

**1ST EDITION**

**STUDENTS TELL ALL:  
WHAT MAKES RUSHE  
UNIQUE**

**ISSUE #1 MAY 2023**

# RAVEN NATION

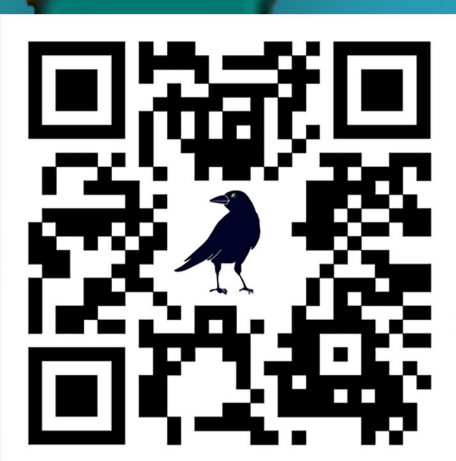
**CHARLES S.  
RUSHE MIDDLE  
SCHOOL**

**THE RAREST RAVEN:  
HOW RUSHE GOT THEIR  
MASCOT**



**EXTRAS: FEATURED  
FICTION & ARTISTS**

- \* NEW POLICY: NO ELECTRONICS**
- \* HOW TO SURVIVE MIDDLE SCHOOL**
- \* SHREK MUSICAL**



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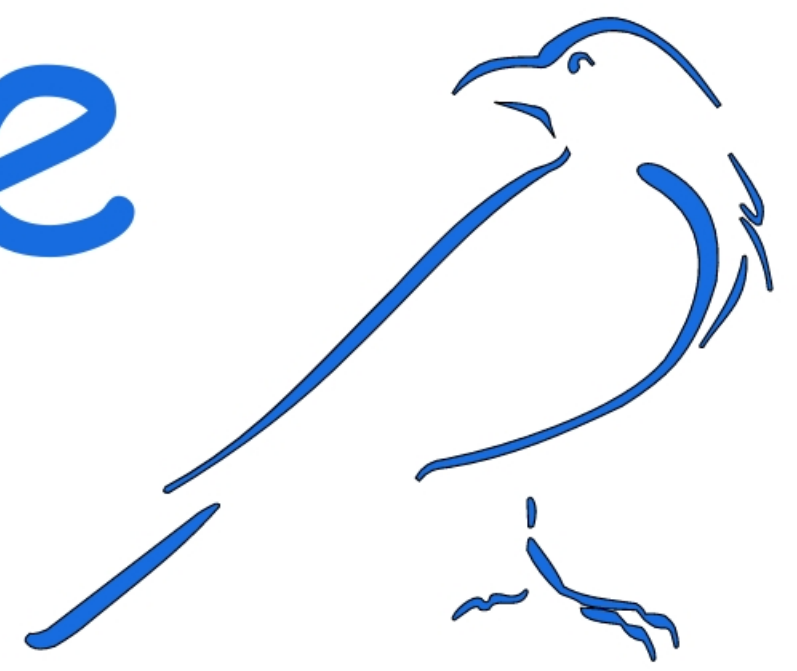
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# Welcome to Raven Nation

our school magazine  
1st edition: May 2023



## FEATURED ARTICLE: STUDENTS TELL ALL: WHAT MAKES RUSHE UNIQUE

*by Jayla Alvior and Mak Ketchum*



## FEATURED FICTION: THE RAREST RAVEN- HOW RUSHE GOT THEIR MASCOT

*by: Ruby Rowe and Ana Maia Menard*



## FEATURED ARTICLE: NEW POLICY NO ELECTRONICS

*by Bella Mindak*



## FEATURED FICTION: THE DAY THE TIDE BEGAN

*by Reese Tomb*



## FEATURED ARTICLE: HOW TO SURVIVE MIDDLE SCHOOL

*by Ann Gregory*



## FEATURED ARTICLE: SHREK MUSICAL: BEHIND THE SCENES

*by: Keertana Shankar & Julieta Arboleda*



## FEATURED FICTION: THE WITCH'S SECRETS

*by Bella Mindak*



# WHAT MAKES RUSHE UNIQUE

Written by Jayla Alvior and Mak Ketchum

Studies show that a school's environment has a tremendous impact on a student's success and mental health. The staff and students at a school can have a positive or negative effect on a student's grades and participation, and if a student is surrounded by unkind peers and teachers, it is likely that their grades will drop. Rushe is unique in many ways, including that the staff is kind and considerate, clubs, activities, and sports are inclusive and fun, and the education is top notch, with high results in every subject.

## STAFF

Firstly, Charles S. Rushe Middle School has an excellent staff. The teachers here at Rushe are understanding, kind, and accepting of the student body and that's not something you always see in other schools. And the principal, Mr. Salerno, is absolutely amazing. He has friendships with many of the students and constantly tries to make us laugh. An interaction with Mr. Salerno would make anyone's day better. We asked a student at Rushe, Kay Coll, what they like most about our school, "I think the staff, because they collaborate really well for the

student's well-being and the councilors really do show a lot of care which is not something I've always experienced in previous schools, so I think that's really nice." Our school has so many amazing people working with it and we're so lucky to be able to get an education with them.

## ACTIVITIES

Secondly, many after-school clubs and activities are offered at Charles S. Rushe Middle School, including the Student Government Association, Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA), Odessey of the Mind, and many more. Rushe offers a wide range of activities and clubs for students to become a part of. Some clubs will help you further in your education while others are mainly for fun, like Dungeons and Dragons and Pokémon club! These clubs help kids to be themselves and find people (and eventually friends) with common interests. Rushe also provides many different physical activities that students can join, like track, football, and volleyball, just to name a few! These sports help with students' team-building skills and physical health. The number of clubs and activities at Charles S. Rushe stands out from the majority of other schools in Pasco County.

## ACADEMICS

Finally, Charles S. Rushe has high academic achievement in many subjects. Rushe is rated in the top 30% of Florida middle schools and our math and reading scores are high above state average. We are often 10-20% above state averages test scores and our participation in many different classes is high. We interviewed our principal, Mr. Salerno about this topic, "I am very proud of the academic achievement of our students, um, I think especially with our students, really looking at math and science, they really have accelerated. We have more kids at our school that accelerate in math and science than in any other middle school in Pasco County." The results in our academics prove that the teaching styles and teachers themselves are wonderful.

Our middle school is very special, from the clubs and sports to the excellent staff, and academics! This school is a great place to learn because of the faculty, who are accepting and fun, the diverse activities and clubs, and the high-quality education. The most important part though is that Charles S. Rushe is lucky to have YOU.

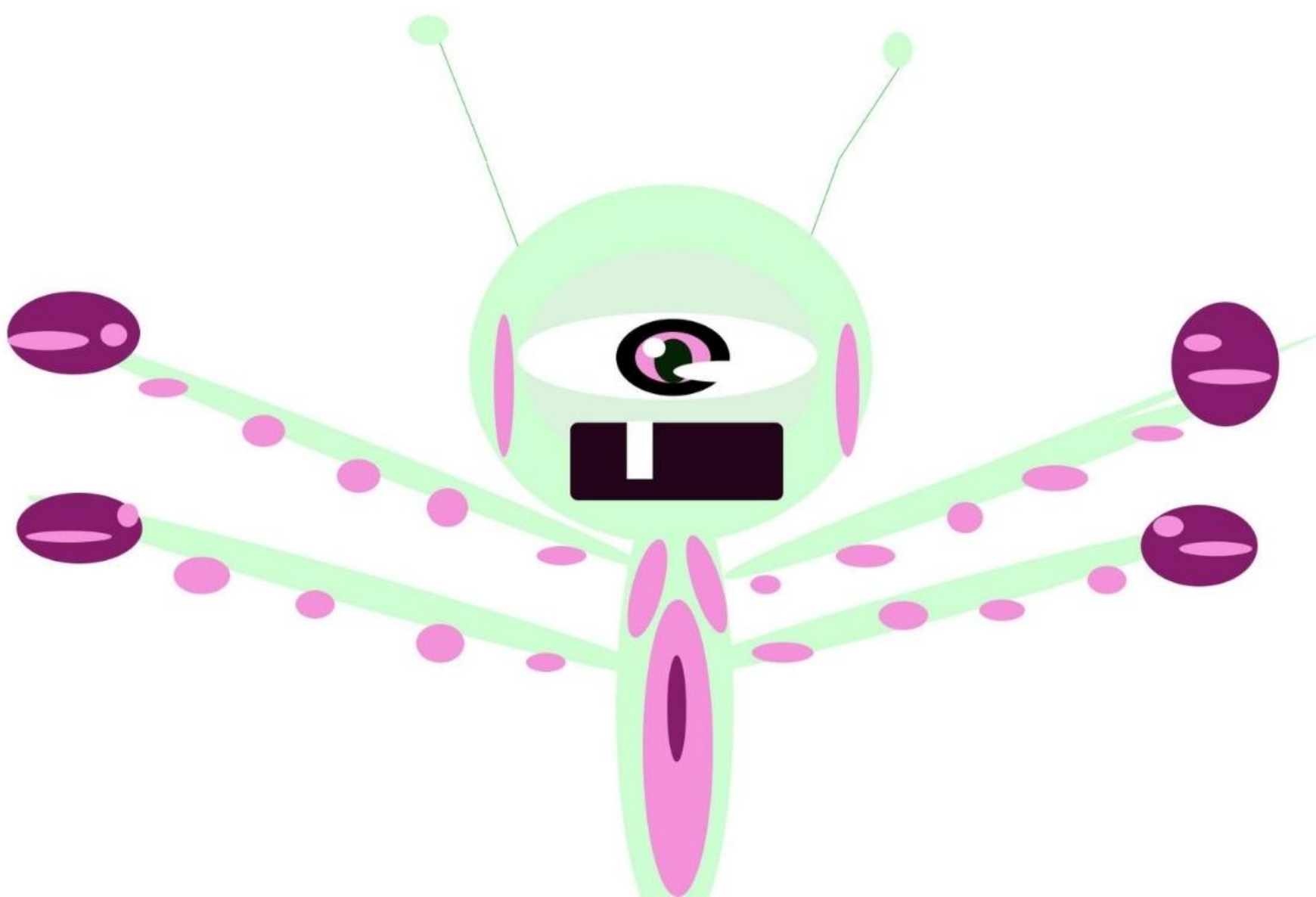


# Featured

2023

A R T I S T

**Maelynn Gonzalez**





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# FICTION SPOTLIGHT

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## ODE TO THE ANGEL I SAW LAST WEEK

To the angel I saw last week, weeping  
With thy wings ripped off and a blood-stained back  
Nose raw, eyes red and puffy; sick of tears  
Thy sobbing alone beseeched me to stare  
So, if only thou knew, angel from last week,  
How thy crestfallen face agonized me  
How my nights have become sleepless dreaming  
And my days; restless scouring of the skies  
I wonder if thou've already gone back  
Or if thou are forsaken to the ground?  
And what made thou teary-eyed on such a day  
When the mist and wind bellowed around us two  
And the morning dew danced upon thy skin;  
For now, I only hope to see thee again



**Written by: Ann Gregory**

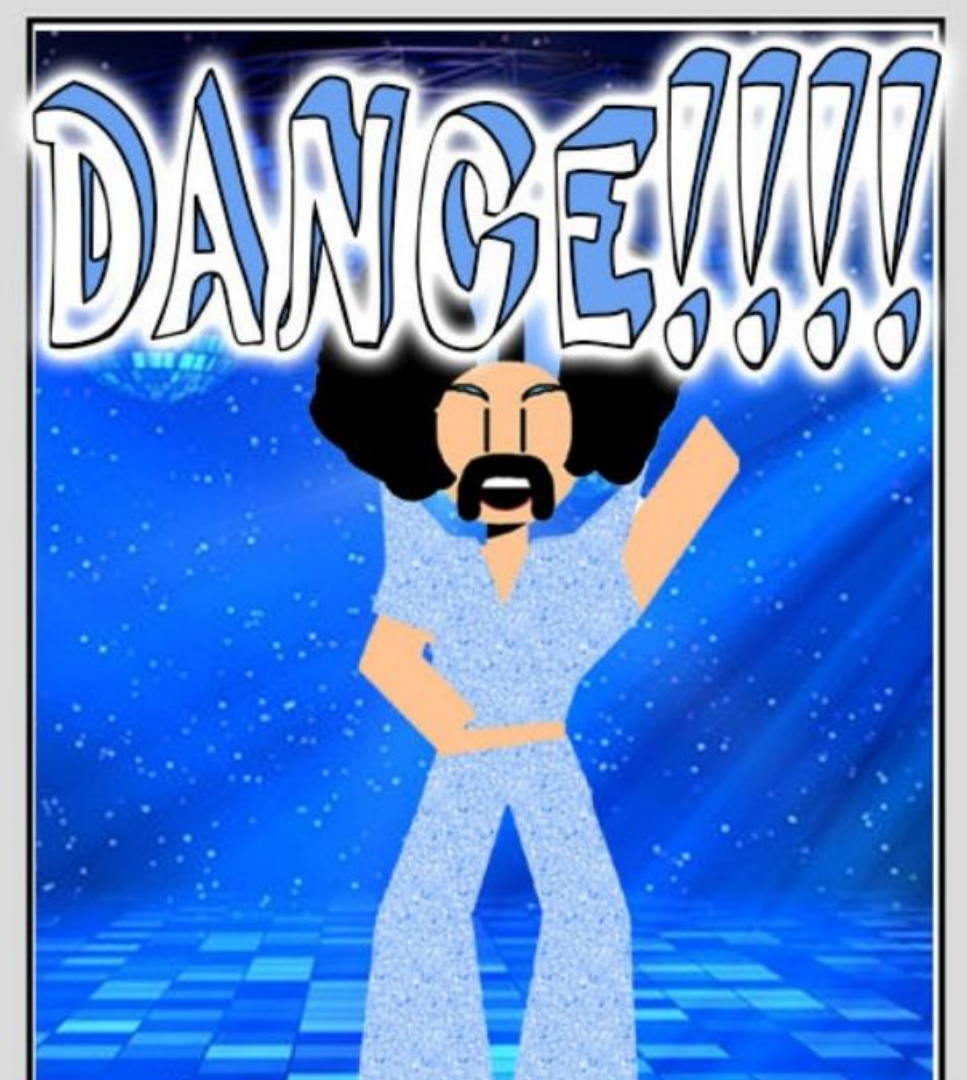


# Featured

2023

A R T I S T

## A Day in the Life of Bartholemew



Layla Deuerling



# The Rarest Raven

*How Rushe got their mascot*

Written by: Ruby Rowe & Ana Maia Menard



Have you ever had a thought so random and new? Hit you so hard like the smashing of a vase. Well, that is what happened to me. While looking at the deep blue marine walls of my school, I noticed something. Ravens were everywhere! On the walls, chairs, paintings, posters, it was infested! So, I took matters into my own hands... I raised my hand. A very momentous moment if you were to ask me. "Mrs.," I gulped. What's the story of the raven?"

The teacher began, "Nineteen years ago, when the land of this school was crisp and fresh, Charles S Rushe walked across the plains. The wind blew through his hair, and he shuddered. He had left the warmth of his home long ago when his face was youthful and his back no longer hunched. The rain poured down on him and he huddled near a small damp tree. His face scrunched trying to keep every inch of warmth. At that very moment, he heard an outlandish cry, but not one of a human. Deep dark in the shadows, three cages filled with helpless ravens cried." Mrs. Andrews paused, staring deep into the students' eyes as if the topic would change their entire lives in a few minutes.

She continued. "Charles stared in shock. His eyes wide and his head hurting from so much questioning. He ran over to the helpless ravens and tried to undo the latch. "It's stuck," he growled. He shook the cage, the ravens whimpering sadly.

Then one raven rudely snapped, "Let us out, would ya?"

Charles gasped. "What..." He struggled with the latch. Until... POP! The latch popped up and the flock of ravens took off making patterns in the thunder-stricken sky.

"Thank You!" The ravens screeched.

"Mrs. Andrews, finish the story!" the students chanted.

She continued again. "Through the window of Everdale Street Charles was celebrating his birthday. The cake was creamed with yellow frosting and two polka dotted candles were propped upon the perfect cake. "Happy birthday Charles!" said Joanna, his wife. Even though Charles loved his family the ravens were still in the back of his mind. That night Charles was taking a stroll out in the many marvels of the forest. He loved looking at the animals that nestled in their homes. When his daughter was young, he had loved to come and pick arrays of nuts and flowers and surprise Joanna with them. The ground was rough on his feet and even though he was tired he loved taking strolls to remember the good times. Then the bushes





moved. It shook and trembled, and out of the darkness slinked a wolf. Charles took off running trying to turn the corner and hide from the wolf but what would a pair of fresh wolf legs do versus an old man? Charles skidded to a stop looking for a tree to hide from. The wolves advanced on Charles and Charles tripped. “Please...” He pleaded grabbing a stick off the ground and throwing it at the wolves. The alpha of the pack growled showing a plethora of pointy white teeth that stretched from its gums. Then, like a hero, a black bird flew across the skies pecking the wolf. The wolf howled in pain as the bird landed on its back and scratched it deeply. The wolf ran off, the bird landing gently at Charles' feet.

“I came to repay you for your good deed!” The raven revealed.

A few years later, Charles was sitting proudly at his desk in his brand-new school called Charles S. Rushe Middle, home of the Ravens. Every night he saw the raven in his dreams soar above the clouds.”

When Mrs. Andrews finished, I was amazed at the thrilling tale of how the raven became our school mascot.



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# FICTION SPOTLIGHT

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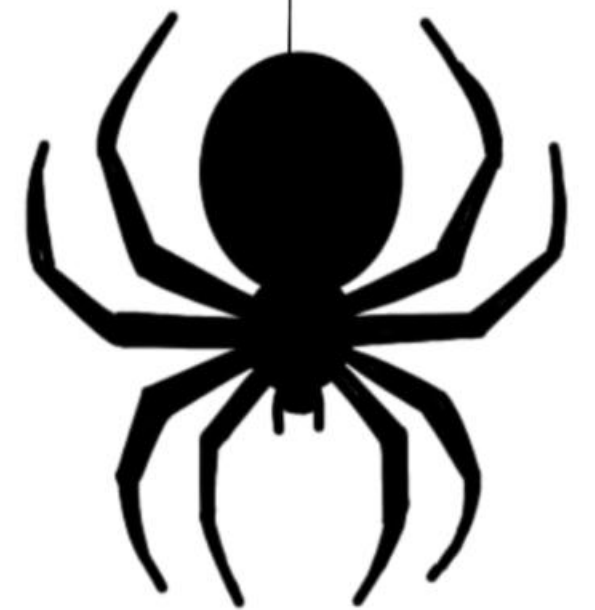
## ARACHNE'S WRATH

Once upon a time on a cliff near the Aegean Sea  
There lived a little girl, and her name was Arachne  
She loved to weave, and she did it all day  
Arachne didn't care what anyone would say  
Maybe she was lonely, maybe she was helpless  
So, she needed a teacher, one that would be selfless

Then came along a weird lady in a cloak  
They didn't know her, but they knew that she spoke  
Suddenly she was revealed to be Athena  
So, they crowned her teacher, that's what you want to be yeah  
She offered her advice, and she took all the credit  
Arachne was furious, no doubt about it

People would say that Arachne did nothing  
Even though her weaving was extremely stunning  
So, she challenged Athena to a weaving duel  
Her anger was ruthless, and that was her fuel  
Athena's eyes were flashing with anger  
She used all her powers, and disconnected from her anchor  
She beat her and ran, opposite of a provider  
And made Arachne become a sneaky spider

Arachne was heartless, and caused lots of trouble  
But we know that the discredit was really a struggle  
She fought for her rights, and wasn't treated fairly  
Maybe Athena should've been more friendly



**Written by: Mia Fackler**



# Tips from teachers: How to Boost your Mental Health this Summer



## Get outside

"Spending time outside can reduce stress, so what are you waiting for? Go outside!"

~Ms. McCracken



## Read



"I like to travel in the summer, which is why I read."

~Mrs. Rapaport

## Try a new hobby

"Having something just for yourself that you can find enjoyment in is great for mental health and staying positive!"

~Mrs. Ziv



## Stay Active

"In the summer, I make sure to stay active. Staying active can be something as simple as going for a walk, swimming in the pool or going for a bike ride. Being active improves my physical and mental health."

~Mrs. McCowan



## Keep in touch with friends:

"Stay in touch with friends because time is short, you're never alone, and you don't know what life has in store for you."

~Mrs. Davis

"It's important to surround yourself with positive people that support, understand, and accept you for who you are."

~Mrs. Ziv



# Ravens soar to success!





2023

# Featured

A R T I S T

By: Kate Dunlap





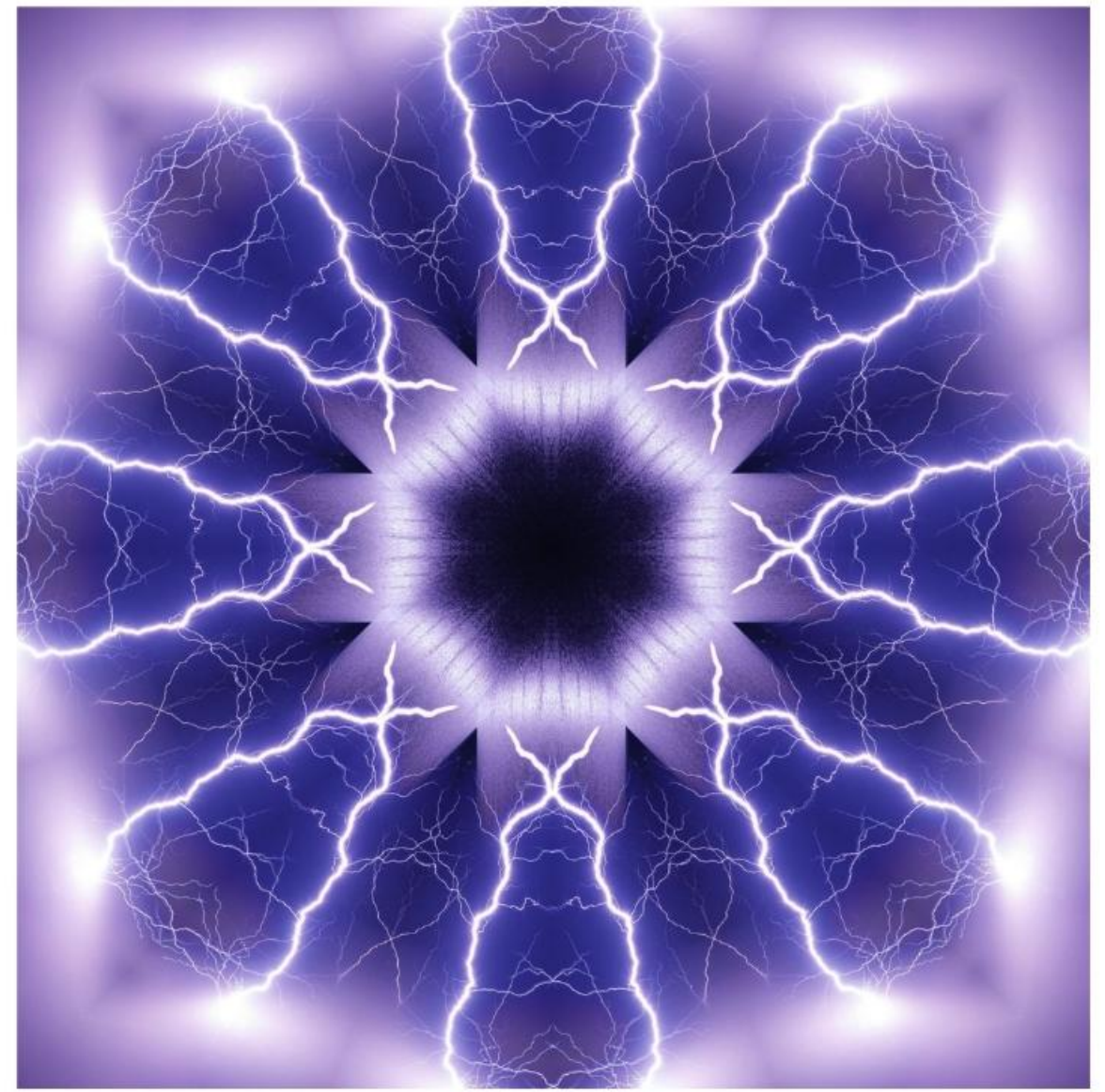
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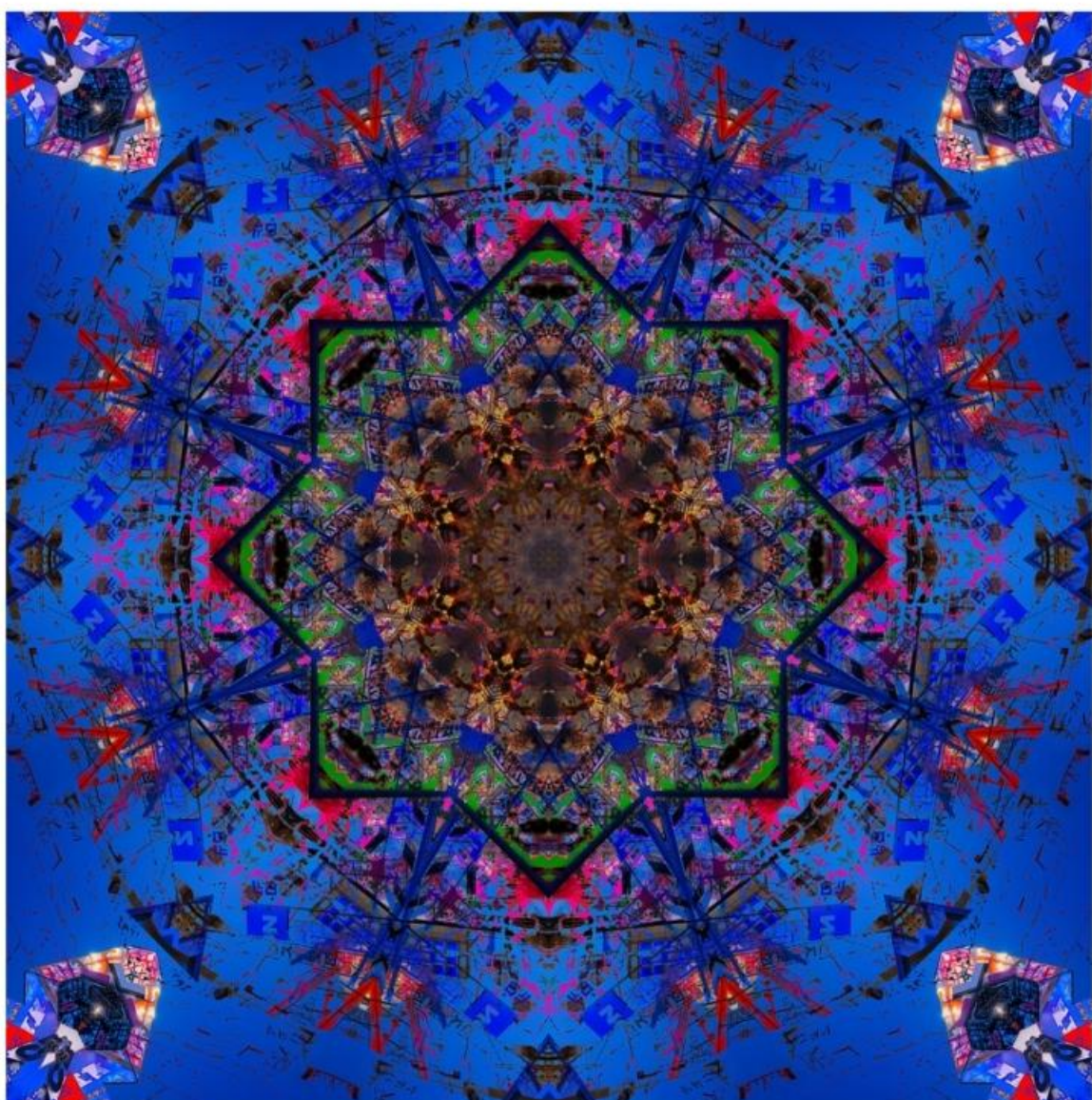
A R T I S T S



**Leila Rivera**



**Trent Strawser**



**Sabriah Bledsoe**



**Alexia Fleming**



# New Policy: No Electronics



**Written by: Bella Mindak**

A new policy was announced on March 6, 2023. This would be known as the Cell Phone Policy. This new policy eliminates cell phone usage during all school hours aside from when the students go to their assigned lunch. Even though it is called, "Cell Phone Policy," it is not limited to only phones but most electronic devices such as tablets, personal laptops, Wi-Fi enabled watches, and earbuds. For students unwilling to follow this new policy, there are consequences: a verbal warning, lunch detention, and in the worst case, a discipline referral. If the student continues to break the rule, an arranged meeting with family may be the next option. Since certain students may need their device for certain matters, there are exceptions when they have documented medical needs and/or have learning accommodations. It is assumed this policy was mainly put into place because of threats the school has been recently receiving.

On the first day of school, August 10th, 2022, all the students had to evacuate the school and stand outside for a sizable portion of the day because of an incident online. It took time away from the day and their learning. A student, Annaleigh replied, "It totally disrupted because we basically did nothing most of the day."

Since this was an online threat, it is entirely possible that this was the first step towards considering removing electronic devices. These types of issues began to happen more frequently, which was not ideal in a learning environment.

After a few weeks of the new policy being enforced, there have been both positive and negative effects. One of the positive ways it has affected the classrooms is teachers are seeing more focusing when teaching a lesson. The negatives include things like, it can make it difficult or challenging to do certain lessons or further teach a certain topic on something without the usage of devices. When asked how this new policy has affected her classroom, Mrs. Swenson said, "Good and bad ways, good: less distractions in class, students seem a little bit more engaged, bad or the con is that it could be more challenging to come up with devices for activities."

Overall, because of the threats against the school, this new rule was made for nearly all students to follow. This affects students and teachers in many diverse types of ways that could be both bad and/or good. People have many opinions when it comes to this new controversial policy. Either way, the students and teachers have adapted quite well.



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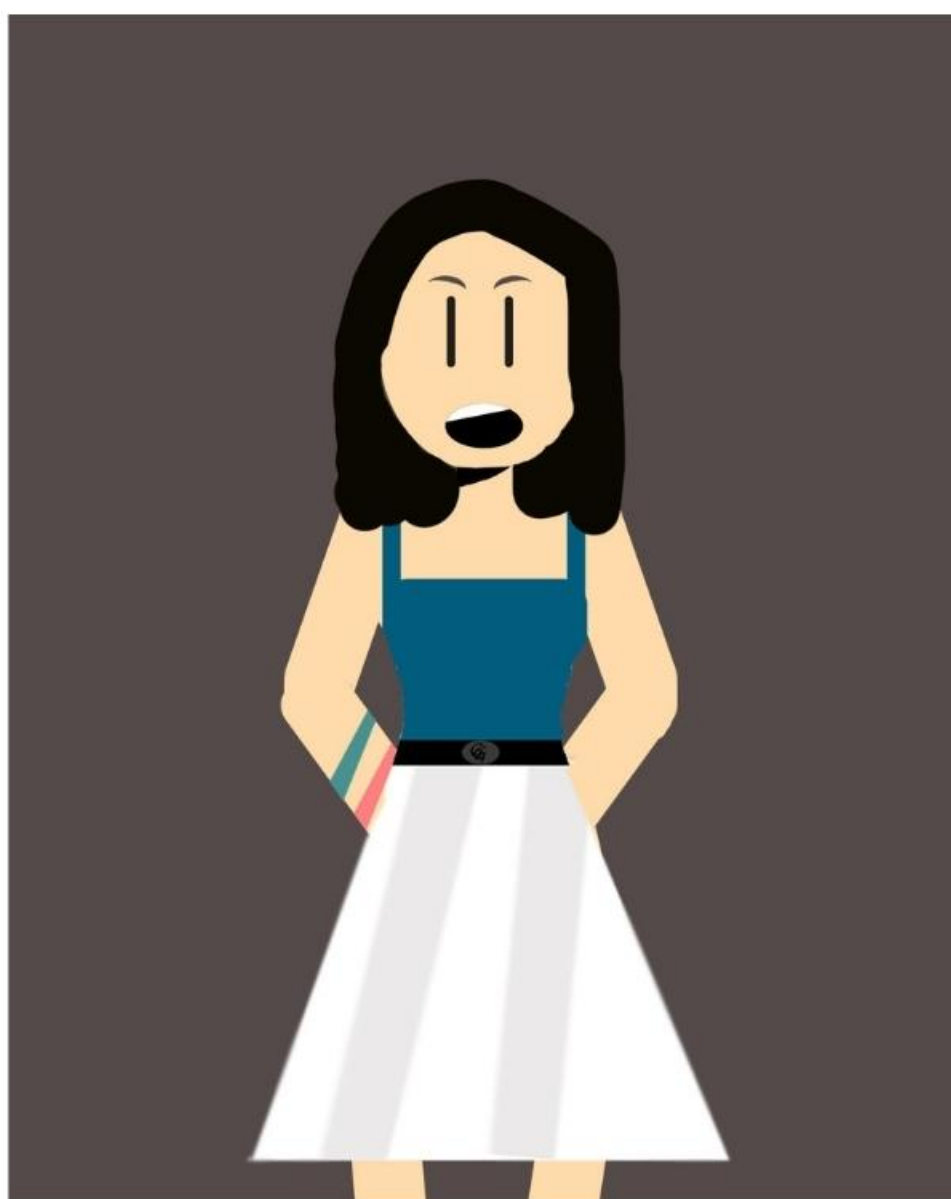
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A R T I S T S

Sage



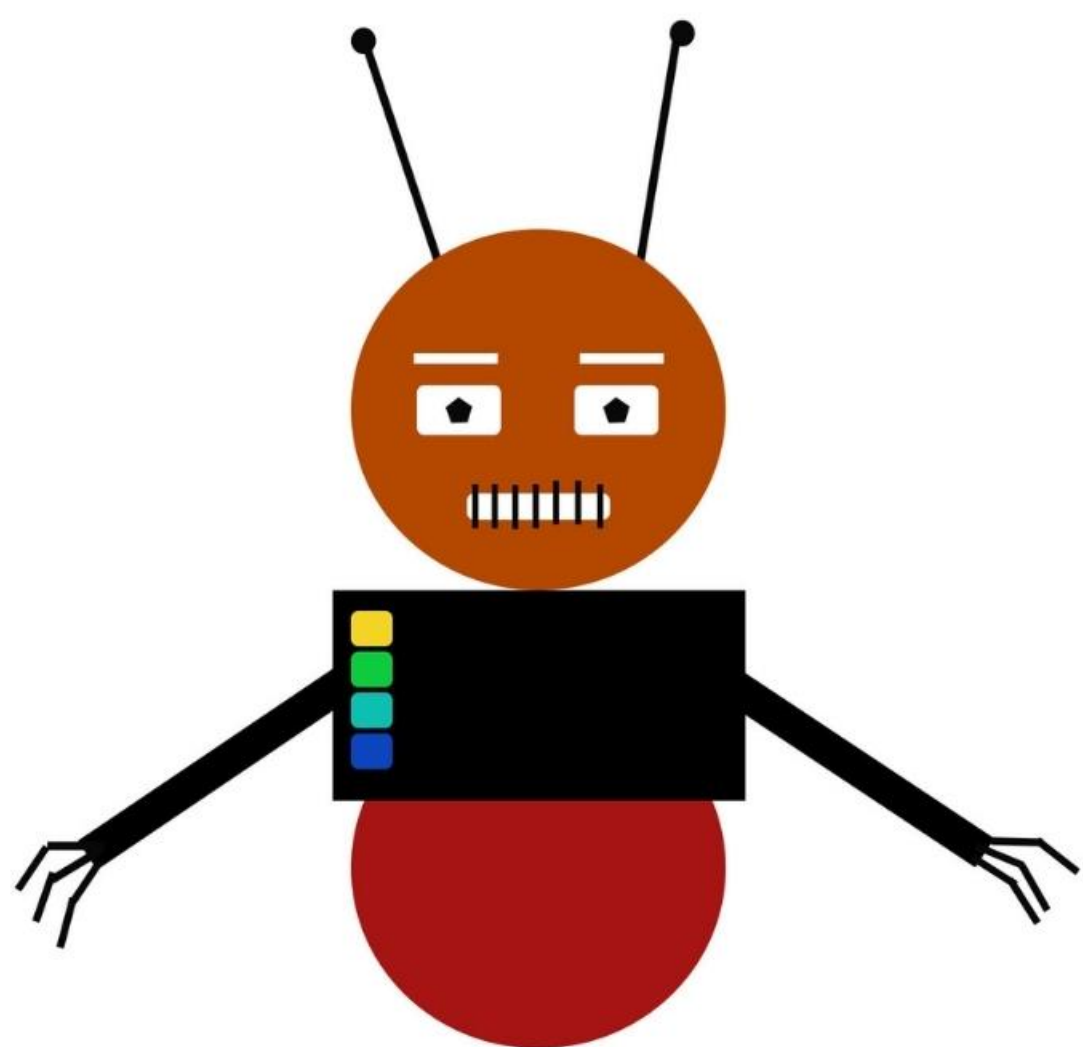
Leila Rivera



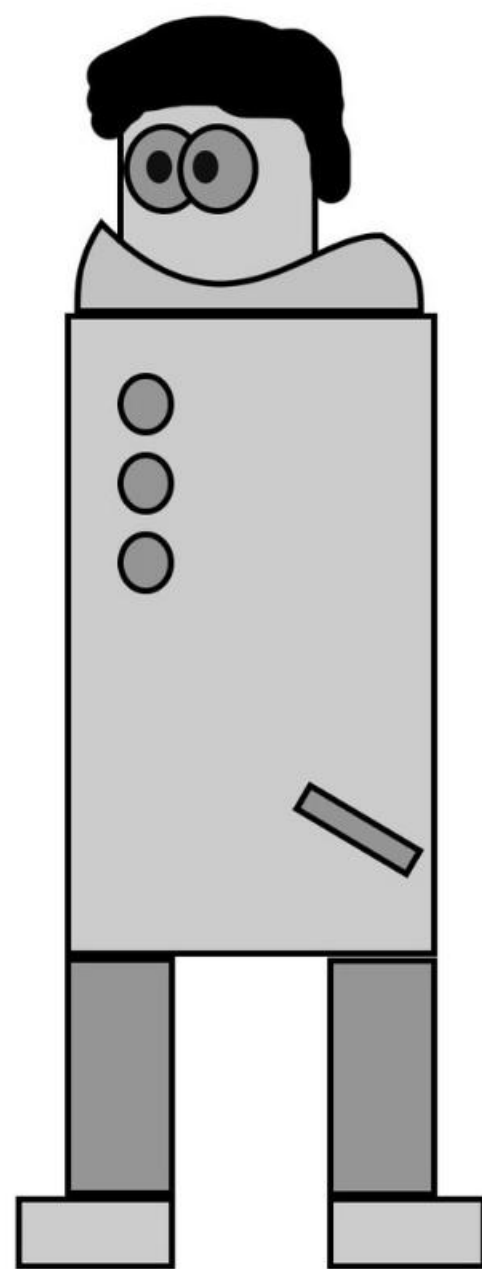
Layla Deuerling



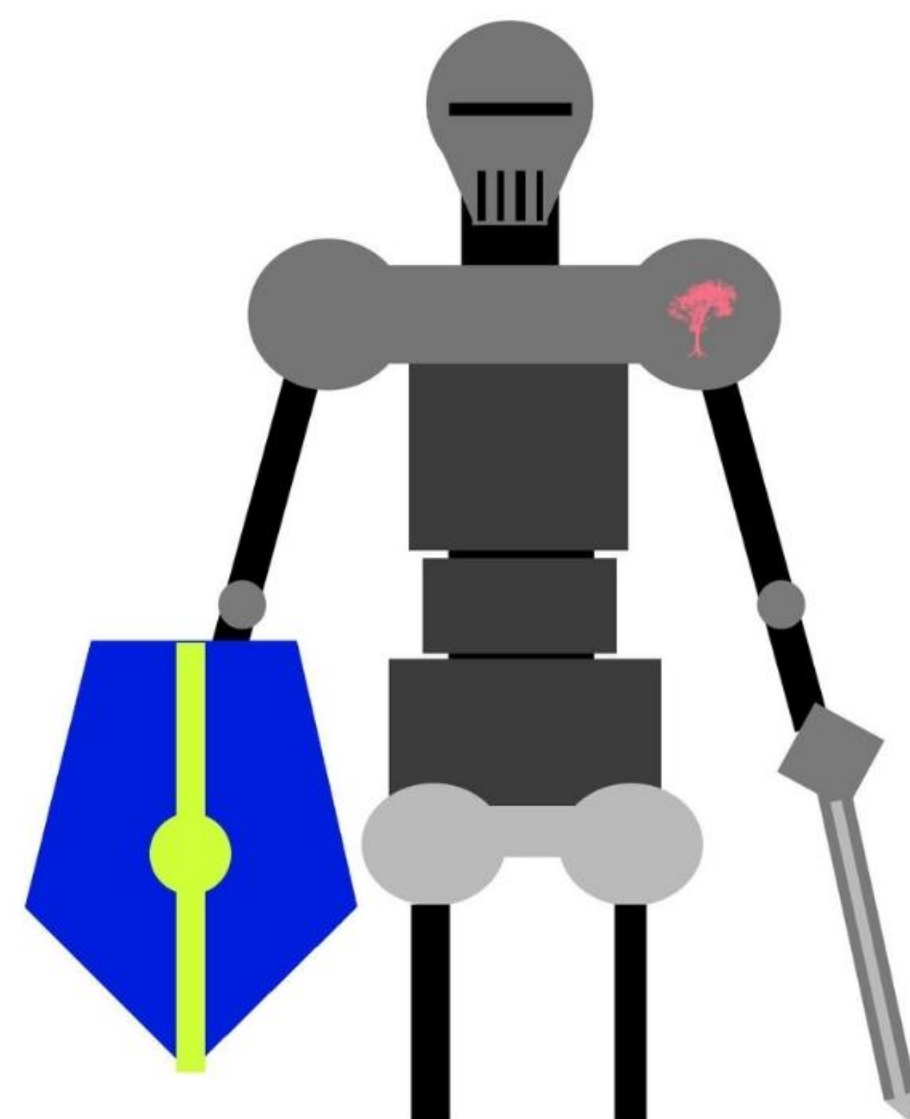
Kingsley Hyde



Madison Blackwell



Mayzie Valez



Vaughan Edwards



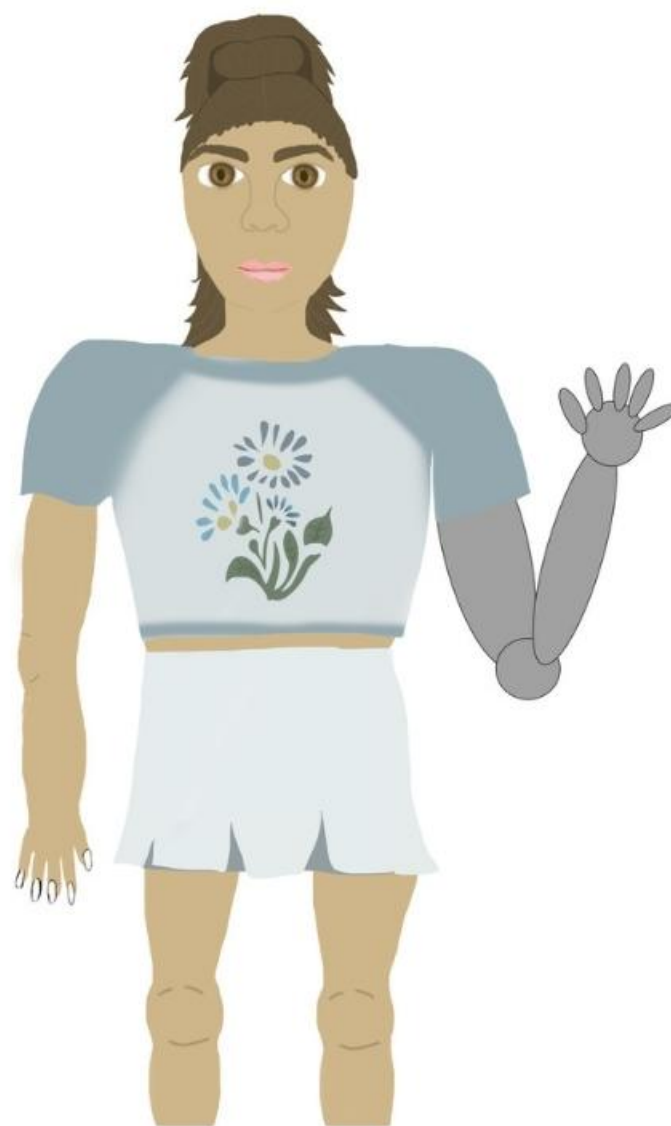
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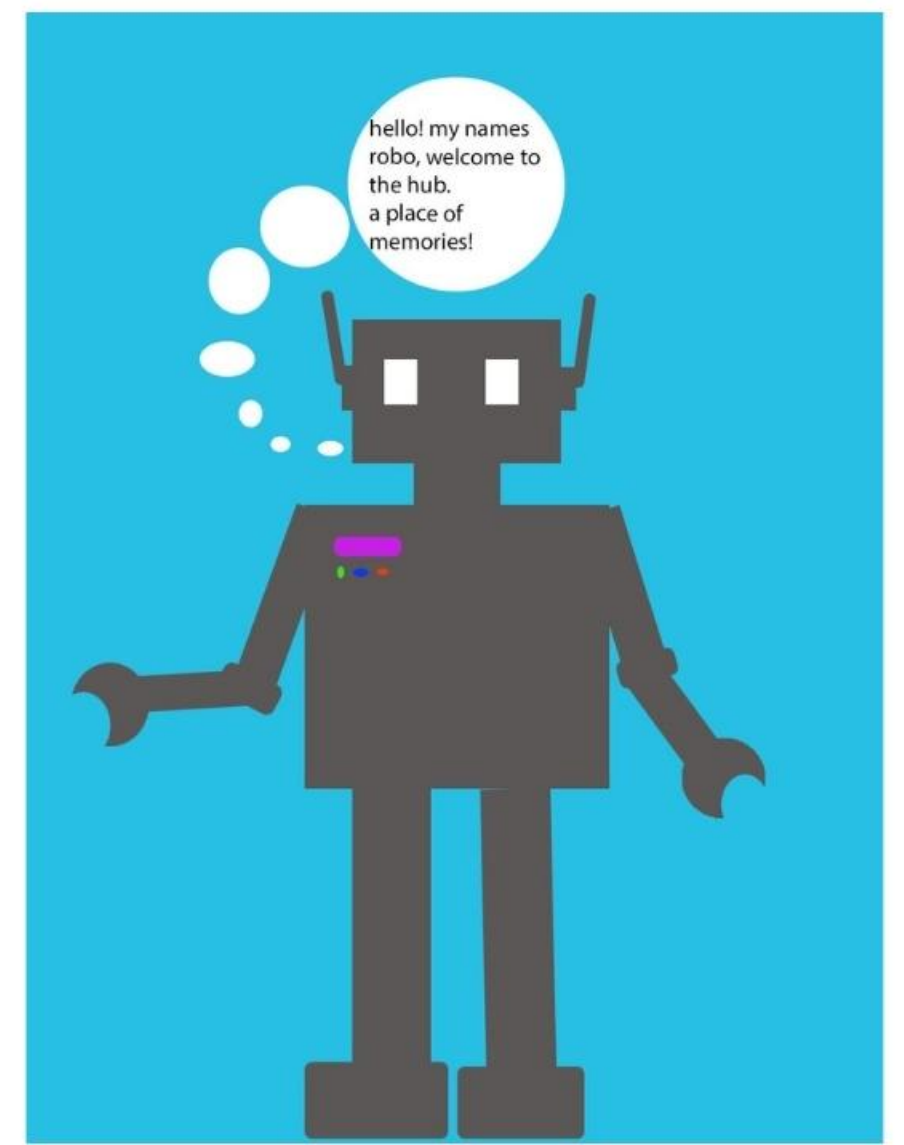
## A R T I S T S



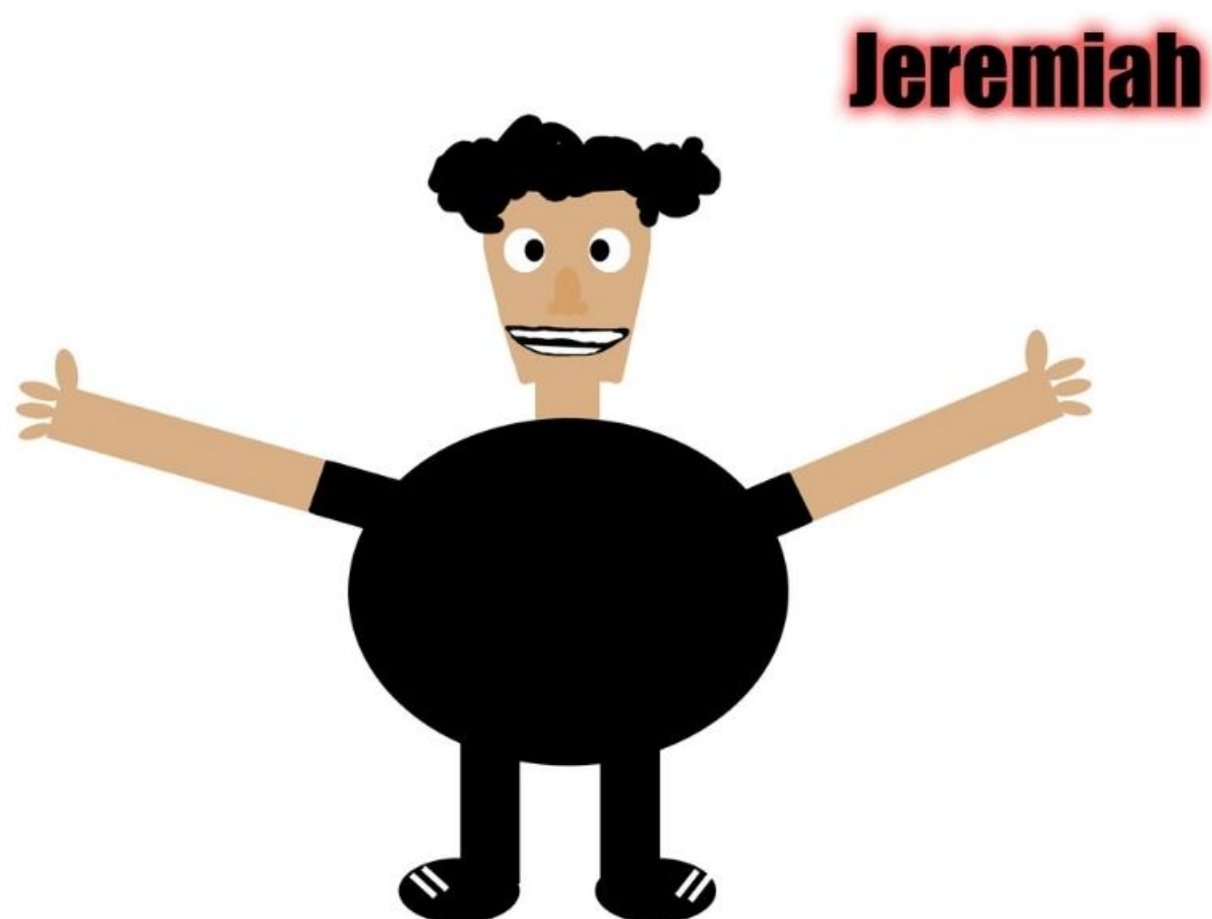
Aisha Jacobo



Gianna Moya



Averi Sapp



Evan Chase



Katelyn Stuart



Kiera Chu



Keep going, tomorrow  
could be the best day of  
your life.  
~Reese T.

Nothing is impossible. The  
word itself says, I'm  
Possible.  
~Audrey Hepburn

If you're lucky enough to  
be different, never change.  
~Taylor Swift

The only thing that feels better  
than winning, is winning when  
nobody thought you could.  
~Hank Aron



“Be kind to your mind.”

Why worry? If you've done the  
very best you can, worrying  
won't make it any better.  
~Walt Disney

Be patient with yourself.  
Nothing in nature blooms  
all year.



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# FICTION SPOTLIGHT

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## MY CAT D'ARTAGNAN



A black feline, D'Artagnan by name, sleek and sly,  
With fur as dark as midnight's starless sky.  
Thy green eyes flash, a piercing, powerful beam,  
A vision to behold, or so it seems.

D'Artagnan hunts in the shadows with a silent grace,  
Quick as thought and light in every chase.

Yet do not be afraid, do not fear his swift and nimble moves,  
For this feline is gentle, a kind one who is trying to improve.  
Thy is a black furred cat, no evil within,  
Just like all the other cats, under thous skin.

So when you see D'Artagnan, walking along the side,  
Do not fret, and do not cry.  
Though thous movements are sleek and sly,  
Do not cause any harm, and you won't have to meet the feline's evil eye.

**Written by:**

Anyaliese Torres



## BOOK REVIEW

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Book Review  
written by:  
Katelin Wilcox

The Hunger Games by Suzanne Collins is an incredible, action-packed novel about the battle between children and a corrupted society. This dystopian novel is a coming-of-age story of a sixteen-year-old girl named Katniss. Katniss is selected to compete in the Hunger Games, a gladiatorial style game where one boy and one girl tribute from each District competes in a fight to the death.

After the world was almost destroyed, a new country called Panem, arose from the ashes of war. In this society, thirteen poor and starving Districts fed a pompous Capitol. The result was an uprising of the Districts against the Capitol, in which twelve Districts fell and the thirteenth obliterated. As punishment for the revolution, the Capitol created the Hunger Games.

In this captivating story that will have you on the edge of your seat, you will follow Katniss' journey through the Hunger Games. Full of action, heart stopping moments, and romance, one question remains... Will Katniss survive?

I would give this book a five-star rating without a doubt in my mind. I could not put this novel down for anything, and it left me begging for more of Katniss' adventures. What I loved most about this book was how the author created so much suspense and made you feel that you were a character in the story. There was nothing that I did not like about this book. I would highly recommend reading the rest of The Hunger Games series, the other books are equally as good as the first.

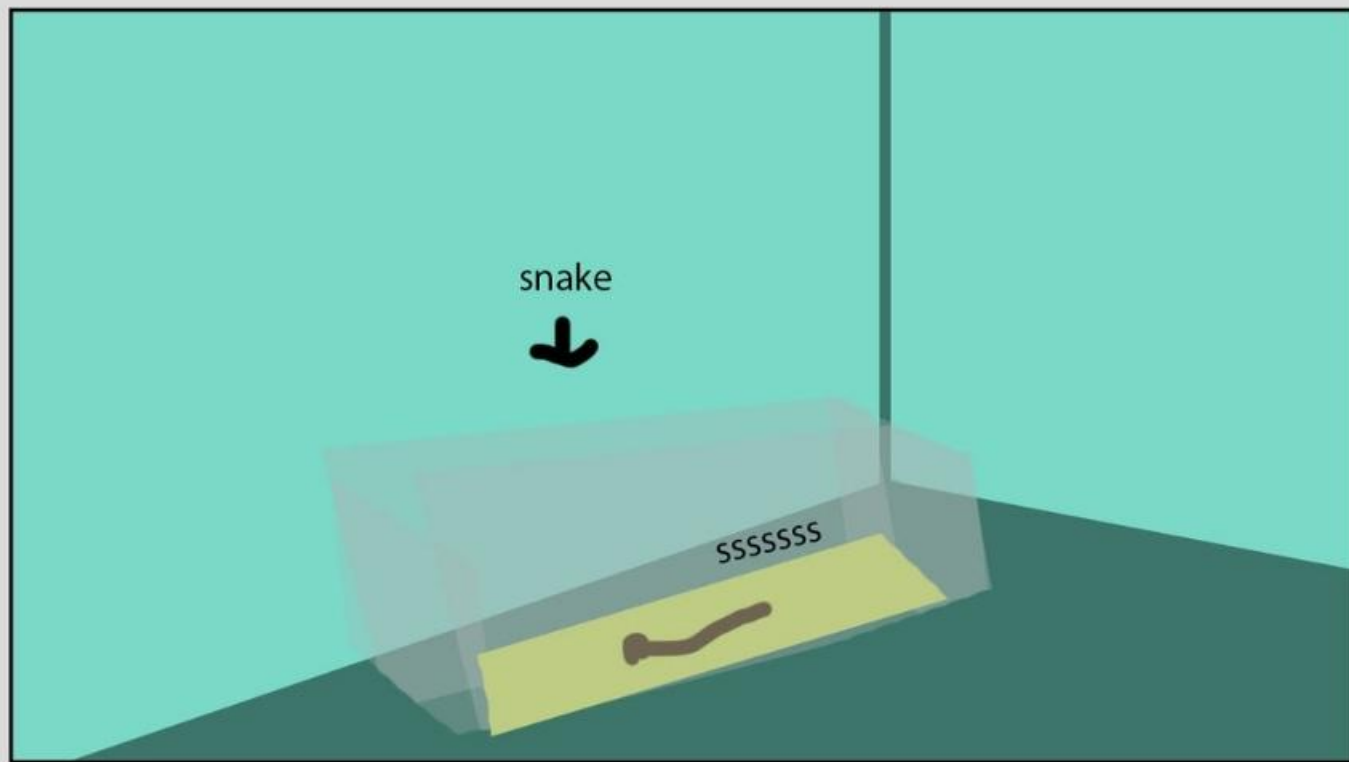


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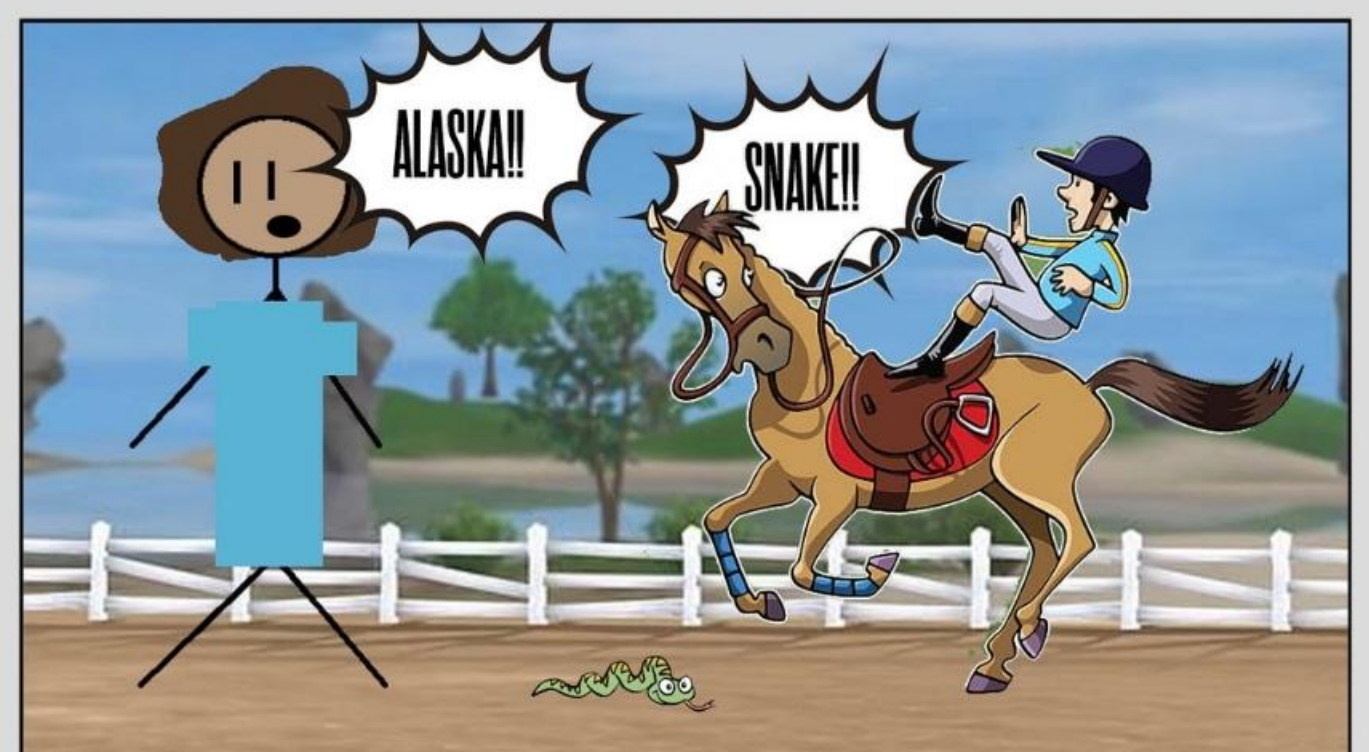
# Featured

## A R T I S T

ALASKA THE SNAKE BY JACIARA OCON



THE BARN BY JACIARA OCN





# *Shrek Junior the Musical: Behind the Scenes*

By Keertana Shankar & Julieta Arboleda

Charles S. Rushe Middle School is opening their latest spring play, Shrek Junior the Musical. A musical is difficult to conduct, so what is it really like behind the scenes? We'll dive into the entire process of directing a musical with over forty kids.



The first thing that occurs is the audition process. Like any other tryouts, people must be accepted into the musical to participate. According to Ms. McCarty, Rushe's musical theatre teacher and head of the play, it's a hefty procedure. She sees all the possible actors sing, dance, and act. Then, a select group of students are chosen for callbacks. The entire process took "a whole week of auditions." The group is then narrowed down to the final candidates, the official performers of Shrek Junior the Musical.

Once the final actors for each role were chosen, they began the many rehearsals needed to produce a good show. Most weeks the entire cast was called. Everyone had to learn music, memorize lines, and perfect the choreography for the dances. It took lots of work and effort from everyone, the students, Ms. McCarty, and Mr. Brockman, the chorus teacher. However, at this point, with only about a week's worth of rehearsals left, Ms. McCarty says, "Everybody knows their lines, they know their songs, and they know their dances. It's extra stressful because we now have to add lots of stuff." With everyone working together to make sure the show's performance is at its best, this step really brings teamwork out.



With the cast and their performances nailed down, what's left is to get all the sets, props, tech, and sound ready. This particular part of the process brings our community together, because it's not only the students, but the parents and any other volunteers who wish to support the musical. This is extra helpful with the technical side of things, which is what everyone is currently working on, and costumes, as Ms. McCarty states. There has also been a lot of contribution for the props, which have been received by multiple people and places. Another thing that's so great about this play is that it enriches the arts in more than one way. The students were the ones who designed all the scenery for the sets. Adding more to that, one of the actors for the play, Avey, who is portraying pig number 1, revealed that all the student's ideas were implemented into the play.

Making this show was definitely not an easy task, but it was all worth it for the amazing production they have in store. A question I know we've all had was why Shrek Junior of all the different musicals out there. Well, Ms. McCarty loves how it has lots of fun characters and exciting songs and thought she had the right group of students to perform. The opening show is on Friday, April 28th and the second and final performance is on Saturday, April 29th, so be sure to check it out!





Daily Motivation

**DO MORE OF  
WHAT YOU**

*Love*





# The Day the Tide Began

Written by: Reese Tomb

The Ocean and the Moon. Hand in hand. The soulmates, that the world did not want. The Ocean was a being of great mystery. The Moon had not yet shrined her beauty on the world. She instead cowered away, nervous of what people may think. The Sea was harsh, with grueling waves, like mountains. She crashed onto land, flooding mortals' villages. It was the Oceans job. She was supposed to be an imperious and ominous immortal.

The Sun broke dawn, as he had for hundreds of years before. It was the same thing every day. The Sun took note from the Clouds, hearing of a large storm coming about. The Sun's nymphs painted the sky with a deep haze. Red, pink, and yellow streaks formed, and the Sun thanked his nymphs. He too, began to take his place in the sky. His lights sent away the colors, and sunrise had begun.

The Ocean crashed land, following lead of the sky's colors. She threw waves into the sailors' docks, causing boats to come loose. Mortals began fleeing from their homes, havoc ensuing. She threw her strongest waves into the village, eroding and flooding their lands.

The Sun continued to rise, until he was interrupted. Something began shading his light, and his glory. The Sun, now alarmed, called to the Ocean, telling her to send a typhoon to the village. The Ocean argued with the Sun, but knew she had to bid by his word.

The Sea began brewing a horrific tidal wave, sending rip-currents towards any mortal who dared to come her way. The Sun, becoming increasingly shrouded by this mysterious darkness, could handle it no more. He demanded that the being responsible for such chaos come forth, or he would no longer shed his light for the mortals.

At once, the Sun was covered completely. The Clouds stopped brewing. The Ocean held back her waves. The mortals watched in fear and in awe. The Moon had emerged, summoning a solar eclipse. The Sea fell into a trance. This powerful immortal had- overthrown the Sun! She watched, her waters glimmering.

The Moon turned 'round and shrined her beauty, and the Ocean was astounded. She never knew the Moon could be so meticulous. Her waves receded from the village, and she hastened up to the skies. Her waves formed a waterspout that propelled her upwards, and she took on her human form. The Moon turned to view the Ocean, and too, took her human form. She removed herself from the Moonrock, her silver skin glimmering under the light of the eclipse.

The Ocean extended a pale blue hand to the Immortal, and curtsied.

"Your grace," The Ocean said, bowing down.

"Please, La, for I am a humble Immortal, I was doing what was necessary." The Moon replied, taking the Oceans hand.

The Ocean's face faltered. "Had the Moon called me La?" She thought.

"Your Immortal name may be Spirit of the Ocean, but you are called La," the Moon explained, clarifying.

"Then what might you be called, oh Spirit of the Moon?" Asked the Ocean.

"Tai." She replied.



The Ocean smiled warmly. It was a pretty name. Tai. She repeated the name in her head, feeling it needed to be honored. The Moon and Ocean stood for a moment; on the waterspout the Ocean had created. They stood silently, forming a strong, but hushed bond. The mortals from below all rose from their hiding places to admire the scene. The Moon turned her head, looking out over the village. The houses were sopping wet from the Oceans waves. She shook her head.

"I don't see why you let the Sun command you." The Moon remarked, putting her arm around the Ocean's shoulders.

The Ocean shrugged, leaning her head onto the Moons shoulder. "He'll evaporate my waters."

The Moon nodded, then paused. She grabbed her temples, collapsing to the grounds of the waterspout. She began yelping in pain. The Moon was torn from her spot on the spout and thrown back onto the moonrock. The Ocean reached forth to grab her, but the Moon was shoved away.

The Sun was trying to fight back. He sent the Moon on her way and resumed bearing light to the villages. The Mortals rejoiced, applauding and cheering. The Moon took a final glance back at the Ocean and Sun. She knew she was not fit to show her beauty, and the Sun had proved it. She continued her journey below the horizon, ashamed. She held in tears, disappearing from the sky.

The Ocean begged for the Moon to stay, afraid of what the Sun might do to her as punishment. When she didn't succeed, she receded back into her waters, giving up her human form. She feared for herself what the Sun might do, and her waves began spiraling out of control. Her waves crashed onto the land, causing a massacre among the Mortals. The Moon watched from below the horizon in horror.

The Sun brought forth the Clouds, and commanded rain. The Clouds mustered the strength to have rainfall, setting in over the Ocean and Mortals village. They began dropping hefty rain, and, among the already deceased, Mortals began trampling around. Tidal waves like mountains, and rain like acid destroyed the Mortals village.

The Moon could take it no more and rose again. The Sun commanded her to retreat, but she tried reasoning with him. She begged to help, but the Sun was firm on his command.

"Please, let me help you, Helios!" The Moon begged the Sun, her face wet with tears.

"Do NOT use those- Mortal's names about me!" The Sun boomed back.

"I'm sorry, but let me help, please, I know what to do! Don't you want this to end?" The Moon questioned, visibly worried.

"...Whatever it is you do, you may NOT shadow my light." The Sun said, with a reluctant sigh.

He parted the Clouds, sending them off. The Sun called out to the Ocean, commanding her to calm down. She couldn't hear his pleas, as she was submerged in the deepest trench in her waters. The Moon rose hesitantly behind the Sun and sent forth waves of gravity from her core. The waves instantly retreated, and the Ocean emerged, confused.

"Tai?" She bubbled.

The Moon nodded, turning round the sky to take her place. "La."

She stayed on the opposite side of the sun, and only got brighter at night, but she was able to regulate her beloved Ocean. The Moon and the Ocean. Connected. The soulmates, that the world didn't know they needed.



# HAIKUS

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All the Haikus on this page were  
written by Madeline Chadwick.  
Together they form a story.

## **Secret Admirer**

I go drive to work,  
I see flowers on my desk.  
I grab them and grin.

## **Wondering**

I get home from work,  
The flowers still in my hand.  
Who could they be from?

## **Sleeping**

I sleep peacefully,  
My last thought of the flowers.  
See you tomorrow.

## **Realization**

I returned to work.  
My co-worker at my desk,  
It's he who loves me?



***By Ann Gregory***

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# ***How To Survive Middle School***



For many people, 6th through 8th grade is one of the most challenging times during teenage hood. It takes a lot of adapting, willpower, and many, many naps. All of this in preparation for highschool -the part of your education that your future heavily relies on. No pressure! But whether you're in 6th -getting the hang of all the new responsibilities expected of you- or nearing the 9th grade, everyone could use some help. So, this is a practical guide on how to not only get through middle school with a passing grade, but to thrive in it with your peers.

## ***Assignments***

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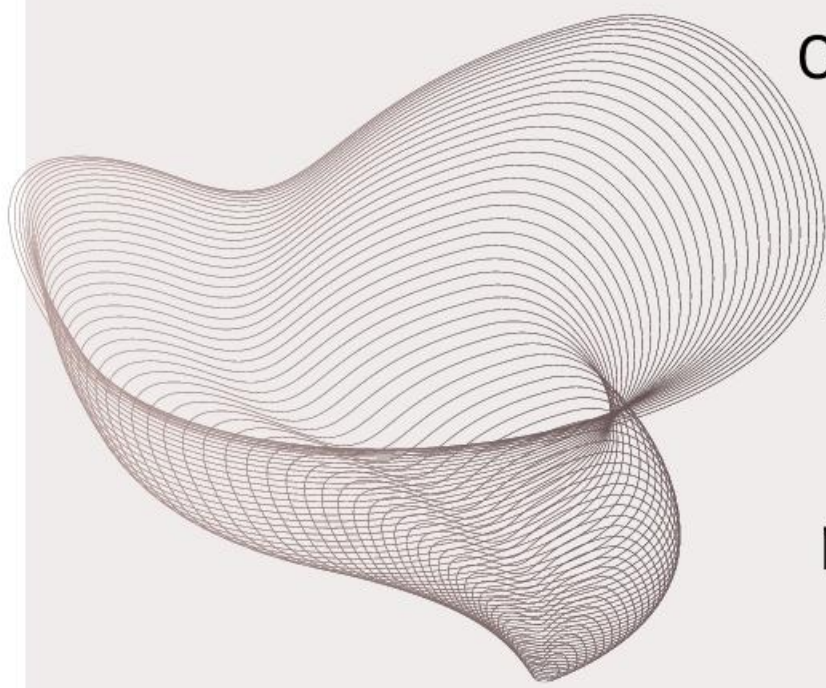
It's easy to fall behind on the abundance of assignments given throughout and even after the school day. People become easily distracted by other events or work at slower paces than their fellow students. "Sign up for your teachers' remind messages." Says Mrs. Sutton, an 8th-grade ELA teacher at Rushe. Remind is a site/app where you or your parents can receive notifications of any important information a teacher may send out. This can include due dates, pdfs, and more. She also mentions using a planner (yes, planners aren't just for busy adults), and putting it in places that will properly prompt you to remember. Bedroom walls, mirrors, and refrigerators are all good examples.

But planners don't just help with being timely on schoolwork, they also help you stay organized. As Mrs. Sutton informs, "Being organized is essential for being successful in life and in school." However, it's easier said to "just keep your stuff together" than to actually do it. She gives tips like color coding notebooks and folders to certain subjects and creating a routine for yourself. Trying to stick to one is always difficult at first, but it quickly becomes simple. Start with small goals and reward yourself for keeping to it. Having a routine, or even multiple, can also help with consistency later on, saving you the effort in the future.



## **Getting Help**

Middle school is more or less notorious for bullying. Most have a hard time fitting in, and this has been the same way for decades and decades on end. If you are being made fun of, it's important to know that **you don't have to deal with it alone** and that there are people who will help you. To quote Mrs. Sutton, "Talk to your parents about who, what, when, where, how, and why you think this is happening." This also goes for teachers and counselors, but some students may be untrusting of the staff, of which you have nothing to fear. In most cases, it's their job to help you! "Administrators, discipline staff, other staff... -we are not your enemies. We are here to help you grow into a positive



contributing member of your school and community." Other places to find support against bullying are friends! It's important to surround yourself with those who will stand up against those who are mistreating you. Otherwise, most bullies are just looking for a reaction, and giving them one will only encourage them further. Of course, every situation is infinitely different, but when possible, reach out to others, and hang in there.

In conclusion, middle school is a critical time that can have an irrecoverable influence on people's futures. It's a time of being awkward and unsure of yourself and navigating relationships as well as schoolwork. Despite the challenges that come with it, middle school can also be rewarding and exciting, and if anything, you will be able to use the advice discussed in the article to make it through in the blink of an eye. Be consistent, avoid conflict, and do your best.



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# FICTION SPOTLIGHT

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## COLD AND CALLOUS

the night, cold and callous  
the way he walked without any balance  
the worrisome people in mid June  
and the corners of this hospital room

the man who won't stop looking at the **clock**  
the lady talking to the doctor in complete shock  
the children almost sleeping not able to stand  
and the anxious couple still holding hands

the quiet of this place  
the tears running down her face  
the way we all cried  
and the way that he died.

**Written by:**  
**Bruna Garcia**





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# FICTION SPOTLIGHT

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## ODE TO WRITING

Oh, clicks of the keyboard,  
And your paragraphs that seem endless.  
You are the free therapist,  
For all the troubled feelings I'll feel.

Your excellent essays,  
And marvelous mood changes.  
Nothing will compare,  
To your beautiful marks.

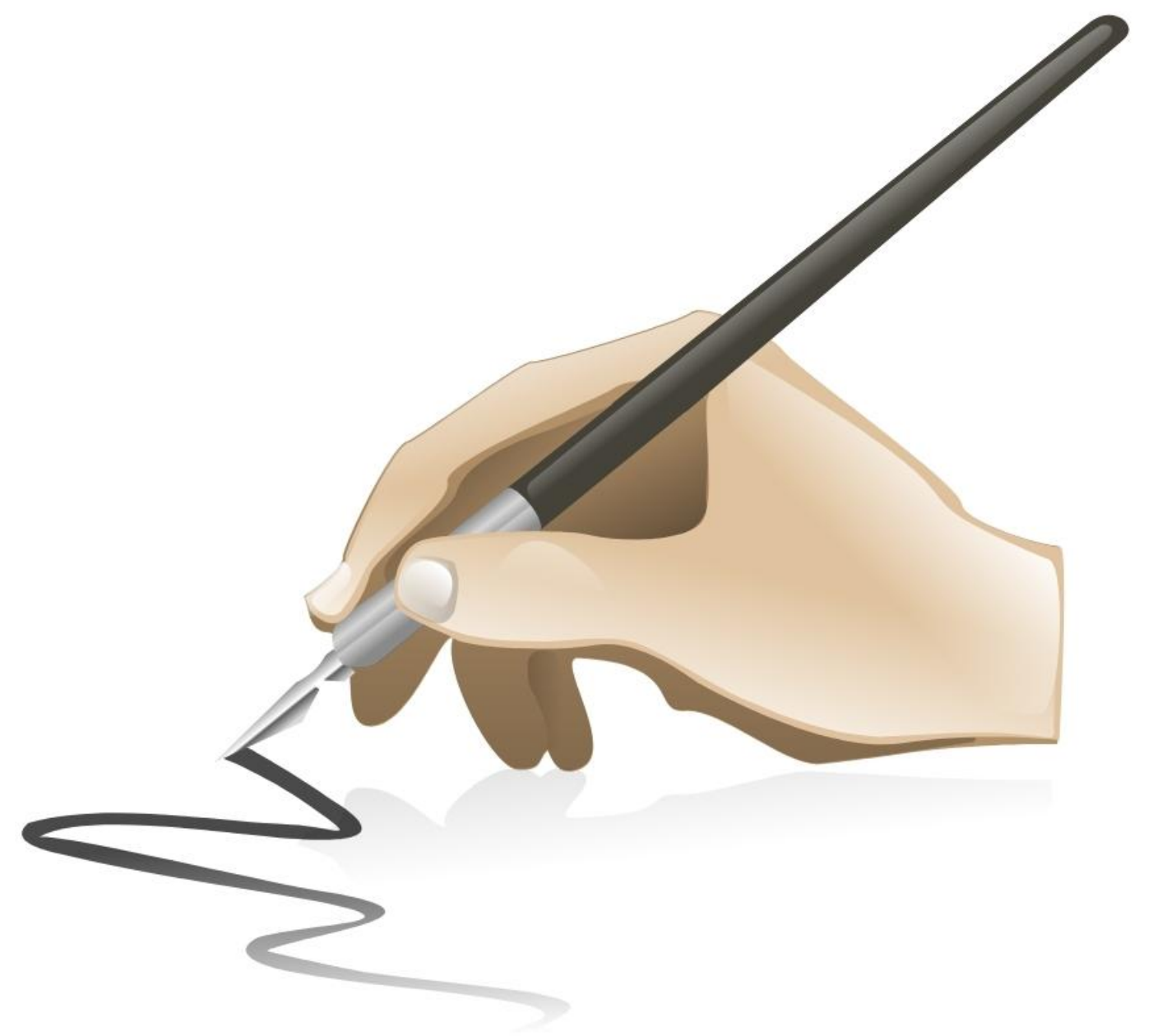
Your soothing words,  
A million stories.  
For you to tell,  
When I want to hear.

Your beautiful paragraphs,  
Imprinted on your screen,  
And forever in my brain,  
Soothing my senses.

The scent of the candle,  
Burning next to the desk.  
That brings back,  
The distant memories of your stories.

You created Shakespeare,  
And Harper Lee,  
Maybe one day,  
You'll create me.

Our relationship,  
High and mighty.  
Like Harry and Ron.  
Unforgettable.



**Written by: Marie Cartwright**

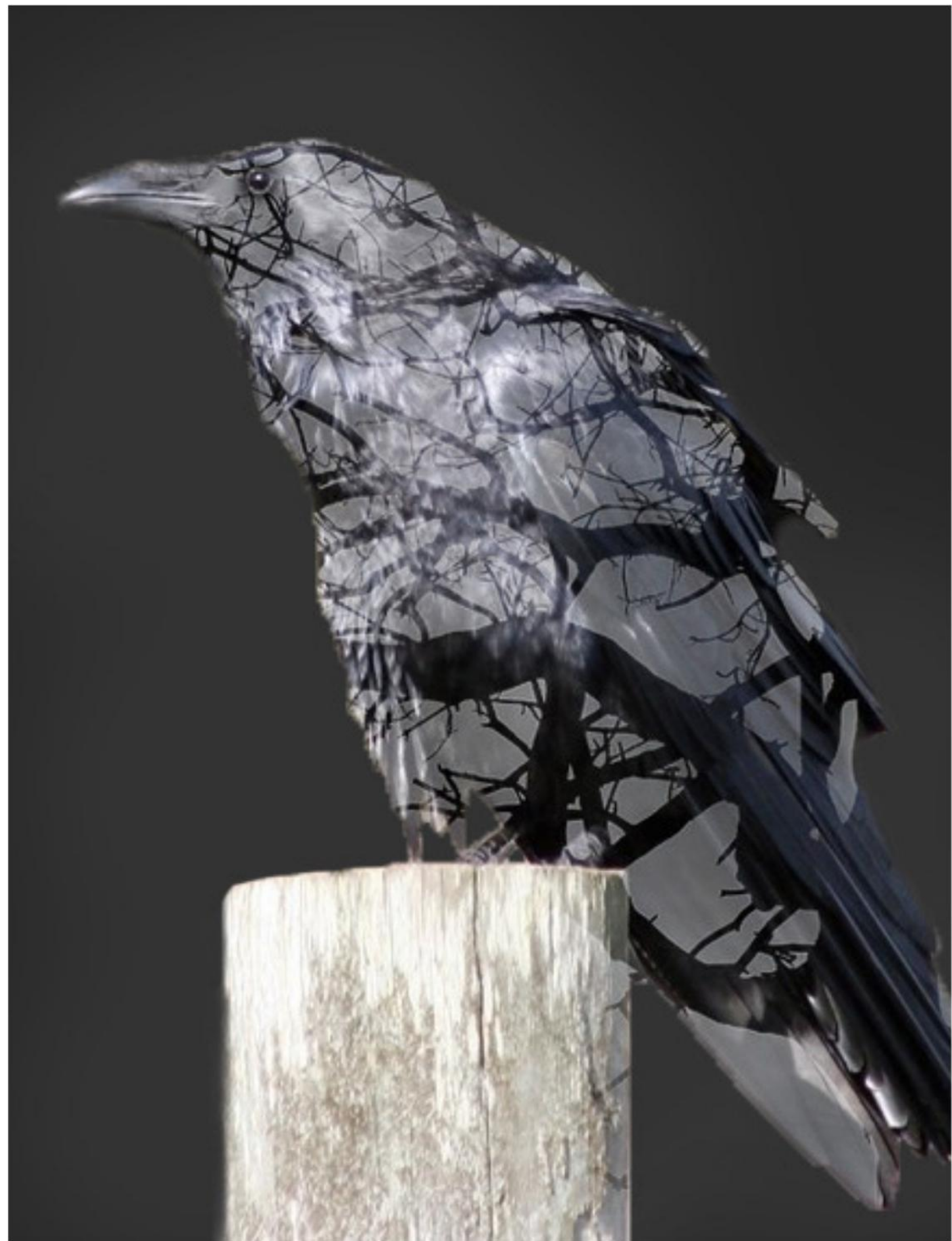


# Featured

2023

A R T I S T

**Gianna Moya**

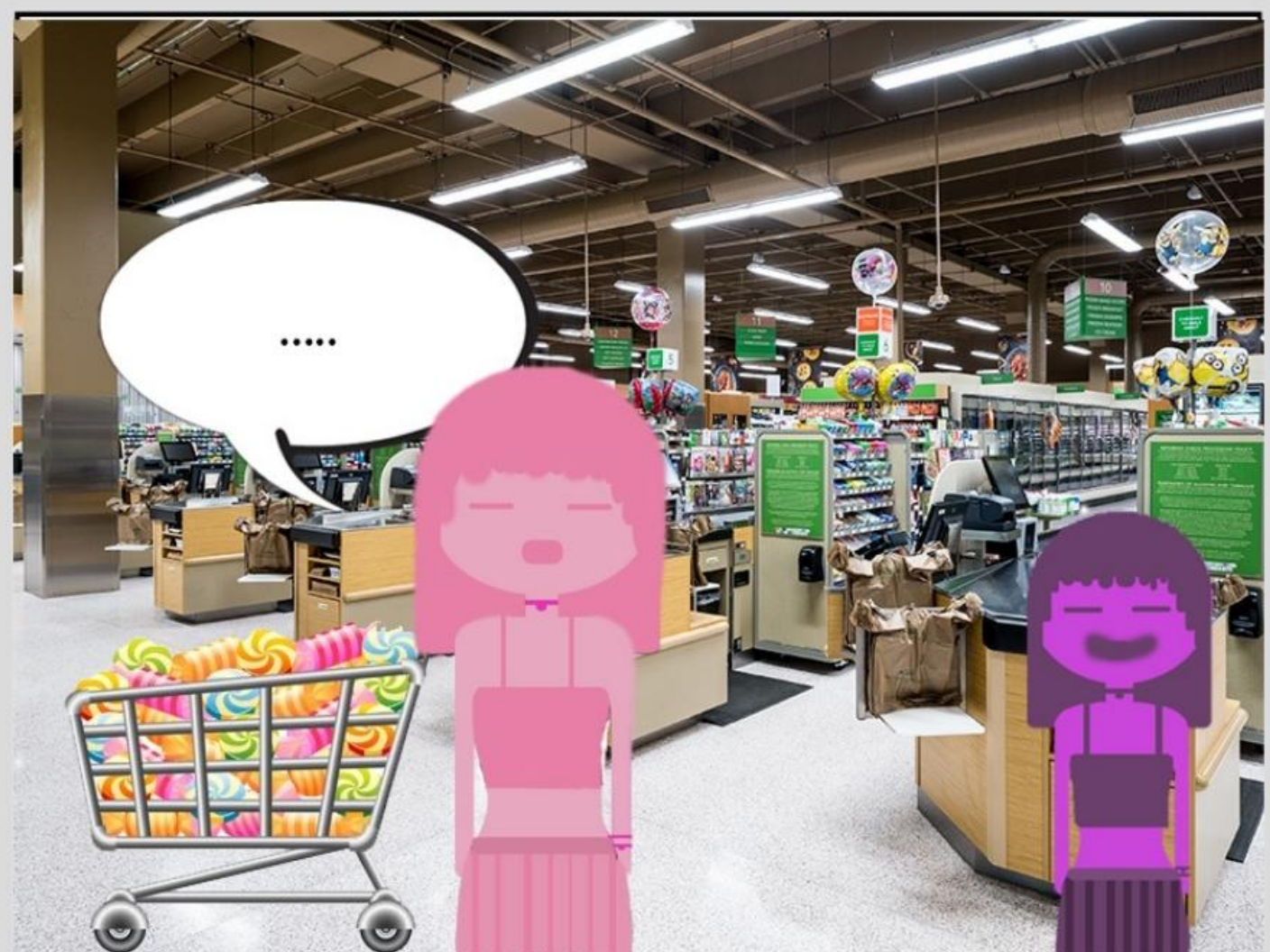




2023

# Featured

A R T I S T



Katelyn Stuart



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# FICTION SPOTLIGHT

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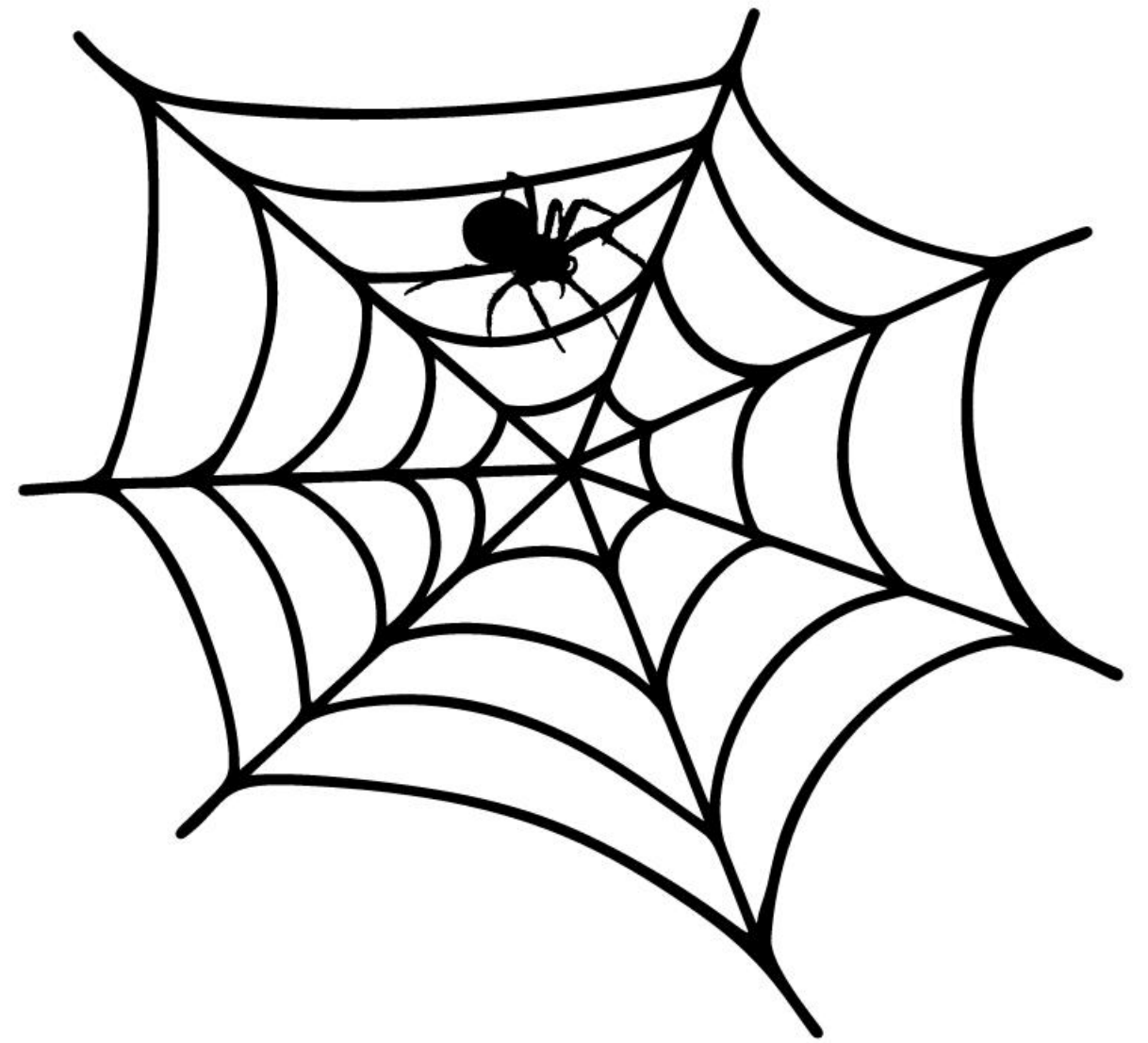
## ARACHNE

In the clay house, is where she stood,  
Arachne was weaving, she was pretty good.  
A person in disguise gives her a hand,  
A new technique that wasn't so bland.  
She soon found out it was Athena in disguise,  
She was going to teach Arachne, what a surprise!

Over time, Arachne became great,  
But she wasn't getting credit for what she'd create.  
She said she was better than the god,  
The buyers around her thought that was odd.  
Arachne challenged Athena to a weaving contest,  
To prove that she was truly the best.

Arachne lost, not a big shock,  
Her weaving had a bunch of gods that she mocked.  
But she didn't want to never weave again,  
So, Athena said, "Weave for all eternity then".  
Boom, next thing you know she's a spider,  
She weaves webs with her best friend beside her.

Foolish, foolish girl who should've been grateful,  
But instead, she said things that were very hateful.  
Why take credit for all your weaves?  
What were you trying to achieve?  
Never upset Athena 'cause she's a god,  
She'll ruin you with the rest of her squad



**Written by: Marie Cartwright**



2023

# Featured

A R T I S T

## The Painting By: Theodore Wilkins

Wow. I actually  
got away!

Ahhhhhh!

Ouch!

Woah...

...it's  
amazing!

# The End!



# HAIKUS

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Dreaming

By: Marie Cartwright

Garden of flowers  
The birds chirping quietly  
Feels like I'm dreaming

BREEZE

By: Gemma Shea

The ocean's calm waves  
Soft breeze flowing  
through my hair  
Now, I am at peace

Glass Half Full

By: Katelin Wilcox

Heartwarming moments  
Laughter, joy, and  
happiness  
Fill an empty glass

Free

By: Taelor Stevens

Rolling in the field  
Flowers and weeds in my hair  
The wind on my face

Under Pressure

By: Jayla Alvior

I walk onto stage  
Tightness in my chest right now  
I muster courage

Nature Connection

By: Kennedy Berg

Leaves whisper secrets  
As the trees rattle and shake  
In the woods I roam.



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# FICTION SPOTLIGHT

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## THE GAME

Do you ever feel  
Like your body's not yours?  
Like it's a puzzle constructed  
From others' expectations?  
Like your personality isn't your own?  
Like you don't remember  
your favorite color anymore  
Just because everyone else's is pink?  
Or red?  
Or blue?  
Like a puppet in society's game?  
The game where the rules  
are crafted by the players  
And if the rules get enough  
likes  
or views  
They become laws  
Laws you have to obey  
To get through the game  
The deadly and unavoidable game  
The game of life



**Written by: Mak Ketchum**



2023

# Featured

A R T I S T



Shania Richards



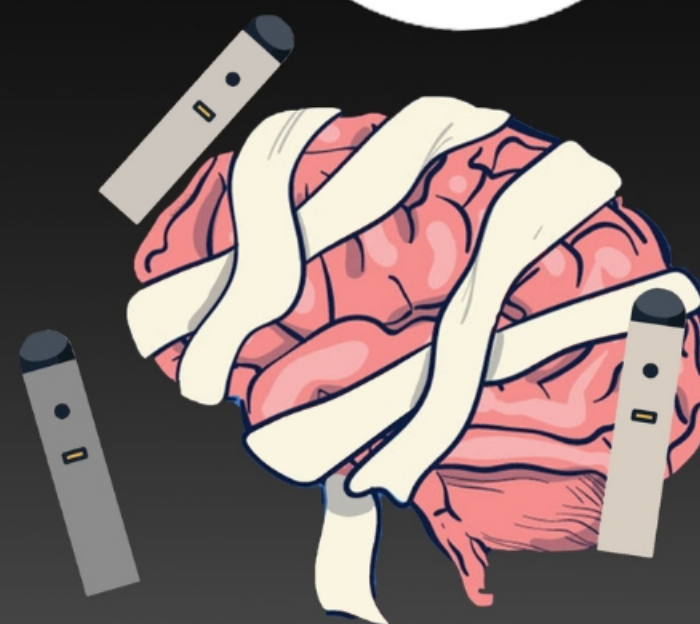
By: Reese Tomb

# VAPING

- Nicotine levels in e-cigarettes are extremely high, with some reaching or exceeding levels found in combustible cigarettes.
- Toxic chemicals found in vapes, like nicotine, are put into vapes, and cause you to get addicted.
- When you vape, you are inhaling toxic chemicals, straight into your lungs.
- Vaping can cause you to develop direct lung cancer.



- Vaping can expose your lungs to toxic metals that can damage your lungs.



## SAY NO TO VAPING!



- 2 minutes of satisfaction doesn't add up to 20 years of health problems.
- Vaping is not a safe alternative to smoking!!
- Vaping is highly addictive, and seriously damaging!

IT'S A BREATH OF ~~STRESS~~ FRESH AIR







-Hansel and Grethel-

# The Witch's Secrets

Written by: Bella Mindak

In a magical land a long time ago I lived in a cottage, it was cozy and perfect for a loner such as myself. People in the town believe me to be a dangerous child when really, I am just a normal kid trying my best to survive by myself out in the woods. One day I was walking to go collect food when suddenly I was dragged in by a mysterious scent coming from a house. It was beautiful, a perfect house, everything I could ever wish for. It looked like it was abandoned so I walked up the stairs to the front door, being careful at each step. Just in case, I knocked on the door before opening it. To my surprise it was answered and opened yet no one was standing there. It was huge, this is what I always imagined as my dream home. Since the door opened, I thought I was meant to be here. As I went exploring through the halls, it got smaller and smaller as if it were shrinking and transforming. Scared, I ran up to the attic where I was attacked. My eyes were shut and all I could hear was the wind gushing by the sides of my ears. I got a dark and deep feeling in the bottom of my stomach and my heart began to pound loudly. I remember hearing a slight whisper, a slight laugh before it had made its way into my body. Out of breath I opened my eyes and saw that the large house had changed into a cute life-sized gingerbread house. I could still feel the force lingering inside my heart, having shocks of pain run up my spine.

Years go by as I yearn at night lying in my bed unable to leave. As I get older, evil slowly fills in gaps. It tells me it has the answer to all my questions. "You will be safe soon, they are coming," said the voices, "It is time." When it happened, I heard different voices. The voices of children. The feeling started again, my eyes blocked and pain taking over from me, but it was different this time. I was trapped, the feeling would not stop, I felt like I was moving but I could not say a thing. After some time goes by in this constant state of suffering, I get my vision back. I looked different; I was not myself. Had I really let the evil win? Though I could see, my thoughts were blocked. It told lies about my family, my life. It told me, "To escape the curse laid upon you for all these years you must push the children in the furnace. It is the only way." My eyes turned black, blocked by rage and hate. I walked down the stairs to see a young girl and boy, as much as it pained me, I had to trick them. I feed them to give them good meals before they must go into the furnace. I wanted them to be happy in their last moments though the evil told me it would good if we would eat them but for any other reason, useless.

I begin luring them to the furnace, after they get a good rest. Telling the boy about making bread. I was so close; I was almost free. Free from the life I could not enjoy. Free to finally be happy once more. I look at him with sadness in my eyes. Wishing that there would be another way to set myself free. I got closer and closer until I had the opportunity to push him, and his sister appeared. She saved her brother by pushing me in instead, "Is this how it will end?" I thought to myself. "Did I really live this life only for pain?" The spirit, force, or whatever had helped me as I let out a long screech. Secretly proud of the bond the children shared. Once more, it went black. The force, the voice, it had stopped. You could only hear the thoughts that had been blocked for so long. I did not feel pain anymore, I did not want to scream into the black void inside my broken heart. I opened my eyes slowly to be greeted by the clouds and the stars, I could not see my body, I had to be dead. As I slowly get up, I look over to see my small cottage clear of plants. The forest is safe and happy. The children jump for joy in the fields. Looking at my nonexistent hands, feeling the wind flow through me, I was finally free.



2023

# Featured

## A R T I S T

### Boys Adventures Part 2

By: Eric Bagniuk

The boys are on the way to get some breakfast cereal.

They went to target so they can pick what they want.

They all like frosted flakes but different flavors.

Finally they can enjoy there cereal.





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# FICTION SPOTLIGHT

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## MY BELOVED BOOKS

Written by: Carly Gaddis

Since the beginning of time  
Books have been read to me  
You put me to sleep every night  
I think of you even without sight  
I love your smell so bibliosmia  
Your pages so old, the must swims to my nose  
Your chapters so beautiful  
They hug me like a blanket in winter  
Comforting me  
However, sometimes the words are different  
Making my heart skip a beat  
Invoking me with excitement, rage, fondness  
I hear the pages turning rhythmically  
I feel your emotions pour out like a waterfall  
The softness resting in my hands  
The ridges on the cover.  
My taste in books change every so often  
I like romance, fantasy, adventure  
You change with my desires  
My own personal quest  
I imagine in my mind.  
You are the collection of my soul  
I love you.  
So.



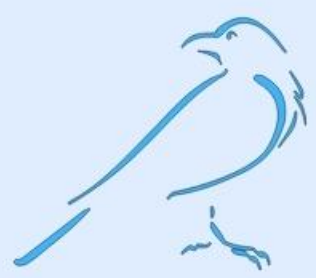




# Rushe Speedsters: Track Tips & Tricks

**By: Kodes Young**

With this year's track season coming to an end, it makes a great time to not only reflect on what went well, but also to prepare for next season. Even if there's another sport that is your main focus, track is an excellent way to help you become better than ever! Here are some tips and tricks to help you excel as a runner.



Make sure to stretch well and drink plenty of water. This will allow you to have larger muscle growth and get the full effect of the workout. Drinking too much water can overwhelm the body, making its job difficult. Make sure to stretch your arms, back and legs.



Eating right and getting sleep is also a great way to improve. Make sure to get 8 hours of sleep. This reduces stress on muscles and immune cells throughout the body to do their job! Your physical performance, energy, and overall health can improve just by getting those hours in. Eating right can increase productivity, the immune system, and increase recovery time.



The right running shoes can affect your performance in any situation. You don't need top of the line shoes, yet you don't need to wear worn out sneakers without any soles either. At the bare minimum, all you need is to find a comfortable yet decent price of shoes. Some popular brands include: Brooks, Nike, Adidas, and Saucony.



Drills are a great way to practice before a race. The perfect form takes time; however, it can be faster if you use drills such as scoops, high knees, strides and starts. These drills will help you be more competitive in your race.



Recovery is important in any sport. One option is to soak in two cups of Epsom salt in warm water. This will help relax the muscles relieving stress after a hard workout/race. Another option that is effective for recovery is the ice bath. However, people may be reluctant to do this because it can be painful.

**“Dream big and be willing to do whatever it takes to achieve it.”**

**~Coach Davis**

**“The idea is to never give up yet give it your all. Greatness is just a word; you must make it happen.”-Kodes Young**





# SENIORITIS IN MIDDLE SCHOOL? HOW CAN YOU HELP IT?

Written by: Jillyann Simmons

Academic burnout is one of the most common experiences a student can have, although that doesn't make it any less challenging to experience. It can be caused by multiple things, a student's home life and stress levels, among other factors all play a part in a student's motivation. In my personal experience, the loss of motivation I experience stems from not setting goals and not practicing self-discipline. Although, there are ways that have helped me stay motivated throughout your school year that I'm sure will help you, as well.

Remember to stay organized, both at home and in school. Keeping a tidy space and a tidy bag will also ensure you have a tidy mind. You can organize your backpack by keeping colored folders for specific classes, and specific notebooks/binders for every class that it is necessary. Keep an extra notebook to write down to do lists as well as thoughts you have throughout the day, keeping your mind clear and focused is essential to staying motivated. Not only should you keep your school essentials tidy, clean your room, clear your desk, and make your bed. You will feel better working on homework in a clean space, and going to school knowing you have a comfortable and clean space to come home to. Set academic goals for yourself. For example, making the honor roll, or getting straight A's. Make sure you always have something to work for. Even if you start small, like turning in every assignment in before the due date rather than on it, or simply studying a little harder for a test. As you set and reach more goals, you will begin to have more trust in yourself, and find it easier to excel in school.

Make school something fun to look forward to. Begin to study in different ways. For example, use or make flashcards, doodle when you take notes, and use nice stationary that you can take care of. When you go to school, put on a nice outfit, eat a good breakfast, and make sure you have had a good night of sleep. Before each class, tell yourself that you're ready to learn. Eventually, you can enjoy your time at school and studying rather than dreading it.

Take it from somebody who works with students every day. Here's a summary of an interview I had with 7th grade math teacher Mr. Depue:

I Asked Mr. Depue what he thought the main cause of a lack of motivation is in students and he expressed his concerns about the lack of discipline in students' school and home lives. When I asked him how we can fix the issue he said that students should learn a sense of self discipline, stricter due dates, and enforced rules. He expressed that he sees many students in middle school experience burnout as if they were in high school, ignorant of the fact they have so much left to learn.

Staying motivated during school may be a challenging process. But eventually, you will learn to love learning by practicing these methods during the school year.





# SOAR TO SUCCESS



COVERS BY: SHANIA RICHARDS