

Spartan

Newsflash

November
2025

Volume 6, Edition 1

STUDENT REPORTERS

FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE:

Kaycee Bahnemann
Luka Elisa Catlin
Arlo Cox
Juliet Fillmore
Kali Fisher

Emily Gonzalez
Isla Gruebele
Hunter Hallermann
Zamayah Hassan
Nolan Henry
Kayla Lakhamone
Edmundo Lamadrid
Xavier McDonald

Lu Mensah
Yangel Morales Del Rio
Ameesha Ohneswere
Mira Oswald
Fernando Ramirez Gonzalez
Naimah Thomas
Giana Uebel
Chloe Willhite

BRACE FOR IMPACT: VOLUME SIX HAS LANDED!

Welcome to the sixth volume of the Spartan Newsflash: the Inver Grove Heights Middle School student newspaper! The goal of the Spartan Newsflash is to connect our community, allow for the diverse voices of our students to be heard freely, and showcase the (mostly) unedited talents of our reporters.

All content in this paper is created by students, and for that reason, this paper will never be perfect. Our philosophy is that learning is a lifelong process, and we all can improve through mistakes and reflection. Our hope is that as future editions are released, you see the growth of our reporters.

Thank you for listening to the voices of our reporters.

Jess Maloney, Staff Editor
maloneyj@isd199.org



A PEEK BEHIND THE CURTAIN

by Nolan Henry, grade 7

Inver Grove Heights Schools has a new Theater Director, Nikko Soukup Raymo. He is excited to bring the drama to our theater. I had a chance to sit down with Nikko, as he likes to be called, and ask him a few questions. Our conversation follows, with minor editing to ensure clarity.

Q: How many years have you been working as a theater director?

A: I've been working as a theater director for probably over 10 years.

Q: Do you have any advice for kids that

are unsure about theater?

A: I always believe that theater is a safe space and a place for people who are artistic and want to be creative. So if you are that type of person, the theater is open and always welcoming. I want to preface that you don't need to have theater experience to join the theater.

Q: What shows have you directed?

A: I have directed *Into the Woods*, *Annie Jr.*, *The Wizard of Oz*, *Sound of Music*, *The Wiz*, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, *Finding Nemo Jr.*, *The Little Mermaid*, and many more.

Q: Do you have a preference between acting and directing?

A: "I am very much a singer, dancer, and actor, so I do really lean more towards acting, but I love teaching

educational theater for students.

There are many opportunities for Middle School and High School students to join theater, on stage or backstage as part of the tech crew. Currently they are working on the fall play *Leading Ladies* which will debut later in November. More opportunities will be announced throughout the year. Any questions about the theater program, can be sent to Nikko at soukupraymon@isd199.org.



BEYOND THE LANELINES

by Erica Lemke & Giana Uebel , grade 7

IGHMS knows Ms. Morrissey as our PE teacher, but outside of school, she’s an amazing coach for the Simley girls swim team. Here is Ms. Morrissey’s point of view on coaching the swim team.

Q: How’s the transition from school to swim?

A: The transition from school to swimming is pretty fun. I get to spend the whole day with students and then go to swim practice to see all of the swimmers. It’s fun when everyone greets me when I walk in. Sometimes after a long day going to swim practice is the highlight of the day.

Q: Do you like your students calling you by your first name at swim?

A: I don’t mind the students calling me Taylor at swimming. I always got to do that with my coaches in middle school which was kind of fun. I enjoy seeing you all sassily call me “Taylor” when I walk in.

Q: Who’s your favorite coach to coach with?

A: My favorite coach to coach with is Coach Katie because we both like Starbucks and compete to see who can get the most accurate split times during meets.

Q: What is your favorite swim stroke?

A: My favorite stroke to swim is freestyle, but my favorite stroke to watch and help swimmers with is butterfly.

Q: How long have you swam?

A: I’ve swam from 5th grade till senior year, so for 8 years.

Q: Are you going to coach swimming next year?

A: Yes

Q: What is your favorite part about

coaching?

A: My favorite part about coaching swimming is getting to know the swimmers better, and building relationships with students and swimmers in a different way! It’s also super fun to watch all of the swimmers improve.

Q: What was your favorite event to swim or watch?

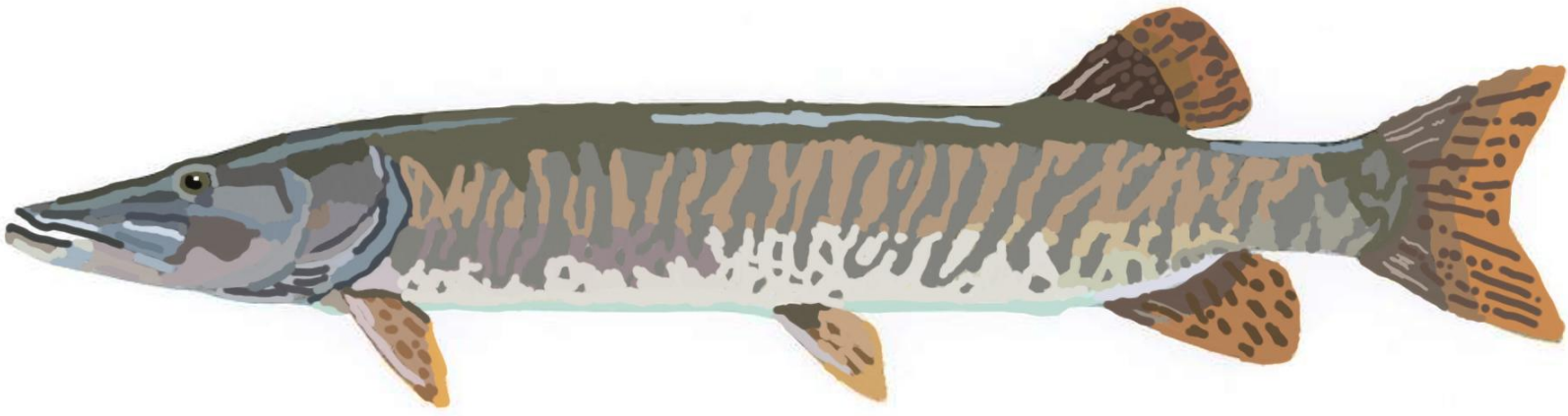
A: My favorite events to swim were the 50 freestyle and the 500 freestyle. My favorite event to watch is the 200IM and the 200 freestyle relay.

Q: What got you interested in swimming?

A: I got interested in swimming because my older sister, Madison, was on the swim team.

Q: What was your favorite set you had us do?

A: My favorite set that we’ve done is the Mile Set, it was fun to watch you all get faster and faster, mile after mile.



Art by Hunter Hallermann , grade 7



Collages by Isla Gruebele , grade 7





Art by Mira Oswald , grade 7

K-POP DRAMA

by Kaycee Bahnemann , grade 7

IDOLS:
In the K-pop universe many idols are commonly hated on, but some good has happened too!
Two idols from the boy group Stray Kids (BangChan, and Felix) have taken legal action against people spreading misinformation about them. For example, the Felix Stan, Felixslandonly, a 17 year old boy, has been harassing Felix online by saying gross things about him on YouTube shorts. I strongly advise that even as a non K-pop fan you find the account and report it as I have.

COMPANIES:
Recently the company Hybe Labels has become money hungry. Since their global girl group Katseye has blown up, the company has brought old contestants from the survival show back to debut, along with a possible boy group survival show.

GLOSSARY:
Survival show - where aspiring artists compete through performances like singing, dancing, and rapping to form a music group, typically in the K-pop industry.
Debut - a person's first appearance or performance in a particular capacity or role.



Drawing by Kayla Lakhamone , grade 7



Drawing by Arlo Cox , grade 8

ANIMAL
OF THE
MONTH

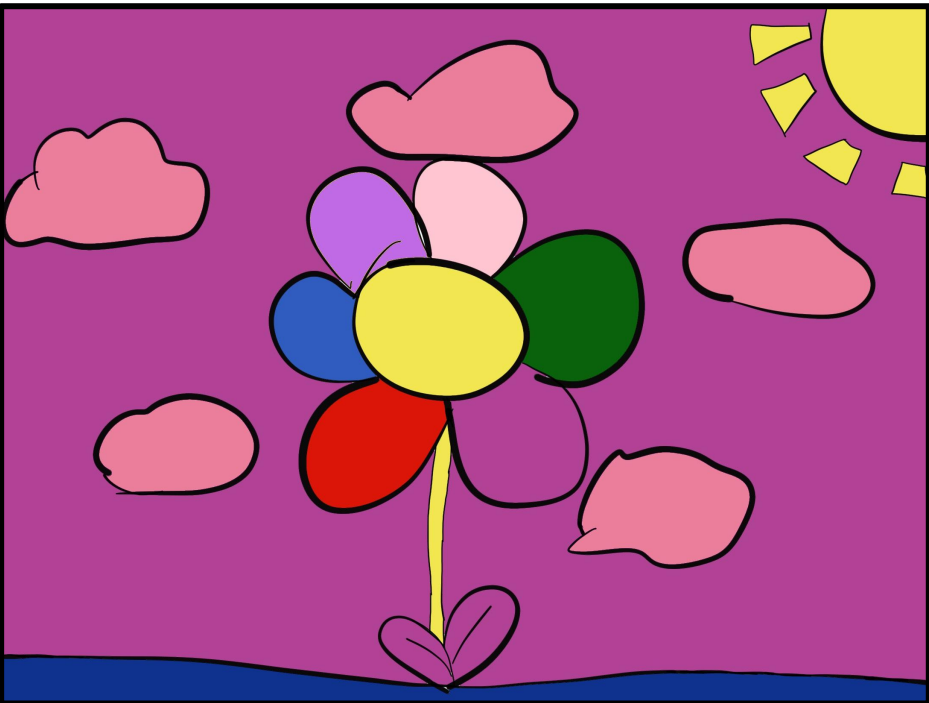
by Juliet Fillmore , grade 7



Vote for the next animal
of the month by scanning
the QR code:



Drawing by Lu Mensah, grade 7



Art by Isla Gruebele, grade 7



Art by Ameshia Ohneswere, grade 7

DR. STONE CHARACTER REVIEW

by Luka Elisa Catlin, grade 8

Dr. Stone is about the entire world getting turned to stone. One teenager, Senku, wakes up in this world over three thousand years later. Luckily, he's a prodigy and overall genius. He finds out how to unpetrify people and sets out to remove the whole world one step at a time. The character Ryusui Nanami from *Dr. Stone* can be described through his personal attributes, relationships, and lifestyle.

Ryusui can be characterized through his personal attributes. Ryusui can be physically described as a tall, asian man with golden blonde hair that goes down just past his chin. That pairs nicely with his thick eyebrows with sharp edges. He also has blue scars on his fingers that reach down to his wrist on the ring and middle finger. In addition to physical attributes, he can also be described by his personality. He is greedy. He desires everything that exists or has existed, as well as everyone. His first word was desire. While his bluntness about his greed might make him come off as rude at first, he doesn't want to acquire everything by *taking* it, he is perfectly willing to do hard work to get things. He doesn't want to make others suffer. He wants everyone to have everything. He cares a lot about other's well being. Furthermore, he is hardworking. In order to conquer the seas, he studied how to work boats, both modern and a bit more primitive. He even developed a strong sailors instinct. Ryusui is a blunt character who cares a lot more about the people around him than it may seem at first, and he will work for what he desires.

In addition to Ryusui's personal attributes, he can also be characterized by his relationships. First, Ryusui doesn't get along well with his blood family. His family is very rich, and very distinguished. His family wanted Ryusui to be like them, they disapproved of his greed and the way he lives. Ryusui's brother Sai hates him so much he moved to India to get away from Ryusui. He always looked down on Ryusui's greed, thinking that Ryusui was always demanding everything from him, which ended up not being true. They make up later in the story. However, he gets along well with Francios, his loyal servant. They are basically his family at this point. They stand with him forever and always agree with his ideals, and make sure he is taken care of. Along with family relationships, he can also be characterized by his relationships after the petrification. He is a charismatic person. Senku Ishigami is his ally and friend. Senku revived Ryusui from petrification despite some people saying this wasn't a good idea. While they have had some quarrels, they are good friends. And of course we can't forget Suika. He has a sort of mentor/parent, or someone to look up to relationship with Suika. She is young and impressionable, and he

always keeps an extra eye out for her. Furthermore, he has also managed to get himself a lover. Ukyo Saionji. While they seem like polar opposites, they balance each other out. Ryusui wants everything, while Ukyo is ok with the bare minimum. As we can see from his relationships, Ryusui doesn't get along with his blood family, as they all judge him for his blunt greed. However, he is still a charismatic man with plenty of friends who don't judge him.

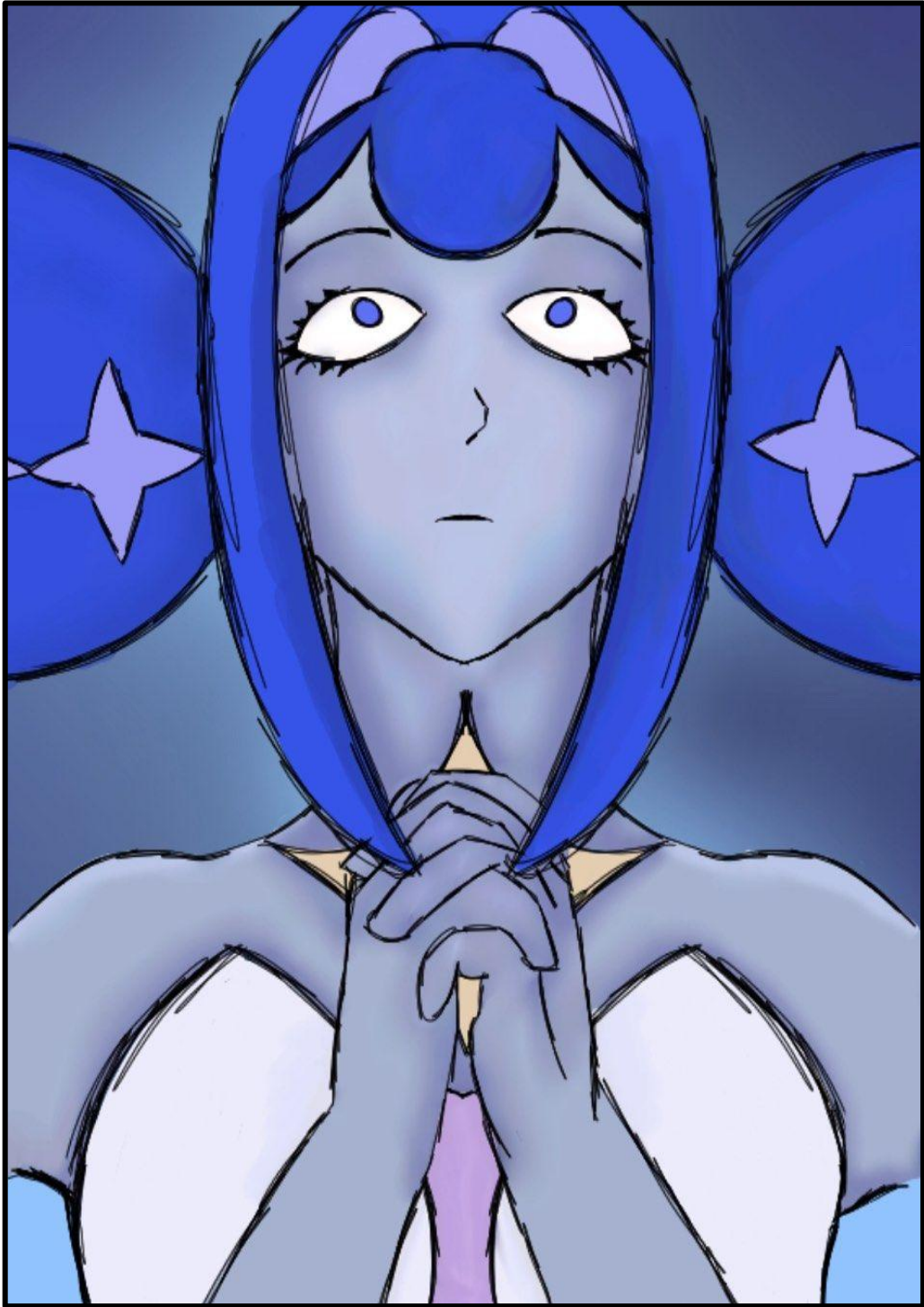
Ryusui's relationships are very much affected by his beliefs and skill set, which say a lot about him on their own. Ryusui is very adamant and vocal about his beliefs. For one, he believes greed equals justice. Being greedy,

desiring everything, and working to get it, creates a system of justice. If you truly desire it, you will work for it. However, desiring something does not mean you should cause others suffering for it. If it's a true desire you'll work to get it yourself. Taking from others isn't true greed, it's cruelty under the veil of greed. Everyone should have everything. Everyone should have a chance at greatness. Everyone should have amazing food, a large living space, and delicious drinks. His greed extends past himself. He lived by his beliefs in order to acquire his many skills. For one, he is amazing at working boats. He's been fascinated by the sea since he was a very young child. He's desired to conquer the seas. He worked so much at it that he developed a strong sailors instinct, able to sense the weather. He also stays

calm under pressure. If there's a storm, even if it's rocking the entire boat, Ryusui will stay calm and collected. He may even enjoy some tea. His strong and reassuring presence helps others around him find peace as well. Ryusui is a very considerate person who tries hard to make the people around him just as happy as him.

Through his lifestyle, relationships, and traits, we can better view Ryusui Nanami's character. Ryusui is greedy, but still willing to work for the things he desires. Along with Ryusui's personal attributes, he can also be described by his relationships. While he doesn't get along well with his blood family, Ryusui does still care a lot about the other people in his life, and will always look out for them. While his relationships are important, another great way to characterize Ryusui is through his beliefs and skills. He thinks everyone should embody his greed, everyone should have everything, and he works to fulfill that with his skills. Overall, Ryusui is a caring character because he never takes the things he desires by force, he keeps his eye on those who need extra help like Suika, cares about his friends, and believes that everyone should have everything.

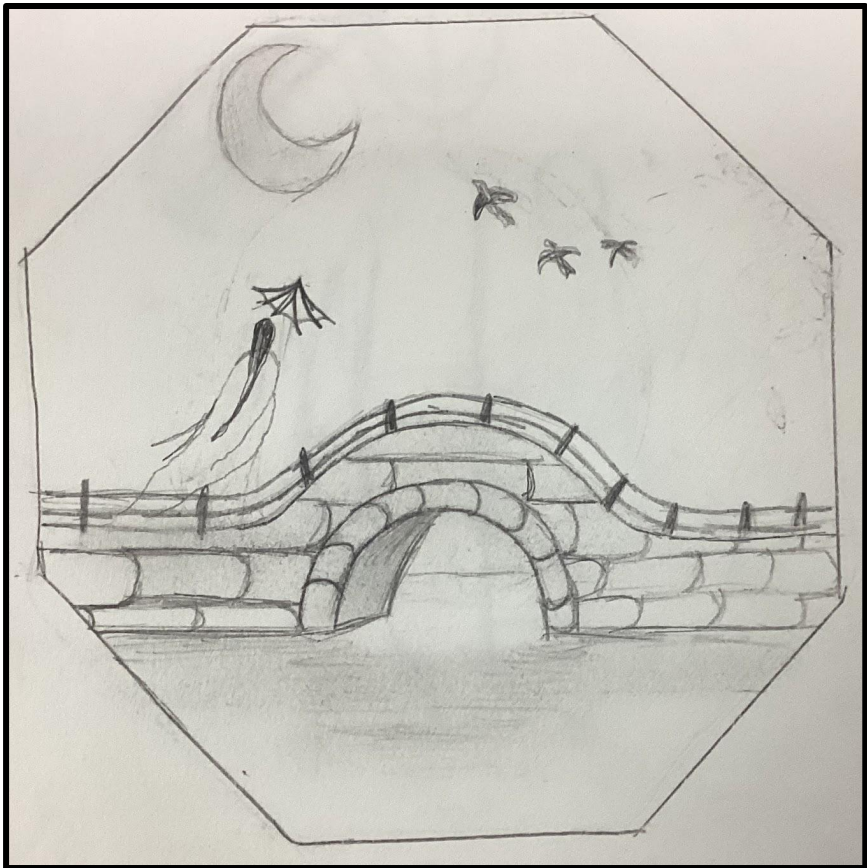




Knights of Guinevere Art by Naimah Thomas, grade 8



Meme by Yangel Morales Del Rio, grade 8



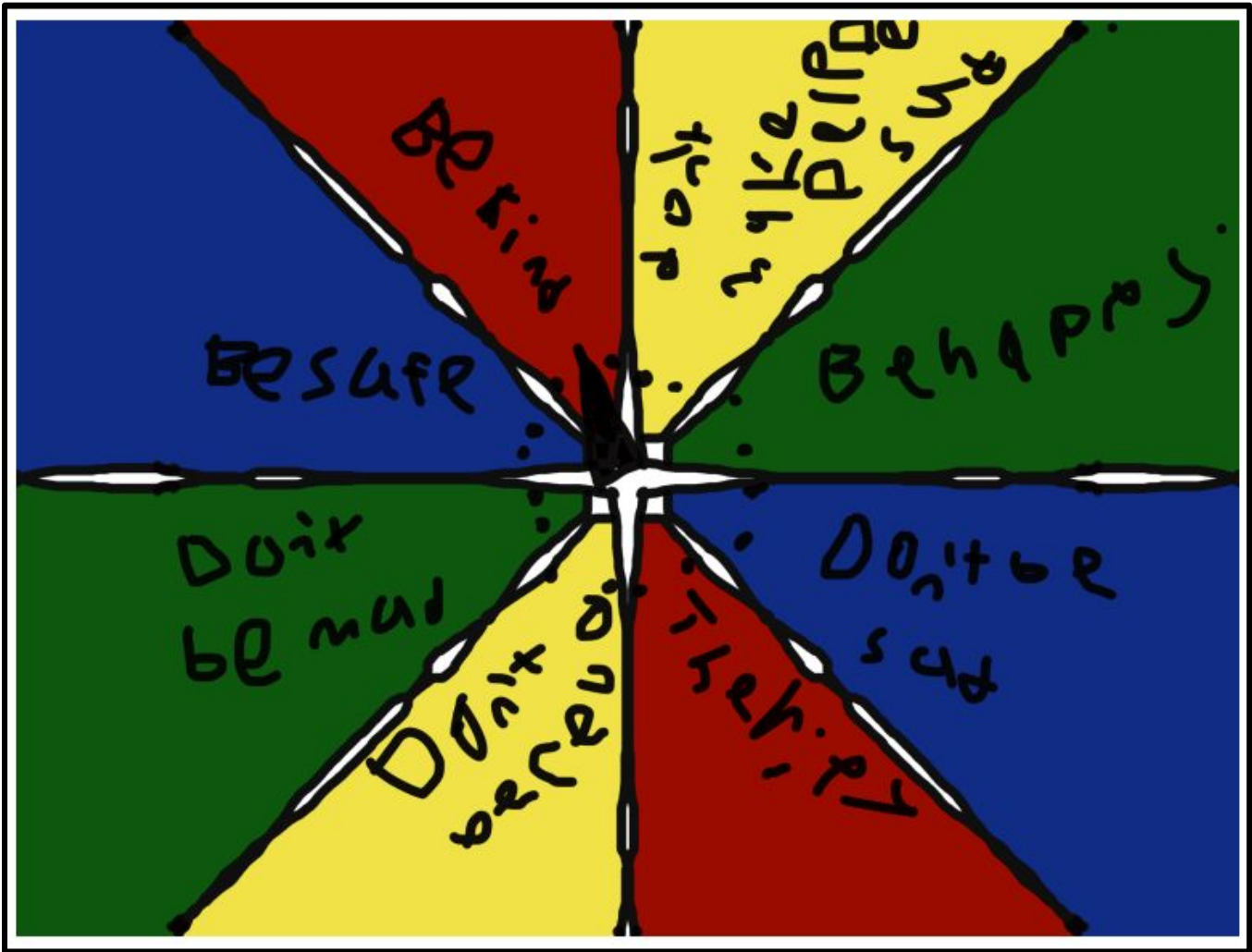
Drawing by Chloe Willhite, grade 8

GREEK MYTHOLOGY PODCAST

by Zamayah Hassan, grade 8

My name is Zamayah Hassan. I started a podcast because I love Greek mythology. I love to learn about their beliefs. I hope you enjoy the podcast.

To listen to this podcast, please scan the QR code or click this [link](#):



Art by Edmundo LaMadrid, grade 7

THE MARKED DIARY

by Kali Fisher, grade 8

Prologue

“Oogaloo boogaloo” used to be a really fun word to say. That’s what my mom always said, before we found out what it really meant. We don’t say it anymore. Not since Mom died. Daddy told us not to.

But that doesn’t matter now, because this year is supposed to be a new year, a better one.

It’s been three years since Mom died, and I’m a different person now. I have my best friend, Sophia, by my side, and my boyfriend, George, who promises he’ll always stick with me no matter what. We’re juniors in high school, which everyone says is supposed to be the best year of our lives.

So this year will be good... right?

Chapter one: The first day

My alarm goes off, blasting “Back to Friends” by Sombr. I groan and reach to hit the snooze button, but before I can, Timothee bursts through my door.

“Timmy?” I mumble, yawning as I rub my eyes. I’m still wearing my gray tank top and white skort from yesterday. Timothee jumps onto my bed and cuddles up next to me.

“Jiji said to wake you up,” he says, grinning. His face is smeared with syrup and whipped cream, which means Jenny made breakfast again. She always does when Dad’s at work, which is pretty much all the time. He’s a detective, so sometimes he doesn’t get home until after 7:30 p.m.

“Timmy, I’m awake now, so you can get up,” I say, trying to move, but his weight pins me down.

“Never!” he says playfully. I start tickling him, and he bursts into laughter.

“Okay, okay! I give up, you win!” he gasps between giggles. His laugh turns into a wheeze, and I freeze for a second.

“Have you done your breathing treatment yet?” I ask, a little worried.

He coughs and shakes his head. “No, but Daddy didn’t bring more of my stuff.”

I sigh. He’s been saying that for weeks. “Okay, I’ll pick it up after school. Go get ready so Jen can drop us off.”

“Okay!” he says and dashes out the door.

I take a quick shower and get dressed in a yellow off-the-shoulder top and ripped jean shorts. After brushing through my hair, I tie it into a ponytail and head downstairs. Jenny’s by the door, car keys in hand, helping Timmy with his backpack while he takes his inhaler.

“Hey, Jen,” I say. “Are you ready to go?”

Jenny turns, flashing that wide, effortless smile that always makes her look like she’s about to be in a magazine ad. “Already been ready, Em. You’re the one who takes forever in the mornings.”

I roll my eyes and grab a granola bar from the counter. “I was dealing with your syrup monster of a brother.”

“Hey!” Timmy protests, his little face scrunching up. “You love me!”

“Unfortunately,” I tease, ruffling his messy hair.

Jenny smirks, tossing her keys in the air. “Alright, Jones crew, let’s move. Daddy’s not home, so that means I’m queen of the house until 3:30.”

“Queen of what, chaos?” I say under my breath.

“Of everything,” she replies, strutting out the front door like she’s walking a runway.

The car ride to school is the usual chaos. Jenny’s blasting her favorite playlist, half pop songs, half random indie music, and singing at the top of her lungs. I scroll through my phone, half-listening, half-thinking about how weird it feels starting another school year without Mom.

Timmy kicks my seat from the back. “Emmy, when are you picking up my medicine?”

“After school, I promise.”

“Pinkie promise?”

I glance back and hook my pinkie around his. “Pinkie promise.”

Jenny grins. “You’re such a good big sister.”

I snort. “Says the one who made breakfast but forgot to put the lid on the syrup bottle.”

“Details, details,” she says, parking in front of Ridgeview High.

As soon as I step out, I spot Sophia waiting by the bike rack. Her long black hair with purple tips practically glows in the morning sun, and she waves wildly like I’m a celebrity.

“EMMY!” she shouts.

“Hey, Soph!” I call back, hugging her tight. She smells like vanilla body spray and hairspray—her signature combo.

Jenny leans against her car, watching us with a little grin. “Sophiaaa,” she

sing-songs, walking over and slipping an arm around Sophia’s waist. “You didn’t text me good morning.”

Sophia laughs, pretending to be guilty. “I was too busy straightening my hair so I could impress you, obviously.”

Jenny rolls her eyes, but her cheeks turn pink. “Good save.”

They share this small, familiar look half flirt, half comfort and I can’t help but smile. They’ve been inseparable all summer, and even though it’s weird sometimes seeing my best friend dating my sister, it’s also kind of... nice. Jenny makes Sophia laugh louder, and Sophia makes Jenny calm down. Somehow, it just works.

“Okay, first things first,” Sophia says, turning back to me dramatically. “You have to tell me everything. How was the rest of your summer? Did George text you back after that thing at the lake?!”

I laugh nervously. “Uh, yeah. We’re good. Totally fine.”

She squints at me. “You hesitated. Spill.”

I shrug. “It’s nothing, really. He just forgot to call me that night, and I kinda overreacted.”

Sophia crosses her arms. “Mmhmm. Forgetting to call is the first sign of trouble. Ask Jenny.”

Jenny, who’s now twirling a strand of Sophia’s hair between her fingers, calls out, “She’s not wrong!” Then she gives Sophia a playful wink before pressing a quick kiss to her temple and heading back to the driver’s seat.

Sophia’s cheeks flush a little deeper, and she watches Jenny drive off until the car disappears around the corner. She doesn’t even try to hide her little dreamy smile.

I nudged her shoulder. “You’re obsessed.”

“Shut up,” she says, grinning. “You’d be obsessed too if you had someone who actually listened to you and didn’t leave you on read for two hours.”

“Okay, fair,” I admit, and we both laugh.

We start walking toward the school doors, dodging clusters of kids catching up after summer break. Posters for “Homecoming Committee Sign Ups” and “Drama Club Auditions” are everywhere.

“New year, new us,” Sophia says, looping her arm through mine.

“New us,” I echo, though my stomach twists a little. Because as much as I want to believe it, I can’t shake the weird feeling that something’s off...

Continued on the next page...

THE MARKED DIARY CONT.

by Kali Fisher, grade 8

...Continued from previous page.

Like the year's already shifting under my feet before it even starts.

Then, right on cue, I hear someone call my name.

"Em!"

It's George. He's standing by the steps, his wavy dark hair perfectly messy, that crooked grin on his face, the one that made half the girls in sophomore year blush. I wave, pretending my heart isn't already racing.

"Hey, Geo," I say as he walks up.

"Hey, babe." He leans down and kisses my cheek, his cologne familiar and sharp. Sophia steps back a little, giving him a polite smile that doesn't quite reach her eyes.

"How was your morning?" he asks, his hand already finding its way to my waist like it belongs there.

"Good. Crazy, as usual."

He nods, eyes scanning over me for a moment before smirking. "You look good. Yellow suits you."

My cheeks warm. "Thanks."

Sophia checks her phone, clearing her throat softly. "I'm gonna go find my locker. Text me at lunch, okay?"

"Yeah," I say, forcing a smile.

As she walks away, her purple-tipped hair sways in the sunlight. George's gaze follows her a little too long. His expression is unreadable, something between annoyance and judgment.

"What?" I ask quietly.

He scoffs, sliding his hands into his pockets. "Nothing. Just... she's kind of intense, don't you think?"

I frown. "Yeah, but that's why I love her. She's been there for me through everything."

"Right." His tone is flat, almost mocking. "Just don't let her drag you into any of her drama this year. You've got enough going on."

The bell rings, cutting through the awkward silence. George squeezes my hand, tight, almost possessive, then lets go.

"See you after third period?" he asks, already glancing at his phone.

"Yeah. Don't be late."

He grins, but it doesn't reach his eyes. "Wouldn't dream of it."

I watch him walk off, still typing something into his phone. The pit in my stomach tightens.

I tell myself it's nothing.

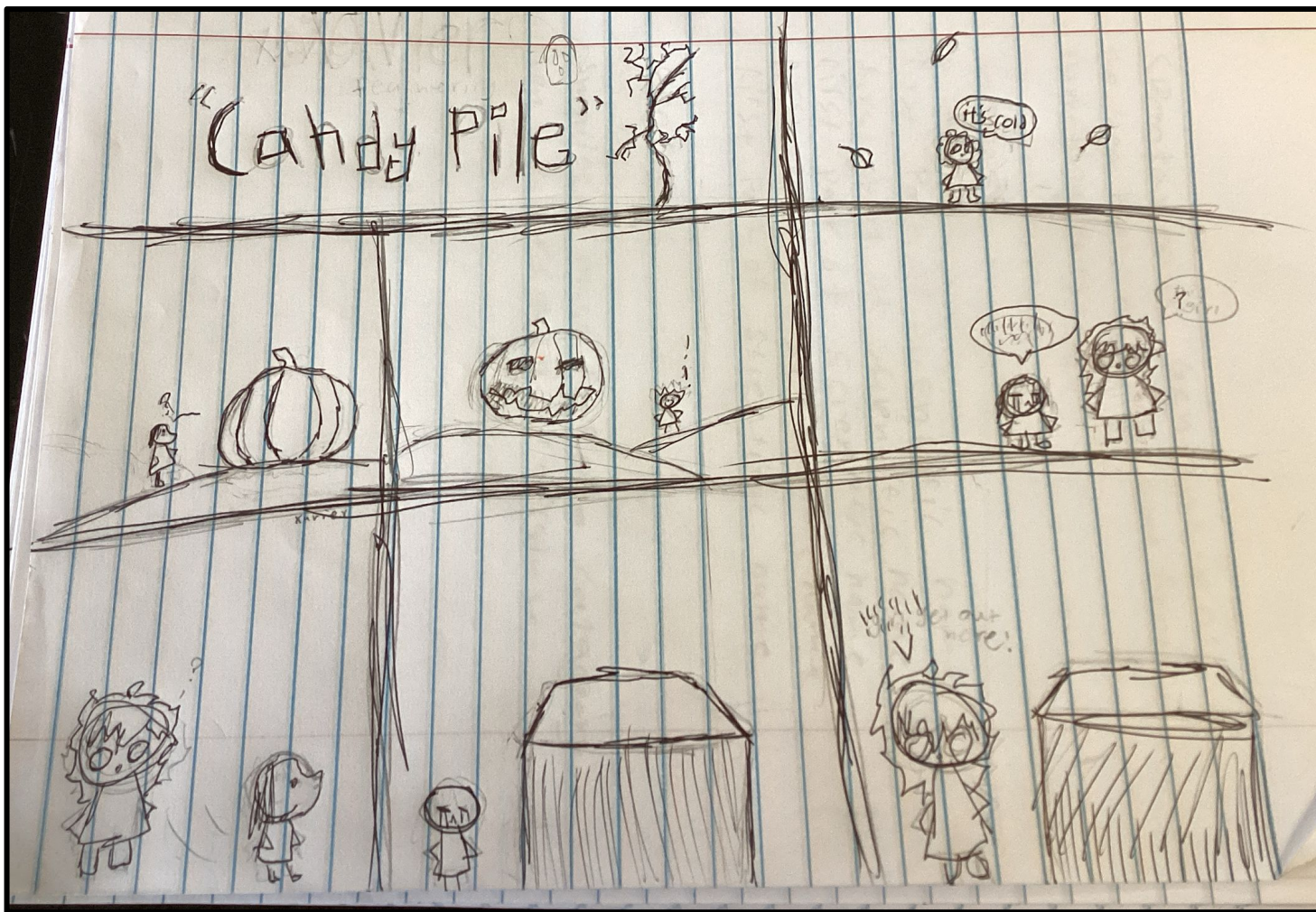
I tell myself not to overthink.

But somewhere deep down, I already know, something about George doesn't feel right anymore.

Maybe Sophia's right.

Maybe this year's not going to be as perfect as I want it to be...





Comic by Xavier McDonald, grade 7



Comic by Emily Gonzalez, grade 6