up this morning and I saw a shadow like thing standing motionless in the corner of my room? And if you are reading this no I did not do anything about I just went back to sleep because I believe if you mess with it it mess with you and I stand by that but whatever when I woke up again it was gone but I have to go my mom is yelling for me because its time for school yay I guess but lillian checking off.

Wednesday October 30 2019

BOO! Did that scare you laughing out loud! Today my parents are like taking me for a early trunk or treat that what way we can get extra candy because my Dad wants "DAD TAX" which mean he is going to go through my candy bag and take the candy he want and says its "DAD TAX" so we go trunk and treating that way on the actually night he won't take my candy but he'll find a way to so either way your candy is not safe! But ONLY ONE DAY UNTIL HALLOWEEN!!!! I start to turn red I am so full of joy because in my neighborhood they don't give out candy they give out like toothpaste and hot wheel cars but not candy so we go to like three different neighborhoods to trick or treat that way we get stuff to donate to the kids who could not trick or treat then give them some candy,hot chocolate and hot wheels. But let's talk about tomorrow's plan so I'm going to walk around by myself then I might stay out a little longer and walk around in the woods. Is what I might do but we never know but anyways I have to go so BYEEEE!

Thursday October 31 2019 5:00AM

Hey so this is going to be a long entry because the most terrifying and the saddest thing ever just happened to me So just like I said on the last entry I went trick or treating alone for about 5 hours I left the house around 7:00 and I stopped trick or treating about 11:00 and then I started walking to the wood around 11:30 and arrived at the woods at 12:00AM and all of a sudden you start to hear the loud sound of thunder rolling in and then you see a bright blue light from the ground and up. And that makes things so much worse because I don't have a flashlight and its pitch black outside because the trees and the clouds were covering the moon and so I was already really frightened and me not thinking that the night could get worse it did it started to rain cat and dog plus the temperature dropped like 30 degrees so it's not a lot colder and I got to search for like an abandoned house that way I could get some kind of shelter from the rain. So as I walked further into the woods I found a house that was abandoned and I wasn't thinking about if anyone was in there because the roof was falling in and I was also thinking that I didn't want to be stuck in the rain. So when I found the house it had like a bright yellow door and the roof was falling in so I just walked in to get out of the rain.

Thursday october 31 2019 5:30AM

I ran out of room on the other side of the page so anyways I went into the house and I started to walk around and tree branches snapped in half when I stepped on them. I didn't really mind that because the storm so I thought it was just a lightning streak hit a branch but then I turned around and the bright yellow door slammed causing me to scream because who wouldn't in that situation but anyways I just continues to explore an then I remembered I had my

phone which had a flashlight so then I pulled out my phone and started to use the flashlight to look around and I walked into the kitchen and like living room looking thing and I got the living glory scared there was a person who has long black silky hair that also looked really healthy and I could really see the eyes but they looked light but they just laying down and holding something I couldn't really make out what it was but it didn't look good so I screamed and started bolting out the house but I forgot the door slams so I ran into the door causing me to fall to the ground and i'm pretty sure I passed out but Im don't know. But after that happened I got up and started bolting out the house and I didn't look back. I tripped over something I think was a tree branch. I got up as fast as I could and then the masked person grabbed my arm for about 30 seconds. And the person got a good look at me and so the masked person took off the mask and the person who was my best friend was chasing me the whole time. In the distance all you saw was red and blue flashing light with a loud noise. And the next thing I know is that my friend is apologizing and getting put in the back of the vehicle.

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## Freedom Was Never An Option

A scream wakes me up in the distance as I lay strapped down to a surgery bed. I let out a yell whilst shaking violently. Finally I break free. The air was cold and the bright light had blinded me. I sway my head to the right to shield my eyes from the bright white light. I look around to see another man seemingly around 5'11 with short hair and pale skin. I get off the bed as the hard white stone tiles sting my feet from the cold as if I were in antarctica. The Man on the table starts shaking violently. I thought to myself if he was having a seizure as I attempted to run to him I fell from exhaustion. Suddenly he stops in an instant and his eyes open.

"Who are you?" he asked

"I'm not entirely sure, the question is who you are?" I said as my head began to become fuzzy trying to remember any previous events. As I stood up the man stuttered and his face showed a realization of forgetfulness.

"He must've been like me" I thought to myself as he stuttered attempting to remember what wasn't there. Suddenly I see a person run across the hall. I place my hand on the glass overlooking the hall. A roar burned my ears as I looked to the right of the hall. The roar had come from a pale white humanoid creature with pale white skin, it seemed to be at least 6 feet tall and it carried an ear to ear grin on its face. Its physique was phenomenal with biceps the size of my head. I open the glass door to look past the glass. I could make out more of the creature. Its eyes were pitchblack with black veins popping out across its body. It breaks into a sprint towards the woman in a lab coat running across the hall. The creature jumped on her back knocking her down to the ground. Just as it was about to bite the woman, a large tongue with spikes emerged from its tongue and spikes from its ribcage poked out as blood spewed everywhere. Me and the other man's head became fuzzy as I sat on the floor. The lights turned off and started flashing red and black as a siren began to blare. I became nauseous from what I had witnessed and both me and the other man in the room blacked out. Waking an hour later I hear the glass shattering and gunfire raging in the distance. A person in an armored hazmat suit runs into the room and hides. I was paralyzed and unable to move. I attempted to look into the halls trying to move my head and looked into the once white halls now red stained with blood and no longer smooth with scratch marks and bullet holes on the walls as corps lay dead on the walls and floors. I feel myself being dragged on the floor by my shoulders. The gunfire stops and footsteps and roars can be heard. The footsteps become louder, they're here and there's more. The lab now smelled terrible with a hint of blood and gunpowder. I was leaning on the wall, and the guard stood up to grab the other man. I laid there and started to regain control of my body. The air is soft and dark. Sparks from a hanging broken light lay hanging on the ceiling, and the lights stopped flashing red. The siren was now quiet with only background noise. The halls were now dim, only partially lit from broken lights. The screams and shrieks are now more rare and now have turned to roars from those terrifying creatures. Suddenly silence as a power outage just now occurred.

"Damn" he said softly while looking up at the light no longer emitting sparks. I have now gained more control of my body and move my head to the right with ease as I watch the man sitting unconscious next to me. The roars become louder and thumping can be heard in the

vent. The man was now silent and hadn't moved a mussel. I watch as the man now lifts the gun up from his sling and points it at the vent. He takes his left arm and unholsters his pistol and hands it to me. The thumping is louder and a slam could be heard from another room. It was here it knew we were in one of the rooms. I grip the cold steel m1911 pistol tightly and now standing up quietly I point my gun at the now open gap in the glass wall leading to the hallway. I now hear two sets of footsteps, one in the halls and another in the vent. I can't pinpoint where they are. The man is no longer unconscious and wakes and generates noise as he hits his arm on a nearby metal shelf. I look at the man in fear. For sure we were dead. The steps were now rampaging through the halls. Just as I turn my head back to stare at the hall, two yellow glowing eyes now lay staring at me as I turn on the flashlight attached to the pistol. It was too late for I had been lifted with one hand. The guard shot at the beast. More and more creatures roar in the hallway.

"In the vent hurry!" yelled the guard as the creature now lays dead on the floor. The footsteps were now getting louder. I'd rather fight one in the vent rather than a dozen of those things, those abominations. I leapt into the vent as I followed the others inside. The footsteps were no longer there. Silence, for nothing had been there. A loud noise came over the intercom. The creatures now rushed towards all the speakers. I took this opportunity to run with my new fellow team.

"I'm sorry" said the voice over the intercom.

"For the leftover survivors you may not know what's happening, and yes this terrible nightmare is real. We can't let anyone out, it's for the safety of the world. We can't let these things plague the world, I'm sorry once again." Said a man with sorrowed and disappointed voice over the intercom

"Those bastards are leaving us for dead!" yelled the guard

"Who even are you?" I asked the guard

"The names John and well I had a family but I guess my kid won't have a father any more" Said John as both me and the other man looked at him. We both knew no one could make it out alive but we still had to try. We nodded to try and stay silent as John unscrewed the vent. We dropped out and explored the new room. It looked like a document room. I reach under a cabinet to find four batteries, a UV flashlight, and a 3d printed 2.27mm modified pistol. I handed my previous weapon to the other man. I was tired of the hospital surgery grounds and now grabbed a vest of a guard and some jeans, a wife beater tank top, and a Serbian coalition hat. I was now no longer cold. I heard Footsteps against the wall. We step out into the hall avoiding the creature I keep my eyes locked on as I stay silent. This virus truly changed people as if it were like radiation giving a mutation to a person. The halls were pitch black as I stepped over corpses. I was still following John and the other man. I picked up a body cam off a corps to document the events. Hopefully someone will see this.

"You two need to take a right into the power room, I'll keep going forward to go find the command center to put an end to this madness." he said whilst handing me an unlocked phone. I nodded and proceeded to the room with my fellow teammate. I peered through the door. The room was dark and quiet. The only noise was the growling of an infected foaming at the mouth. I look to my left to see the generator. All I needed was to sneak past and keep my light turned off. I couldn't have let it see me. An audible thud occurred and caused it to be alerted, it was starving. The thing Jumped onto the walls and climbed on top of the shelving. I scurried past leaving no sound to be heard. The other man was still outside the room making sure I would have a clear exit. I had now approached the generator. It was so close it was almost breathing down my neck by now. I flipped a switch and the lights had came on. I turn back only to see it directly sprinting behind me. It was too fast to run. I Slept on top of me taking a massive bite out of my right hand. I practically have been missing a finger. I let out a yell. My partner ran into the room and ripped it off of me. He fired his weapon multiple times, for sure they heard us. I ran out of the room to go find John. My hand was bleeding profusely. At least 5 were behind me. The

glowing eyes and terrifying screams alerted more and more. I see him at the end of the hall as he opens a door to his right. He signaled for us to come in. The pursuit kept happening as more and more came. I look behind me only to see my partner fall and be devoured by all of them. I froze in utter horror. They were too fast so I turned left into a room and slammed the door. I look at the abundance of weapons on the wall. A look to my left to see a serbian flag. I grabbed a rifle of the wall. Armored hazmat suit were on the wall. Waisting no time I grabbed the suit. I climbed into a vent and grabbed the radio

"They were too fast, if I had been more cautious he would have been alive!" I yelled holding my rifle whilst laying in the vent.

"It's fine we can't mourn him, we need to go up these stairs we're almost towards freedom" John said calmly.

"There's a bit on my hand what do I do"

"You're fine, why do you think you were being experimented on in the first place?" He said

"What do you mean?" I asked.

"Well you would be one of those things by now, your immune obviously. Thats the point of the facility. We were finding a cure. I can't tell how the infected got out though." He said. I could hear rummaging in the background of his radio. He was looking for something.

"What are these things in the first place?"

"They're asia I think, I'm not sure. The doctors were saying they found it in a cave back in Nam" He said

"Well, where next?" I asked, staying put in the vent I checked my surroundings.

"Now that there's power back I can get this key card to work on the door, you need to get back here. For sure you can't get back the way you came. Try lookin around" He said

"Ok I'll look around" I said

"John you there?"

"JOHN!"

"Answer me dammit!" I yelled, I looked around and saw a pair of glowing eyes staring directly at me. I paused in horror. I dropped the radio while trying to crawl out of the vent. The creature roared as it started to rapidly approaching me. I got out but it soon followed me. I was in the room with the creature. I readied myself holding my rifle in hand pointing it at the creature. The door slammed open behind me. (POW) A bullet was fired but it wasn't mine. I was suddenly grabbed the shoulder.

"What the hell are you doin, I said you could come back this way!" John yelled as roars and thumping rapid footsteps approached. I followed him into another room leading to a concrete stair case. He slammed the door right behind him, locking it tight.

"You almost got us killed!" Yelled John. He grabbed me by the neck and hit me on the back of the head.

"Follow me from here on out" He said in a scolding manner as if I were a grounded kid. I followed him up the stairs to the room. I saw a pool of blood on the back of his neck. It was black though, It must've been blood from a zombie, definitely not his right? We peered through the door and pulled out our pistol.

"Everyone get the hell on the ground right now!" I yelled at the top of my lungs as pulled out my pistol. All the scientist yelled in horror. I grabbed a scientist by the back of the neck and pinned him on the table.

"Unlock the door right now or a bullets going through your skull" I said in his ear. He grabbed a keycard and swipped it, as he did that the door made an audible click. I approach the door and open it. POW! A bullet killed the main character on the spot John walked over his dead corps as he walked outside. His eyes were pitch black and his skin was now pale. His hair fell off his head. He let out a screech and commenced on a rampage.

## Sam's New Friend

Mom, look what I made!" Sammy exclaims, showing his mother a small piece of black folded paper in the shape of a human with yellow eyes colored on it.

"That's great, Sammy, now go play somewhere else." His mother replies unenthusiastically, hunching over her laptop screen.

"But, mom, you should see what I made you!" Sammy says, shoving the contraption in his mother's face.

"Not now."

"But mom--"

"I said *not now*, Sam. Go to your room and play."

"Okay..."

Sam drags himself somberly into his bedroom. He tosses the figure under the door of his closet, throws himself onto his bed, and falls asleep.

Sam's alarm goes off and he is jolted awake, he checks the clock.

Friday, October 25th, 1992, 5:27 a.m.

Sam gets out of bed, turns off his alarm, and checks if his book is inside his backpack...it is.

"*Can't leave the house without this...*" Sam thinks, holding the book in hand. He hears a noise...

"CLANK"

Sam doesn't pay any mind to the noise since there's usually something going on outside of his window.

"CLANK"

It's louder this time, but still, Sam doesn't think much of it.

Sam goes ahead and makes himself breakfast with whatever is in his pantry...his breakfast ends up being unseasoned oatmeal, which tasted like absolute crap. After Sam is dressed and ready, he goes to wake his parents up.

"Mom.....Mom," Sam whispers, shaking his mother awake, "Mom, get up, I need to go to school."

"Shut up, Sam- please. Go bother your father." She replies through an irritated sigh.

Sam walks around the bed toward his father. "Dad, wake up, I need to go to school." he whispers. Sam's father looks up at him, "Alright, Sam, give me ten minutes..." His father says, rubbing his eyes.

"Okay, dad."

Sam and his father drive to school. When they arrive, Sam gets out of the car.

"Bye dad, see you after school!"

"Bye, son."

Sam walks away from the car and sees something in the corner of his eye...A dark figure staring straight at him...The figure gives him an eerie and nervous feeling. Sam can't quite see it that clearly because it's so far... He's shaking. Sam has never felt this before. His heart starts thumping, he tries not to look at the figure but he can't stop... He starts walking faster toward the building, he's in a deep sweat.

Sam enters the school and goes into his classroom. He usually sits on the far right, back of the class, but recently, the teacher rearranged their seats. So now, Sam sits in the front of the classroom, right next to Michael, the 'class clown.' Although, Sam doesn't think Michael is as funny as he perceives himself. Sam sits down and gets out his book to read, wiping sweat from his forehead.

Mrs. Robinson heads to the front of the classroom to announce something, Sam looks up from his book to listen. "Alright, class, today we have a free day since it's so close to Halloween! Go ahead and do whatever you want...Well, other than burn the building down! Hah, hah, hah." Nobody laughed.

Sam starts reading his book, a shadow appears on the page, it's getting closer...and closer... Sam turns around and sees...

"BOO!" Screams Michael.

Sam jumps in the air out of fear, nearly drops his book, too.

"Michael, you scared me! I almost lost my place!"

"Heh, sorry, Sammy, just trying to get into the Halloween mood!"

"Maybe you should get into the 'Halloween mood' somewhere else."

"Alright, Sam, have fun with...whatever you're doing." Michael replies, "He's so weird..."

Sam goes back to his book while Michael bolts around the classroom with a sheet over his head. "Why can't he just leave me alone?" Sam thinks.

He goes back to reading his book.

Sam reads his book for *hours*, he loses track of time. He looks up from his book occasionally to hear the teacher say something like, "Put that down!" or "Don't run with those!", etc.

"RING" Every kid dashes out of the classroom as fast as they can, except for Sam.

"No running, please!!" Mrs. Robinson calls out.

Sam finishes putting his book inside his backpack and walks out the door.

"Goodbye, Sam! I hope you have a nice weekend!" Mrs. Robinson yells.

"Thanks Mrs. Robinson, you too." Replies Sam.

Sam gets into his mother's car, she's a half-hour late, as per usual. Sam doesn't care anymore, he usually just sits outside reading his book while waiting for her.

"How was school, son?" His mother questions, applying makeup to her face using the car's mirror.

"It was fine, mom."

"How do leftovers sound for dinner tonight?" Sam's mother asks, his parents never put any effort into cooking, they usually just order takeout.

"Sounds great..."

"Good, because that wasn't a question."

It's a mostly silent car ride, Sam gets out his book to start reading.

"What are you reading, Sam? A comic book?"

"Uh- no..."

"Well, what are you reading?"

"It- It's nothing..." Sam rushes to put the book back inside his backpack. Sam's mother mumbles something under her breath that he couldn't quite catch.

When they arrive home, Sam's dad is there to greet him,

"Hey, sonny, how was school?"

"The same as everyday." Sam replies, hanging his jacket on the coat rack next to his front door.

"Want to go outside and help me with the garden?"

"No, I- I think I'm just gonna stay in my room."

"...And do what?"

"I don't know, read my book?"

"Alright, Sammy, come out if you decide to change your mind."

"Will do." Sam states, heading to his room.

Sam can overhear his parents talking about him.

"Why couldn't we just get a normal son??" His mother asks.

"He's normal...Enough..." Sam's father replies.

"Sure...He never wants to do anything a *normal* boy does. He only reads books and he has no friends, why can't he be like that boy down the street...What's his name? Oh, Michael."

Sam covers his ears and tries to block them out, he continues reading his book. It's always a mystery what Sam is reading, although, nobody seems to ask.

Sam finishes a chapter in his book and gets ready for bed. As he walks out of the bathroom, Sam hears something... It's coming from his room. But there's nobody in there...At least that's what Sam thinks.

He assumes it's just one of his action figures falling off of his dresser and heads to his room to look for it. As he's inching closer toward his room, he hears it again...This time, It's louder. Like a "CLANK" sound...He wonders what could have been making this strange noise...It definitely was *not* one of his action figures. Could've been coming from the kitchen...Oh! It was the sound t  
"CLANK...CLANK...CLANK."

Sam's heart starts racing, he has the same feeling as he did when he saw that weird figure staring right at him at school...He starts shaking, shuddering... *who could possibly be in my room at this time? Is it mom? Is it dad? Is it a...uh-raccoon??* He inches closer

"CLANK...CLANK...CLANK..."

It stops.

Sam goes into his room to find...Nothing. Absolutely nothing...

Sam looks at the clock.

*Friday, October 25th 1992, 8:26 p.m.*

"What was making that noise? There's nobody in here..." Sam thinks.

Sam searches for anything that could have fallen, broken, or accidentally turned on. He didn't find anything...There was nobody in his room, his toys hadn't been turned on, and there was nothing on the floor...

"That's weird," Sam thinks, shutting the door and going under his bed covers.

"Must've just been...The neighbor- Yeah, the neighbor!" Sam does not sleep peacefully at all...He awakens to hear the *CLUNK* noise again...He glances at the clock:

*Saturday, October 26th, 1992, 2:47 a.m.*

"*CLUNK*"

"2:47 a.m.?? Who is up this late?" Sam thinks, getting out of his bed. Until he realizes...

"*CLUNK*"

The sound isn't coming from another room...

"*CLUNK*"

It's coming from- *his closet*... Sam turns to look at his closet, door shut.

He never goes in there...All of his clothes are in his dresser-

"*CLUNK*"

What could possibly be happening in his closet??

"*CLUNK*"

Sam hears a noise again, hardly through his heart thumping, it was different this time...

"*THUD*"

Sam takes a large breath and walks very slowly toward his closet, trying not to make a sound...

He reaches for the door handle, shaking out of fear. He feels blazing hot, it's never this hot in his room... He keeps reaching for the door handle, and yet, it opens without him touching it. Sam is flabbergasted, mouth agape, gazing at a tall, shadowy figure with glowing yellow eyes.

"What- What are you?" Sam asks through his breaths, his heart thumping. Still shaking, sweating. The figure answers in a deep, raspy voice...

Sam's alarm goes off.

"BEEP...BEEP...BEEP...BEEP"

His mother enters the room.

"Sam, turn that damn thing off!" She yells through a yawn, rubbing her eyes. "Sam..Wake up..."

Sam lets out a groan and slowly sits up in his bed.

"BEEP...BEEEEEEP"

"What, mother?" he asks, glancing at the clock while his mother turns off his alarm.

"Click"

*Saturday, October 26th, 1992, 10:23 a.m.*

"You *seriously* let it go off this entire time?!"

"I'm a heavy sleeper."

"Mhm, sure. Go make yourself some cereal or something." His mother responds. "And *stop* calling me that, show some *respect*."

Sam scoops up some froot loops and nearly takes a large bite when his father walks in the room.

"Hey, sonny, how has your morning been?" He asks.

Sam doesn't answer.

"Sam?" His father questions, touching Sam's shoulder.

"What!?" Sam screams, shoving his father's hand off his shoulder violently.

"Oh- sorry, Sam, I didn't realize you were in a rough mood. Are you feeling okay?"

"No."

"How come?"

"Sam?"

"NO!" Sam yells, throwing his bowl of cereal across the room, his parents watching in shock.

The glass bowl shatters into about a million pieces, milk and froot loops flying everywhere.

"SAM, WHAT THE HELL IS WRONG WITH YOU?!" His mother screams.

Sam gets off the table and dashes toward the front door, his parents still in complete shock.

He leaves the house, his mom follows.

"SAM! GET BACK HERE!"

"NO!" Sam yells back.

His mother stops trying to chase him. "*He'll be back...*" she thinks, "*Right?...?*"

It's Monday, Sam still hasn't returned home. His parents are very worried about him, but are still confused about the random outburst he had during breakfast Saturday.

It starts raining. Sam's parents are thinking about Sam, but don't have the energy to get up and go find him.

They hear a knock at the door.

"Knock...Knock...Knock"

"Is it Sam?!"

"Knock..."

"I'll go check."

Sam's father gets up to go see who's at the door.

"Knock...Knock..."

He looks through the window.

"It's Sam!"

He rushes to open the door.

"Hello, is this the Miller's family?" The policeman asks.

"Yes. Sam! I've missed you so much!"

Sam's father goes to hug Sam, yet Sam does not hug him back.

"Alright, Sam, go inside now."

Sam walks inside, doesn't look at his mother at all, and heads to his room.

"Sam!" His mother calls out.

Sam does not look back, he goes into his room.

"SLAM"

The policeman leaves.

Sam's father opens Sam's door and looks inside his room.

"Sam?" He calls out.

He scans the room, no sign of Sam. It's very dark in his room.

"Sam?"

He walks inside and looks around for any sign of Sam. Nothing. He turns around to go back to the living room when he hears something...

"CLANK"

"..Sam?"

"CLANK"

His father looks around Sam's room to see where the noise is coming from. It's not coming from under the bed, or out the window...

He searches until he hears it again...

"CLANK"

It's coming from the closet. Sam's father inches toward the door of Sam's closet, reaches out his hand when...

"DON'T GO IN THERE!!!" Sam screams from the doorframe.

"Sam? Where did you come from?"

"...Back away from the door, dad..."

"Why?"

"I said.. back ... Away..."

"Um, okay..."

His father backs away from the closet. Sam dashes toward his closet door.

"It's going to be okay, he won't hurt you.." Sam expresses, peering through his closet door. "Or will you?" Sam turns around to look at his father.

"Sam...Uh- Why are you acting like this?" he questions. "And where is your mother?"

"Oh, heh, you won't have to worry about *her* anymore..."

His heart starts racing, he's shaking and he can't stop...

"Sam..." He says, trying to stay as calm as possible. "What is in your closet?..."

"My new friend..."

"...What-...Who is your new friend?..

"He's *not* a 'what'." Sam replies angrily, his father has never heard him talk like this before...It makes him nervous...

"What- What happened to mom?"

...

"Sam?"

"DON'T WORRY ABOUT HER.. I. TOOK. CARE OF IT."

"... *What* did you do, Sam...?"

...

"...*do you want to see my new friend?*..."

...

Santiago S

Dr.

13/8th grade

Janitell Junior High

## The Man

Basim: It was halloween and I was going to trick or treat. As I walked out of the house my mom told me to wait. She said, "Basim, you forgot to bring your brother." I said "Mom I really don't wanna bring him. He's too little." Then she said "Boy please, your brother is 1 year younger than you." Then she told me to wait as she went to get my brother and I vanished." After that I make a plan and start to go to the rich houses first but before I do that I have to go around my neighborhood and get all the candy. As I walk to the last house I see my best friend Karl. He went up to me and told me "Hey bro how are you doing" then I said "I'm doing fine, what about you." After the greeting we had a conversation about the new Assassin Creed Mirage coming out. Then he asked me if I wanted to do a challenge. He said, "Who can get the most candy in one night?" I accepted the challenge and then he rushed to the other houses but I went to my house and I got my roller blades and I went down the road where the town of the rich people are. Before I left I saw him and I told him goodluck and started to go really fast, but an old man stopped me and told me not to cross the road. I was confused and asked why, then he said "Sunny, you can't because that road has one of the most disappearances in the world. As I was trying to convince the man to leave me he kept getting more angry and more worried. Then I took his candy and I made a run for it on my roller blades knowing the old man couldn't stop me. The man told me to stop but I was long gone. I felt bad about it but what does he know? He's an old man, maybe he's crazy or he forgot to take his pills or maybe he was sleep walking. Whatever the reason was I was not going to let him stop me from getting the most candy. While skating and eating the old man's candy I start to get a little bored because it's just me and no one else. I also started to get tired because of how fast I was going to get away from the old man. Then something weird happened and I started to see the road get longer and longer and I blinked for like 1 second and everything was back to normal. "Ok that was weird, may I'm a little tired," I thought to myself. Then I got to the town in less than 5 minutes after that weird experience. I skated through the entire neighborhood and got all the candy I could get and decided to take the long way home which was the road instead of the fast way just because I didn't want to get home yet, but as i'm walking I finally noticed that nobody was here, then I see only a little glimpse of a tall man with a black cloak that went down to his knees and those eyes... The eyes were so red and evil it felt like the air was filled with

fire. Then I turned around and went to the neighborhood. As I got back I noticed that there were no tricks or treats. There were no parents or grandparents. No dogs, cats or any animals in the town. The weirdest thing is that the town looked abandoned. "How is this possible?" I told myself "I left like a minute ago." Then I saw the man again but instead of standing there like a stick he started to walk and walk but every step he took kept getting faster and faster. His arms started to twist and twirl, his face became only a shadow. His arms started to go on the floor and his body started to bend down as he was still walking then he started to run. I ran as hard as I could, I leaped over cars, threw rocks at him but he kept coming. Then after a couple minutes of running I looked back and he was gone. Then I said "What is go-," before I could finish I bumped into something and there he was... I looked up and the man didn't have a mouth but could talk to me in a telepathically like way and he told me in a dark demonic voice, "WHY DID YOU CROSS THE ROAD." I told him I don't know why I did, I just wanted to. Then he went silent for a moment then told me something that would scare me more than I have ever been. He said "I SENSE MY HEART IN YOUR'S." As the fear filled my veins I ran into a house but the house disappeared and the man came walking toward me. As I managed to get out of ITS way I hid in the shadow and felt a cold hand on my shoulder. As I turned my head, all my... fear had... disappeared. Then I hear a voice saying you can't hide from me. When I turned there was nothing there but a sign that could barely be seen. As I tried to look at it I heard the man coming and I skated all the way home as fast as I could. I said to myself, "WHAT WAS THAT THING, IT LOOKED LIKE DEATH FROM PUSS IN BOOTS." As I got home I opened the door and saw my mom sobering. Then my mom told me where I have been in tears. I was very confused and said I was in the neighborhood. Then the next thing that came from her mouth had scared me to death. She told me "Son, are you ok, you've been lost for a year." As I heard this news my mom was crying of joy but I was not. All that fear I felt had come back and I was terrified and I was scared. I started to wonder "What happened to my friends or how my brother is doing. Maybe I should have waited for him instead of bailing." A week later I went outside and I saw a man on the porch with a hood. The feeling in the air was cold and the sun had disappeared. In the afternoon after that weird appearance my mom had a surprise for me. Then the same man from the porch outside came inside my house and told me congratulations on getting back home little man and wanted to give me a handshake. I was getting very scared and suspicious of this man since I don't know him, how does my mom know him and I didn't want to give him a handshake but my mom insisted and the moment my palm touched his the air got thin, I started to get dizzy and then I blacked out. When I woke up I saw the man and I was hanging in the air. I tried to escape but every time I tired the pain would only grow in my shoulders. As I looked to see, I saw a 6 inch hook in my shoulder. As I cried out for help the man came to me and choked me. Then his face had a mouth and told me in an eerie voice "GIVE ME YOUR HEART." His

mouth opened very wide and I tried to scream for help but I couldn't. I was trying and trying but I couldn't breath. Then the guy got hit with a knife to the head that flew out of nowhere. The man looked like he was pretty dead and I even double checked. Then I ran and found a door and when I opened the door I was in my house. As I was about to sit on the couch but then the couch disappeared and then everything else started to fade and my mom became a shadow and as the house started to disappear I looked around and I saw IT. Not only IT did not die but only played a trick on me this whole time. I ran into the basement just for the door to be a brick wall and nothing else. I turned around and IT was there. I kicked IT and tried to fight it. Then I blinked and he disappeared and the house started to come back but my... my mom, oh my mom... As I stand there groaning and mourn for my mother I hear my brother in his room. I ran to his room but only to see IT was standing right there. I kicked IT and it pushed me into the wall. As I tried to get up, the man killed my brother in front of my eyes. IT told me to get up but how could I? I was very injured and hurt emotionally. I couldn't move then the man kept getting closer and closer. Every step he took the more of not just the house but the whole world would disappear. Step by step the house disappeared, another step the neighbor disappeared. Until he reached me then everything was truly gone. My mom, siblings and everything and everyone I knew was gone and it was only me and him. He picked me up from my neck and the other arm ready to do something but I didn't know what it was going to do. IT was forming a mouth and IT started to say "I'M GOING TO GIVE YOU ANOTHER CHANCE. IF YOU GIVE ME YOUR HEART I WILL LEAVE YOU ALONE AND YOU WILL BE FREE FROM ME." I asked myself "WHY DO YOU WANT MY HEART" .....Only silence for a little while then he spoke with a grin and a soft voice, "You really don't know do you." Then IT started to form into his human form and I felt...true fear. Fear that cannot be expressed in human words. Fear that can't be explained in any way and that same fear gave me the chills and my body froze. IT was the old man who tried to stop me. "I tried to stop you... I didn't want you to take the road or take my candy. But you never LISTENED. KNOW I SHALL TAKE MY HEART BACK AND DO THIS CYCLE ALL OVER AGAIN." As IT gets his blade coming out of his hands and...

Logan Y

Address:

Phone Number: 710 726 6115

Age:12    Grade:7

## **THE CAMP FUJI CREATURE**

It's the summer of 2009 in a town called Carlaville and Tommy wakes up to find himself ready for an adventure. He opens his window to see beautiful autumn leaves and gets dressed for the day. He runs downstairs, takes a piece of bread and is out the door. He starts to walk down the road and continually sees missing posters for different kids. They are a deep gray with big bold bright white letters. Tommy continues to walk down the road, thinking "I wonder where they all are." Worried Tommy starts to think of how he could find them. He grabs one of the posters, and he puts it in his pocket after that he continues to walk to the store. When he eventually gets there he takes the groceries and goes home. On the way back he called his friends Arlo and Jemma. "Hey, have you seen the posters?"

"Yeah I have." Jemma replies curiously.

"I have also seen them." Arlo adds on nervously.

"I think we should go looking for them." Tommy says with excitement. "See you tonight" he yells. They gather all their stuff up like flashlights, snacks, cameras, and their phones. From what they had heard everyone went missing somewhere around the woods near Camp Fuji. They decided to look there first. It's a long walk so they left after they ate dinner.

"Are you sure that we want to do this?" Arlo says with a shaky voice. The wind howls as the three of them begin to shiver in horror of what's to come as they get closer to the camp as the giant spruce trees sway back and forth.

"Do you hear that?" Jemma says with complete fear in her voice.

"Look!" Tommy yells with fright of what it could be. A figure covered in black runs into one of the cabins. They run up after him. They peak through one of the windows.

"Oh no." Jemma whispers petrified... They see a deceased body lay on the floor. They hear the door slam. They turn around to leave and investigate the cabin and then they see... The figure looming over them, with his lengthy pointy...sharp fingers? They yell at the top of their lungs almost as high as a dog whistle. All at once they push him down with as much force as they possibly can. He falls to the ground and grabs Jemma's leg, she kicks him with the other and they hide. Soon enough it starts to rain. They sit under the tree scared, shivering. They don't know what to do. KRASH! Lighting strikes in the distance. It becomes pitch black and the winds pick up.

They can't decide what to do. All of them are scared of what will happen next. The kids start to sneak around and they find out that there are three cabins and a boat house. All three of them agree to check the cabins first. They look in one, nothing, just a bed and a shelf. The other one had the same thing as the first. To the final cabin they think. The group tries to go in but it's locked.

"Don't worry." Tommy exclaims as he pulls out his hatchet. After a little while he makes his way into the cabin. They all huddle together and go in. They see the deceased body from earlier and weapons that were most likely used in the murder and also a few pieces of paper that were all ripped up. Once they look at the paper, they see that indicates that there are a few spots around the lake the shadowy figure may be hiding. They all decided to first look around the lake's shoreline for any clues that the mysterious figure may be hiding there, but found nothing. They continued to look around a little more. Then they continued their search around at the boat house. After searching around the lake and the boat house it was getting late and they knew they needed to get home. As the three of them walked home through the gloom of the forest, every sound made them shiver. They all had the nagging feeling that they were being watched. Once they reached Tommy's house, Tommy begged his mom to let Arlo and Jemma spend the night. Tommy, Arlo and Jemma didn't want to separate, since there's safety in numbers and they were scared that "It" might get them. Eventually the group settled down and restlessly fell asleep.

After a long frightful night feeling as if though there were eyes peering through Tommy's windows at them, the three agreed to continue with their day as if everything was normal. Every moment they were checking for Him, constantly looking over their shoulders like in the alleyways, behind doors, and in empty rooms. The crew hadn't told anybody what they had seen or about the bodies that they had found. Arlo's worries were racking up, the images of the deceased ran through his mind on an endless loop; their faces forever frozen in twisted horror. He continued to think about the shadowy figure, and its long knotted appendages shaped like the twisted old growth of a tree and its spindly gnarled fingers, that came to a point like knives. He shook the images from his head and ran to catch up with Tommy and Jemma.

All three of them ate their dinner and Tommy says to Arlo and Jemma "It's time." They started their way back to the campsite. On their way to reinvestigate the boat house they spotted the twisted shape of the dark figure... dragging his next victim!

"I'm so scared!" Arlo thinks to himself, trying not to freak out. Jemma sees him starting to breathe heavily and reassures him.

"You're going to be okay Arlo." She says in a gentle and soothing voice.

"Okay." Arlo says, slowing his breathing, feeling reassured.

With a sharp crunching sound of joints and bones, the figure turned his head sharply and looked in their direction with a piercing stare. Tommy, Arlo and Jemma staring back at the misshapen face of this...man? Creature? They couldn't tell. The trio bolted to hide behind a tree with a yearning desire that the thing didn't see them. Jemma readies herself to run and yell as a distraction but it looks away and continues on dragging its victim. The thing drags its injured prey away into the depths of the boat house. All three of them start to cautiously trudge through the slick, squelching mud left from yesterday's thunderstorm. They get to the door and with a loud, agonizing creak, push it open. Peering inside the three of them had a hard time making out the boat houses' dark, neglected interior. Through the gloom they can see that there is no one there. In that

instant, they hear a quick clacking sound, like animal claws scrambling across a wooden floor. They see the twisted shape of the creature carrying the limp body of its prey over its shoulder as it dumps it into a row-boat. They watch him paddle out to the center and discard the body into the deep, penetrating cold of the lake.

"L-l-let's move to a different spot, maybe we can get a better view."

Tommy stuttered anxiously. Once they moved to a different area they saw bubbles gurgling up to the surface. The thing started to paddle back once it finished making sure its victim perished. He started paddling back. By the time he got back to shore the group started to walk away stealthily, hoping that the creature didn't sense them. At that instant SNAP, a twig under Tommys foot splinters. The sound seemed to echo over the entire lake. Tommy froze, too terrified to move, he could feel his heart pounding against his rib cage. To Tommy, the forest began to spin as his anxiety swelled and tears filled his eyes.

"Oh no." Arlo wimpers. All three of them turn around to see Him clambering towards them on all fours, like a feral beast. Quickly Tommy, Arlo, and Jemma took off rapidly, jumping over fallen logs and darting between trees, looking back to see the creature closing in on them. They ran harder, the cold air stinging their lungs, their leg muscles burning. They kept thinking about its long slender legs as it ran and the ferocious claws that marked the end of its leathery arms. Once they got out of the woods... he stopped? They continued to run to Carlaville. After a few more minutes of running they found their way to the police station. Tommy quickly swept past Arlo and Jemma. He yelled to the front desk lady.

"Someone, NO something was chasing my friends and I throughout the woods." Tommy takes a deep breath to try to calm his nerves "They threw somebody in the lake. It's at the campground."

"Calm down honey." The lady at the front desk says, reassuringly. After telling her what happened, they all went to the boat house to see if they could find this "Thing." Tommy, Arlo, Jemma and the officer entered the boat house.

Upon entering the trio looked around the boat house, and to their horror they saw the bodies of every police officer in Carlaville. That's when the kids heard the door to the boat house slam shut. CLICK. The kids saw the officer locking the door. With a twisted smile she turned to them, as her skin began to stretch and split. The sound of her flesh tearing is all they could hear as her form began to twist. Suddenly, the creature was standing before them. It's leathery skin stretched over its long twisting frame. The stench of rotting blood filled the boat house. Tommy, Arlo, and Jemma held each other, and opened their mouths to scream when the creature lunged at them. Darkness.



Chloe

13 8th grade

Breakoffs

Brandy could remember meeting her as if it was just a few minutes ago, her sweet smile, her kind eyes, her sweet silky voice, her soft, beautiful brown hair. Who knew it would all fall apart; piece by piece, lie by lie.

How could it all go away in fifteen minutes?

Three weeks ago was almost all she could think about while practicing before her dance shift.

"Will you make me the happiest girl in the world and marry me, Brandy?" Still echoing in her mind

She thought she knew Roslynn.

"Why would I even think I knew her?" Brandy paced around the large mirror covered room, ranting to her dance manager, Cara. "I only knew her for at least 9 months. I guess those 9 months weren't as amazing as I was making herself believe they were, huh, Cara? I really thought that we were amazing together!"

"Clearly this Roslynn was thinking something different, why else would she let her friends touch you, Brandy?" Cara said, not expecting Brandy to reply.

"You're right! Why would SHE do that to me?" She responded, surprising Cara. "She didn't even try to cover up what they did, all she did was throw a bag of trash and a few leaves over me and fricking leave!" She spit, falling to the floor in a heap of sadness.

"Brandy, I don't think that Roslynn even tried to even know you, she just thought you were attractive." Cara explained, walking speedily over to her student.

"That just can't be true Cara! She was so sweet, so caring...." Brandy trailed off looking into the looming mirrors that framed the studio walls. "Sh-she couldn't have thought that!" she cried, writhing on the floor cradled by Cara.

"She lied to you Brandy, Roslynn never truly loved you sweetheart." She wiped away Brandys tears, "Hey, it'll all be okay Brandy. We'll figure it out. Okay?" Cara slowly spoke to Brandy trying to calm her, to help her.

"But how Cara?!" Brandy started to stand up, releasing herself from Caras hold. "No one will ever believe that anything happened!" Brandy yelled, hurting her already sore throat, her silky red hair sticking to her tear ridden face.

"Brandy!"

"WHAT??"

"I know that I told you what you can do if you aren't believed by the authorities" Cara stared at Brandy, into her soul.

"What are you talking about?" Brandy asked, beginning to back away from Cara.

She didn't answer. She only kept staring, eyes constantly changing shape. The studio began to fade away. Melting into another scene. Cara disappears, melding into the melting colors of the once normal studio. Quick as it happened it ended, throwing Brandy into another seemingly endless void of an alleyway.

"Cara?...CARA!" The long stretch of dirt and garbage looming ahead of her. "CARA!!" Brady screeched into the alleyway. This place felt familiar.

"I can't believe we actually got her here...." Brandy heard a familiar hushed voice say.

"It was so easy...." others snickered.

"no...NO" Brandy knew where she was. She knew exactly what was going to happen. She couldn't, no, wouldn't go through with this again.

She could see herself. She could see all of them walking behind her, Mathew, Jackson, Melissa ....Roslynn.

"How did you even get her to say yes to your stupid joke engagement?...." The voices rang in her ears, bouncing through her mind, never ending.

"Roslynn, what did you guys want to show me back here?" Brandy heard herself say a few feet from her. "You said it was gonna be cool!" she laughed.

"Calm down, we're almost there, Brands." Roslynn snickered under her breath.

"How does she not realize? It's so obvious!" Jackson whispered to Roslynn.

"Its cuz she's freaking dumb as crap, Jackson"

The looming buildings seemingly began to grow taller and darker with every step into the long foggy alleyway. Each crunch of the dirt and leaves just sealed Brandy to the memory.

"NO,NO,NO. I CAN'T DO THIS AGAIN!" Brandy screamed at Roslynn.

"This is gonna be awesome Roslynn, no one will find her here." Melissa muttered.

"I know right!" Matthew replied with a beaming smile.

"Shouldn't she know not to go to places like this with people? You may be her fiance but she should know..." Jackson muttered.

"Will you all shut up! She's going to hear us talking about it!" Roslynn sternly looked at her group of friends.

"Sorry man.."

"Yeah Ros sorry, I wasn't thinking about that"

"Yea well just be quiet, OK?" Roslynn spit at them.

"Will do bro"

"NO! SAY WHAT I WOULD HAVE HEARD TO BE ABLE TO LEAVE MATHEW!"

Brandy wailed in his face unaware that he could hear her.

"Brandy, did you say something?" he asked.

"No, why?" Her memory answered.

"NO I DID SAY SOMETHING! PLEASE" Brandy screamed through her tears at Matthew who walked right through her, shivering with the contact.

"Brandy, stop messing around, I can hear you talking!" Matthew spit, getting annoyed.

"I told you, I didn't say anything Matthew!"

"Yes you did, Brandy! I heard you."

"Damn it Matthew, no I-" She froze.

It was like they froze. All actions stopped. All Move sounds gone.

"W-what happened..." Brandy muttered to herself.

A shadow moved in Brandy's peripheral vision sending a gust of wind towards her, a chill down the spine.

Brandy whipped around to see what was there only to see the ugly dirt covered bricks of the worn buildings. She began to fill with pure fear, hearing heavy breathing coming from everywhere around her. None was coming from the people that she tried so hard to get away from. Her hitched breathing became more quick.

"WHOS THERE?" She managed to shriek through her fear.

The shadow moved again through the alley past Brady.

Brandy slowly started to move down farther though the long narrow alley trying to get closer to the large massed shadow.

"HELLO?" She shouted into the dim light.

The shadow moved closer to a pile of what looked like trash and leaves.

Brandy knew this exact spot. She looked behind her to see that everyone who was there had disappeared.

"No..... It can't be.." Brandy moved closer to the shadow looming over the mass.

She began to move the bags and leaves out of the way. The smell of blood and other fluids flooding her sinuses.

"NO!" Brandy screamed.

# The "infinite" Forest

Landon G

12

7th grade

1

ON MY MORNING JOG, I WALK INTO THIS HUGE FOREST BUT THEN START GETTING SCARED SINCE THEY ARE ALL DEAD, AND A SLIGHT FOG COVERS UP WHAT'S FAR UP AHEAD SO I CAN'T SEE MUCH. I START TO TURN BACK UNTIL I NOTICE THE WAY I GOT IN IS NOT THERE ANYMORE. JUST FOG AND MORE DEAD TREES. MY HEART POUNDS IN MY CHEST AS I FORCE MYSELF TO KEEP CALM, PUSHING DEEPER INTO THE FOG IN HOPES OF FINDING SOMETHING - OR SOMEONE - THAT COULD HELP. AS I WALK INTO THE FOG I SEE A MEDIOCRE SIZED SHACK AND I IMMEDIATELY START RUNNING TOWARDS IT HOPING SOMEONE THERE CAN HELP ME OR I CAN TAKE USEFUL THINGS FROM THE SHACK. AS I APPROACH THE FRONT DOOR I HEAR A SOUND WHICH SOUNDS LIKE TWO SHARP THINGS OF METAL SHARPENING ONE ANOTHER. I PRAY THIS ISN'T A SERIAL KILLER AND KNOCK ON THE DOOR JUST HOPING FOR SOME DIRECTIONS.

GET AWAY YOU MONSTERS!" I HEAR FROM SOMEONE WITH A SCRATCHY VOICE "MONSTER? WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?" I REPLY THINKING HE IS INSANE. "OH? WHAT ARE YOU DOING OUTSIDE THEN?!? COME GET INSIDE BEFORE THEY GET YOU! "WHAT?? WHAT IS GONNA GET ME?" "NO TIME TO EXPLAIN, GET IN! HE'S HERE!" I RUN INSIDE AND HE SLAMS THE DOOR. A FEW SECONDS LATER I HEAR SOMETHING POUNDING THE DOOR. "WHAT IS THAT!" I SCREAM LOOKING AT ITS FACE. ONE BIG EYE STARING THROUGH THE PEEPHOLE. LOTS OF BLOOD ON THE COAT AND IT IS STANDING UP ON 2 LEGS. HE HAS A STARE OF DEATH THAT WHEN I LOOK AT MY TEETH QUIVER. "IT'S A MUTATED DEER. ONE OF MANY MUTATED ANIMALS IN THIS FOREST." "WHAT MUTATED ANIMALS?. WHY ARE YOU NOT SCARED HE'S GONNA GET IN!!" "DON'T WORRY IT CAN'T GET IN. THE DOOR IS MADE OF A VERY TOUGH WOOD. "THANK GOODNESS. THAT COULD HAVE BEEN REALLY BAD FOR ME IF I DIDN'T RUN IN.

"YES, GOOD THING YOU GOT IN ON TIME. THOSE DEERS ARE THE 3RD STRONGEST MUTATED ANIMAL OUT THERE!

"WAIT, SO WHAT ARE 1ST AND 2ND?" "MUTATED GORILLAS AND MUTATED TIGERS." I STOPPED HEARING THE BANGING ON THE DOOR AND ASSUMED HE LEFT BUT I'M GOING TO WAIT A BIT BEFORE GOING BACK OUT THERE. OK SO NOW, WHERE IS THE EXIT OUT OF THIS FOREST?" RUMORS HAVE IT THAT THERE IS NO EXIT. JUST AN INFINITE FOREST WITH LOTS OF TREES."

"THAT'S GOTTA BE A LIE! I'M GOING TO FIND THIS EXIT OUT OF HERE!" "DO YOU HAVE ANY SCRAPS TO MAKE A VALUABLE WEAPON THAT CAN KILL THESE THINGS?" "I HAVE A COUPLE, BUT DEFINITELY NOT ENOUGH TO MAKE A WEAPON. PLUS I DON'T EVEN KNOW HOW TO CRAFT WEAPONS." "DON'T WORRY ABOUT THAT, I AM A PROFESSIONAL CRAFTSMAN." "I'M GOING OUT TO GET SOME MORE SUPPLIES THEN BE BACK!" I SPRINT OUT THE DOOR AND IMMEDIATELY START GRABBING SUPPLIES AND THROWING THEM INSIDE OF MY BACKPACK. I KEEP DOING THIS FOR A COUPLE MINUTES UNTIL I HEAR THE BUSHES TO MY LEFT RUMBLING LIKE SOMETHING IS IN IT. I START SLOWLY STEPPING BACK AS THE SHAKING IS STILL HAPPENING. I'M TERRIFIED, WHAT IF IT IS THAT ONE MUTATED DEER AGAIN! I TRY TO BE AS QUIET AS I CAN UNTIL SOMEONE POPS OUT WITH A LOT OF STICKS. "HELLO?" I'M KINDA CONFUSED. "OH HEY! WANNA HELP ME GATHER SOME MATERIALS AND MAKE A CROSSBOW SO WE CAN DEFEND OURSELVES?" "THAT'S ALSO WHAT I'M TRYING TO DO. DO YOU HAVE A HOUSE AS WELL?" "NO, I HAVE BEEN SURVIVING BY MAKING SHARP SPEARS BUT THEY ALWAYS BREAK AFTER I KILL"

"YOU CAN LIVE WITH ME AND THIS GUY I MET WHO SAVED MY LIFE IF YOU WANT." "THAT WOULD BE LOVELY!" I SHOWED HIM THE WAY BACK HOME AFTER FINDING TONS OF SCRAPS. "YO, I'M BACK FROM GETTING THE SCRAPS. CAN YOU OPEN THE DOOR?" "YEA I'M COMING" HE OPENS THE DOOR AND I WALK IN. HE TRIES TO CLOSE IT THEN HE SEES THE CUBS SCOUT I BRING WITH ME "" "WHAT THE? WHO ARE YOU?" "I'M DREW!" "OK.. I'M KEVIN "" OH AND YOU" HE LOOKS AT ME "WHAT'S YOUR NAME AGAIN" I'M MARK "" HE LETS DREW INSIDE AND ME AND HIM START MAKING SOME WEAPONS WHILE KEVIN MAKES SOME FOOD FOR US. AFTER A FEW HOURS I HAD MADE 3 MACHETES WHILE DREW WAS ABLE TO MAKE 3 CROSSBOWS AND 10 ARROWS FOR EACH. "WE ALL GATHERED AT THE DINING ROOM AND ATE THE STEW KEVIN HAD MADE.

WE FINISHED THE FOOD AND WE ALL DECIDED TO TRY AND FIND AN EXIT TO THIS HORRIBLE PLACE. WELL KEVIN DIDN'T WANT TO GO BUT WE JUST FORCED HIM TO. WE WERE ABLE TO GO FURTHER THAN BEFORE BECAUSE KEVIN HAS GOOD MAPPING SKILLS SO HE CAN ALWAYS LEAD US BACK TO THE HOUSE IF NEEDED. I SHOOT ITS EYE IN THE HEAD THEN FINISH IT OFF WITH A MACHETE JAB IN THE JAW. WE CONTINUE VENTURING THROUGH THE FOREST UNTIL WE HEAR THIS STRANGE SOUND. AND THEN ANOTHER ONE, AND ANOTHER ONE, AND ANOTHER ONE, HUNDREDS OF THESE WEIRD SOUNDS EMERGE FROM THE BUSHES. THEN OUT OF NOWHERE HUNDREDS OF MUTATED DEER EMERGE AND START SURROUNDING US IN A CIRCLE. "WHAT THE HECK! THERE ARE HUNDREDS!" I SAY FREAKING OUT. "TRY AND MAKE AN OPENING BY KILLING THESE ONES

RIGHT HERE." KEVIN SAYS. ME AND DREW SHOOT THE 5 HE POINTED AT TO FINISH THEM OFF WITH THE MACHETES. BUT ONE OF THEM WAS ABLE TO GET A BIG SLASH ACROSS MY STOMACH. CAUSING ME TO START GUSHING OUT BLOOD.

BUT I HAD TO STAY STRONG. I GET UP OFF OF AN IDLE POSE AND TRY TO GET AWAY FROM THE BIG CROWD OF MUTATED ANIMALS. KEVIN AND DREW ALSO COME BACK WHILE SWINGING MACHETES AT THE ONES NEAR THEM. WE WERE ABLE TO HIDE IN SOME BUSHES AND DREW WAS ABLE TO MAKE A BANDAGE WITH NEARBY LEAVES AND STICKS. IT WAS GETTING LATE, EVEN THOUGH IT WAS ALWAYS DARK HERE WE COULD TELL THAT IT WAS LATE CAUSE WE WERE GETTING PRETTY TIRED. BUT WE STILL HAD TO PUSH ON SINCE WE WERE MILES FROM THE HOUSE SO WE VENTURED OUT HOPING THAT THE MUTATED ANIMALS LEFT, THANKFULLY THEY DID. WE KEPT VENTURING ON, OUR LEGS GETTING REALLY WEAK AND TIRED BUT WE STILL DIDN'T GIVE UP. A COUPLE MORE HOURS PASSED AND WE SAW A PILE OF BONES. SINCE DREW LEARNED HOW TO IDENTIFY THE TYPE OF BONE WE QUICKLY DISCOVERED IT WAS A HUMAN. WE WONDER WHAT HAD HAPPENED HERE UNTIL A MUTATED TIGER JUMPS OUT OF THE FOREST AND OUNCES ON DREW! ME AND KEVIN QUICKLY KILL THE TIGER BEFORE HE DOES ANYMORE DAMAGE TO DREW BUT DREW WAS BLEEDING OUT REALLY BAD. WE QUICKLY TRY TO MAKE BANDAGES BUT WE DON'T KNOW HOW TO. WE TRIED AND TRIED BUT THE BANDAGE KEPT FALLING OFF OF HIS WOUNDS. WE START PANICKING AND LOOK BACK TO ASK DREW IF HE CAN TRY AND TEACH US BECAUSE HE IS NOT IN THE CONDITION TO STAND UP AND MAKE ONE. BUT WHEN WE DID, DREW WAS DEAD. AS WE WERE MOURNING HIS DEATH, TONS OF MUTATED ANIMALS ROSE FROM BUSHES INCLUDING DEERS, WHALES, GORILLAS, TIGERS, AND THE LIST KEEPS GOING. WE START RUNNING BUT THEY JUST KEEP COMING AMONG EVERY BUSH WE GO NEAR. WE KEPT RUNNING AND RUNNING, BUT THEY JUST CAME OUT OF NOWHERE! WE WERE RUNNING OUT OF BREATH, SLOWING OUR BREATH, SLOWING OUR PACE, WE WERE SCREWED. BUT THEN WE SEE SOMETHING AGAIN FROM THE FOG. LIGHT! THE FIRST TIME WE SAW IT IN A WHILE SO WE GOT EXCITED. BUT WE HAD TO RUN STILL SINCE THEY WERE ALMOST CAUGHT UP TO US. WE RUN AND RUN AND SEE THE EXIT. THE MUTATED ANIMALS RIGHT BEHIND US ALMOST GOT A SWING OFF WHEN I LOOKED BEHIND. WE BOTH RAN OUT AND BAM. IT LOOKS LIKE THE SAME PLACE I ENTERED FROM. THE NON-BUSY ROAD WITH THE SIDEWALK I WAS JOGGING ON. WE BOTH RUN OUT AND LOOK BEHIND US. ALL IT IS NOW IS A COUPLE OF TREES NOW. KEVIN SAYS "I CAN'T BELIEVE THE RUMOR WAS WRONG! THERE WAS AN EXIT AFTER ALL!". "HECK YEAH!" I REPLIED. AND WE BOTH GO OUR OWN WAYS TO THE HOUSE.

Angela Jo

13 8th grade

On Halloween, There was a trio of kids named Milo, Trixie, and Jade. A group of neighborhood kids that always played outside together and explored the neighborhood together. While these kids were playing truth or dare Trixie dared Milo to go to the spooky house at the end of the street, nobody ever went there or even walked on the same side of the sidewalk as the house. As night time began to approach Trixie had finally convinced Milo to go to the spooky house. Trixie and Jade agreed to go with Milo though .

They all slowly approached the house, fear intensely coursing through them. When they made it to the house Milo tried to stall but that stalling didn't get him very far Trixie shortened it up and tried to make him open the door by grabbing his hands and forcing them on the knob of the door but Milo pulled back with all of his strength and Trixie pushed and pushed and they both went flying through the door. When the door opened it made a really loud creaking noise and revealed a pitch black hallway. They all walked in and Jade yelled "IS ANYBODY THERE" then ran out of the house.

Milo and Trixie slowly walked into the house and heard the stairs creak every step they took. They started to pick up on a really bad smell and followed it. They followed the smell and it led to the bathroom. The bathroom had garbage all over the floor and sink, with cobwebs everywhere, when they looked in the bathtub it had a pool of brown murky water at the bottom. Trixie left the bathroom after finding out what it was because she soon lost interest after that. Milo stayed behind, he looked in the mirror and noticed that his reflection was inverted and didn't necessarily look like...him. Milo was in a stage of shock and confusion.

Milo called trixie back into the bathroom to show her, and noticed a tall dark figure start to crawl out of the mirror, they both started to run out of the bathroom and it followed behind them. Trixie: MILO WHAT IS THAT! Milo: I DON'T KNOW! They sprint upstairs, go into a random bedroom, and go under the bed. "Oh crap we forgot to close the door" \*Milo whispers\*. Before words could slip Trixies mouth Milo covers it, as the figure walks into the room. They could hear the wood creek as it was very dusty and old. Each and every step \*thump, thump thump\* but then they stopped right over the bed. The sound of each other's heartbeat began to grow louder and quicker, they heard the sound of the bed squeak. Milo's heart stopped and sunk down to his toes realizing the creature had not only been in the same room... but right on top of the bed. The creature looked down underneath the bed and they both rolled from underneath the bed and dotted out of the house.

Milo and Trixie ran into the woods behind the house. They hid inside of a pitch black tunnel, they both crouched down inside. Trixie: Eww milo stop touching me! Milo: I'm not? Trixie:"Then

who-"before she could finish her sentence they realized they had company... It was a bear home. They had startled the bear so it started chasing the both of them out of the tunnel. When they made it out they realized that they were in the middle of nowhere. Milo: "UM TRIXIE...BEHIND YOU!" she slowly turned around to see the monster again, they both sprinted with all the strength left in their bodies. They made it to a tall tree and they both climbed up the tree and hid within the orange leaves.

The creature walked past the tree without realizing they had been hiding in it until Trixie fell out of it. It looked back and started running at her on all fours at an alarming speed. Trixie tried to get up soon realizing that an abnormally large tree branch was stuck on top of her foot, she attempted to escape but didn't succeed, she pulled and pulled and barely made it out. The creature kept running toward her, she tried to run away but her foot was gushing blood and the bone was broken so she just crawled and before she knew it she was being dragged by her long brown hair. Milo was still in the tree curled up covering his own mouth crying from the traumatic sight he just saw, he sat in the tree for at least 10 more minutes contemplating his next move. Milo climbed out of the tree and started calling out for Trixie "TRIXIE..TRIXIE" you could hear the tremble in his voice as he stuttered.

Milo ran as fast as he could out of the woods with tears rolling down his face. When he got home it was already late and he ran up to his mom to explain the story. When he brought up the name "Trixie" she looked at him with utter shock and disbelief. "WHO?" his mother said with an unsettled look on her face. "That name has been banned from this town since I was a little girl. It was all because of some story about some creature with... that name that would grab children that went to that house at the end of the street and hang them on the balcony, but we weren't allowed to speak about it and it was all just some crazy story anyway. Anywho, what do you know about that?" "Well I uh... nothing" Milo runs out of the kitchen and into his room. Milo breaks out into tears again and just sits realizing, either everything that happened was made up in his head and he may just be insane or maybe it was real.

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## The Maze

The year is 2005 in a small town in California, Juan Diaz is your average teen going through high school. One day after school was walking home from school, but got a text from his mom

"Can you go to the store and get us some milk?" Juan was right by the store so he walked to the store. While walking around looking for the milk he kept seeing a guy following him, but Juan didn't think much about it. After getting the milk he had bumped into the man that was following him.

"Oh sorry kid didn't mean to bump into you" said the man in a deep voice

"Oh no your ok" Juan kept walking, but when he looked back he saw the man looking at him. Juan couldn't see his face because of his mask but his eyes struck fear into Juan, so Juan walked a little faster. When Juan got out of the store he thought about the man and how his eyes looked scary, but Juan had heard someone screaming.

"HELP SOMEONE HELP!". Juan rushed to the screaming. He saw an old man sitting down in an alleyway.

"Are you ok sir, Are you hurt?" Juan asked the old man

"Some man just robbed me, he took my medication"

"Don't worry I'll help..." The man had stabbed Juan with a needle.

"Don't worry I don't need help anymore" Juan looked at the old man slowly passing out. He tried screaming for help but couldn't. The old man picked up Juan and put him in a van with three other teens.

Juan wakes up in a semi dark room, and the only light in the room is two torches. As Juan looks around he sees three other people laying down, one has messy blonde hair, the other is tall, and another one has glasses

"Hey Hey are you ok?" Juan didn't get an answer, so he decided to shake him.

"Hey wake up, wake up!"

"AGH!" The tall guy yelled.

"AGH!" Juan Yelled

"WHO ARE YOU, WHERE AM I" the tall yelled

"AGH WHERE AM I!" said the messy haired guy

"AGH!" Juan yelled with the tall guy. The tall guy pushes Juan off of him, the guy with the messy hair looks like he is about to have a panic attack, and the guy with the

glasses is still passed out. Everyone is freaking out but then a voice from a speaker starts to talk.

"Hello kids, now I know you're wondering why you are and the truth is..." The voice took a pause.

"Well I guess you don't have to know" The guy with the glasses finally wakes up

"Wow, where am I" The guy with the glasses said, still half asleep.

"Well now that everyone is awake let me tell you the rul-" the voice was stopped

"HEY WHERE ARE WE" Said Juan

"Ok if you really want to know you teenagers are trapped here, and you are in a maze that is all I am going to tell you"

"Well then how do we get out" said the tall guy

"So you see the door in front of you that's the only way into the maze, so find the key in that pit over there" Suddenly the lights of the room turn on showing a pit with snakes in it, and there is a key around the neck of the biggest snake.

"Oh hell no, I am not doing that" said the tall guy while looking in the pit.

"Yeah there is no way I am doing that" said the kid with messy hair

"Hey look we should know each other names, because it looks like we are stuck with each other, mine is Juan"

"Ok I think that's a good idea mine is Carlos" Said the kid with glasses

"Well my name is Josh" Said the tall guy

"My name is Miguel," said the kid with the messy hair. After introducing themselves they decided on how to get the key. Miguel wanted to get a big sharp stick and stab it. Josh wanted someone to climb in the pit and get it.

"Hey I have an idea" Carlos said

"Back home I would work with snakes because my family owns a farm, and the snakes would try to eat the chickens, so let me get the key". Everyone decided to go with Carloses plan, and now Carlos was in the pit sneaking around. Carlos was trying to not step on a snake, or make a loud noise. Carlos had made it to the big snake, and he put two fingers on the string that is holding the key, and carefully took it off. Carlos rushed out the pit, but accidentally stepped on a snake, and it bit him.

"MMM" Carlos screamed in his mouth. Carlos ran faster, and was able to get out of the snake pit.

"Ah look at that bite" said Josh

"I'll be fine, but here's the key". Juan took the key, and picked up Carlos. Juan rushed to the door, when he opened the door he saw a dim hallway. The speaker goes off again.

"Well looks like you made it out the first door now find your way out, and remember this is a maze, and make good choices on which way you go"

The teens looked at each other, and at the hallway, and back at each other.

"Well let's get going" said Juan while his voice echoed in the dim hallway.

"Ew, is that mold on the walls?" Josh said in disgust.

"Hey watch your step here, there are some holes here" said Carlos from a distance. The teens walked for a little and Miguel saw the next door.

"Hey look there's another door" Miguel yelled to the group. The man in the speaker starts to talk again.

"For this door one of you will have to make a loud noise and that is it". A bell with a rope comes out the roof.

"Ring that bell three times and the door will open" said the man in the speaker. As the man in the speaker was talking, Juan took a look around and saw fresh blood, and Juan sounded like someone was having a hard time breathing.

But while Juan was thinking Josh rang the bell.

RING... RING... RING!

"RAHHHHHHH!"

"RAHHHHHHH!" Blood curdling screeches are heard down the hallway behind them. Bright Glowing eyes are the only thing seen in the dark hallway, and there are many glowing eyes.

"Run" said Juan while shaking

"What?" said Josh

"HE SAID RUN" Yelled Carlos while already running down the other direction.

Now the teens are in a full sprint, and they are cutting corners like cutting an apple , and Jumping like never before. Josh is behind the group, and Josh looks behind him, and sees what looks like a fleshy human with one have is jaw not there. Josh thinks there are zombies, but when he takes a closer look they have the head shape of a weird looking mushroom, and some have rat tails. But when he is not paying attention one zombie uses its tail, and it makes him trip.

Juan looks back to see if Josh is there but he doesn't see. He only sees the horde of zombies.

"HEY JOSH IS NOT BEHIND US" Juan yelled. But no one heard him because of the screeching of the zombies. As Juan follows Miguel he sees Carlos stop at a door.

Carlos opens the door and lets everyone in, and closes the door shut on the horde.

BANG BANG SCRATCH BANG

The hoard is banging and scratching the door, but then it stops.

"OH MY GOD WHAT WAS THAT" Miguel said while trying to catch his breath

"Hey where's Josh" said Carlos while trying to catch his breath too. Juan takes a deep Breath.

"He didn't make it..." Miguel and Carlos looked at each other, and then looked back at Juan. The silence felt like an eternal to Juan, and then the speaker spoke again.

"Looks like one of you is down for the count" said The man in the speaker

"WHAT ARE THOSE THINGS THAT KILLED JOSH" Yelled Juan

"Ah you have already met them, so you wanna know what they are huh don't worry you'll see them very very soon" the man said in a very sinister voice.

"What does that mean?" Said Carlos. Then smoke started to fill up the room, and the group started coughing a lot.

"I hope you have a great time with this one, AHHHHH AHH AHHHH" The man said while laughing violently. Juan wakes up not remembering how he got here, but then The man started to speak.

"Welcome to the glass box, for this challenge one of you will have to cut all of your fingers to get a key, Goodluck" said The man in the speaker.

"YO CAN YOU HEAR ME" said Miguel from the room next door

"YEAH I CAN HEAR YOU" said Juan and Carlos

"SO WHOS GOING TO DO IT" yelled Carlos

"I'LL-" Miguel got cut off.

"I'LL DO IT, HEY GUY IN THE SPEAKER GIVE ME THE KNIFE" Yelled Juan. A knife fell from the ceiling.

Juan looked at the knife, and looked at his hand. Sweat started to drop the knife, and then a timer started "1 MINUTE". Juan looked at the timer, and then Juan grabbed his shirt, and cut a chunk of it , and put it in his mouth. The timer now said "40 SECONDS". Juan put the knife at his fingers and chopped his thumb right off.

"MMMMM" Yelled while his shirt was in his mouth. This pain is something that Juan has never felt before, and the burning sensation of his finger hitting the cold air makes it ten times worse. Drool dropped down to the knife that was covered with blood, and Juan's life flashed before his eyes. He wanted to go home, back to his mom, back to his dad, and his family, he wanted to go somewhere where it is safe. Now Juan was crying in pain, and in sadness but then he looked at his pointer and middle finger and CHOP his fingers fly right off his hand.

"GOD DAMNIT" Juan yells where his scream was muffled. More and more tears and drool fell on the knife, and then he looked at the timer. It had 10 seconds left. Juan panicked and without thinking he cut another finger off. The timer said "5 seconds" Juan thought he was about to pass out, but then he snapped back to reality, and chopped his last finger with a second left.

"Good, good job little boy," said The man in the speaker. Juan looked at the group who was looking through the glass wall, they looked like they were screaming at Juan, and then Juan passed out.

"You boys better run," said The man in the speaker. The blood curdling screeching is heard again. The boys rush down the long hallway while being chased by the zombie horde. Carlos felt like he was about to pass out from all this running, but he had to get

out of the maze. Miguel was behind Carlos and then remembered what happened to Josh when he was in the back, but he looked back at the horde, and saw this big looking zombie, it was the size of the hallway. The big zombie goes and tries to grab Miguel, but Miguel somehow moves out of the way. This makes Miguel go faster than ever before. The boys ran and ran, and then they made it to a dead end.

"AH CRAP what are we going to do" Carlos said while running out of breath

"LOOK A VENT" yelled Miguel. Both of the boys open the vent and rush into the vent right before the hoard can get them. The teens started to crawl until they saw a room they could jump down in.

The boys finally find a room to drop down to, and they drop down into a lab and they see Juan strapped to a chair at the end of the lab.

"Welcome to the last challenge of the maze, I'm surprised you two made it this far, and your little friend here what was his name? AH Juan yes Juan will be free when you make it to the end of the room, but when the lights go out you must stay as still as possible or else" said The man in the speaker. They boys looked at each other, and looked at the end of the lab with Juan strapped to a chair.

Miguel runs to try to get to the end of the room but the lights go out. A loud growling noise is heard across the room, but then the lights turn back on. Carlos runs to where Miguel was but then the lights go out again, but this time it felt like an eternity for them to turn back on. When the lights turned on, Carlos was gone, nowhere to be found. Miguel thought that Carlos was gone for good, but he had to keep going. After a little bit of doing this he notices a pattern, the lights stay on for 3 seconds and the lights turn off for 6 seconds, so he used this to his advantage.

He would count for 6 seconds when it was dark then run when it was over, then when the lights were on he would do 3 seconds and then stop when the lights turned off. Miguel was at the end of the lab, and he grabbed Juan who was still in the chair, passed out, and then went for the door, but the door was locked. But then the lights turned off, the growling was heard again, then the lights turned on, and at the end of the hallway there was a zombie, but he looked stronger than the other zombies, more muscular, taller, and had mold on his body.

"Good luck little one, survive" The man in the speaker said. Miguel looked at the zombie with a death stare, and the zombie gave Miguel one back. Miguel grabbed a scalp knife off a table, and held it up to the zombie.

"I don't fear you" said Miguel while staring down the zombie. Then the zombie leaped at him, and Miguel used the scalp knife to stab the zombie but failed to hurt the zombie. The zombie threw a swing at Miguel. Miguel blocked the punch with his knife, and then

Miguel stabbed The zombie with full force. The Zombie pushed Miguel over the table, and hit Juan, who is still unconscious. The Zombie leaped at Miguel, and then the zombie picked Miguel up, opened his mouth wide open, and then the lights went out. When the lights went back on no one was there, not the zombie, Miguel, or Juan was there. The man in the speaker comes into the room and looks at a CCTV camera. "Thank you for watching this episode of THE MAZE, next episode tomorrow at the same time today, goodbye for now". Your computer screen goes black, then the live stream ends.

Abigail Kr

(719)-  
12/yo 7th Grader at  
Janitell

## Wake Up

The bell rang, signaling lunch. Today was Tuesday, so the lunch ladies would be surprising the kids with what lunch was being served. It was a dumb rule. Why would you get in line if you didn't know what was for lunch? Sage got in line behind Sarah Baker. She was talkative and struck most people as odd. She was friendly, though.

When she noticed him she greeted, "Hi Sage! How is switching to your left hand going.?" *She noticed?* Sage thought. He felt his cheeks getting hot. Though it wasn't that important, it was kind of embarrassing for her to know that in his free time, he would write with his left hand just to see how it felt. It didn't really benefit him, but in a way, it was kind of fun.

"Yeah," he started. "I got bored, so I just kind of did it." He smiled sheepishly. Sarah grinned and turned around to start a conversation with the person in front of her. As he got to the front of the line, he saw that today's lunch was a turkey and cheese sandwich along with a choice between an apple, an asparagus, or a peach. Not the best foods, but not bad either. He was just glad that there weren't just bananas for fruit like in previous days. He was sick of them. He reached forward and grabbed an apple.

Sage left the cafeteria and shoved his way through the crowded hallways to his science class. Sage walked into room 103 for another boring hour and 1 second of his day and took his seat. The bell rang. "Hello, guys." Ms. Callistode said half-heartedly. "As I've been reminding you for the past two weeks, your big test is tomorrow. All of the topics we went over this quarter will be on this test, so you should all study hard tonight. REMEMBER! This test is 60 percent of your grade for the first quarter. It is VERY important that you do your best if you want to pass." Apparently, Sage had zoned out more often than he thought while she was speaking; this was the first he had heard of this test. Ms. Callistode gave the rest of the class time for work. Throughout the class, Sage kept telling himself to start studying, but he was lost in his own thoughts. His heart sank when he heard the bell ring. He knew that he would probably bomb that test. The rest of the day was a blur.

Sage was walking home from school on an average foggy day. He began to think about how he wished his life was less bland as he walked along the sidewalk, leaves crunching underfoot and his breath creating small clouds. His mind wasn't really thinking about much, so he began to get bored. He recalled his day. Ugh. He remembered about the test tomorrow. Trying to stray away from the thought, Sage started making dull observations about his surroundings. There was a white mailbox. There were 12 trees in front of him. There were many leaves falling from trees. The sky was gray. His shoes were green. 2 dogs were in the yard in front of him. It was quiet. It was quiet. *Too quiet.* Sage stopped walking. He felt a chill run down his spine. Without moving his legs, he turned to peer behind him. His eyes darted around the neighborhood, but there were zero

kids. Not just kids, but people too. The streets were apparently devoid of people. *That's odd.* Sage thought. He felt something was unnatural, but dismissed the idea. He turned back around and continued walking. He figured he must just be nervous about the test. Still, a nagging feeling deep inside of him made Sage walk just a tiny bit faster.

Sage arrived at his house and thumbed through his key ring. He inserted the key that had a picture of his dog Shadow into the keyhole. Sage twisted until he felt a faint *click*.

"Mom! I'm home!" he shouted.

There was no reply. Sage shrugged and tossed down his backpack. It wasn't *too* odd for his mom to be gone on a Tuesday. She was probably out shopping for dinner. After all, she didn't really have a regular shopping schedule. She didn't really have schedules for *anything* really. Still, he wanted to give his mom a call. Though he knew it was irrational, he felt like he should check and make sure she was alright. Once he pressed call, his phone started ringing. And ringing, and ringing.

"I'm sorry, the number you have dialed is unavailable right now. Please try again later."

He panicked. More frantically this time, he called his mom. Still no answer. His breathing started to become quick, his heart started pounding in his chest, and his palms were sweating. Was it odd for her to be gone on a Tuesday? Where was his mom? He then tried to call his brother Matt. Matt didn't answer either. He then tried calling his dad, his friend Landon, his cousin, his aunt, and his uncle. Every time someone didn't pick up, his heart began to pound faster, as though an angry man was beating on his door and becoming more impatient for him to answer. The missing cars, the missing people, his closest friends and family not answering, it was all adding up in ways that Sage didn't like. Could it be some wild coincidence? He tried one more number. 911.

No answer.

That definitely wasn't some coincidence. 911 always answers. There is always somebody on the line.

Sage became distressed in ways he hadn't thought possible. He began to feel he was truly alone, that nobody was left on earth except for him. Sage fell down into a chair as he tried to steady his breathing. It was no use. He knew something was wrong, terribly wrong, and he couldn't figure out why. What had happened? What had happened to Mom, Dad, Matt, Landon, and all of the people he called? What happened to his neighbors and the other school kids? Panic seemed to overwhelm him. He dreaded the idea of being alone in the world. Sage felt like he was drowning in his worries, and that the waves of the storm-ridden sea wouldn't let him swim back up for breath.

Suddenly, he hears noises from upstairs. THUMP THUMP THUMP. Could it be Shadow?

"Shadow?" he called, his voice a higher pitch than he intended. Shadow barked in response. Shadow was in the corner of the room with Sage. She wasn't the one making the noise. As the noise gets louder and louder, Sage froze in terror. Still, Shadow seemed to not notice it. She picked up a blue dinosaur toy and waddled on over to Sage. Sage barely noticed the pup. He was too terrified to respond. Something was going to get him. Something was getting closer. THUMP THUMP What was going on? Sage began to feel his stomach twist and turn with anxiety. THUMP THUMP Sage had nowhere to run. Nothing that could get him away quick enough. THUMP THUMP Sage heard a horrible cackle. He had a horrible suspicion that

whatever had taken all the people, was coming for him. **THUMP!** Sage finally screamed for his parents. No answer! Sage saw the monster rapidly pounding down the stairs, AND THEN!

Sage awoke in his bed. His hair was matted down from sweat, and his shirt was drenched. Sage sat up abruptly as he continued to pant. He gradually slowed his breathing as he was trying to comprehend what was happening. Could it have really been just a nightmare? It felt so real! Had he really imagined so vividly? The way Sarah talked to him, the way the food tasted, the way the leaves crunched, and that same nervousness he felt from the test, he had felt a horrible dread, could it have really been a dream? A real feeling dream? He tried to recall all that had happened. It had been a normal school day. Yes. The terror had started when? It was when he was walking. There had been no people. He shuddered at the thought. He got home, and nobody answered the phone. It sounded silly that he was scared by something so little, but he remembered how terrified he felt. Then he heard the noise coming from upstairs. He remembered Shadow, being unconcerned as ever. She had even tried to play with him, while the world was ending. There was this dinosaur toy. When he thought about it, that toy didn't even exist! That was such a horrible nightmare, and he was glad it was over. Sage went over to his closet and got dressed.

"I'm leaving for work!" his mom shouted.

Mom! Though he knew that it was just a dream, he was relieved to see her as he ran down the stairs. Without speaking, Sage ran up and hugged his mom. She chuckled.

"I love you too, Sage," she said as she walked out the door.

When the lunch bell rang, the students sprang up from their seats and started flowing through the door. Sage pushed his way through the crowded halls and got in line for lunch. When he looked, he saw that Sarah Reddagch was in front of him.

When she noticed him she greeted, "Hi Sage! How is switching to your left hand going.?" Where had Sage heard those words before? He filled with dread as he remembered. The dream. She said the same thing to him in the dream.

Without thinking, he responded rudely, "Is that some kind of a joke?" Sarah looked at him with a puzzled expression on her face. She shrugged and turned around to talk to the person in front of her. That was very strange. Could he have predicted what she was going to say? It sounded like something Sarah would say, and he figured that was why she had said that in the nightmare. Still, he felt bad for what he said.

When he got near the front of the line, he noticed the turkey and cheese sandwiches on the counter and gulped. His head swiveled towards the fruits. There sat a box of apples, a box of asparagus, and a box of peaches. His heart began to speed up, and his palms became sweaty. Scared of what would happen if he went along with what happened in the dream, he grabbed a peach. When he sat in his seat, he didn't start a conversation as usual. He sat with his elbows on the table and his forehead resting on his hands. *What's going on?* he thought. *First Sarah, then the food?* How could Sage have possibly guessed what was for lunch? Nobody even *knew* last night. It had to be a crazy coincidence. It just had to be. His dreams had no impact on what happened. The most influence that they had was how he remembered the dreams, and how they impacted his choices. His dreams didn't decide what other people would do. They couldn't decide something that he had no control over. His mind was playing tricks on him. He was probably worried about the test. Wait a minute, the test never existed. No wonder he hadn't heard of it before! Still, he was probably just on edge, maybe from the nightmare itself. Sage started to eat his food. The bell rang, and people started to exit the room.

Sage walked into his science class. After the bell rang, Ms. Callistode made an announcement to the class.

"Hello, guys. As I've been reminding you for the past two weeks, your big test is tomorrow. All of the topics we went over this quarter will be on this test, so you should all study hard tonight. REMEMBER! This test is 60 percent of your grade for the first quarter. It is VERY important that you do your best if you want good grades."

Sage's heart raced. The thought that his dream lining up with the day as a coincidence became less probable. Apparently, his expression wasn't masked on his face.

Sitting next to him, Landon asked "You alright?"

"Yeah, I'm just tense about the test, that's all," Sage lied.

"I know! 60% of our grade! That's way too much!" Landon agreed.

Sage didn't like lying to his friend, but the test was the least of his worries. Something was wrong. Really, horribly wrong. Could he have heard previous mentions of the test before and just forgot? No. Sage didn't know what was happening, but he knew one thing. He didn't like it. After class, Sage asked if Landon wanted to walk with him. Landon was supposed to get a ride, but he saw the distressed expression on his friend's face, so he agreed. Sage needed someone to walk with him to ease his peace of mind. Though he knew he was being irrational, he wanted proof that the people he cared about weren't disappearing. Sage felt his shoulders tense up.

While he was walking, Sage was relieved to see cars drive past them. There was a lady sitting on one of the porches reading a book, and there were a few other clusters of kids walking away from the school. When he got to his house, he invited Landon in, scared that if he left, all the people would disappear. When the boys walked in, Shadow greeted them at the door with her tongue flapping around. Sage petted her soot-black fur. Sage's mom was in the kitchen cooking dinner. He led Landon up the door to his room. They both sat on the bed.

"You still sleep with your toys?" Landon asked.

"What?" Sage responded, confused.

Landon held up a blue dinosaur toy. It was the same toy from the dream. The toy that had never existed. Yet here it was, in Landon's hand.

"This was sitting on your bed," Landon said.

What was going on? That toy never existed! Sage became scared.

"Shadow must have put it there," Sage answered unconvincingly.

"Alright, I won't judge," Landon assured him.

Sage looked down and didn't reply. Landon thought it was out of embarrassment, but Sage was in deep thought. Something was going on. Sage had never seen the toy, and he wasn't sure where it came from. Sage felt his breathing get shallow. He was in horrible fear. Sage looked over at Landon and gasped. His friend seemed to be evaporating into the air. Every part of him seemed to be fading into the atmosphere. There was a crooked smile on his face. It wasn't the smile of a friend. It was the smile of a killer who knew he had succeeded.

Sage crawled back in horror, his eyes wide. Sage forgot to breathe, fearing Landon would attack at any given chance. Finally, the last of Landon faded away and the dinosaur fell to the ground. Panting and still in shock, Sage reached over to pick up the dinosaur. The thought of him breathing in a twisted version of his best friend made him gag. Suddenly, the dinosaur sprang to its feet and leaped at Sage in one swift motion. Sage jumped back with a scream and stumbled backward while trying to stay on his feet. The dinosaur was rapidly growing in size. Once about a foot taller than Sage, mind you a tall kid, It charged forward. Without leaving Sage time to think, it tackled him to the floor. Sage cried out in pain as he felt one of his ribs snap, flooding all other thoughts out of his mind.

Sage shot out of his bed, screaming with his arms flailing. Matt burst into the room. Still in his pajamas, he shouted,

"Are you okay!?"

His legs sprawled on the floor with one arm sitting him up, Sage panted, "Yeah... I'm \*gasp al- \*gasp I'm alright."

The dinosaur was no longer in the room. He was awake. Still, he didn't feel...right.

Matt's face started to contort. "What the heck's wrong with you!" he growled. Matt's face was starting to become red. "What kind of brother are you, Sage? You're HORRIBLE!" and with that, Matt stomped furiously out of the room and slammed the door as hard as he could. *What the heck?* Sage didn't know what he had said or done, but something obviously made his brother explode at him.

Sage tried to think about if it was a dream. He concluded that it was, as multiple things happened twice. He wasn't sure if he was recalling it correctly, but he wondered why he wasn't at least mildly confused that asparagus was a choice of "fruit". Yes. It was definitely just a nightmare.

When Sage showed up to his first class, he took his seat and turned around to talk to Landon. "What did your mom say about the sleepover?" Sage asked. Landon glowered at him in response. His gaze seemed angry enough to pierce stone. Odd. No, not odd. Upsetting. Unnerving. Sage couldn't remember what he'd done, and on top of that, Landon never held grudges. He couldn't stay mad at anyone for more than two seconds. It scared Sage. The rest of the day, the only things said to Sage were insults.

By the end of the day, Sage felt defeated. He felt as though the world was teaming up against him. He trudged through the front door and grumbled, "I'm Home." He walked into the kitchen and saw his Mom. "Mom, can I talk to you for a second?" Sage asked. His mom immediately stopped stirring and inhaled sharply. "Sage, I'm busy right now! Why can't you ever leave me alone? For 13 years, Sage, 13 years I've had to put up with you. If I had a time machine, the first thing I would do is tell myself to think twice before having you. Honestly, you being born was my biggest regret!" The words stung Sage. Everyone else was one thing, but his own mother? Trying to hold tears back, he started, "Mom wha-" "Get out of here will you?" His mom shouted. "Run away and don't come back, Sage. You aren't wanted and never were. You're a BURDEN. *Nobody* in this house wants you in their lives! None of us ever did!" Sage froze in shock.

Sage's eyes fluttered open, and he felt dried tears on his face. *These stupid dreams are killing me!* Sage thought. Deep down, the dreams were shredding Sage from the inside out. Sage hated it. He knew he was probably still in the dream. No. He was definitely in the dream. Sage was sick of it toying with him. This time, he was going to fight back.

"Good Morning Sage! I'll pick you up after school for your doctor's appointment," his mom called out as she closed the door on her way out. Sage paused. Did he really want to go to school without saying goodbye to his mom first? Yes. He did. She wasn't real. She might do something horrible. He knew it was just a dream. He didn't even have a doctor's appointment. Without saying anything, Sage got dressed and walked out of the door.

Landon was standing there, waiting for him. "Good morning," Landon greeted. "Leave me alone, will you?" Sage snapped. Sage knew that the dream was trying to get his hopes up by making everyone nice to him. The horrible, cruel dream. Sage started walking.

A little while later, Landon asked, "You okay?" Sage stopped walking, turned around, and let horrible, horrible words spill out. As much as it hurt him, he wasn't going to lose control of himself. He knew it.

"What's wrong with you!" Landon spat with tears in his eyes.

That put Sage over his limit. *This dream*. Sage thought. It was turning his friends against him again. He couldn't let it happen. It killed him to hurt Landon, even as a horrible imitation, but Sage lunged toward Landon forcing him into a prickly-bush, and ran. Tears stung Sage's face. He never wanted to hurt Landon, he was just scared of what might happen if he didn't.

He didn't know this at the time, but Sage was no longer in a dream. He woke up with *real* tears on his face. He woke up in the *real* world. He had *real* memories, yes, but they never happened. It was only a nightmare. When he woke up, *real* things were happening. His actions were *real*. Sage never intended to be horrible, but he was hurting people. *Real people*.

Sage continued to run to his school. Sage wasn't going to let bad things happen to him. He would be terrible before the dream had a chance to be. He *knew* that was what had to happen. At least, he thought he knew. Because to Sage, he was still in the dream. His first stop was the playground. He walked up the stairs of the slide. There was a kid there. What Sage didn't know was that the kid's name was Danny Finch, he was 6 years old, and his life.. was about to end.

When Sage neared the top of the slide, Danny started chatting as every little kid might, "Isn't the slide fun? I can't wait for my turn! You aren't going to cut me, are you? I've waited a whole lot of minutes to go down!" He gestured, making his arms wide. "I've already waited this long!" he exclaimed.

Sage hesitated. Danny was such an innocent and friendly kid! He was smart and curious, and he undoubtedly could have had an amazing future ahead of him. *Should I do this?* Sage asked himself silently. He resolved that he *had* to, or terrible things would happen. In reality, it was the opposite. However, Sage's mind was on a horrible path, and nothing could convince him of that, real, truth. He made up his mind.

Sage inhaled sharply and in one motion, he shoved poor Danny over the stairs near the top of the slide and watched him scream with wide eyes as he fell and hit the ground. To a 13-year-old like Sage, the drop might just twist an ankle, but the drop for little Danny was three times his own height. Guilt panged through Sage, but only for an instant, because he "knew" that Danny was just part of his dream. Sage "knew" he had done the right thing. Danny hit the ground with a thud.

Danny was gone.

Just like that, the kind soul Sage had become a murderer. A murderer. He became a murderer because of a twisted, horrible, cruel, dream. Because he thought he couldn't wake up. The moment his nightmare started was like a seed. It was a seed that poisoned his mind and continued to infect it as time passed. He was corrupted. Sage didn't stop there. No, he continued to do terrifying and horrifying things because no matter what, he just "*knew*"

he couldn't wake up.

### Break in

My parents left at 8:30 in the morning for a trip to Hawaii. That means I was going to be alone for at least two weeks! Since it is fall break, I spend most of my time eating pizza and being lazy, but I didn't mind the loneliness. I didn't have to get bossed around or told what to do.

As usual I ordered pizza and went upstairs to play video games. I entered my cluttered room, my bed was unmade, dirty socks and clothes were laying around, and an unpleasant scent lingered throughout my whole room. I struggled to get to my desk because of the piles of laundry. I didn't clean it cus my parents weren't there to tell me to, so I paid no mind to cleaning.

As I was still attempting to get to my desk I heard my phone vibrate on my bed. I groaned and leaped onto my bad smelling sheets that lay on top, hearing a huge creak as my body slammed onto the 10 year old bars that held my bed up. I opened it up and there was a text notification from my friend, Jack,

"Hey, I won't be able to come over because of the snow storm, sorry!"

"Snow storm?" I said, confused. I turned around and opened the curtains to the window that was right behind my bed frame. It was snowing at a fast rate, snow hit the ground and made even bigger piles that were all around in the roads, yards, roofs, and even the trunks of cars. I had completely forgotten that I even invited him over so it wasn't a big deal to me. I closed my curtains and made my way to my desk where my laptop was. I put on my headphones and opened up my favorite game forgetting about reality.

"Noo!" I threw my headphones onto the ground, frustrated from the game. I looked at the time, it was already 11:45 pm. "My pizza!" I lost track of time and totally forgot about the food I ordered. I rushed down the stairs and lifted the mail slot. By now my pizza was definitely cold.

But.. Instead I saw something different. I saw 3 pairs of legs, 6 separate feet, 3 torsos, and 3 heads. Each with black long pants that looked fuzzy, with brown leathered shoes, and oversized winter coats on. I immediately felt my heart sink and my breath getting heavier as if someone hit me in the stomach, I could feel the hairs on the back of my neck stand up. *Who would be standing in front of someone's door in this*

*weather? Who are they? What do they want? Why are they at MY door?* Thoughts littered my head. I slowly looked up and saw 3 men. One with a beard that needed to be shaved, another with a mustache that pointed at the ends and another with both an overgrown beard and a mustache that connected. All of them had a similar brown haired, messy look, then beanies that went over them.

"Come on Cornelius! You said you know how to unlock doors!" The man in the middle said with a croaky voice that sounded frustrated.

"I-i-i'm trying! My hands are just so cold and-"

He got cut off by another man that stood on the right side of both of them, "Shut up Cornelius! You're just making up excuses!"

"Oh you shut up Oswald!" Cornelius argued back

Hearing this, I came to the conclusion that these men were attempting to get in the house. They both continued arguing while I ran to our home phone that was in the kitchen to call the cops. I knew I had no time to waste, I grabbed the phone and quickly dialed 911, keeping my eyes on the front door. The few seconds I waited for them to pick up made me impatient knowing they could unlock the door any second. BEEP, they didn't pick up. BEEP, no answer, BEEP, nothing. BEE-

"911, what's your emergency?"

"T-t-theres men at my door trying to get in! My address is Mesa Drive 9876, Please get here, FAST!" My voice couldn't help but shake because of the amount of nervousness I had in me.

"We'll be there soon, the storm might slow us down bu-" the front door swung open. I could physically feel the petrified heart I got, and a lump in my throat. Right away I hung up the phone and hid behind a counter. They were inside now, and I have never felt more horror-struck in my life. I'd rather be anywhere else but home. I watched them as they chuckled their evil, wicked, lunatic chuckles. I watched one go upstairs, another go to the living room, and I watched my worst nightmare come to life, one walking to the kitchen. Aka so called "Cornelius"

I was at the left of the counter, he was at the right. I peeked at the corner, and he started going to the front, so I shifted to the back, then he went to the left, I went to the right. Then as I thought he was going back to the front, I went to my left, and I felt something hit my arm, then I heard a scream that sounded like it was a little girl who dropped her ice cream. I looked up, I was caught. I then screamed too, but quickly got up and dashed upstairs hearing the loud footsteps following behind me. I sprinted to my room, quickly shutting the door behind me no longer caring about how much noise I make, my first instinct was to grab my bedside table and block off my door, making my lamp fall on the ground causing a huge crashing noise.

13 yo.

malevolent

The cold wind howled through the little town of Great Falls, Montana, as darkness settled over the town. Most people had long retreated to the safety of their homes, but not John. He was a solitary man, living alone in a small, beaten up apartment on the outskirts of town. His days were spent in isolation, and his nights were filled with a deep sense of fear.

On this particular night, hunger scratched at John's stomach, forcing him to go out into the darkness. He wrapped himself tightly in a heavy coat, his breath visible in the frigid air. The streets were deserted, the only sound being the crunch of his boots against the icy pavement.

As he walked, a sense of dread washed over him. Shadows danced and flickered, playing tricks on his mind. He quickened his pace, hoping to reach the local convenience store before his imagination got the better of him. But no matter how fast he walked, the feeling of being watched continued.

Finally, he arrived at the store, its neon lights casting a glow on the surrounding area. John stepped inside, the warmth of the store enclosed on him. He grabbed a basket and began to peruse the aisles, his eyes darting nervously from side to side.

As he reached for a loaf of bread, a chill ran down his spine. He turned, his heart pounding in his chest, but there was no one there. He dismissed it as his imagination playing tricks on him and continued his shopping. But with each passing moment, the feeling of being watched grew stronger.

John hurriedly paid for his groceries and stepped back out into the night. The wind had picked up, howling through the empty streets. He clutched his coat tighter around him, his eyes scanning the darkness for any sign of movement. But there was nothing, only the sound of his own footsteps in the silence.

As he walked, a shadowy figure appeared in the corner of his eye. He turned, his heart racing, but it vanished as quickly as it had appeared. John's breath hitched in his throat, his mind racing with fear. He quickened his pace again, eager to escape whatever was watching him.

But no matter how fast he walked, the shadow figure seemed to keep track with him. It lurked just beyond the reach of the streetlights, its presence growing more menacing with each passing moment. John's heart pounded in his chest, his breath coming in short gasps.

He reached his apartment building, fumbling with his keys in his trembling hands. As he stepped inside, he felt a sudden gust of wind, dimming the light in the hallway. Darkness surrounded him, and he froze in place, his heart pounding in his ears.

The shadow figure materialized before him, its form shifting and contorting in the darkness. John's blood ran cold as he stared into its featureless face. It reached out a long, shadowy and malnourished hand, its fingers as sharp as a thumbtack. He tried to scream, but no sound escaped his lips.

With a sudden burst of energy, John broke free from his paralysis and ran into his apartment. He slammed the door shut behind him, his body trembling with fear. He locked every window and door, desperate to keep the shadow figure at bay.

But the figure was relentless. It scratched at the windows, its long nails leaving deep marks in the glass. John cowered in the corner of his room, his mind consumed by terror. He could feel the figure's presence growing stronger, its fear seeping into every corner of his being. Hours passed, and John's fear turned to exhaustion. He fought to keep his eyes open, but sleep eventually overcame him. As he drifted into unconsciousness, the shadow figure crept closer, its form merging with the darkness.

When John awoke, he found himself standing in the middle of a desolate forest. The trees loomed overhead, their branches reaching out like skeletal fingers. The air was dense with a pure silence, broken only by the sound of his own heartbeat.

He walked through the underbrush, his body weak and trembling. The shadow figure followed closely behind, its presence suffocating him. John knew there was no escape, no way to outrun the darkness that had consumed him. As he collapsed to the ground, his vision fading, John realized that he had become nothing more than a pawn in the shadow figure's twisted game. It had stalked him relentlessly, feeding off his fear until it had finally claimed his life.

And as the last bit of his consciousness slipped away, John knew that his fate was sealed. The shadow figure would continue its show of fear, forever haunting John and his family lineage, of the unsuspecting people in his family venture out into the night.

Janitell junior High

7th/12

## Camping Trip

One day Leo and his brother Ace wanted to go camping at a really haunted campground for fun. Leo and Ace packed whatever they needed. Leo suddenly got goosebumps, a cool cold breeze hitting his body, but he didn't think anything of it. Ace was so excited to go so he was rushing everything.

"Ace slow down, we're not going yet," Leo said.

"I know but I'm just excited to go," Ace said while jumping.

“ It’s giving ADHD” Leo said jokingly.

Leo goes to the kitchen and feels weird, he gets chills down his spine, his stomach churns. Leo looks back to see if anyone is watching him, but a black shadow passes by and he doesn't notice.

Leo checks the time, and it's time for them to go. Leo tells Ace to put all his stuff in the trunk and get in the car.

"Ace, it's time to go, so go put ur stuff in the trunk." Leo said as he gathered the things.

“Ok” Ace said, running to the car.

Leo tries to start the car but it doesn't. The car is not usually like that. As he tries again he starts to feel nauseous so he takes a mint. The car finally starts, so Leo drives the car out of the driveway.

They stopped at a small gas station to gas their car. The gas station looked really abandoned. Leo was hesitant to go to the gas station, but he did anyway. Leo was gassing and the owner called him in.

"Hey, I need you to come in for a second," The owner said.

"Ok," Leo said while taking his hand off the gas pump.

“You only paid \$25, and you wanted \$30 on pump 5 so you have to pay me \$5,” The owner said while looking at the register.

"Oh, I'm sorry about that," Leo said while getting the \$5 out of his wallet.

Leo pays the owner, and he goes back out. He continues to gas his car, he finishes and gets in his car.

They arrive at the campsite. Leo grabs the backpacks and the sleeping bags. Leo and Ace walk to find a great spot for them to camp. They found a spot next to a small river and the river had a small waterfall. They start to put up their tent and a small bear walks up to the river and gets in the water to catch some fish. Leo and Ace pause for a second, they get a camera to take a picture of the bear. They wait for the bear to go so they can get back to putting up the tent. The bear leaves and a baby fox runs to the river and drinks the water. Leo and Ace were so excited because they are seeing a lot of animals they have never seen in real life, they've only seen them on tv. The fox finally leaves so they put the tent up.

Leo and Ace walked up to the river with the waterfall and looked around to see what was around the river. Ace hears a noise from nearby. The leaves would crunch everytime they would take a step, but there were no leaves by them. Ace and Leo look around to see what is making that noise, they just thought it was an animal. As soon as they turn their head a little girl starts running towards the river. Leo and Ace didn't know what to do so they stood still and their hearts started beating fast, ba-dum, ba-dum, ba-dum. Suddenly the little girl disappears into thin air. Leo and Ace ran as fast as they could to their tent, and they were breathing hard, their heart beats racing. It was now 9:30pm they needed to make a fire so they could heat up food they had. Leo and Ace finally calmed down and gathered themselves together again and went outside the tent to make a fire only because they were hungry. Leo gathers some wood while Ace finds something to make a fire with. Ace couldn't find anything so he made fire the old fashion way. Ace took a stick and a rock and started rubbing them together. It took a while but Ace made progress and a little fire started. They started the fire and they warmed up their food. After Leo and Ace ate, they told each other scary things they had experienced.

"One day me and my friends wer-" Leo said while getting interrupted by hearing a strange noise. This creature was looking at them as they looked around confused. The creature stood still, the creature's eyes were yellow and red just like the sun, it looked like a giant, the creature had a body like a girl but much more taller. Ace gets chills down his spine, goosebumps form on his arm. Ace gets cold so he gets his jacket and puts it on. Meanwhile Leo is trying to start his story again.

"Ahem since I was rudely interrupted by something I'm going to start over again" Leo said with so much sass. "My friends and I were just playing soccer outside and then we

saw this shadow walk pass us and then disappear into thin air just like that little girl from today," Leo said. "Oh my gosh, that is crazy," Ace said. Ace was about to tell his story but they heard a growl coming from nearby. Leo and Ace turned on their flashlights and faced it to the trees that surrounded them. Crunch, crunch, crunch, crunch, everytime the monster would take a step. The nervousness they felt was bad; they felt very nauseous and scared. The creature suddenly made a loud growling noise. " Oh no, this is it, we're going to die," Ace said, scared. The creature finally showed itself, it was tall, the eyes were big and red. The creature looked hungry but not for the food Leo and Ace threw at the creature, it looked hungry for them. The creature licked his lips when he saw Leo and Ace. Although Leo had recorded everything, it still wasn't enough for him, he wanted to get every single angle of the creature. Leo was trying to take a picture but the creature turned and ran away, Leo did get a picture but it was very blurry. Leo wasn't satisfied with the picture so Leo grabbed Ace's hand and he ran so fast so he could catch up with the creature. Ace was screaming because he didn't exactly know what's going on. Suddenly Leo faints for no reason, Ace is trying to wake Leo up again because Ace was so scared of being out there without someone watching him. Leo wakes up, and ears are ringing hard. Leo could never forget what he saw. Ace and Leo stayed for a little while in their tent curled up in a ball and shivering to the sounds the creature made while looking for them. Ace's heart is beating so fast it feels like it will rip right out of his chest. Once Leo got more energy they gathered their things and drove back home. That was the night they will never forget.

Brandon F.

7/3/11

12/7th grade

## The Forest of No Return

Me and my friend James are in a camping group. There were about 15 other people and one of them was our old friend from a couple years back but we stopped talking to each other last year for no reason. His name was John. The group was known for visiting mysterious forests and finding out what makes them so terrifying. Last time we visited black Forest, and when it's night it looked like the forest came straight out of a horror film. This time we were going to go to the haunted State Forest or what the mentions read as, "The Forest of No Return. The forest was known for over 200 people going into the forest but to never be seen again. James was pumped but I was terrified. The thoughts echoing through my mind. What would happen if we go missing too, but I tried to not think about it because we were going tomorrow.

It was the next day. We were on the bus to go to the forest. We got there and it looked fine. It just looked like a normal old forest. We started walking. After 10 minutes of walking we walked up to this cabin. The cabin was known for terrible creatures coming from it and causing terrible things to happen to the people around the forest. We got up to the cabin. The wood was rough and rigid. You can even smell rot coming from the cabin. As James reached for the door we heard.

"I don't think we should open that." The camp inspector said, with a calm look on his face. We all listened and the people in the group were done with the adventure for the time being. We all went to the campsite, and We had a great night. We had a fire going, and we cooked some smores. It was great until we heard a noise coming from the bushes. We all jump. We ran into the tents and just slept it away.

After the first night we went out to explore some new things like an abandoned hospital built in 1937. They got shut down by the government because they weren't curing diseases, they were poisoning their subjects.

The camp instructor said, "Stories say this hospital was injecting people with poison made by the venom of a scorpion."

The information sent shivers down my spine. We walked in and we saw veils smashed on the floor. Remains of the smell of the scorpion venom in the air. We were walking for a solid 10 minutes but then we heard it. A scream. But not like any other scream. The hospital was shocked when it happened. The whole group ran out of the hospital in a flash. We were outside catching our breath to go explore some more things.

After a while of adventuring our numbers got smaller. It was like people started to get knapped. We noticed that John was gone. We were confused.

"Dude where do you think they're going?" James asked.

"Why would I know?" I asked him.

Then it happened. The group was gone. Me and James stood there not knowing what to do. We started walking. Thinking we could either run into someone that got lost too or the group. We walked and walked. About 15 minutes later I was panicking.

"What if we don't get found? What if we can't find them? We have to find a way out." I thought to myself.

"I know I know I'm scared too, but panicking means nothing in this situation. If we stay calm we might have a chance of getting out of here." James said, trying to cheer me up.

During our conversation there was a moving bush. A black shadow whipped past some bushes. For a little bit of time we were trying to figure out what it was. Then we got a good look at it. It was a little girl. The little girl dashed to a tree. I was terrified. Me and James stood there confused. After we gathered our thoughts we started to walk towards the tree where the girl went. There was a lake behind it. The lake was not like any other lake though. You can't even see anything on the other side of the forest. The fog was too thick. There was a solid whistle coming from the lake.

"Let's get out of here" I said, eager to leave.

"Agreed," James said, looking as pale as a ghost. Then we saw it.

"Dude look, it's the little girl that we saw." I said, looking confused.

"Let's ask her for directions to get out of here. It's the only way. I don't want to say that here."

"Ok, let's do it."

James was running after the girl, but I slipped on a little branch. I heard some footsteps coming at me from the bushes. It was John! John and I started to see where James went and then we saw him standing there. He was really close to the water.

"Dude where is the girl?" I said

"She jumped in the pond," James said, staring at the pond.

"Don't tell me that you are planning to jump into the pond?"

"I don't know"

"Dude if you jump I don't think things are going to end up good. Dude this forest looks like it just came out of a horror movie. Please don't do this."

"My gut is telling me to jump."

"I know your gut is telling you to jump, but that would be dumb. What will the girl give you that's so important that you can die for the info?"

"Bro im sorry"

Then he jumped. Screams filled me and John's ears while we watched the place where he jumped in and it stained red.

"Dude, let's get out of here" I said, starting to run.

John and I started to run so fast. We ran as fast as we could. Wind blowing past my face at the speed of light. We got to a place where we could catch our breath. There was some rattling in the bushes so we ran again, faster and faster. We ran till our legs couldn't move.

We sat at least 1 mile away from the lake. Then we heard it. There was a giggle. But it wasn't like any other giggle they have ever heard of. The little girl was laughing creepily. So we ran faster and faster

When we got away from the little girl again we didn't stop moving, we just kept walking, but when we saw the forest again we were confused. Because we were running so much, we started to get dizzy. We passed out right next to the lake and woke up with John and the little girl was dragging us into the lake. We kicked, we squealed and lucky we got away for a few seconds

and then we saw our camp group walking in the distance so we ran to them. But it was an illusion, the way to them was another path to the lake. We couldn't find a way out. We found the girl following us. We noticed there wasn't a way to get out.

We tried to fend for ourselves for at least a day but we couldn't. We couldn't get a break. All night the little girl tried to drag us to the lake every time she could. We stayed up all night. After the next sunrise.

\_\_\_\_\_  
"Dude im starving." I said holding my stomach in pain.

\_\_\_\_\_  
"I know but there isn't anything to eat." John said, fidgeting with his fingers.

\_\_\_\_\_  
"Try to think of a way to get some food here." I said, trying to look around.

\_\_\_\_\_  
"Do you see that?"

\_\_\_\_\_  
"What?"

\_\_\_\_\_  
"James"

\_\_\_\_\_  
"No, we can't do that. He is my best friend we can't.

\_\_\_\_\_  
'Do you want to survive?"

\_\_\_\_\_  
"Yeah but there has to be another way."

\_\_\_\_\_  
"What food are we going to find? We walked outside for like 50 minutes yesterday. Did you find anything that you can eat?"

\_\_\_\_\_  
"No but..."

\_\_\_\_\_  
"But what. If we don't eat then we won't survive.

\_\_\_\_\_  
"Never I'd rather die before i do that"

\_\_\_\_\_  
"Fine you can but im not"

\_\_\_\_\_  
Before John could get to James I pushed him away. I couldn't let him do that. But then it happened. I accidentally pushed him into the lake. I was horrified. Both of their bodies layed there. Bleeding out. I am shivering at what I have done. Then it happened. My alarm rang.

\_\_\_\_\_  
"Welp that was one heck of a dream. Time for school"

# *The Scar on the Entry*

*By: Briana Muse*

## *Intro*

*Everyone has a stalker. I learned that recently that whether they are good, Bad, Creepy, Weird, friendly, or Dangerous everyone has one. Be safe and don't wait till it's too late. This could save your life like it saved mine and don't let family or people you care about get involved.*

*Sincerely*

*-Paris Beaumont*

## *Beginning*

*Oct/13/24*

*Dear diary,*

*This may be my last entry. I have gotten into trouble. You see everything was normal at the concert, but when I was walking home I started sweating. Someone was behind me. I turned around and no one was there but I still ran home in fear. But I heard someone running too. So I ran to my new house that was empty. My heart sank but I would be safe.*

*Extremely scared*

*-Paris Beaumont*

Paris ran in her house gasping for breath.

"Honey, Is that you, you're supposed to be at the other house," A figure said

"Yes it's me, I decided to spend time with you" said Paris..

"Wait, where is Steven?" Paris asked as she was walking down the corner to her kitchen still out of breath.

"I don't know, he said he went to get you after you called him," said her husband in the kitchen.

"I never called him," said Paris out of breath.

"Well he will come back soon," Said her husband while washing his hands.

Paris was nervous, what if the stalker is going to break in. Why did Steven go look for her even though she didn't call. She was confused but decided to get her mind off of everything so decided to watch TV. She walked downstairs and sat on the couch.

Meanwhile her husband went to take out the trash.

"Paris I'm going to take out the trash," yelled her husband on the porch in the pouring rain.

"Just be quick Pierre, you don't want to catch a cold," Paris yelled back.

Pierre was walking under the roof when he had a feeling that someone was watching his every move. He stopped to listen to the background. He turned around. Nothing. He started walking to the trash can all drenched in water. A figure with a bag was walking away with an awful grin on his face and a scar on one eye.

Pierre didn't see him. But he did see Stevens' dead body in the trash. He yelled in horror.

Paris Ran out of the house to see the dead body stuffed in the garbage bin. Paris called the police and they came in minutes. Paris and Pierre were waiting in the rain crying about losing a bodyguard . After investigating the body had no scars from gunshots, no rope marks and no poison. This was an investigation for the police. Paris had suspected something, her eyes filled with tears. She walked up to the police putting the body in a bag.

"I -I have a s-suspect" she said stuttering.

"Who do you know there name" said officer 1 in a deep voice

"Well no but a man followed me home After I ran into my house for safety. My husband said that Steven went to look for me," said Paris, crying.

"I see, did you get a glimpse of this man," said officer 2 in a scratchy voice.

"Again No, but I do remember one thing: he was holding a bag about the size of my head and had a cloak on," said Paris in a scared voice.

"WAIT, did you say bag," said officer 1 in shock.

"Yeah why," Said Paris, confused.

"That bag might be the murder weapon," said officer 2 in a deep thought.

Officer 2 started murmuring to himself.

"No marks on the victim's body probably because he suffocated" said officer 1

"That is a hypothesis," Said officer 1.

Just then officer 2 sprang up from his thought cloud.

"THERE IS NO MARKS ON THE VICTIM BECAUSE HE SUFFOCATED!"

It went quiet.

"That is what we're thinking," said officer 1, annoyed.

After the police left Paris and Pierre had dinner. The smell of the food made Paris happy.

It was her favorite. She was still scared.

**Oct/13/24**

***Today was supposed to be good but it's just awful. There is a crazy Person on the loose. He killed my bodyguard with what the police think is with a bag. I think they are going after me. I hope I live another day.***

Me and Pierre stayed up all night. We even made some calming tea. Everything was fine until a knock on the door. We both jumped. When we heard a knock on the backdoor. Both the front door and the back door were being knocked. I answered the front door. I was relieved when I saw it was just the cops. They questioned me and Pierre about everything. We heard a knock on the backdoor again. The cops answered it and there was no one. We were all confused. But the police left and we went to bed.

At 3 am Pierre woke up and walked downstairs to get a blanket.

Knock knock knock

"Hello, who's there?" asked Pierre

Knock knock knock.

"If your the police I can wake up my wife,"

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK!!!

Pierre built up the courage to open the door.

The door creaked open. But nothing there. A figure was hanging off of the fence. Pierre walked to the fence but didn't see anything. When he turned around he saw scratch marks on the door and the wall. He walked back to look at it closer. But the figure was sneaking behind him with a dagger in hand. Pierre heard someone walking behind him and he turned around faster than lightning. No one was there. But the figure was sneaking behind him and ran inside. Pierre was scared so he ran inside. The figure had hid in the Shoe closet. Pierre went back upstairs. He had to show the police this. Pierre woke up at 5 to help unpack everything for the house. He went downstairs to get his shoes on. The figure was still in the closet waiting for a time to escape. But he heard a person walking closer and closer. He started sweating. Pierre opened the door. The figure grabbed a bag, jumped on Pierre and put the bag on his head. But the bag was too small and Pierre was able to escape. Pierre ran to the kitchen grabbing a knife, but the figure stabbed him in the neck. His blood dripped all over the floor as he was choking on his own blood.

Pierre tried to call for help but the blood was filling his lungs, he soon fell to the ground. The figure started to clean up the crime scene, and painted the scratches on the door. The cops came shortly after that.

I woke up so tired my legs couldn't hold my body. I answered the door and it was the cops. They asked us a few questions and then they were on their way. I grabbed my Diary and put it on the table to write on later. The day went so fast it was almost midnight. I went to bed to relax but after 20 minutes I heard a window break. I walked downstairs worried but it seemed like some little kids just broke the window. I went outside to see. I didn't see any kids, just a man, a man in a cloak. I didn't recognize him but his cloak seemed familiar. He looked up at me, I could see his face from the light of the street lamp. A man with a scruffy face, one eye that had an X stitch over it. started creeping slowly laughing like a man

I tried to open the door but it was locked and I didn't have the key. The laughter overwhelmed me. I was going to die till I realized the broken window. I ran to the broken window and jumped in. The man had hit the door with a knife. I was out of breath but I ran to my room. I could hear him walk up the stairs. His feet were so heavy like they were made of stone. This house had secret rooms made for this moment, and to hang out. I hid in my mirror's secret room in my bathroom. I could hear him walking around. But then I heard his footsteps walk downstairs. I thought I was safe but he had found the mirror room and walked in. I was on a pillar attached to the ceiling so if he looked up I was dead. He looked around and then walked out. He went to the attic so I went to get my phone to call the cops. I had made it downstairs and grabbed my phone. The noise of the police picking up was a delight, but the man was walking downstairs. I hid in a closet covering my mouth so he couldn't hear my short breaths. I could hear him turning the doorknob but then I heard a gunshot and a man falling. Perhaps Pierre saved me or the police. I stayed in the closet for a while but soon I got out. I opened the door and saw his hideous face. I

screamed. He then grabbed me. I saw a knife on the counter, I grabbed it and stabbed him in the chest. He dropped me and I ran. Then he jumped on me and put a bag on my head. I pretended to faint. Then he left me on the floor and got his dagger off the counter. I was able to escape. But then Darkness.

Paris had fainted after the man had stabbed her twice; In the heart and in the face. The police showed up and he was taken to jail. The police had taken her to the hospital where she was in a coma for 3 weeks. It was all over the news from the stalker to her being in the hospital. She had woken up after what seemed an eternity.

"What the," she said as she was trying to open her eyes.

"Pierre, I had the weirdest dream," she said, turning to her side.

"There was a stalker trying to kill me and I survived even though he stabbed me," she said, opening her eyes.

"Good you don't have amnesia," said a sweet gentle voice.

"Who are you," asked Paris.

"I'm a doctor, everything that you told me did happen, you lucky to be alive," said the gentle voice.

Paris just realized she wasn't dreaming. It might have felt like an awful dream but it did happen.

**Oct/15/23**

**Dear diary**

***I am safe and the stalker was put in jail so everything is well. I hope one day I recover from this but for now i'm just going to take a break in my new full house.***

***-Paris Beaumont***

I was soon able to go home after some questioning I was sent home the stalker would be getting life sentence I was relieved but the next day i thought everything was over but it wasn't I was going to bed when I heard a Knock on the door I was too tired to answer it o I didn't. But someone kept knocking. Finally I went downstairs and saw my Diary was missing, I will find it tomorrow. I kept hearing the knocks so I said

"Honey if that's you just open the door you have key,"

But there was no answer. I went to bed and went downstairs the next morning.

I opened the door and saw Pierre's decapitated head hanging on the porch. I wanted to scream but I couldn't. I then saw underneath his head was my diary with a picture of me with a knife on my face covered in blood. It was a Scar on the entry.

Lena Stephens

715-555-1234

12-7th

12-7th

## NOT YOUR FRIEND

I screamed in delight when my friend Summer texted the group chat saying she bought tickets for a cruise! She told me, Hailey, and Jamie that it was in a week and that we needed to get new swimsuits. She was right, I hadn't worn my swimsuit in 2 Years!

I was so excited I jumped right out of bed, grabbed some cash, and ran out the door to buy a new swimsuit. As I was driving I got an alert on my phone and I played the recording.

**"Alert! I repeat Alert! There is an unknown creature on cruise 1789! The police are looking into it. We will get back to you when we find out more information! Until then we advise you to stay off any wide ocean areas. Such as cruises, boats, islands, and beaches. I repeat-"** I shut it off, I wasn't too worried. 17 was Summer's unlucky number. When I got to the mall I double checked my phone because I knew if that was our cruise then Summer would have told us, or at least warned us. After I checked my phone I called my friends Summer, Jamie, and Hailey.



"Hey guys! I'm at the mall! Do you guys wanna join me?"

"I would love to!" Hailey replied.

"I'm in!" Summer squealed.

"Who's paying?" Jamie asked.

"Oh! If you guys wanna bring money you can, but I have enough for all of us!" I replied.

"Ohhhh! I didn't know who had to pay." she said, sounding slightly relieved.

"Ok I'll see you guys when you get here!" I said and hung up. I waited for a while and got myself some snacks while I was waiting. I decided on a brown sugar boba tea and a large pretzel with cheese. It was Amazing! They all showed up together in an Uber.

"So what store do yall wanna go to first?" I cheered with excitement.

"Just sixteen!" Jamie yelled.

"Ok! Ok! Lets go" I said slightly annoyed. After we got to Just sixteen Jamie practically teleported in with me, Summer, and Haily following behind her.

"She might like this place a little too much." Summer sighed. We all laughed and looked for our things. We all found some cool outfits and headed out. We decided to get something to eat for the ride back. I decided on a small salad and cookies n' cream boba, Summer chose a banana split and a small Dr.Pepper, Jamie and Haily decided to get the same thing. They both got a cheeseburger and a large coke. We finally left and decided to have a sleepover at my house.

A week finally rolled around and our group chat was blowing up! Everyone was talking about the cruise today! I packed way too much stuff! I had packed two toothbrushes, two things of toothpaste, and ten...TEN different outfits. Once I had everything packed I went through my travel checklist.

"Clothes check. Toothpaste check. Toothbrush check. I have everything." I told my mom goodbye and ran out the door and hopped in my car. I met my friends at the dock when I caught up to them, they were all practically jumping with excitement.

"Guys! Todays the day!" Summer yelled with excitement. I checked my watch. **6:30 PM**

"First to get sea sick is a... uhhh..." Jamie said excitedly. That excitement turned into confusion as she worked to remember what to say after. We all stood there as we waited for her to remember how to say rotten egg. "Uhhhh... Ummm"

"I think the word you're looking for is rotten egg." Summer said in a confused tone.

"Ohhh rotten egg!" Jamie was good at forgetting things easily. The man on the dock yelled that it was time to get on the cruise. We all screamed in pure delight. We did get a couple weird looks but we didn't really care. We were in line to get on the boat and a strange man walked up to us. He looked dirty, his clothes were ripped, his teeth were crooked. I had a really bad feeling when he walked up to us.

"Please... Don't get on that cruise! You'll regret it!" The old man said in a shaking voice. We looked at each other in confusion. "DON'T GET ON!" He yelled at us. Summer backed up scared and the old man

grabbed her arm. I pulled out my pepper spray and sprayed him in the eyes he screamed in pain as security dragged him away. It came our turn to get onto the cruise and the man asked us a couple questions. Summer answered them but while she was answering I couldn't help but notice how the man's smile was off. It looked like one of those robots that looks too real that it's creepy. I shrugged it off and we walked on bored. The second man had very formal dressing on. I had never seen a suit that fancy before.

"Your ladies room will be room 667. It will be on the bottom floor." He sounded very sophisticated. We went down the elevator and..DING I covered my ears.

"What's wrong Samantha?" Haily asked in a nervous voice"

"Oh nothing! I'm just a little sensitive to loud noises." I said calmly. We walked down the hall to our room. It was fancier than that hotel I slept at like 2 months ago! I flopped on the bed. "I'm so sleepy I could just-" I let out a fake snore and we all giggled. HONK the cruise was leaving. I started to panic, "What if I forgot something! Where's my phone? Is everyone here?"

"Everyones here, Your phone is right next to you, and we all know you went through your travel checklist about 2,000 times!" Jamie said in a funny voice. We all laughed. We decided to play the board games that Jamie had brought. We played until we saw the time. **11:24** We all went to sleep and woke up really late. We needed to get lunch a little after we woke up. We found a table and waited for the waiter. While we were waiting I checked my phone. Hmm nothing about that cruise with the unknown creature.

"You good samantha?" Summer asked me. I hadn't noticed but I was staring blankly at my phone.

"Oh yea I'm fine! Just thinking." The waiter came and he sounded calm.

"Hello I will be your waiter today! Can I get you ladies any drinks to start?" He asked. We all gave him our drink orders and he left.

"Guys please don't tell me I'm the only one who noticed he looked a little...off." I said quietly.

"Yea I agree! He seemed a little off." Jamie whispered. We all nodded our heads to agree. After lunch we decided to go to the library to pass the time. Haily and Jamie went their own way and summer decided to stay with me. We went into the Mythical creature section and I wanted to look in the books to see if the creature they were talking about was called an unknown creature or if it's really unknown. I knew it was most likely just unknown but I still wanted to check. I was looking through the index.

"U ....U where is it?" I muttered to myself.

"Whatcha looking for?" Summer whispered in my ear. I jumped.

"Oh! I'm looking for the section of U."

"Ah! I know where that is! I've read this book before." She flipped the pages and... U It was smack in the middle of the page! I felt foolish to not have seen it. I ran my finger down the U section and surprisingly there it was!

"Unknown creature!" I whispered to myself. Before I had a chance to read it the lady at the desk yelled.

"This library is now closed!" I sighed. I checked my watch again.

**9:30 PM.** Now is a good time to get back to the room. I checked out

the book at the front desk and brought it with me. Summer and I headed back to the room and sat in my bed. Jamie and Hailey had got there before us.

"So do you guys wanna—" My sentence was cut off with screams down the hall. We all stopped and looked at each other.

"What was that?" Jamie asked nervously.

"I don't—" My sentence was cut off again with more screams. "Um guys Imma go check that out."

"Wait, don't! What if it's a crazy psycho killer chainsaw dude!" Hailey said in a panicked voice. She is known to over exaggerate things. We heard more screams.

"Don't worry! I'll be fine! It's probably someone's cat or something!" I jumped out of bed and slowly opened the door. There was a cold gust of wind. I slowly walked down the hall to where the screams sounded like they were coming from. Oh it was the waiter from earlier! His back was facing me, it gave me a bad feeling. "What's wrong? What are the screams for?" I asked. He turned around slowly with a grin from ear to ear. A chill went down my spine.

"Come closer..." He said in a dead, cold voice. I took a step closer, "Closer..." I stepped closer. It got cold, very cold. "Closer..." I inched closer and was almost a foot away from him. His mouth opened. He opened it slowly. It opened wider and wider and wider! I was so scared I froze. His mouth almost opened so wide I couldn't see his face. A dark red smoke figure started to crawl out. I could feel my face turn pale. When it was done crawling out the waiter dropped to the floor, dead. I finally started to inch back but it noticed me. It flew into my mouth. It made it

hard to breathe. I started to float... I couldn't move it felt as if someone else was in control. My arms and legs started moving! But It wasn't me, I moved into a star position as my arms and legs moved. My arms cracked. CRACK..... CRACK. I knew my bones weren't supposed to sound like that. I could feel blood seeping out of my arms. Now I heard my legs. CRACK.... CRACK. I felt blood start seeping out of my legs now. I fell to the ground. THUD! I screamed in pain.

"AHHHH" I heard only one door open and heard people running down the hall. I stood up... but it wasn't me standing up. I had no control!

"SAMANTHA? Are you OK?" I heard Hailey yell down the hall.

"Yea! Someone's cat just got me!" I saw Summer run back to the room!

Yes! She knew that it wasn't me! I walked to my friends. No! Run! I wanted to yell but I couldn't. We started walking down the hall and I could hear.. Crunching sounds? We kept walking and saw summer in the room crushing what looked like salt.

"Summer what are you doing?" Jamie asked.

"Oh im making this uhh face mask I saw on the internet!" She sputtered. She was mixing salt, water, vinegar, and apple juice? It was confusing but I started running and Summer ran after me. I ran down the hall and she chased behind me. she cornered me and I could feel a grin forming on my face. I knew what was coming next. Before I could open my mouth, summer splashed the mixture on me. I let out a shrill scream. It was really loud. I dropped to the ground, unconscious. I woke up some time later with Jamie, Hailey, and Summer above me. I sat up.

"What happened?" I said.

"You were possessed or we at least think you were." Summer told me. "I used the book you were looking through earlier at the library." She plopped the book on the bed next to me and flipped to the Unknown creature section. "Look! It says that if you were to be possessed by this, then you need to mix sea salt, water, vinegar, and apple juice." I saw right under the recipe that if any DNA got in the mix that person would be next. I asked if she got any DNA in it. She told me that 1 strand of hair fell in but it probably wasn't enough to do anything. We got off the cruise and booked a hotel. We heard screams down the hall. Summer offered to check.

**THE END**

**Avalynn H**

## **12, 7th grade**

I would describe my life as pretty cool, I mean I have great friends, good grades, and a good family. So you can imagine when I woke up as a ghost I was a little startled. It's not a normal experience, unless you're already a ghost obviously. I'm not too mad though, even though I Love my life, I've always wanted to restart. This is the moment I decided that I will make the best of my new ghost life! First I double checked if this was a dream because it definitely could be, it wasn't though my mom literally walked through me; by the way I wouldn't recommend it felt really weird. Next I tried to see if I could pick anything up, I could but it was just a duplicate of what was already there, basically I don't affect anything in the real world. I decided to see if I could find any other ghosts in my town, but I didn't have any luck, or so I thought. When I was just trying to find out if I could eat, someone said my name. I turned around and saw my best friend, how could she be here? When I looked at her she had a bitter look on her face, like she hated me. I had done nothing to her, also why are we the only two in town that turned into ghosts? When I finally said something back to her she said, "I see my spell worked." I was so confused why she hated me all of a sudden. When I finally looked down I noticed she had a ghost sucker, to most likely kill me. I just accepted my fate, as before I knew it, she had killed me.

On halloween night me and my friend dominic decided to go to the old dexter house we rode are bikes till we got to the door. After I rang the door bell and then a man walked out. We met the house owner his hair was like a bunch of worms crawled into the hair. As we stepped into the house I herd a shreek Ahhh! I ran to the kitchen to see slimy digusting snails in a jar. I ran up more to another room antd I found a body with no eyes no lungs just a pile of skin hanging up. I immediately ran out of the room thats when the house owner came in with a bat and said you were not supposed to see that and knocked me out! Next thing I knew was that i could see my own bodie telling me its time to got ascend. The end.

Matthew Be...  
7th grade

Ella N.  
7<sup>th</sup> grade

There was a beautiful woman and her name was Aaliyah, she had long black curly hair and nice plump lips, her dress was knee length and a lavender purple. She was driving to a halloween party when out of nowhere her phone redirected her on GPS. She thought it was strange because as she was driving it was getting darker and spookier. She arrived and she thought it was weird because the house she was invited to before was two stories, gray, and modern, while this house was a mansion black and worn out. She went into the house anyway and a woman with very pale skin and a low cracky voice invited her inside. She thought this was weird and as she started to realize she wanted to leave. Ghosts started popping up everywhere and chasing her. She started to realize that the woman smelled decayed and dead, she yelled "aahhhh" and tried to leave but couldn't get the door open. She finally busted the door down and drove away. She told her friend about the experience and her friend told her that the house got torn down two hundred years ago.

7th Grade, Age 12, Miss. Irvine Pre-Ap lang arts class

Dakota tossed and turned in her bed, plagued by a dark nightmare. Shadowy figures lurked in the corners of her vision, whispering sinister secrets that sent chills down her spine. She woke up in a cold sweat, the images from her dream still fresh in her mind.

Determined to shake off the uneasy feeling, Dakota got ready for the day and headed out to meet her friends, Kyle, Khloe, and Shy, for a hike in the nearby woods. The sun shone brightly, its warm rays momentarily soothing her troubled mind.

As they ventured deeper into the forest, Dakota couldn't shake the sense of foreboding that gnawed at her insides. The atmosphere grew thick with an unnatural silence, broken only by the rustling of leaves beneath their feet.

Suddenly, the nightmare from the previous night materialized before them. The shadowy figures emerged from the trees, their hollow eyes fixed on Dakota. Panic seized her, and she screamed, "We have to run!"

They sprinted through the dense foliage, each step echoing their heartbeat. The figures pursued them relentlessly, their laughter ringing in their ears.

In a desperate attempt to escape, Dakota stumbled upon a decrepit cabin hidden amidst the trees. Desperation clouded her judgment as she flung open the creaky door and rushed inside, her friends closely behind.

They frantically searched for a way out, but the cabin seemed to have no windows or escape routes. The walls closed in, trapping them like insects caught in a spider's web. Fear tightened its grip around their throats, an invisible specter choking the air.

"L-let's...stick together," Dakota stuttered, her voice trembling. "We'll find a way out, I promise."

Hours crawled by, minutes dragging like centuries. The darkness pressed against them, suffocating every shred of hope. Their terrified screams echoed through the cabin, their pleas falling on deaf ears.

Just as despair threatened to consume them, the cabin's door swung open, revealing the warm glow of daylight. Dakota and her friends stumbled out, gasping for air as if coming up for breath.

The nightmare had come to an end, a cruel phantom that had toyed with their lives. As they stood in the safety of the forest clearing, they vowed never to return to those haunted woods again.

Kaitlyn H. [unclear]

Janitell J.R High

Age 13, Grade 8

(Spl email)

## El Bosque de La Lechuza

It was a hot summer day, Azul and their friend Jose had just got done playing a match of soccer before getting drinks from the gas station near the park "Y'know, Azul, they say not even the bravest people can step foot in the woods over there." Jose says as he looks over to the forest, "Yea, but have you heard of the people going missing who've tried going in there?" Azul replies back, also looking out to the forest. "I'll make a deal, if you can go into the woods and come out by midnight, I'll pay you \$50." Jose said again with a smirk, "Ok then, I'll take that offer." Azul replies back confidently before getting up, taking one last swig of their jamaica, and standing up. Later, Azul arrives home and heads straight to their room and starts to pack a small satchel full of things such as a flashlight and a few snacks then a first aid kit. About thirty minutes later Azul is done packing and they walk downstairs to see their mom in the kitchen.

"Oh hi, mija! I just got done making fajitas." Azuls' mom said as she took the pan off the eye, the smell of onions, peppers, and beef filled their nose along with fresh tortillas. It made Azuls mouth water, "hi mom, could you save me some for later?" Azul asked as they started lacing up their sneakers. "Sure, where are you going?" Azuls mom asked as she put some of the food into an old whipped cream container and put it inside the fridge.

"I'm just going into the woods to explore around." Azul said casually as they stood up after tying the double knot on their shoetie, "At night? That seems dangerous, Azul. maybe you shouldn't go into the woods, you've heard about the people going missing in those woods." Azuls mom said, her face having an expression of worry.

"Yeah..but I'll make sure to be careful, promise!"

"Still, I don't want something to end up happening to you."

"I'm not a little kid anymore, I won't get hurt or anything." Azul said, glancing out of the door window.

"I know but I'm still your mother, and I think you should stay home." Azuls' mom said, her tone starting to sound stern.

Azul could feel their face heating up from frustration, they couldn't understand why their mom wouldn't listen and why she wouldn't let them go to the woods. They would be careful and make sure to not be there long, plus they aren't a little kid anymore so why can't their mom trust them to just go out into the woods for a little bit? Out of frustration, Azul stormed out the house letting the screen door behind them slam shut. They could hear their mom say something but it was muffled by the door, Azul then got on their bike from the garage and started heading to the forest. When they got there the sky was dark as ink that not even a star was in sight, just the large full moon glowing brightly over the forest, just Azul and the moon alone. A feeling twisted and turned in Azuls' stomach, a feeling that was telling them to not go into the forest, to turn back and go home, but Azul just ignored it and with a deep breath they took a step into the forest. The wind was unsettlingly chilly, the branches swayed, and cicadas duetted with the crickets with their songs. Azul could feel overgrown weeds brush past their legs as roots tried tripping them, so they flicked on their flashlight and now they could see the forest better. There were a lot of bushes and brambles so they made a note to watch out for those.

As Azul continued walking they couldn't help but get the feeling that something or someone was watching them, the sound of the grass softly crunching underneath them was audible. Suddenly, Azul hears the sound of a baby crying in the distance. "A baby? Why's there a baby in the woods?" Azul thought to themselves as they started following the cries, looking around with their flashlight trying to find the baby. Then as Azul makes it to a clearing they see a woman crouched down on the ground, her hair is long and unkept with dirt

and..feathers? intertwined in her hair, the womans' skin is unnaturally pale, and her face wasn't visible from her back being turned to them. Azul felt the same feeling rise up in their stomach, something screaming for them to turn back and run yet they still ignored it and stepped forward, a branch snapped, then the cicadas and crickets stopped singing and all fell silent only for Azul to hear their own breathing. The woman turns her head and Azul is met with pitch black eyes staring back at them, the womans' eyes almost resemble the sky but with no moon in sight, the hair on the back of Azuls' neck stood on end and they could feel escalofrios begin to rise at their skin, then the woman lets out this ear piercing screech that sounds *exactly* like an owl. That's when it hits Azul, that woman isn't human, that woman is La Lechuza herself.

Azul felt their heartbeat pick up and they quickly turned around and started booking it, the wind rushed past their ears as La Lechuza screeched and flew over them, swooping down and nicking their shoulders with her sharp talons. Azuls legs were being cut by the sharp thorns of the bramble but they didn't care, they just needed to get out of the forest quickly so they kept running and dodging La Lechuzas attacks.

Azuls' lungs burned and their legs ached but they kept running, the flashlight they had was leading the way as their only light source and La Lechuza continued to scream so loudly that it made Azuls' ears feel like they were going to bleed, and their heart was beating against their chest like a drum. Then Azul sees the edge of the forest, a sense of relief washes over them and better yet they could see a cop car, so Azul starts running faster and pushing their legs to the max to run. They were going to live and get out of the forest. "Help! Help me, please!" Azul screamed at the top of their lungs despite them burning from how much they were heaving, "¡ayudame, por favor ayuda!" They screamed again as they finally exited the forest, the screeches of La Lechuza starting to fade in the distance, and ran to the cop car. The cop then gets out of the car and starts trying to calm them down, "hey, hey, what's wrong? What's going on?" the cop said in a calming voice "La Lechuza! She's after me!" Azul replied back in a shaky voice as they frantically tried to explain what just happened. "Look kid, where's your parents?" The policeman said as he opened the backseat of the car for Azul to get in, his face looked like he didn't believe Azul, like it was some prank but they got into the backseat anyway and told the address of their house, "okay, I'm going to take you back to your mom. You've probably been out too late." the policeman stated as he got into the car and started driving to the address

By the time Azul made it to the house, they quickly thanked the officer before running into the house and seeing their mom standing in the living room on the phone and sounding concerned before turning and seeing Azul in the doorway and quickly hanging up, "Azul! Where have you been, mija!?" Azuls' mother questioned before Azul rushed up to her and hugged her, "I'm sorry, mom! I'm so sorry! I should've listened to you and never went into the forest for a stupid bet!" Azul sobbed as they hugged their mother tightly, soon they felt warm arms wrap around them as well and their mother said in a gentle voice "it's ok, mija. I'm not mad, I was just so worried for you. Promise me to never do that again." she said as she continued to hug Azul. "I promise, I'll never go into the forest at night again." Azul said again before pulling away from the hug and wiping away their tears. "Don't think you won't have a punishment though, you'll be having double chore duty this week." Azuls' mom states in a stern but still gentle voice

"Fair enough, I'm just glad to be home now." Azul says in a relieved tone

"Now, you still have some food to eat. It's in the fridge for you to heat up." Azuls' mom says as she goes and sits down on the couch, "Okay, thank you mom." Azul says gratefully before heading to the kitchen and heating up their food

"You're welcome, mija."