

# TIGER TALES

LEBANON MIDDLE  
SCHOOL'S  
ART &  
LITERATURE  
REVIEW  
2023-2024

## **Radioactive Vines and the Giant Rabbit** by Zoie Alexander

At the local library, a girl named Delilah was looking for a book to read for a book project. She went down all the book aisles until she got to the last one. Delilah found a book that caught her interest. It was shiny and almost had a glittery gleam to it. She could feel the shine on her skin.

"This book is perfect," Delilah said in awe.

She took the book up to the desk and checked it out.

As Delilah walked out, the librarian had a wicked grin on her face saying, "Another one falls into my trap," with a cackle following her words.

Delilah took the book home, jumped into her bed, and started to read. After a little while, she went downstairs to eat dinner. When she came back up, the book was in a different spot than where she left it. As Delilah flipped the book, she saw vines.

"What the...," Delilah said just as something zapped her.

Whatever zapped Delilah, tucked her in bed to make it look like she fell asleep and then laid the book open next to her. In the morning, Delilah woke up screaming as she saw vines all over her room and house as if they had taken over. She carefully made her way downstairs to call her dad, but before she could, the vines slapped the phone out of her hand as if they had a mind of their own.

"Hey!!!" Delilah hollered.

She had no idea what to do. Suddenly, Delilah remembered that her dad had a secret cell phone hidden in a safe. She dialed her dad's number as fast as she could.

"Dad! I checked out a book, and vines grew out of it so uncontrollably, and it's like they have a mind of their own, and I have no idea what to do!"

"Wait, calm down and explain," her dad said confused.

"Okay, I went to the library to check out a book. I found one I liked and came home with it, but I went to sleep and when I woke up there were vines everywhere. I tried to call you on my phone, but the vines slapped it out of my hand, and something zapped me to make me sleep," Delilah said with a kind of shaky and fast voice.

"I will be there in 20."

"But dad, you're all the way in spa—"

Her dad hung up.

She went down to the basement to wait as there were no vines there. Delilah waited for what felt like an hour with nothing to do in the basement. (It had only been 15 minutes.) Suddenly, Delilah heard a loud chewing that was so loud it shook the ground. She heard a voice calling her name, and Delilah knew her dad was home.

She ran upstairs and her dad said, "See I told you I'd be here in 20," as a gigantic rabbit ate the vines.

"How did you get a rabbit this big?" Delilah asked in shock.

A little alien popped out from behind her dad and said, "Well, actually I had a shrink ray, but it has a setting to make things bigger, and I heard you needed help, so I just used it on this rabbit."

In a matter of minutes all the vines were gone, and the book fell to the ground. Delilah grabbed the book and ran fast like the wind to the library before the book could grow anymore vines. Delilah returned the book and was never to be seen at that library again. A few days later, a little girl named Maria was at her local library. She saw a shiny book that caught her interest and picked it up.

### **Lifetime Eclipse** by Vinny Larew

Once... this will happen only once in a lifetime. Basically when an eclipse happens, it's normally only a few years from the previous one. Well, there's a thing called a totality eclipse when the moon goes over the sun totally. This is a rare case, and I want to tell you about when it happened to me.

When people found out about the eclipse, they were ecstatic. They started planning how they would celebrate. People were renting out spots and driving from all over the country to see this beautiful eclipse. I planned to go to my mom's work, so I could see it with her. I had to pack up entertainment and stuff to keep me busy.

I was sitting there in a room playing on my phone. My mom came to get me around three, so we could watch the eclipse. The eclipse coverage was less than half at the time, so we saw it and sat there on our phones until we felt a rush of air. It felt like a paint brush that was cold brushing on us. It did not feel bad; it just felt soothing. Immediately after, it was getting dark. You could see the street lamps turning on. People were starting to come outside.

When we looked back up, boom the total eclipse happened. We got to take our glasses off for around four minutes. It looked so surprisingly cool. Everyone was so impressed about how soothing it was. After four minutes, we had to go back inside so that my mom could finish her work. It was an amazing sight, and if you get the chance to see it, then I recommend to go out and look.

### **Solar Eclipse** by Cindy Hutslar



## **School** by Annabelle Thatcher

School can feel like a trap beneath your feet.  
It can pull you in and make your face red as a beet.

School can feel like a home away from home,  
a vacation from home when you feel alone.

School can be a horrible place that you never want to be,  
but we all know it's a place to be free.

School is full of staff, teachers, and books.  
You may feel like you're getting weird looks.

Students, teachers, and books don't give you those looks.  
It's the school kind of feel when you think school is only books.

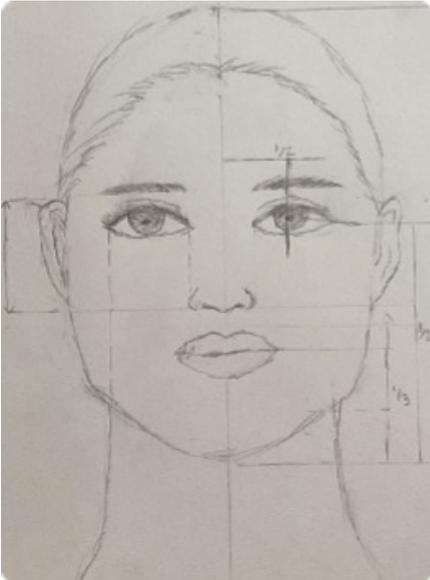
## **Sharing the Light**

by June Dimiceli



## **Portrait Math**

by Lillian Gutowski



## **Lone Indonesian Island**

by Andrew Olsen

As I look out at the turquoise water  
and the dragon tail of surrounding islands  
I notice an emerald island all alone  
like a slowly turning whale or  
possibly a turtle hiding in its shell.

All alone in the shallow, sandy water  
Separated from every island; and as the wind  
whistles past my ear, and the rocks push into  
the soles of my feet, an island catches my eye  
as looking strangely similar to a piece of broccoli.

"Weird," I think to myself as I continue  
down the trail of this stunning Indonesian  
mountain taking in one last breath  
of the ocean breeze and its salty taste,  
finally leaving the lone Indonesian island.

**Cattitude** by Gabby Braner



**Eppy: The Back-Porch Menace** by Lucy Langebartels

In 2019, (two cats ago) I had a cat named Eppy. This mean furball was an outdoor cat, and she despised other animals to an insane extent. Even though she wasn't pleased with the

situation, Eppy lived on our back porch. Per usual, the feline was sitting at the back door, wailing. Then it went silent. Our eyes all turned to the back porch. On our back porch was a large black dog, whimpering as Eppy clawed his back! This series of events resulted in giving Eppy to a friend's farm, where she still lives, and still bullies local dogs.

**Lebanon Courthouse**

by Jesus Campos



## The Meow From Afar by Chelsea Howard

Two months ago, on a sunny day, I heard a quiet low-tone meow coming from a black shiny car in our garage. As I walked closer to the sound, a black, skinny tail appeared.

My dad, who was standing near me, saw the tail too. He said, "Is that a cat's tail?"

It was about that time that I had to get on the bus. I quickly walked down the driveway to get on the bus. Later, my dad texted me a picture of our little, hyper,

black dog and a black and white, furry cat eating clumps of brown, wet dog food. The cat looked like it was probably still a kitten. I was so excited to get home! I've always loved cats, but we've never been able to have one. I was hoping this time would be different.

Once I arrived home, I had to look everywhere for it. When I found the cat, I realized it was fragile, skinny and afraid. I felt horrible for it. I went back inside, filled a cold water bowl, and took it to the kitten. As soon as I had put the water down, the cat ran to it. After drinking a little, it went underneath our white and gray camper. I sat down by the camper and the cat slowly moved closer to me, so close that I could pet it. I couldn't tell yet if it was a boy or girl. I was already asking my mom and dad if we could keep her/him. Mom reminded me, "I would love to honey, but you know me and your sister are very allergic to cats, so we cannot have one indoors."

We both agreed that we should first try to find the kitten an excellent home, and if we couldn't, we would possibly keep it as an outdoor barn cat. I worried about that, though, because we often have coyotes and foxes in the field behind our property.

A few hours later, my sister came home and said she had asked around at school to find the kitten a home. She found a girl that was interested but needed to speak to her family first. A little while later, the girl reached out to say she and her family could pick the cat up the next day. I was up thinking about it all night. I had trouble sleeping because of it. I wanted to keep the cat, but I knew this was the right thing to do.

## Cattitude by Addison Bryant



The next day, my sister's friend came to pick the kitten up, but it got scared and raced into the dusty field behind our house. We called for it and looked for some time, but eventually gave up. A few hours later, I went out alone, to the field again. I heard a quiet meow, and I saw black shiny fur. I tried to grab it, but it ran past our house, through some bushes and dry, dirty corn. When it tried to pass into a dirty tree infested area, I quickly grabbed it. It kept moving in my arms and was hard to hold. My sister put her in a crate and drove to her friend's house.

I was against giving the kitten away, but I understood that this was the best option for the cat, even if I would rather have

kept it. It was the right thing to do. I successfully rescued the kitten. I'm proud of the decision that I made, to never give up on him or her and went back towards the field because many things live in that field that could hurt or kill it, I also am proud that I gave it a warm, loving home even though it made me sad, too.

**Self Portrait** by Audrey Parrish



## **Coconut Home** by Kaylei Carlile

Few trees stand in the distance like a tall jungle gym  
that breathes in unison with the wind whistling.  
The grass contains an awesome reseda green touch.

Distant naked mountains stand still never to move.  
The mountains contain a weird attracting beauty.  
They hold little life far away from the family's home.

A dirt circle encases the home that looks like a coconut.  
The coconut home draped with huge pieces of dirty clothes.  
The wind blows making whistling whooshing sound.

A tarp for cover lays on top to act as a piece of brown shelter,  
for the family that was less than wealthy stood under  
in front of their little bit of a weird coconut home.

Kids stand near a magnificent pot with their little baby brothers  
and mom who is wearing an awesome green hijab with red dots  
covering it like an attractive and beautiful, but still diseased plant.

## **Free Draw**

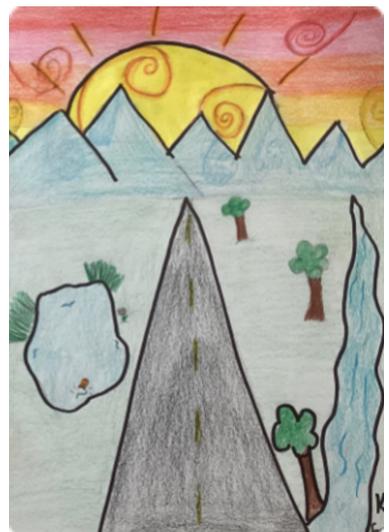
by Kyla Gosewehr

## **Cabo Verde Beach** by Clara Wright

A man wearing long sleeves and a straw hat  
stands on what looks like a creaky tower.  
He looks at the waves like they're great whites.

Boats in the background float like pool noodles.  
They vary from red, yellow, and blue like the sky.  
A speed boat zips past kayaks and canoes.

It's chilly, frosty in the sand, frigid at the beach.  
The beach volleyball calms down at the bird's final caw.  
Waves crash, people yell, "It's here; darkness has arrived."



Entries from **The Memoir of the Lanky Bottoms** by Noah Vischer

...and then I was with me new crew. What's that? You didn't hear me? Well, too late now, lubber. It's a story for another day. Anyways, I have a new crew now. A good group, but they really tend to slack off! Arrgh, even the captain! If we want to be gentlemen of fortune, we need to work for it. Rumor is they take me as a spy! Who knows what other contorted things will come to pass on this crazy old ship.

Later today, we finally, hit the shore.

"Hop in the boats off the bow and get on that island," said the captain.

Once we were on the island, each step we be takin' feels a step closer to the treasure. As long as I get a piece of it, I'll settle, but I still think me old crew deserves it! Where are they now...?

Arr! those rumors really got to them! I've been marooned! Those diabolical ruffians. The last words I heard from them were "Rumor or not, you'll be staying here!"

It's been a while since then, and me stockade is really getting built! Ye, I built it after I got meself attacked. It was earlier on, but I remember it like yesterday.

I was hunting for supper when a sea-gully whizzed right by me head. Turnin' around, a crew of five men charged toward me. Scrawny, little men. I beat them silly and stole their sabres! I've never seen an attack that feeble! It was laughable. Anyway, I have no clue how to get to the treasure now. No crew means no sailin'! I'll figure something out.

A ship! Just sitting off the coast of this fair island! It's been another couple weeks, and I found a ship yesterday, no crew member aboard, so I decided to "borrow" some o' their supplies.

By Poseidon's beard, I was wrong! A guard stood waiting. We drew our sabres.

"Arr! Leave now!" said the guard.

I lunged and struck a blow. The rest of the battle was back and forth. In the end, I struck the final blow. Ahoy! A chest of supplies. Finally too, I missed that prodigious rum. Wait, I hear someone. Is that one of my allies! Could this be the day, me hearties! I can feel me treasure getting closer every single second!

## Normal by Julianna Strle

Beth finished her last order before clocking out when the manager came up to her, "I'm sorry, Bethany, but you're fired," the manager said dead in the face.

Beth stood there for a second trying to pretend she was calm and collected before walking out.

Among all of the nice self-driving, automatic-battery-running cars was her old rusty pick-up truck she got from a yard sale. She hopped in her car and almost burst into tears. She didn't know if the money she had was enough to last her till she was able to find a new job. She turned on her car and went home. When she got home, Beth paid the babysitter and headed upstairs to tuck her children in. Beth kissed them goodnight and went to sleep.

Later, she woke up and realized it was only three in the morning. She didn't typically wake up in the middle of the night. Beth felt wide awake, but she wanted to get extra hours of sleep since she would have to go job hunting in the morning. She went down stairs to get a glass of water. She didn't turn on the lights because she didn't want to wake up the kids.

In the kitchen she had a bad feeling in her gut and turned on the light. She grabbed a glass from the cabinet and turned the faucet on. She chugged the water before heading upstairs. Beth turned off the light and felt the urge to turn around. Scared to death, Beth grabbed a knife and turned around with her eyes closed preparing to fight some robber or criminal. She swung the knife around before realizing there wasn't anybody there. She opened her eyes and instead of seeing a person, she saw a pumpkin illuminating the room.

She stepped closer to it with the knife still in her hand. Her eyes were popping out of her skull because there wasn't a pumpkin there just a second ago. Maybe, it was there and she hadn't noticed, but that wouldn't explain why it was glowing. She kept looking at the pumpkin while backing up towards the light switch. She turned away to flip the switch and looked back at the pumpkin, but it wasn't there. She heard a door being opened and then quickly slammed. She went to see where the noise was coming from and found an orange goo trail with pumpkin seeds in it.

Beth didn't know what to think. Had someone broken in and placed a pumpkin on her counter? She was so frightened and concerned that she called the police.

"911, what's your emergency?" the cop asked.

"I think someone broke in," Beth said almost skipping over her words.

"Ok, can you describe what happened?"

Beth went to her dining room and told the police everything that happened.

"Have you had history of any mental disorders?" the cop questioned.

"Fine! If you're not going to help," Beth hung up and went upstairs and hoped that what just happened was a side effect of her medication.

In the morning, Beth woke up early to make breakfast and get her kids ready for school. When Beth was down stairs, the orange trail that had been there last night was gone. She now knew what she thought she saw was just a figment of her imagination.

"Mom!" Beth's kid yelled from upstairs.

Beth started walking up the stairs to see what was wrong.

"Mom, why is the bathroom filled with the inside of a pumpkin?" her son asked.

"I don't know, just use the bathroom downstairs," Beth replied, staring off into space.

Beth knew the police wouldn't believe her, and she would have to figure out what was going on. After Beth dropped off her kids at school, she went back into her kitchen, and right in front of her was the pumpkin. This time there was no hesitation. She grabbed a knife and held it in the air about to use all of her strength to demolish it.

Then out of nowhere the pumpkin grew small baby-looking legs and arms. She decided it had to be an alien. She stood there frozen while the pumpkin ran in circles on the kitchen island. Beth dropped the knife and quickly grabbed a sheet from the laundry basket. Beth scooped up the pumpkin-alien thing with the sheet, ran upstairs, emptied the sheet quickly into her desk drawer, and locked it. She suddenly realized that she was late to an interview and debated leaving, but she needed the job. She rushed out of the house almost forgetting her keys.

Later that night, after her kids fell asleep, the noises coming from the drawer got louder. Beth called the babysitter, hoping she would watch her kids this late at night, so Beth could drive to the nearest science related building and turn in what she had found.

Beth walked into the building with a cat carrier and found the nearest lab coat guy.

"Excuse me, sir?"

"What? I'm busy," he said while walking away.

"I think I found an alien."

"What?!"

"It's in the cat carrier."

The man looked in the cat carrier and said, "How about this? I give you \$2000, and you give me that cat carrier".

"Okay," Beth said just wanting to get rid of the thing and left.

A few weeks later, Beth found a job and emptied her mind of all things pumpkin related. While having breakfast with her kids, her son turned on the tv.

"What did I say about tv while eating?" Beth said, and then stopped to listen.

"Scientist Kendan found a pumpkin that had arms, legs, and even moved around," the news guy stated as a picture popped up on the screen. "Apparently, the pumpkin was the result of a local farmer using too many fertilizers in his pumpkin patch. When he discovered what happened, he destroyed them, but he said he must of forgot one."

Beth took a big gulp from her cereal and couldn't believe what she had just learned. At first she was mad that the scientist took all the credit of finding it, but then she was glad that she could forget what happened and go back to normal with an extra \$2,000.

## **Tiger** by Roman Moore



## **My Pantera Concert Experience** by Logan Watkins

One time almost 3 weeks ago before school started I went to a Pantera concert in Noblesville. While at the concert, I went to a porta potty and I was doing my business and some random guy smacked into the porta potty when I was in there. I got pushed and my phone fell in the toilet, and with no hesitation I stuck my hand in there and grabbed it. When I came out, I got a free twenty dollar bill because I found the guy who did it, and he felt bad. I was mad, but I got money.

## **The Tragic Choice** by Claire Wilhoite

When I was eight years old, I went to Rivera for a swim meet. Rivera is an outside water park. I had to swim the 50 and 100 freestyle, backstroke, butterfly, and breaststroke. For the 50 free, I was swimming my heart out while in 1st place. All of a sudden, my cap fell off my head. I had a choice, keep swimming or leave it behind but my eight year old self thought if I leave it, I will get in trouble, so I swam down, grabbed my cap, and finished the race. I ended up fifth because of that.

## **The Shadow That Follows**

by Lewis Shepherd

One boring day, I saw something particularly creepy out of the corner of my eye, my sister. I became worried because my sister just went shopping with my parents. What was she doing outside? I ran out of the back doors and called her name. No answer. I circled the house, looking for her, but I couldn't find her anywhere. I went back inside to lie down for a bit; I thought I was being delusional. After an hour of sleeping, my whole family came home, including my sister. Still, to this day, I don't know what that was.

## **Op Art**

by Marissa Ayala



## Justice for “Pancake Man” by Lucy Langebartels

Jeff Harms describes the story of a man trying to follow his dreams while being pushed down by person after person. This story is a poem called “Pancake Man,” which has many impressive qualities that show why this poem should continue on in our poem tournament.

The first quality is humor. “Pancake Man” has a sad and dark story to it hidden under the whole “dude-in-a-pancake-suit” idea. The whole poem is about a man who has a dream career and can’t seem to get to it, but the way the author presents it is humorous. It’s a strange kind of dark humor you don’t get to see often. One example of this humor is at the end of the poem: “Often I’d like to end it all. / Leap off some tall building / and land flat as a... oh, never mind.” It’s a nice, even balance of humor and storytelling.

The next strength I feel like pointing out is how imaginative this poem is. Not everyone can come up with a relatable poem about an optimistic yet depressed actor practically living in a pancake suit. It’s a strange idea but comes together nicely, which is something cool to see in media. It’s not your cliché dark humor story, which makes it interesting to read. Jeff Harms clearly has an incredibly creative mind.

The final strength this poem expresses is complex emotions. The man in the suit is optimistic, yet depressed. He bounces back and forth between pride, sarcasm, joy, and sorrow throughout the entire poem. Even though the poem shows complex and diverse emotions, you can still follow the narrator’s train of thought as he experiences these emotions. Jeff Harms creates completely realistic mood swings through this character.

Now, some may argue against “The Pancake Man.” One criticism many people hold against “The Pancake Man” are the mentions of depression and suicide. Understandably, these topics make many people uncomfortable, but I do feel like this topic is important. Depression and suicide are scary subjects for many people, yet they need to be talked about. “The Pancake Man,” although a goofy poem about a guy in a pancake suit, is a story that many people can resonate with. Around 4% of people struggle with depression—that’s about 280 million people who can probably relate to this poem.

“The Pancake Man” by Jeff Harms is clearly a brilliant poem. Jeff Harms’s story is humorous, creative, and expressive all at once, yet it also covers some important topics. “The Pancake Man” should quite obviously continue on in our poem tournament and end up on top of the metaphorical poem pancake stack.

**Free Draw** by Peter Dimandja



## **The Storm of Nightmares** by Sofia Gilmanor

Vwoosh! The tornado was about to destroy everything I had ever grown up with, loved, and known! It was tinted with green, had huge black clouds as hair, and three glowing red eyes above its drooling mouth equipped with hot pink fangs! The grass turned a withered gray as the tornado monster stepped near. It sprang toward me and grabbed my toes, tearing at the stubs of flesh ready for a bloody supper. I was in great pain as the strange tornado chomped off my whole foot while I was hanging midair. I was about to be dinner when I awoke sweating like a horse.

I was back in my house after a nap. I walked downstairs to find my mother, little brother, and father in the kitchen eating donuts. I was then reminded of the tornado creature eating my toes, barf!

"There you are! We were just waiting for you to wake up. Have a donut," mom said.

I thanked her and told my family about the strange dream. They giggled and laughed at the silliness of it, but little did we know how possible it was for dreams to come true. We ate donuts and cracked storm jokes for a while before my father pointed out the clouds outside. It didn't look like much more than rain, but the forecast would later say something different.

We went out on the porch to have some fun looking at the cloudy sky. My brother saw a shape that looked like a donkey with wings and eyelashes. I saw a fat caterpillar sitting on a monkey. It started to rain, so we headed in. What started as a light pitter-patter soon transformed into a loud, dark, and

## **Self Portrait** by Zeke Pinedo



freaky mess. I was slightly nervous that my toes would disappear. What if it turned into a pink-fanged, red-eyed, green-faced monster? Or would worse happen? Could it turn into a real tornado and cause damage?

Grandfather always says, "From the day you are born 'til you're hauled in a hearse, things are never so bad that they can't get worse," and sure enough, it got worse.

Sure enough, it got worse indeed. The second we heard it, we got a little more serious. There was a tornado warning in our area. We rushed around checking that everything was in place for safety if the storm turned out to be really serious. There were working flashlights, bottled water, food, and blankets, so even if bad turned to worse, we would be all right. We went over what we would do if a dangerous situation occurred and made sure our toes were safe. It would be alright; we had nothing to fear.

The warning turned to an alert a half an hour later, and we rushed to the basement. The basement was always really creepy, and sometimes I thought I saw creepy, demonic figures down there. We huddled together in silence as if the movement of all air in the basement had frozen.

It turned quiet, and I knew what that meant. Worries rushed through my mind as I sat by the wall. Everything started shaking like popping popcorn kernels. The ceiling crashed down and everyone died in mid-scream. The last thing I saw was a shadowy figure with glowing red eyes and hot pink fangs.

Then, I woke up as confused as ever and decided I didn't like tornado nightmares with tornado nightmares inside them. I came to a final conclusion that I would always be extra prepared for storms just in case they want to eat my toes.



**Spiderman Shoe**  
by Cienna Hiatt

Excerpt from **The Blue Mutants** by Roman Moore

A man named Alfred is in his office doing work when he notices there is a bump in the rug that is causing the table and lamp to tilt to the left. The bump then begins to move around in the carpet and Alfred becomes paranoid, so he picks up a chair and strikes down on the bump as hard as he can. The bump disappears, but Alfred wanted to be safe, so he flipped the carpet up to reveal nothing but a giant hole.

“What is that?”

Alfred contemplates on what this could be from, and eventually decides that he needs to go down. To see how far down it is, he throws down a book. After 5 seconds, he finally hears a loud boom. There is a rusty reddish brown ladder going into the darkness of the hole. Alfred brings a flashlight and begins the journey down.

As he is going down, he can smell the unpleasant odor coming from the bottom.

“What is that smell?” Alfred coughs.

Alfred finally climbs to the bottom to find that he is in a sewer. There is a narrow path across from Alfred, and on both sides of him is dirty water. Flying around are insects that you could probably get diseases from and the occasional rat sounds. There are pipes all over, some busted and some completely brown. Some leak water that are splashing into the water causing an echo throughout the tunnel.

After awhile, Alfred begins to walk, the image of the bump still in his mind. All around him are rocks. Even the ceiling looks like it could cave in on him any minute. He continues down this path until he reaches a room with two possible ways to continue the path. As he enters the room he hears a thud getting close to him. Alfred takes cover behind a giant boulder, and soon enough there are four blue creatures that don't seem to have a trace of human in them. They have gills with faces that look like real fish. They stand at six feet tall just barely fitting under the ceiling and have lighter dots all around their bodies. They have fins around their back and four fingers that look extremely slimy. They begin the walk towards the way Alfred came in.

“What are they, and what are they doing under my house?”

When it was okay to go, he went down the left tunnel. This tunnel was not dirty, nor was it clean. It didn't have any insects, and it was plain white all around. A tiny lightbulb stuck out of the ceiling, making the tunnel bright. About 100 feet down were three rooms. The one open had tanks filled with green goo that bubbled like boiling water. This peaked Alfred's interest, so he entered the bright white room, and started inspecting the tanks.

“Wow! This place is amazing. I can't believe this is under my house!”

There was a shelf near the tanks that had clear blasters mounted onto it. Alfred picked one up and saw that it too, had the same goo the tanks were filled with.

There was a trigger toward the bottom of the blaster. Alfred began to feel it, debating on whether he should shoot it or not. Alfred, still touching it, put too much

pressure on it and the blaster shot in the ceiling. He looked up and saw a giant hole with green goo dripping down like vines coming down from a tree.

Footsteps began to come toward him, so he hid in a corner behind one of the tanks. Three fish guys entered the room.

“What happened here!?” one of the blue fish guys exclaimed.

“It seems someone has broke into our lab!” shouted another one.

Alfred was trying his hardest to keep quiet, but there was a clear tube next to him that must’ve been a sample. He was trying to move from it, but he kicked it, and it went right into the wall. Its glass shattered into a million pieces.

“What was that?”

“It came from over there!”

Alfred was stuck. There was no way he could escape the blue mutants. When they came over, Alfred knew he was caught. Or so he thought... When he turned around, he faced a trap door that he could just barely fit through. When the blue mutants reached where he had been, there was nothing to be seen. Alfred would hide in there until it was safe, then he would go back up to his home. After about an hour of sitting in the cramped space, it was finally safe to go out. Alfred left immediately and sprinted down the tunnel until he finally reached the ladder. Finally, Alfred was back. It was now 11:30 PM, so Alfred decided to go to sleep and figure this out tomorrow.

**Free Draw** by Nylah Green



## **A Frankenstein Parody** by Lucas Hicks

Dr. Beaker was in his lab working on bringing his friend Kermit back to life. He dug Kermit up and put him on a cold metal table. It was his destiny to bring him back to life. Kermit was deformed, hideous, his grey pallor skin was filled with maggots and other specimens from all the years in the ground. His eyes were shut, waiting to be reopened and renewed with life.

On a particularly rainy stormy night, Dr. Beaker hooked up the machine, and to Dr. Beaker's utter shock, Kermit started to wake, but when he awoke, the first words he said were "Vow to re-awaken Miss Piggy."

Dr. B was in hysterics, over filled with emotions of joy and confusion. Kermit swiftly stood up and started studying the anatomy of a pig. He was immersed in fulfilling his wish of being with Miss Piggy again, but Dr. B felt foreboding and refused to let Kermit dig her up.

Kermit shouted, "I need to talk with her again!" Dr. B felt bad, but also felt it wasn't right as she had already been turned into BBQ. However, he didn't have the guts to tell Kermit, so he went to bed.

Kermit left with vengeance in his heart. He was going after Dr. B's family. He had heard that there was a party happening soon, so he rushed over, planning to find Dr. B's son, Michael B., and kill him. Kermit saw Michael walking home and lured him into the woods to be executed.

Later, when they found the body, Dr. B was in utter shock and pain, causing him to have a heart attack and pass away, leaving Kermit to wander for the rest of eternity.

## **Cheerios** by Crysta Summers



## **Share the Light** by Jadyn Sample



## A Book Review of Every Last Word by Lyla Susong

Do you have a favorite book genre like romance or comedy?! Personally, I love romance and the book Every Last Word by Tamara Ireland Stone reminded me how much I love it. The main reason I loved this book is due to how well I could relate to it. Sometimes, I feel like I don't fit in, and sometimes, I feel as if I need to find better friends. I think I am!



This book begins with Samantha Macalister feeling like she didn't fit in with the popular crowd (who she had hung out with her whole life) since she had OCD and anxiety. That suddenly changed when she started to hang out with a girl named Caroline. Caroline could see she was struggling socially at school; therefore, Caroline decided to let her into a secret group that met in a secret room in the school's auditorium. In this club, Samantha met a guy named AJ who she began dating. She started to realize that her mental health was getting better since she wasn't hanging around her old friend group as much. Her old friends started catching onto her secret club and began causing problems.

I loved how the author put this book together by having a big problem happen every chapter causing me to be on the edge of my seat each chapter. If I could change anything, it would be the climax never happening as a big secret is revealed and is devastating to the reader!

The theme of hanging out with people that bring out the best in you truly is an amazing message to young teens. This theme applies to almost every teen girl because she wants to be friends with popular people, but if they bring you down and you start to feel bad about yourself, then those friends aren't for you. On page 332, Samantha states after meeting her new friends, "I finally feel healthy for the first time in years." This quote explains that after she started hanging out with people who made her happy she began to feel better all around.

When reading Every Last Word, I recommend you be at least 11. Be prepared for the feeling that this book was meant for you, because it was. I give this book 5 stars, it was so relatable!

## Why Did I Pee in the Urinal?

by Aspyn Lakin

It was a windy afternoon. I was walking home from the bus stop. Then one minute later, BOOM! The tornado siren went off. I was the last one off the bus, and my older brother was in sixth grade, so he was already home. I sprinted home. My brother sprinted to me to make sure I was okay. We got home, gathered the supplies, and went to the basement.

We turned on the news, and it said, "TAKE COVER! GIANT TORNADO IS COMING WITH SOFTBALL SIZE HAIL!" I started freaking out and crying because I was going to die. Easton tried to calm me down. The stupid news kept on saying more things that scared me. I was like what the heck? Are you trying to scare me? I kept saying to myself, "We are safe down here... we are safe down here," over and over again until I had to pee.

If you didn't know, my dad turned the basement into a man cave, and there's a urinal. I am a girl and can not pee in the urinal. I did it any way. That left a mess.

"Oops".

When my dad got home, I asked him, "How did you not get a broken windshield?"

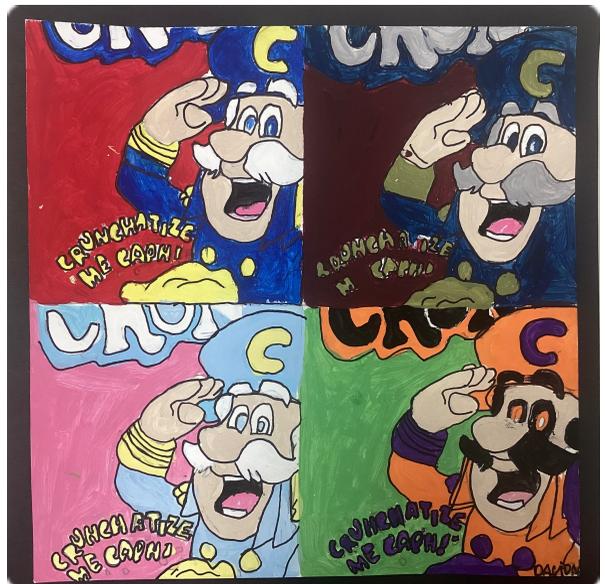
He said, "You learn how to dodge them."

Turns out the things that they said on the news didn't even happen, and there wasn't even a tornado. I peed in the urinal for nothing. I could have just gone upstairs and went to the bathroom. My last words would have been, "Stupid news."

## Cheez-It by Zeria Harris



## Cap'n Crunch by David Nsoki



## **Thailand Breeze** by Olivia Behl

Walking out to his grandpa's elderly,  
muddy white pickup truck,  
the sweat dripping off his hairline,  
nostalgia.

The humidity floating through the air,  
the sunset burning his eye's,  
and falling on everything around him,  
nostalgia.

The smell of the Thai food is  
drifting from grandma's kitchen,  
making his stomach gurgle and grumble,  
nostalgia.

The thick layer of humid heat  
radiating off of the old beat up car,  
reminding him of hot summer days,  
nostalgia.

Taking notice of the tall green grass  
flowing majestically, he remembers  
playing hide and seek in it as a child,  
nostalgia.

The water from last night's rain  
leaked through the mildew smelling roof,  
reminding him of his not so distant past,  
nostalgia.

## **Fiery Chickens** by Noah Vischer

Those fiery chickens,  
they are embers in a fire pit.  
A blanket of ash curls around them.

One, a full and strong rooster,  
of deep brown and black,  
and fiery orange sits on its sides.

His eyes stand, bright and alert,  
like he's trying to intimidate  
someone or something.

Watching out for his partner?  
His stance speaks a warning,  
'Back off,' in chicken.

His friend, the hen, sits peacefully,  
a speckled copy of her partner.  
She rests with the sleeping volcano.

The dust leaves a lingering scent,  
ash and fire, not a smell or taste I enjoy.  
I think that the chickens smell it too.

The chickens recall snow,  
yet in the tropical summer,  
and clouds that fell.

They settled and choked the green  
with their weapon of dust and debris,  
making the plants look depressed.

But those amazing birds,  
those fiery chickens,  
continue their eternal flame.

## **Glowing Blue Wonders** by Kerigan F. Huntsinger

It was a cool summer day in England, my father and I had just gotten home from the bakery. My mother was waiting for us by the front gates.

"Jack! What have you got from the bakery, my dear," she said cheerfully.

"Some fresh bread for dinner tonight, Mama," I exclaimed.

Tonight we were having dinner with my aunt and uncle. It was a big dinner, since we were royalty. I'd never understood what the difference between royalty and commoner was; I mean we were all the same right? I also had a little sister named Margot. Mother and father had a good relationship, never fighting. I guess you could say they were a normal king and queen.

Aunt and uncle arrived in the late evening for dinner; my cousins were here too. I have two older cousins, Elizabeth and George. They aren't the nicest, but I tend to just brush it off.

Father cooked lamb chops and veggies, served with the fresh bread we had bought earlier from the bakery. Everything smelled amazing. The chatter at the table sounded like bees buzzing in a field. I wasn't in much of the chatter although Margot had showed me this really cool paper craft she made at kindergarten.

"Look, Jack! Miss Berry showed us how to make those origami fortune games!" She sounded like when you inhale helium and begin talking.

"How cool, Margot! Could you try it on me?"

I think that was the only part I was intrigued by.

She responded, "Hmm, I think I remember what to say so sure."

"Ok, pick a number between one and four," said Margot.

"Uhh, how about two?" Twenty-two is my lucky number, so two was close enough.

She put the fortune teller in four fingers and said, "One, two."

She continued by asking to pick a color: blue, pink, green, and red. I picked blue because blue is my second favorite color, purple being my first.

"Okie dokie, now let's see what your future is," Margot said mysteriously.

She opened the blue flap and read out the words, "Very soon you will experience something that will change your life forever," whatever that means. My sister and I carried on with eating our last bits of dinner. Then mama told us to go to bed since it was getting late.

I woke up to the smell of fresh bacon and pancakes being made, and my sister was still sleeping peacefully in her bed. I walked down the hallway to the spiral

stairs. It looked like my aunt, uncle, and cousins had left because the guest bedroom was empty and neatly made.

After Margot and I had eaten breakfast, we sprinted out to the garden to play our favorite game: hide and seek. Margot insisted that she be seeker first because she wants to find good hiding spots as she looks for me I guess. She started counting down, "One, two, three, four..." I bolted into the forest to find the perfect hiding spot. I found a spot near the river, filled with greenery and the scent of freshly picked flowers.

I heard Margot yell, "Ready or not! Here I come!"

I would say that about five minutes had passed, and she still couldn't find me. I was about to go out and give up my perfect hiding spot until I saw a small blue glow in the corner of my eye. I thought it was a rock, so I went to go collect it. It turns out the blue glow wasn't a rock. It looked like two small blue glowing beans. I picked them up, and they were heavier than what I had anticipated.

"Margot! Come get a look at this!"

"Coming, Jack," she said annoyed. "What'd you make me run over here for?"

"Look look, they're glowing beans. Don't they look like jelly beans?"

"They do, don't they. Let's show Mama and Papa," she said urgently.

Before we could even begin running, something started to burst out of the beans. The beans turned out to be alien eggs from Neptune. Margot started to freak out.

"Jack, what's happening to the beans!"

"I don't know Margo—"

My sentence was interrupted with a big explosion next to the castle. Two spaceships the size of Big Ben and the Eiffel Tower combined, flew above London. Margot and I sprinted towards the castle to see mama and papa outside looking for us. When they spotted us, they ran towards us, but another explosion in the town shook the ground, making us fall. As I fell, the eggs flew out of my hands onto the ground. They started to grow and grow until they were full sized Neptunians.

All I remember is the city I loved collapsed as we lay on the ground. My family and I are now in our doomsday bunker that my great-great grandfather built for this exact reason. All I can hear now are the sounds of a clock ticking, and explosions left and right. Who knows how long we'll have to spend locked down here, maybe for the rest of our days or maybe a few months.

Future me, did we make it out?

## **The Outsiders Shelf Songs Playlist** by Vince Bauerle

Greetings! I am thrilled for the opportunity to create a playlist for Ponyboy Curtis in the Shelf Songs; the character-inspired playlist picks series. Ponyboy's journey in The Outsiders is both poignant and relatable, and I believe a carefully curated playlist can capture the essence of this experience.

The first song I am picking is "Dancing in the Sky" by Sam Barber. The song is about grieving, and Ponyboy, having lost two of his friends, would obviously be in a state of grief. The lyrics "Tell me, what does it look like in heaven?" describe him perfectly as he is trying to come to terms with his friend's death. Sam Barber's music fits perfectly for a young boy trying to grapple with the loss of his friends while also trying to discover himself.

The second song I'm choosing is "Please Don't Go" by Wyatt Flores. This song is about having a love-hate relationship, and clearly Ponyboy and his brother Darry have that. The lyrics "You're screaming at me," and the other lyrics, "but I can't keep going if you leave," describe the two of them perfectly in the earlier chapters. Darry loves Ponyboy, but the stresses of raising his two younger brothers and having to balance a job and friendships get super stressful, and sometimes he takes his stress out on Ponyboy, leaving him wondering if he is really loved.

The next song is another Sam Barber song called "Run Away Highway." This song fits well because it describes how someone feels when he or she has lost everything, like almost nothing feels real. The lyrics, "These cheap cigars burn my lungs, but I don't care," show how he feels throughout almost the whole book: stressed and anxious, so he uses cigarettes to cope with all of it.

The fourth song is "Dreamer" by Drayton Farley. I chose this song because it tells a story about having a dream—a dream that, even if it sounds hard or impossible, you will achieve. "I was born to be a dreamer in this hard-up kind of life" is a good lyric that matches Ponyboy almost perfectly. He doesn't want to end up like his gang; he wants to use his smarts for something good and get out of Tulsa; he doesn't want to just be another delinquent in his town.

The last song I'm choosing is "Tourniquet" by Zach Bryan. The lyrics say, "I'll bandage up your body, your bones, and your bad days too." It matches how he feels about his friends; even if he doesn't like all of them, he will always be there for them, while also hoping they'll be there for him.

Thank you for considering my proposal. I am enthusiastic about the opportunity to contribute to the Shelf Songs Series and look forward to the possibility of bringing the Ponyboy playlist to life.

Regards,  
Vincent L. Bauerle

## **Malian Children** by Evelyn Edwards

Rustic water flows down the concrete wall,  
a concrete, classroom wall in the heart of Mali.  
It's around noon when kids start their math lessons.

The classroom clamors as the kids' excitement increases  
seeing the black chalkboards, pink and white chalk sticks,  
making scratching noises when used like forks on glass plates.

The young girl learns math with all of her friends; she is ecstatic  
about her velvety pink shirt and her bumblebee yellow pants.  
Then her friend, the young boy, wears a USA army shirt.

On the left side of the room, indigo chairs sit quietly, vacant,  
like an abandoned house. Under those chairs, hard,  
cracked floors with dirt that crunches under your feet.

**Battle Dress**  
**Chapter 15 Illustration**  
by Gabby Gonzalez



## **Darkening City of the Philippines** by Hayden Beal

Throughout the Philippine's capital city,  
The hazy, quiet sky is resting between skyscrapers.  
It's slowly going to sleep after a long day with the sun's essence.  
The moon rises with its glow, replacing the sun.

The gold, glimmering buildings stay shining as always,  
As the dark, gloomy, closed off from the world ones go to bed.

Another skyscraper is lit up by the lighting on the inside.  
Surrounded by duplicates with almost the exact same features.

A white, silvery tower stands still, starting to sleep with the others.  
There's a short building with green lights wrapped around it  
Like a Christmas tree that still seems very loud and playful,  
Just like the children chatting away on top of the roof.

The children on the roof are filled with happiness and joy,  
Watching the cotton candy colored sky set slowly with the sun.

They talk as many thoughts creep into their minds,  
And the sky growing darker as time moves on.

When they talk, their faces seem darker with the sky.  
They watch the buildings brighten more and more,  
With the blazing, hot sun setting against them.

The darkness sets in slowly, and the heat disappears.

## **Life of Trees**

by Ariawna Ziebarth



## **A Terrible Day to be a Substitute** by Jillian Pollock

“Do you know what you’re gonna learn at school today? Anything exciting?” my mom always seemed to ask as she was driving me to school.

“I’m not sure.” That’s what I usually replied with unless there was something else exciting going on that day, which wasn’t today.

We continued our car ride to school listening to music, and it was normally Taylor Swift. My favorite song, at the time, was “Shake it Off.” I listened to that song almost every day of the week because I was so fond of it.

Finally, we reached the school. We pulled up to the student drop off car line, and I hugged my mom tightly. I opened the car door and went inside the school. Everyone, including the teachers and staff, were always graciously welcoming in the morning. I walked to my second grade classroom to find a substitute teacher, Mrs. Barber, standing at the door. She had been a substitute teacher at my school ever since I was there. I was so glad she was our substitute because I loved being taught by her.

As the day kept progressing, I kept feeling worse and worse. At that point in the day, it was writing time, and I was writing a story about a lost dog named Simon. It was then when I started to realize something wasn’t right with me.

Lunch finally came, but I wasn’t even hungry. I didn’t eat my nachos or my smiley fries, and all I wanted to do was cry. I could feel my eyes getting watery, so I wiped my eyes with a brown napkin. When I told Mrs. Barber I felt nauseous, she told me I could go to the nurse after recess, and I said okay even though I didn’t feel superior.

Recess finally came, and by that point, I couldn’t move. I didn’t wanna bother the teacher, so I just sat there and waited. I finally heard the whistle, and I rushed inside.

Mrs. Barber told me she would call the nurse. I nodded and sat down at my desk. I felt absolutely terrible. As I was resting my head down on my desk, I started getting goosebumps everywhere, which was weird because I felt especially hot. All of my classmates were up against the hallway wall outside of class waiting to come in. Suddenly, I felt something come up my throat, and in that moment, I puked absolutely everywhere, on my desk, on the floor, and all over me.

I felt so embarrassed; I was as red as a tomato. My whole class had watched me puke. Even after getting all of that out, I still didn’t feel great. Mrs Barber grabbed a trash can, and then proceeded to walk me down to the nurse. The nurse took my temperature, which was like 100 degrees, then called my mom. I waited patiently in the front office, with the trashcan right beside me until my mom came and picked me up.

If I had communicated sooner with Mrs. Barber, I could’ve told her I felt ill sooner. I also should have been more self-aware and listened to my thoughts, the thoughts that were telling me that something didn’t feel right in my stomach.

## The Next Chapter of "They Might Be Dangerous" by Ava Fidler

She knew what she had to do. She knew she had to choose courage over fear. After all, that's what she would've wanted if these strange creatures had found her. Ignoring Zak's signals, and Mips points towards home, Alia slowly reaches out for the pod.

**What if these creatures were waiting to be rescued? Waiting to find me, and know more?** she wondered.

Zak quickly glanced at his sister, and wondered whether she will come. On one last thought, he bent down with Alia. **We can't stay here. Pack these things up, hide them somewhere, and dash. The watchers haven't spotted us yet.**

With a single nod, she started to slowly place everything she had discovered into the box, wondering whether she would ever learn anything else about the hideous creatures from the picture inside the pod. She readied herself and ran, along with Zak, behind a few bushes in the park.

Right after they had left, the Watchers finally decided everything was clear, and went to look somewhere else along the edge. Amazed at how that plan had worked out, Alia gave her brother a big hug and apologized.

**It's fine,** Zak signaled. **Should we take a closer look?**

Alia grinned at her brother before racing off, ready to discover more about these strange creatures from Earth. As she got everything else out of the pod, the stuff she had already seen, surprised, she noticed a big red button. Zak, who was on the lookout for the watchers, didn't notice his sister slowly reaching for the button. As she was about to press it, Zak came rushing back explaining the watchers had spotted them. Quickly, hoping it would give her a solution, Alia zapped the button with her antennas.

All of a sudden, everything went pitch black. Knowing she might never go back home again, she reached out for her brother, who is no where to be found. After few seconds of panic, she spotted her brother as the world became slightly brighter. But again, everything became pitch black, right after the siblings smacked hard into the earth.

Knowing her brother was most likely furious at her, she tried to signal a message, **Are you ok? I didn't mean to send us here.** But before the message even made it past her thoughts, it evaporated.

Zak did get up, and looked more scared than mad. He pointed towards a large green bush, and they hid there, holding each other, for fear was all they knew in this strange

place. Zak and Alia drifted to sleep. Alia dreamed of everything she found—the picture of the odd, deformed creatures; the weird, unique weapons, the button.

Alia jumped up with a startle as she realized where they were. She aggressively shook Zak awake. It doesn't seem like anyone noticed them at first, but as Zak was about to signal to Alia, an enormous creature with tiny eyes, razor sharp teeth, pointy ears, and white spots on its brown body approached. It was connected on a chain and made a horrifying sound when it opened its mouth. "Bark! Bark!" the creature shouted. The siblings stared at the creature in surprise.

Zak signaled, **Alia, that creature is clearly dangerous. Get back here, right now!**

Alia ignored him and slowly stepped towards the creature, who had calmed down once she showed she wasn't afraid. Alia realized the creature looked a whole like their Mip, who had run back home, except this thing was supersized. She slowly patted his nose while Zak was backing up, horror in his eyes, thinking his sister was about to die.

**There, there buddy, we won't hurt you,** Alia whispered through her antennas, even if it couldn't exactly hear her. It began to shake its tail and slobbered all over Alia.

She burst into a fit of giggles as she rolled over, but the fun came to an end when a sharp pointed, skinny and tall creature that they had seen in the pictures from before, ran out after her beloved animal.

**Alia! They're coming! I told you they're dangerous, no time for second chances! Hurry!**

Barely hearing her brother's call, Alia backed away in fear towards her brother.

"Oh, I'll get you next time you lousy, good for nothing pests!" a tall woman exploded after believing they were only a few rats that had caused such a startle.

**Did she find us? Is the the end?** Alia asked her brother, terrified for the answer and terrified that everything here was scared of her, scared of someone different.

**No, we are safe for now, but it's best we find another hiding place,** Zak reported. They slowly wiggled their eyes around, looking for anywhere to hide, anywhere to get away from this terrible place.

**Maybe I'm really the only one who wants to discover,** Alia thought sadly to herself.

## **Solar Eclipse** by Willow Rimmer

Did you think the eclipse was cool? I sure did! Watching the full eclipse is like a once in a lifetime opportunity. When I watched the eclipse, I was at my house. My parents threw a watch party for it. Almost half of my family came.

About thirty minutes before it actually happened, we all put our special glasses on and watched all the sudden movements the moon made. All of a sudden, the sky got dark, and it happened! The moon fully covered the sun with a shiny circle around it.

About five minutes went by, and we saw the ring of fire. The ring of fire is when a bunch of reddish pink dots surround the moon. Then, about a minute after the ring of fire came the diamond ring. The diamond ring is the big bright glow after the moon slightly goes off the sun. A lot happens in two to three hours, but it's amazing!

## **Eclipse 2024** by Caleb Hammer



## **Costco Cactus** by Bentley Schrier

One Sunday evening, I went to Costco and looked at various items. There were hot pockets, chicken nuggets, fish sticks, and corndogs. Then, I saw it, a cactus.

Now this was no ordinary cactus! There were flowers on it, and it was slimy. Now, I the curious person that I am, decided to ask the manager where they got this cactus.

They said they got it from Death Valley, but they also said it was highly poisonous.

Then, I thought to myself, "Why would they sell this cactus if it was poisonous?" Anyway, I bought it because it looked cool.

## **Tin Punch Heart** by Cash Tucker



entries from **The Memoir of the Big Bertha** by Austin Hughes

Captain's log 2/14/1724: The next account is based off what me crew told me. I was feelin' a little under the weather, likely from throwin' bodies to the sea. Anyway, while I was sick below, me crew, including the four new rookies, sent out to continue the search of our treasure. As a side note, me loyal crew and I have decided to keelhaul the four new lubbers once in two clicks of land we be. With their spades, they went to the western shore near the forest to look for it. From Greasey's accounts, a few Spaniards who look to have been marooned, jumped me hearty crew. With nothin' but claw and talon, they managed to break and bloody Gorlock. They came up from the southeast and spoke a language unknown to me crew. When they started to inch closer, Gorlock tried to hit the ringleader with the spade. The Spaniard caught it cast it aside. They continued to throw him to the roots of a large oak and kicked till he couldn't breathe. Two then retreated with bottle o' ale and left me crew to drag him back to the ship.

Captains log 2/29/1724: It's been a few weeks of diggin' and impatience, but we found it. The Spaniards were tracked by Greasy to their placed hamlet, covered in nett'l and vines stood the treasure of Cap'n Miles. With our remaining rations, we set camp near the stockade. With I fully healed, they stood no chance.

"Fire, boys!" I commanded.

All hell broke loose as musket balls and black powder flew everywhere near their set up, and when all me crew went 'n replied, I saw the bandoleers on their chests. Muskets and flintlocks and blunderbusses all returned fire. Soon, cannonade occurred, and, luckily, we had eight men against twelve Spaniards. Me crew had many firearms ready for use and soon enough, I could see their faces now like smashed marrow. The repugnance of such almost left me crew and I to leave the treasure, but we decided we went through too much to leave it.

In four days or so, we had loaded and counted what was around 200,000 'n gold in silver. Twenty-six men killed over this treasure. Af'r we got course set for home, we asked our four recruits to line up near the bowsprit and to close their eyes for promotion. Me crew and I, besides Gorlock, promoted 'em up all right. Thirty now; this way pay is spread more generously. One last stop, Gorlock, Greasy slit his throat with a cutlass. Now each of us gets 50,000. Thirty-one men on a dead man's chest. Yo ho ho, and a bottle of rum.

excerpts from **Boat Out of Water** by Josiah Novakowski

USA, 2065, Underground Facility. Scientists, engineers, and security walk dark halls and rooms, with lights spaced between intervals. A loud banging of machinery working or being built echoes around corridors. Janitors mop and sanitize regularly with lemon scented chemicals. In a particular section of this giant facility though, is the large experimenting room. An underground lake, fake and real grass, giant yellow thermal light, and soil planted 4 feet deep into the floor decorated the place like an underground Earth. Here, the smell of roses and violets, freshly blossomed, the gasoline and oil from machinery, and an oceans salty spray of water mixed together.

Scientists inside a testing room near the underground lake work on some alien technology: a long tube similar to a shotgun barrel, but designed thinner and with a small pointed end with a hole in it.

"Just look at how advanced this is," a scientist notes. "It's completely different from anything I've ever seen. I mean, just look at how they made this energy source. It never goes out, endless power and electricity, or... not electricity."

Another scientist regards this, "If it isn't electricity, then what is this energy?" These kind of debating of topics are common.

They file out of the room into the cavernous experiment room and walk towards a white board, cushioned chairs, and a table with multiple supplies on it, including a microscope, scalpel, screwdriver, beakers, droppers, pipets, test tubes, and Petri dishes. They put together the energy source with the other parts of the alien machinery. What is formed from it is an arm-like mechanical device with the pointed tube at the end. Engineers showed up to help with the rebuilding. The scientists put in the power source and try pushing buttons to operate the machine. It moves very little, but there is still more to be done... modifications, plenty of modifications to be made.

2069, USA, Underground Facility. Testing had continued for the next two years proving successful time and time again, but the President still didn't think that revealing the technology was right, saying he needed to wait for the right moment. Inside a meeting room, Jerry, Garry, Charles, and Darren analyze data and findings. The scientists regularly took trips to the Atlantic Ocean during lunch breaks using the Teleportation device.

Last week using the Reverso device on the cruise ship model to make it twice as large was in short not a very good day. The one thing that went right was making the cruise ship bigger; the one thing that went wrong was that the Reverso broke and would be broken for another couple days, so the steamboat was ginormous, and they couldn't revert it back, so Jerry, for the past four hours, had to fill out paperwork.

"So, what should we do now?" Garry asked after they had finished studying data. "Jerry's still out doing paperwork, and we can't just do nothing."

Charles thought for a few moments. "Why not go get lunch?" he suggested. "We get lunch, go out to the Atlantic, and leave a note for Jerry to bring us back at two. Maybe we can take a few sailors with us to steer the boat. Jerry is usually the one to do it anyway, and I got no idea how to."

"Sounds solid," Darren commented.

Charles walked out of the meeting room taking a piece of paper and started up the Teleportation. He set in the coordinates of the Atlantic Ocean and to be teleported there in twenty minutes. He wrote a note and stuck it to the screen of the Teleportation, unknowingly bumping it and switching coordinates around dramatically. He walked back to Garry and Darren who had left the meeting room. "Got the note and coordinates set up. Let's get someone to steer this thing," Charles said to them.

"And don't forget to grab your lunch. Don't wanna be starving out there," Garry said, going to the cafeteria inside the facility.

They found some sailors who were on break and itching for something to do within the facility. Few minutes later, they were all on the giant cruise ship, and waiting for the countdown of the Teleportation to go down all the way: "15...14...13...12...11...10," they all counted at the same time. The count went to zero, and a yellow light engulfed the giant cruise ship along with the people on it. The light retracted, and they were sent through the Teleportation's process of teleportation: breaking all people and objects being teleported into the atoms that make them up, the atoms represented in the yellow light. They were sucked into the machine, sent thousands of miles into the Earth's atmosphere, brought down, and put together again due to Earth's gravity, regaining themselves as a whole.

They were sent not to the Atlantic Ocean as expected, but instead, inside an extremely narrow street with waterways and tall buildings close together. They weren't anywhere near the Atlantic. They were in Venice, Italy.

2069, Europe, Venice Italy. People who were walking along narrow pathways or in the middle of a canoe were shocked by the sudden appearance of a giant boat. Entire buildings surrounding the boat were pushed backwards and cracking along the middle like the line of Earth's equator. Boats that had been crushed by the steamboat were now splintered wood floating out from underneath it. The one lucky thing was that no one was nearby it when it was teleported, so no human lives were in danger, yet your typical person with a sign saying 'The End is Near' suddenly started laughing.

"I said it! I called it! You all didn't believe me! This is it! It's happening! The end is near!" The man started running away shouting it around. People inside and outside the buildings ran around and started shoving things in suitcases and backpacks. Mothers took their children's hands and ran with them as far as possible to the nearest boat they could find. People flee with the possibility of their lives being in danger.

## **The Palms of Malaysia** by Gabby Gonzalez

As the cool chill of subtle winds flow playfully past the rustling trees of the Malaysian forest, smell of earth fills the air all around.

Two elder trees both covered head-to-toe in green and vibrant lushes of moss, look down on the younger, smaller trees across them.

It's their time now, to rise among every tree and embrace the warm and bright sunlight they've been waiting for.

Sun shines as glimmers of light trickle through the gaps of the long leaves.

The sun trying its hardest to reach the ground.

Their wise old roots abstract and bumpy, crowd the floor down below they'll never see, so grand, and aged, rule the ground beneath.

The smaller trees, still saplings, look up towards the elders all perfectly aligned, each a clone of the other, all the same.

The bottom of the forest all covered with dead palm leaves, look up desperately, trying to reach their final rays of sun from above.

They blend with the ground around them with lush terrains of grass.

In the forest lies a lonesome, yet peaceful man.

The man looks toward the trees, stretches his arms out, carrying a long metal claw collecting the leaves of the palms to flourish.

The leaves sway to the sound of the rustling winds, and the smell is old and woody, yet fresh scents of the Malaysian Forest.

## **Origami Flower Mandala**

by Evie Jasionowski



## **Landscape Art** by Gabby Braner



## Self Portrait by Lucy Hitch



## Little Theft by Tyler Delicate

When I was in third grade, my family and I went to Walmart to get some groceries. I wanted only one thing, a Kinder Egg. I knew that if I asked my mother, she would definitely say no. I came up with an idea. As we checked out, my mother saw it and took it out of the cart.

She said, "Ask you sister for money;" so I decided to steal it instead. It was sooooo wonderfully tasty.

While I was eating, I didn't even realize my sister saw me. I ended up losing twenty bucks and my subway sandwich to keep her quiet.

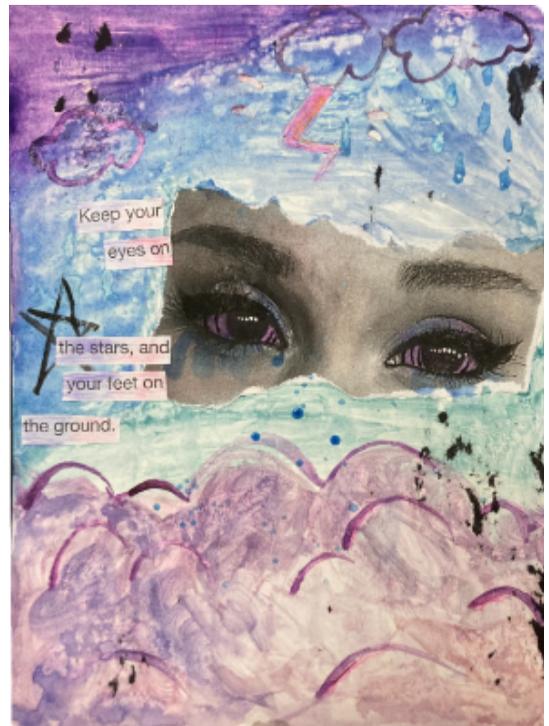
## Calm Before Disaster by Jessie Loveras Santana

One day, I was walking my dog, and it was going perfectly fine. While walking, a random pit bull saw us and just stood there. I kept on walking while ignoring it, but then it came charging at us like a bullet. I tried turning the other way, but my dog dragged me to the pit bull.

The pit bull was friendly, but my dog wanted to rip its throat out. I was struggling to get my dog to calm down. My dog jumped the other dog, and you could hear the pit bull whimpering. I zoomed away after that.

## Keep Your Eyes on the Stars

by Bella Ravellette



**Dear Students, Parents and Faculty,**

**Lebanon Middle School is pleased to share student writing and artwork from the 2023 - 2024 school year with the 15th edition of Tiger Tales: Art and Literature Review.**

**Congratulations to all the students published in this year's review! Your teachers are extremely proud to showcase your talents in Tiger Tales for members of your school and the community to enjoy.**

**Additionally, I want to extend my thanks to the following teachers for guiding students in their writing and taking the time to submit the excellent work for this year's review: Lorrie Faust, Wendy O'Rourke, and McKenzie Legan.**

**We especially appreciate Ronda Villines for submitting another varied and impressive collection of student artwork. To further enjoy and share this year's review and past reviews, please visit the student publications section of the LMS website.**

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