

**ALSO IN  
THIS ISSUE:**

**RSHS DRAMA  
COMPANY  
PRESENTS  
DISNEY'S  
FROZEN**

**THE  
BIRDS OF  
WINTER**

**THE  
MYTH OF  
APHRODITE**

**SICK:  
PARTS 3&4**

**SOLVING  
SOMETHING  
WITH SEVEL**

## **FROM PRACTICE TO PERFORMANCE: STUDENT MUSICIANS AT RSHS**

BY LOGAN BLAKELEY

*Rising Sun High School puts on awesome concerts and performances with our many talented musicians! The musicians of our school work hard to balance their practices and schoolwork, and we would like to recognize their hard work and achievements! To discover what makes our musicians tick, we asked our student musicians the following questions and received some exceptional and interesting answers:*

**Why did you join the music program?**

*"I've always done band ever since I was in elementary school. My parents encouraged me to join the band because*

# **FROM PRACTICE TO PERFORMANCE: STUDENT MUSICIANS AT RSHS**

*it was an opportunity they never had and that others today don't always have. I had always thought it would be really cool if I could learn to play the saxophone as well as people do in popular jazz songs or other well known songs. After I started I just really enjoyed it and continued taking every opportunity I could to play the saxophone." - Jake Baugher*

*"I originally joined band because I always had an interest in music but I have met many people who have helped create an amazing and fun activity." - Delaney Chard*

*"I joined a choir outside of school then later joined the school's." - Oscar Guevara*

*"I've always loved listening to my mom play and then I saw other people playing instruments and I wanted to do it to. But what made me double down was watching my mom's old videos of her marching band competitions." - Myra Moore*

## **How do you balance schoolwork with your practices?**

*"I balance schoolwork and practice by prioritizing getting schoolwork done during school so I have more time at home to practice." - Maxx Longacre*

*"I use my student aid period and free time I have at school." - Regan Boyko*

*"I balance schoolwork and practicing by taking a study seminar class, it's super helpful to have a full period dedicated to just doing all of your schoolwork." - Charlotte Vaughan*

## **What is your favorite memory from the music program?**

*"Practicing orchestra pieces that I barely knew 1 hour before the concert" - Chloe Kline*

*"My favorite memory is the marching band bus rides back from our competitions my freshman year. Everyone was always just excited and having fun and I feel like I wouldn't have started high school as easily as I did without being in marching band and forming the friendships with others early on." - Jake Baugher*

*"My favorite memory is going and participating in 'All County Chorus' with my sister and my friends, and just every choir concert seeing all the families and people who show to support." - Charlotte Vaughan*

## **What role do you think the school music program plays in the community?**

*"It's a good way for high schoolers to enjoy their time in high school and make friends." - Regan Boyko*

*"Giving students a great opportunity for expression and adding a fun way to show how much talent and hard work goes into making music." - Bryleigh Wagner*

# **FROM PRACTICE TO PERFORMANCE: STUDENT MUSICIANS AT RSHS**

*"The school music programs help the students get into the community, through playing at home football games and parades." - Anonymous*

*"I think the school music program helps give students qualities that make them more productive people overall. Music encourages self-discipline and teamwork from the moment you involve yourself in it. If you go to rehearse with your band and you haven't practiced your part enough to be on par with the other members of your band, you and others can tell. Your band relies on you which can instill a feeling that you need to do better. That skill stretches to other places in your life other than just the band." - Jake Baugher*

## **What do you enjoy most about working with fellow student musicians?**

*"It's enjoyable to work with people who do the same things I do and share the same appreciation for them." - Brody Rash*

*"I enjoy bonding over the music that we perform, and creating music that feels and sounds great." - Max Bocklage*

*"Iron sharpens iron and musicians sharpen musicians, everyone gets better when they communicate." - Elijah Jakubac*

## **What advice would you give to younger students thinking about joining the music program?**

*"I would always give the advice to join the music program because of all the friends you make, the new things you learn and the community it builds for you." - Alexa Kornak*

*"Do it, it's so fun and you meet so many great people. It'll be challenging at times but don't give up" - Arianna Cefaloni*

*"I would just say anyone who wants to join band, definitely should. This is because the only challenging part of music is actually learning how to read the sheet music. Everything else is self-explanatory, and we end up having a lot of fun." - Matthew Longacre*

*"Just give it a try, and if you don't like it you can leave, but I have made some of my best friends through band." - CJ Miles*

**So whether you echo the words of Xavier Fetters, who reports, "Yes, I would like to believe that I will pursue my career in music," or you relate more to this sentiment expressed by Brady Ashford: "While music isn't something I consider as a future career, it will forever remain one of my favorite hobbies," you may want to consider joining the awesome students of the music program at Rising Sun High School!**

# RSHS Drama Company Presents Disney's Frozen

Join us for an amazing night of theatre when the RSHS Drama Company presents Disney's Frozen, the Broadway musical. Performances are scheduled for February 27 (7:00 p.m.) and February 28 (2:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.) in the RSHS auditorium. Tickets are on sale now through School Cash Online. You can use the links below to purchase tickets. Adults - \$15; CCPS staff, students & senior citizens - \$10

**Friday, February 27,  
7:00 p.m.**

ADULT Ticket - Friday,  
2/27 Disney Frozen: A  
New Musical

Student/CCPS  
staff/Senior ticket- Friday,  
2/27 Disney Frozen: A  
New Musical

**Saturday, February 28,  
2:00 p.m.**

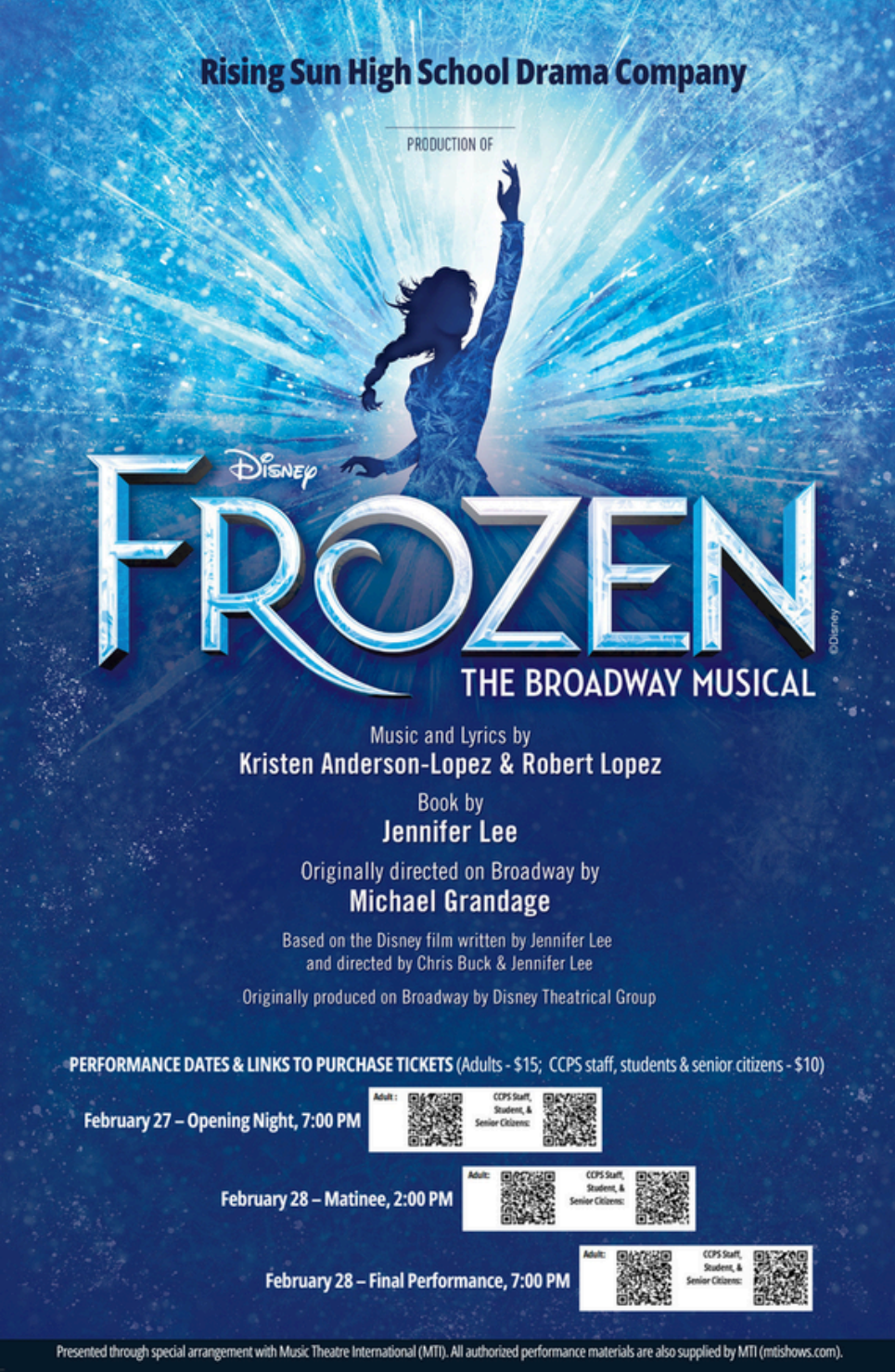
ADULT Ticket - 2 PM Sat.  
2/28 Disney Frozen: A  
New Musical

Student/CCPS  
staff/Senior ticket - 2 PM  
Sat. 2/28 Disney Frozen

**Saturday, February 28,  
7:00 p.m.**

ADULT Ticket - 7 PM Sat.  
2/28 Disney Frozen: A  
New Musical

Student/CCPS  
staff/Senior ticket - 7 PM  
Sat. 2/28 Disney Frozen



Rising Sun High School Drama Company  
PRODUCTION OF

Disney  
**FROZEN**  
THE BROADWAY MUSICAL

Music and Lyrics by  
**Kristen Anderson-Lopez & Robert Lopez**

Book by  
**Jennifer Lee**



Originally directed on Broadway by  
**Michael Grandage**

Based on the Disney film written by Jennifer Lee  
and directed by Chris Buck & Jennifer Lee



Originally produced on Broadway by Disney Theatrical Group

PERFORMANCE DATES & LINKS TO PURCHASE TICKETS (Adults - \$15; CCPS staff, students & senior citizens - \$10)



February 27 - Opening Night, 7:00 PM

Adult:  CCPS Staff, Student, & Senior Citizens: 

February 28 - Matinee, 2:00 PM

Adult:  CCPS Staff, Student, & Senior Citizens: 

February 28 - Final Performance, 7:00 PM

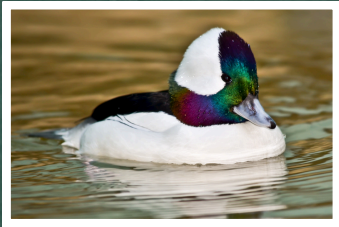
Adult:  CCPS Staff, Student, & Senior Citizens: 

Presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI). All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI (mitshows.com).

# The Birds of Winter

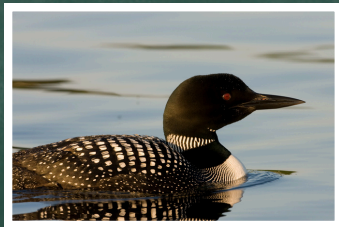
By Sofia Solis Cascante & Jayden Barham

If there is one thing birds are well known for, aside from flying, it's for migrating, especially during the winter! Here are a couple of the birds that we can luckily still see during these cold days!



## **Bufflehead (*Bucephala albeola*)**

The Buffleheads are common ducks that can be found in the winter in Maryland. You may find these ducks in open water just chilling around. The male buffleheads have an almost iridescent pattern of their head and feathers to attract mates.



## **Common Loon (*Gavia immer*)**

Common Loons are migratory diving birds that can be seen in the winter in Maryland. You can see them in a body of water like Chesapeake Bay. Though they are masters in the water and amazing divers, they are surprisingly clumsy on land due to the placement of their legs.



## **Evening Grosbeak (*Coccothraustes vespertinus*)**

This large songbird is most recognizable by its strong yellow plumage and pale conical beak. This diva sports yellow eyeliner and participates in noisy social behavior; they are frequently found in noisy flocks.



## **Greater Yellowleg (*Tringa melanoleuca*)**

As their name suggests, these birds have long slender (and great) yellow legs! They are approximately 14-inches long, and produce a loud 3-4 note "tew-tew-tew" call. Being shore-birds, they are commonly found in coastal areas and tidal wetlands.



## **American Goldfinch (*Spinus tristis*)**

These cute birds don't always look so golden, as their plumage completely molts in the winter, replacing their bright yellow feathers with duller colors, which allows them to blend in during winter times. Pairs of goldfinches make virtually identical flight calls.



# THE MYTH OF APHRODITE

By Keira Erbe

## Aphrodite's Origins

Scholars often theorize that Aphrodite's inspiration and worship had come from the East. This is due to the fact that her attributes are very similar to those of the Middle Eastern goddesses Ishtar and Astarte. There are two different origins when it comes to Aphrodite. Hesiod, an ancient Greek poet, claims that she was born from sea foam made from the severed genitals of Uranus after his son Cronus had thrown them into the sea. Another origin would be that she is the daughter of Zeus and Dione.

## The Myth of Eros, Psyche, and Aphrodite

A popular myth involving Aphrodite actually involves her son, Eros, more commonly known as Cupid. A mortal woman by the name of Psyche was known by the people to be more beautiful than Aphrodite herself. Many came to worship this woman, leaving Aphrodite's altars barren and unkempt. Aphrodite, enraged by this, called her son to shoot one of his arrows and make Psyche fall in love with the most vile creature they could find. Eros agreed and went to do so. But, before he could fire the arrow, he felt as though one had struck him. He fell in love with the woman. Due to this, he couldn't complete the task. Psyche, contrary to Aphrodite's belief, did not enjoy the attention, and she yearned for true love, but no man truly wanted to marry her. Psyche's parents became anxious of this and went to the temple of Delphi and asked Apollo, the God of the Sun for a prophecy.

He stated that she was to marry a hideous beast, a serpent with wings; the serpent was known to be awful and more powerful than the gods themselves. The prophecy stated that she must be brought to the summit in a black dress and wait for her new husband to take her. Zephyr, the Greek god of the west wind, had lifted her to a meadow of flowers and had put her to sleep. She awoke and in front of her was a golden palace, a palace that looked as if it belonged to a god. As she approached the door a voice without a face whispered that the house was for her; it told her to take a bath while her meal was being prepared.

Night had come and she was laying in her bed peacefully when suddenly she felt the presence of someone. The man began whispering sweet and comforting things in her ear. She then was immediately certain that this was no beast, but the husband she had been longing for. She soon got pregnant after that. The days following were full of joy, they were the happiest days of her life. But she soon grew sad due to not being able to see her husband, she became bored and longed for her family. She asked him if she could invite her sisters, but the man felt uneasy about this. He had finally allowed it but not without warning. He warned her to not let them influence her negatively or their relationship may crumble. So, she invited her sisters.

Her sisters arrived and immediately began gushing over the palace. But their gushing did not come without suspicions, their suspicions involving him. They had begun telling her that this all seemed suspicious and that she should see what he looks like. If he was the vicious beast from the prophecy, they told her that she should be suspicious of him for the protection of her and her child. Psyche took this to heart. So that night she waited until her husband was asleep she hovered a lamp over his sleeping form. He wasn't a Serpent or vicious beast but possibly the most beautiful man she had ever seen. She celebrated by thanking the gods but it was cut short when a drip from the oil lamp had fell onto to the man. The man awoke and looked at her heartbroken; he then left saying that there was no such thing as love without trust.

After a long time of searching Psyche had finally reached Aphrodite and begged her to help her find her husband. Aphrodite was still furious and overcome with jealousy, but she agreed to help. Although not nicely. Not knowing the girl was pregnant, Aphrodite sent her servants Sorrow and Worry to torture the woman. She then gave Psyche impossible tasks, but the girl had luck and even the pity of Zeus on her side. The final task involved Psyche going to the underworld and visiting Persephone the Goddess of the spring and the queen of the underworld. She was instructed by Aphrodite to ask Persephone to drain a bit of her beauty into a box. After completing the task and leaving the underworld with her box, she grew curious and opened it. She then fell asleep. Eros had escaped his mothers home and went after Psyche. He then lifted her and flew to his mother with both Psyche and the box.

Afterwards, Eros went to Zeus and asked him to help them both. Zeus ordered Aphrodite to stop harming the couple and he then made Psyche drink ambrosia which allowed her to marry Eros and become a Goddess. Aphrodite was happy after this because Psyche now lived in the sky and the mortals had forgotten about her. The mortals went back to worshipping Aphrodite. Eros and Psyche lived happily, and Psyche gave birth to Hedone, the Greek Goddess of pleasure.



# Sick: Parts 3 & 4

By Ragan Baker

Please enjoy Parts 3 & 4 of the original, on-going psychological thriller, Sick. Click [HERE](#) to read Parts 1 & 2 in our previous issue and be sure to check out Parts 5 & 6 in our next issue!

## Part 3

Yesterday was not a good day. I was angrier than usual. It was all Dr. Bryar's fault. She made me feel awful about myself, and spread lies about me. I know she talks to the others in the hospital about our interactions, and all of the things I used to tell her when I trusted her. The biggest problem I have with her is that she doesn't care about my feelings. She sets me off on purpose. This is why we don't talk. This is why I hate her.

I walk out of my room, and look towards Dr. Bryar's office. Today is supposed to be my annual meeting with her, but I'm not going there today, not after how she treated me in our meeting and group session yesterday.

I head to the cafeteria and avoid any eye contact with the others. They always bring stuff up from the day before, no matter how small or big it was. This place is just like high school, besides the group sessions and medication distributions. Today, they have a lot to talk about. My outburst, although justified, is still embarrassing. I don't like drawing attention to myself, especially in front of the crazies.

I grab a bowl of their flavorless Cheerios from the counter, and one of the lunch ladies pours the milk. When I turn, my bowl of cereal launches from my hands, and spills all over me. I look up, and see him. Mason, my archnemesis. I may hate Dr. Bryar, but Mason has been terrorizing me since my first day here. For the past two weeks, he's been in solitary confinement for acting out against the guards, and he hurt one of them badly. I haven't seen that guard since, and at the moment his name isn't coming to me. I used to see him all of the time, and we talked a lot.

Mason snarls at me, and gives me the middle finger.

"Get out of my way," he barks.

"I-I'm sorry."

I'm sorry? He was the one who stood in my way. I'm standing here with milk and Cheerios in my hair and on my clothes. Why am I saying things I don't mean?

"You better be sorry. I don't play around, especially with guys like you," he says, staring into my eyes.

I'm ready for lasers to protrude out of his eyes, and into mine. He's my enemy, but I'd never be able to fight back. He scares me.

"Yeah, okay," I sigh.

I walk back to my room and change my clothes. I pluck the pieces of Cheerios out of my hair and head back to the cafeteria. Shower time is right after breakfast. Thank God because I didn't take one yesterday. I'll finally be clean. I just hope the water coming out of the showerhead will be normal. I don't want Them to find me.

When I walk out of my room, my lesser enemy, Dr. Bryar, is in the hallway and waves to me. I'm done for. I won't be able to get away from her this time. She struts towards me, and I turn to face her, with my arms folded. I put on my serious face so she knows that I don't want to see her.

"I need to talk to you, Gerard," she says.

"What, so you can tell lies about me, and make me feel worse about myself?" I ask, never breaking eye contact.

"I never lied to you. You need to understand that. I'm here to help you. I am not your enemy," she says, folding her arms.

She looks scarier that way. I don't look as menacing as I thought I did. Now I look stupid.

"You know you can't trust her," Bert says.

I look in his direction, and see that he is leaning against the wall to the right of Dr. Bryar. He has a smug look on his face, and is fixated on her like she is bait. She never reacted to what he said. Is she ignoring him? Does she already know how he is and not take what he says seriously? She doesn't look in his direction. She doesn't move. Why doesn't she see that she is in danger?

I know I said that Dr. Bryar is one of my enemies, but that doesn't mean I want her to get hurt. Bert is strong. He could do damage to her like Mason did to that guard.

"I won't let him hurt you," I blurt out.

I cover my mouth in surprise. I meant what I said, but now Bert is looking at me in pure hatred. He always protects me, but now he never will after what I just said.

"Gerard? Who are you seeing?" she asks, looking around the hallway.

"What are you talking about? He wants to hurt you, don't you see that?" I answer, pointing to him.

Dr. Bryar looks in the direction of Bert, but she doesn't react. Is she blind?

"Is it Bert?" she asks.

Is it Bert? Well of course it is. If she opened her eyes, she would be able to see who it is.

"Don't you see him? He's right there!" I say, gesturing more aggressively.

"There's no one there, Gerard," she sighs.

All she does is lie. I say that I will keep her alive, and she wants to mess with my head again.

"I'm not doing this again! He's right there! Why are you lying about me to everyone? What did I do to you to deserve this?" I yell.

"Gerard, calm down. Please lower your voice," she says, reaching her hand out.

I back away from her and wipe the tears that are rolling down my face. They won't stop. Why am I crying? Why am I so emotional? None of this is making sense.

"I don't understand," I say, still crying.

"I know, but that's why I'm here, to help you understand. You know you can trust me, right?"

I look into her eyes to see if I can read her mind, and see if she is lying to me. Nothing. I have nothing. I have no trust. What does she know about that anyway? She doesn't. She's keeping me here against my will, even though I've begged her to let me go.

"I don't know if that's true," I answer, backing away from her a little bit more.

"You can always trust me and come to me when you need help, or a better understanding. I'll always be here," Dr. Bryar says in a softer tone. She turns away from me and walks back into her office and shuts the door.

I walk shyly down the hallway to the cafeteria. Breakfast is the last thing I want right now, but I guess I'll go there anyway. It's better than being in my room, steps away from Dr. Bryar's office.

Breakfast passes by quicker than I expected. Even though that goes by fast, I can't stop thinking about how Dr. Bryar looked in the hallway. I keep replaying it in my mind in slow motion. She was confused and sad. Have I made her that way? Am I bad? Do I spread melancholy around to those I speak to all the time?

I think about this all the way to the showers. I caused some sort of discomfort in her. She is never like that around the others. She understands them, and they understand her. I am the problem, but why? What did I do? It's not my fault that she is blind. It's not my fault that she doesn't understand me. I have done nothing to her that wasn't deserved.

I get undressed and pray for the water to be normal as I turn the nozzle. To my pleasant surprise, it isn't red. I am safe, for now.

Everyone is escorted out of the showers and taken outside for "free time". The order of our days doesn't make sense. Do they expect us to get all hot and sweaty after we just bathed? There is an error in their ways. I sit under the shade of a tree in the yard and pick at the grass.

Tod sits next to me and taps me on the shoulder like I didn't see him walk up or hear his heavy breathing. I look over at him, and he is smiling like usual.

"Hey Tod," I say, so I don't seem rude.

"Hey Gerard! How are you today?" he asks me.

"Just alright, man," I answer, never looking at him.

"Yesterday wasn't the same without you. I had to sit out here all by myself!" he says, waving his hands.

I look over at Tod and can't help but feel bad for him. I did leave him alone. I'm worthless. I should have been by his side. He doesn't get along with anyone else here. They all think he's weird. I mean, he is, but I will never tell him that. I don't mind him that much. He's nice to me. I know that I should have stayed.

"I'm sorry, Tod," I say.

Tears begin to stream down my cheeks like they did when I was with Dr. Bryar. They won't stop either. I'm such a baby. Why do I cry all of the time?

"Hey hey, it's okay," he reassures me, as he pats me on the back.

It's not, but I nod my head like I agree with him. He's always making up excuses for me whenever I do something stupid, or wrong. I wish I could repay the favor, but I'm too honest for that.

I look across the yard and see the rest of the patients. I feel lost today. They are all so talkative, and friendly to one another. I don't fit in with the rest of them. They don't like me that much. Only Tod, and the others don't like him either. We are the outsiders at this place. I don't know if that makes us special, but I like it better having one friend than having a whole group that will betray each other eventually.

Tod taps me on the shoulder again, still smiling with all of his teeth.

"What are you thinking about?" he asks me.

"Just how glad I am to have you as my friend," I answer. He looks shocked, but excited. I don't think he's ever had a true friend before.

"Me too!" he says.

Tod seems to relax next to me, like he was on edge the whole time. His breathing slows, and his shoulders slump, and he looks in the direction of the others. We sit in silence for the rest of our free time, just enjoying each other's company.

## Part 4

Dr. Bryar isn't in today. She had some sort of emergency with her family. I think that's a load of crap. She's probably scheming with Them.

I've decided that even though she's not my worst enemy, she has something to do with the ones who are after me. She couldn't see Bert. That should have immediately clicked in my mind that she was one of Them. Bert told me that it was a characteristic of someone who is working for the bad people. They can't see him. How come he never told me that before? Was this something new that he also discovered?

The day goes on as usual. We go to breakfast, shower, free time, lunch, educational time (we just read or write— which I am very good at), dinner, and then room time. We don't necessarily need to go to bed at that time, but we have to be in our rooms.

I hate room time. I am stuck with my thoughts. I don't have any sort of music to keep me company. That is when I feel as though I am losing it. Not that I am crazy, the fact is I don't like being alone. Even in my childhood I hated being by myself. I'd cry for my parents and my older brother, Lucas, but they would tell me that I was getting older and that I needed to start growing up. I shouldn't be some scared little kid.

What else was I supposed to do? I knew at that time someone was going to come and get me. I knew, and now I experience it on a daily basis. There will be a time when They come and I won't be able to get away.

I will prove to my parents and Lucas that I was always right. I am never wrong about anything. It's like I have this sense of major events that are going to take place in the future. I don't know where I get it from, I've just always had it.

Someone knocks on my door and doesn't bother to wait for an answer. Dr. Bryar walks, props herself in the door frame, and folds her arms. I sit up in my bed and fold my arms, mimicking her. She doesn't look amused and shakes her head.

"I thought you had a family emergency," I say plainly.

"I did, but everything is okay now, if you were concerned about that."

"I really don't care," I answer, looking away.

I know I have been nothing but evil to this woman, but for her to think that I care about her and what is going on in her life is hilarious. I thought I was going to be completely free of her today, and I was happy about that. I need a break.

She sighs and clears her throat. She is going to reprimand me for being so rude and uncaring, but I never see her care about me. She has only humiliated me, ever since my first day here.

I look up at my bedroom doorway, but she's gone, without a trace. Where did she go? Why didn't she say anything? I know I said that I didn't care, but it's not like her to just ignore me. She always has to have the final word.

I get up from my bed and peek out of the doorway, but there is no trace of her. The door to her office door is also closed, which means she isn't there either. What happened to her? Was I dreaming?

I walk out into the hallway and go to Dr. Bryar's office, and sure enough, she isn't there. No one is in there. The door is locked, and the lights are off. There isn't a person in sight. I am all alone.

Where are the guards? There is usually at least one in the hall, watching out for me and the others in this wing of the hospital. Right now though, They are free to roam if they want to. That isn't safe. They could come for me, and there's no one here to protect me.

A faint noise from down the hall sends a shiver down my spine. I've heard it before. It's Them. They have come for me. They are here because they know there aren't any guards to protect me. It's all Dr. Bryar's fault. She is working for Them. She was here and let them know that I was ready to be taken. She can't stand me. She hates me.

I look at my skin in the dark hallway, it's hard to make out, but I can tell that something is wrong with it. She did something to me. How? The showers were fine. I checked to make sure. Maybe it was invisible? She masked the color of the water to help Them get to me.

The noise I heard just moments ago happens again. It's a ticking noise, counting down the minutes I have until my demise.

"They're gonna get you," Bert barks, making me jump.

"Shut up, I'll get away. I always do," I say, walking past him.

"The only reason you got away the last time was because there were guards. How do you expect to get away this time? You ain't fast enough," Bert says, following close behind me.

"I'll run faster, faster than I've ever run before. I'll get away on my own. I don't need the guards. Don't you understand that Dr. Bryar is the reason they're here in the first place?" I ask, turning around to face him.

"Run," he says with fear in his eyes.

"What?" I ask.

"RUN!" he screams.

Bert pushes me away, and I don't hesitate to turn and run. My legs are moving faster than the rest of my body, I can't feel them anymore.

I hear the pounding of feet behind me. They are coming, but what happened to Bert? Did They kill him? Did he get away in time? Their footsteps quicken. They are getting louder. Bert was right, I am slow. They are getting closer to me, and I won't be able to get away. I'm not strong enough. I'm not fast enough.

As I approach the end of the hallway, Tod steps out of his room looking at me with a confused expression. I know he doesn't understand now, but when he sees Them, he will freak out.

"Gerard?" he calls after me. "What are you running from?"

I don't bother to answer his question. I need to get out of here as fast as I can, and I can't have him slowing me down with his stupid questions.

Sweat pours down my face as I run for my life. Even though I haven't stopped, I can feel myself getting slower and slower by the second. They are getting louder. All of a sudden I trip over my own foot, and go crashing to the floor with my arms sprawled out, bracing for impact.

I make a loud "smack" when I hit the ground. All of my dignity is gone. I try to stand up to get going again, but I twisted my right ankle. It hurts to stand, and I can barely walk.

Their voices are the loudest they have ever been. They are gaining on me, and any second now, They will be here. I force myself into a walk. The pain is so bad, but I can't stop. I've made it too far to give up. Even though walking causes me discomfort, I do a hobble-like run to make up for lost time.

I know I have too much hope for myself. There is no way I am getting away from Them. They are stronger than me, and they aren't tripping over their own feet like a child learning how to walk.

"Oh, Gerard. We can see you," Their voices sting like a bee.

I look back, and there They are. They are tall and lanky, and wearing black suits with white masks. They have weapons in their hands, but not like any I have ever seen before. It's almost as if they are makeshift.

As I continue to hobble down the hall, I begin to lose all hope. I am done for. My life is over. I have fought so hard to stay alive, but for what reason? They were always going to win in the end.

One of Them grabs my wrist and pulls me down. I smack my head on the floor, which sends a ringing in my ears. They are gathering around me now with their weapons up and ready for action. I scream at the top of my lungs, but one of Them puts their hand over my mouth. I begin to cry when they flip me over to face them. I grasp at the man's wrist that was trying to silence me. I scream again, but now it is muffled. No one is coming to save me.

They grab hold of my ankles and wrists to hold me down, but I still fight. The man releases his hand from my mouth and I cry out.

"Let me go! Please let me go! I didn't do anything to you," I plead.

"Oh, but you did," one of Them says. "You are pure evil, and don't deserve to be safe in here."

"NO! No, please! I'll change, just tell me what I did wrong!" I cry.

Their grip on my wrists and ankles tighten. They begin to laugh at me. They are hysterical, sounding like wild animals fighting for food. I am a joke to Them.

"You'll never change," They say in unison.

Their laughs end abruptly, and I close my eyes tight as one of Them inches their weapon closer to my face. This is my end. I thought that I could get myself out of this one. I thought I was smarter than I actually am. I relax my arms and legs, accepting my defeat.

"Gerard? GERARD! Can you hear me?" Dr. Bryar asks in a panic.

I open my eyes, but They are still surrounding me. Did they get what they wanted? Why is Dr. Bryar here? I close my eyes again and turn my head to hide my face.

"No no no. Go away!" I yell.

"Gerard. I'm right here. I know you're scared. It's okay to be scared. I'm right here. Look at me. There is no one else here, okay? Just look at me," she pleads.

I continue to close my eyes and cry. I don't want to open my eyes again. I don't want to see Them or Dr. Bryar with her evil smile. She has to be behind this, right?

"Gerard, listen to her," Tod chimes in.

Should I? He seems to trust her so much, but I don't know whether or not he's a part of this. I wouldn't think so, he's been so kind to me. He has never given me a reason to not trust him before, besides his crazy fantasies.

I open one eye and see Dr. Bryar, Tod, and Them. I knew it. He was wrong. I should have known. He apparently doesn't notice them or he would be freaking out. He's only focused on me. Why won't he turn around and see?

"I don't understand. I don't understand! You told me it was okay. You lied!" I yell.

"I didn't lie!" he whines.

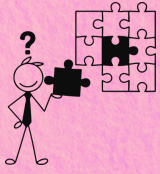
"He's not lying, Gerard. Okay? I just need you to calm yourself down."

"No no no! They're getting closer. Get them away!" I scream, flailing my arms.

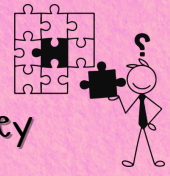
"I'll help you, okay? I'm going to administer a sedative. You hear me?"

I don't answer her. I can't. They are RIGHT THERE. I don't have much longer until it is the end. I will never get out of here, and I'll have to die with Dr. Bryar right in my face. Just my luck.

I nearly faint from the sight of Dr. Bryar holding a needle in her hand. She grabs my arm and sticks me with it. I feel the urge to vomit, but everything seems to be going dark. I can't fight any longer.

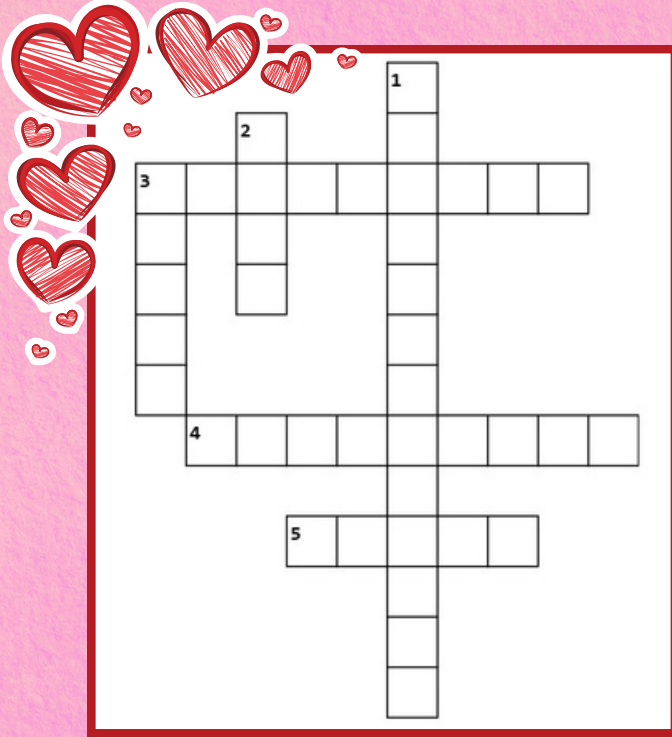


# Solving Something with Sevel



Puzzles Created by Ella Shortall and Severin Abbey

## Puzzle 1: Love in the Air Crossword



### Across

3. A sweet gift
4. How many couples spend Valentine's day
5. Romantic flowers

### Down

1. Celebration of love
2. Love bird
3. Someone known for creating love

## Puzzle 2: Connections

Connect four teachers that share a common thread to form four total groups.

Mr. Dawley	Mrs. Basehore	Mrs. Arter	Mrs. Boyle
Mr. Barker	Mrs. Blythe	Mrs. Luto	Mrs. Nacey
Mrs. Weaver	Mr. Robertshaw	Mrs. Kuchta	Mr. Morgan
Mrs. Ripani	Mrs. Lai	Mrs. Keller	Mrs. Brumbley

## Puzzle 3: A Wintery Day

find words that fit the theme in this word search and uncover the spanagram, the main theme of the puzzle hidden somewhere in the grid.

S	F	L	R	Y	C	O
S	N	U	R	Y	C	L
L	E	O	N	S	D	I
H	D	T	W	O	C	H
T	O	A	E	D	O	O
C	O	L	T	R	A	L
H	C	O	S	O	F	Y