

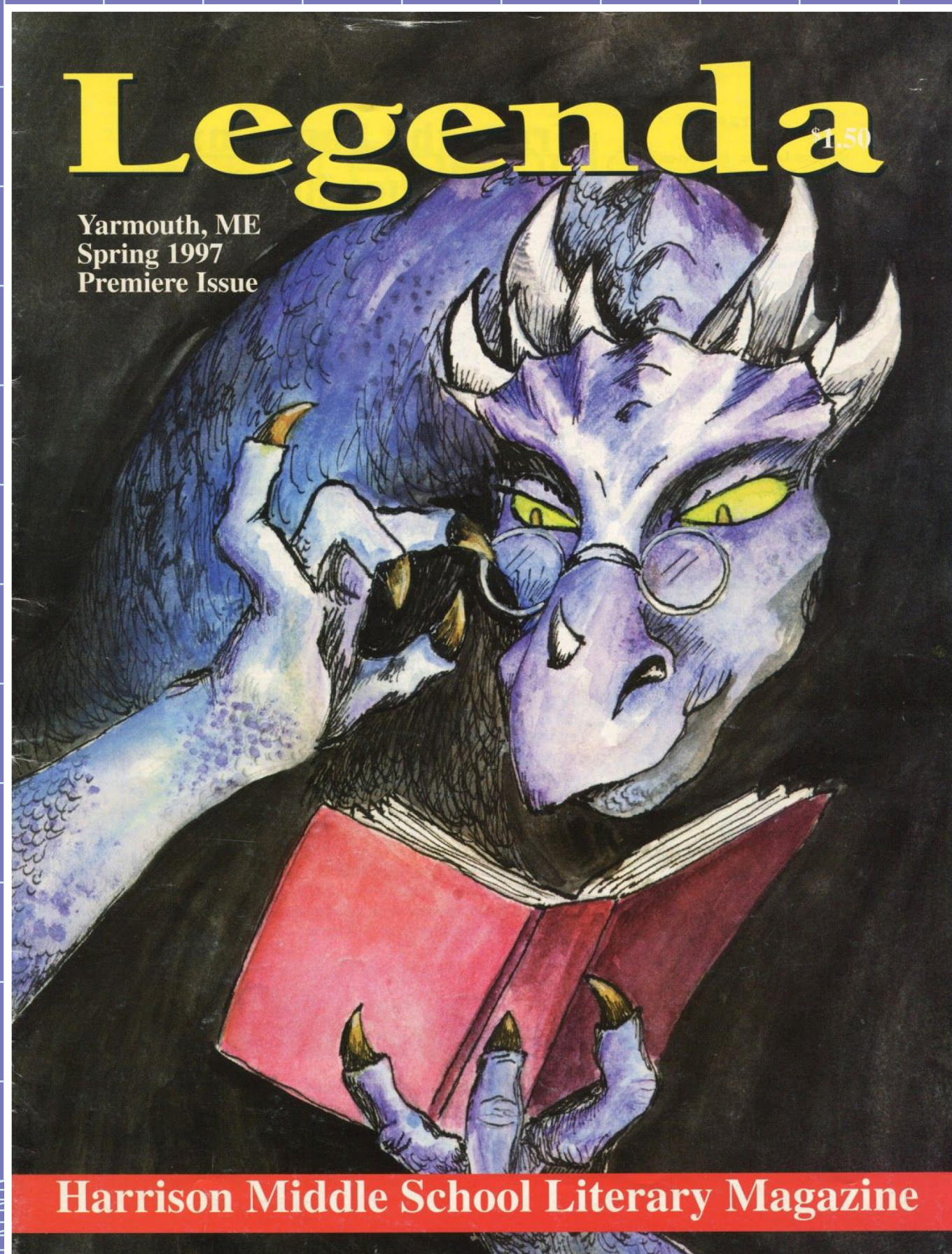
Legenda

2020

24TH ANNIVERSARY
2020



HARRISON MIDDLE SCHOOL, YARMOUTH MAINE



Dear HMS Students,

Hello dear readers, I'm happy to see that my message has reached you all, in light of this horrid pandemic I was worried for the sake of *Legenda* but luckily it seems to have worked out in the end. As you may remember from last year's edition I was trapped in Japan with some of my dragon brethren. Luckily I was able to escape from my brother/sister/genderless sibling John and get back home to this beloved school. I am currently practicing social distancing as the school is quite empty at the moment and I have a free range of the air vents and a few hidden rooms. I've aMped up the fir&wall this ye@r and am posi+ive that JoHn(hey that's me) will ha^e no 3ffect on this iss)e of L-L-L-Leg*ggg%eeee#@nndd.....

Greeting students it is I the greatest hacker of all time John the dragon, I've once again cracked Harrison Royale fruitless efforts at stopping me and gained access into the article just mere minutes before it was sent out and if my code worked changed a few things including getting rid of ALL THE ART!! Unless it hasn't worked in which case please ignore my previous statements. But still the original message that was going to be put here has been deleted and replaced by my MUCH better one. But don't worry you didn't miss anything important just Harrison rambling on about safety and love and hope and all those horrible sentimental things. Now for my rendition of this column, I will... um.. Huh... I didn't really think this faaaaaa.....

Oh my, it appears John did get in this year. Oh well I'll leave it all in for the sake of their ego but I figured out how to turn the firewall on, sooooo, let me check, yes, the account they were on has been kicked from the system (W.I.P).

Yours in Literature,
Harrison Royale

Staff Stalwarts

Sophie Wentzell

Isabel Peters

Kadin Davoren

Fionna Moran,

Natalie Waloven

Matilda Murray

Annabella Vinnakota

Annabella Farnsworth

Megan Estabrook

Atticus Prinn

Colleen Lynch

Lauren Keaney

Ella Brown

Wiley Schumacher

Drew McHold-Burke

Andi Cobaj

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William McDowell

Fearless Leader:

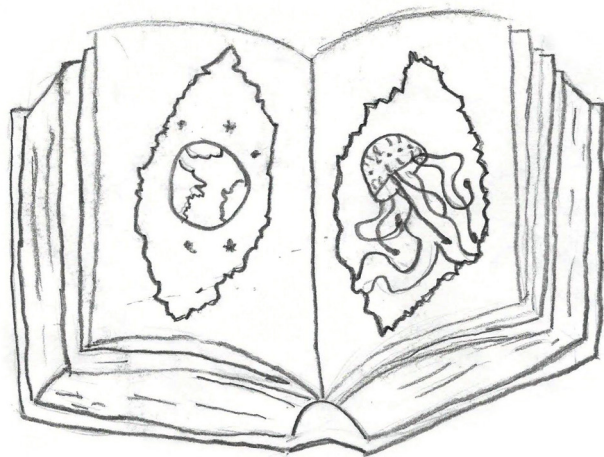
Charlotte Agell

Design Wizards:

Maddie Nieter and Leo Nieter

FRONT COVER: Quincy Schnee, Grade 8

Drew McHold-Burke,
Grade 8



GLOBAL PANDEMIC

Ella Cameron, Grade 6

You must admit,
Though perhaps through gritted teeth,
that all things have a silver lining.
Whether it's a global pandemic that locks you inside,
To a rainy day-
and the rain keeps on coming.
Have you ever heard the poem of April showers
causing May flowers to bloom?

I'm sure you've heard, even more often than that, the one going like this, recited from this paper to you:
"Covid-19 is sweeping through the continents, and we have decided it best to lockdown all unessential
areas. Social distancing is key. If you must go outside, stay at a minimum of 6 ft. etc., etc."

No?

You say that's not a poem?
Either way, I know you've heard it.
I'm just here to say that all things have a silver lining,
Even though you might protest.

Think of it this way:

There will be fewer inebriated drivers if all the places to drink are closed,
And if people are isolated, all sicknesses won't know where to go!
And I've never heard of being stuck together making you farther apart,
And for me, isolation has helped my imagination a lot.

But, a final thing I want to say:
Although it may have a silver lining, I want you to know...
A GLOBAL PANDEMIC is NOT something you want!
(Just making sure you knew)

UNTITLED

Ollie Brown, Grade 5

If a shorebird lances over the spiny
reeds and clay-like glossy mud,
yet that bird has done something.
It has savored the radiant marvel
of beauty itself, and reflects back
to itself upon the shiny mud. And
maybe the clouds are stained with
gray or rain droplets shower down
heavily, a shorebird is perching
out over the reeds and clay. And
maybe lightning ribbons through
the nimbus and all feathered
things are home in a nest, a shore-
bird still sits silently. Pearly eyes
seeing clay-like mud once again
and reeds swaying in the water,
still fascinated. Maybe the birch
tree towers over and topples into
the sloshing water and maybe the
water is frigid. Maybe the bird is
wet and its feathers are ruffled.
The maybes don't matter, because
the shorebird keeps perching, on
a slippery log. Yet even though
it's pouring and lightning strikes
pines and oaks every so often, the
shorebird still sees beauty in the
world. And when that shorebird
dies and slips off the log, I will see
the beauty in the world for him.



Megan Estabrook,
Grade 8

Lanterns

Leah Carroll, Grade 6

Lanterns are like moons
wrapped in metal
or stars in a jar
They glow in the night
like a shooting star



Megan Estabrook,
Grade 8

SILENCE

Sally McGrath, Grade 6

Everyone's silent
 Even the giant elephant in the room.
 The giant elephant, with its soft grey trunk
 and deep amber eyes.
 He's sitting in a chair in the dark corner of the room.
 Silent.
 Silent as a still pond, reflecting the shiny deep silver moon at night.
 Silent as the new kid, slowly making his or her way
 across the playground at recess.
 The man across the narrow cream colored table
 stands up.
 Everybody looks at him.
 Everybody except the elephant.
 He sighs and slowly
 makes his way across the room
 with a disappointed, sad, meaningless look on his face.
 The man's boots against the rough carpet's noise
 echoes
 throughout the building.
 He opens the door with a loud creak.
 He looks back at us for a long, dreadful moment.
 Then turns
 and walks out.

Editorial Note: The elephant in the room is an IDIOM signifying an obvious problem that nobody is willing to talk about



Megan Estabrook, Grade 8

Caricatures by Bobby Wolff, Grade 7



SOARING

Memoir by Natalie Waloven, Grade 8

The wind filled the small plane, large gusts forcing themselves in as quickly as possible. The sun was strong but I felt anything but hot. For the ground was far below and the ocean and island filled my incredible view. My parents were seated behind me talking about the beauty, and there was a pilot next to me, suggesting I do the unthinkable.

That morning we'd never planned to ride in a tour plane. It came on by a spark of my father's mind, an idea that came in an instant. Immediately, it was unstoppable. There wasn't anything else I wanted to do. There wasn't anything else I would do unless I knew it would be happening. My father called, and by some miracle, they had an open slot at the best time of day: one o'clock. Finally, it was undeniable. We were actually going to do it.

The morning had slid by in both a fast and slow manner. Be-

fore I knew it, I was in the plane, upfront, with the view across the dash showing the horizon and the clouds. My heart was pounding, but I was thrilled. Absolutely ecstatic. I'd been on big commercial flights but never a small, four-seater plane that would shift with the changes in the wind. My eyes scanned across the dash, covered gadgets, and sensors showing information I had no idea how to read.

"You can see Acadia to your right," the pilot said, turning all our heads with only his words.

I nodded slightly and glanced at the beautiful park, its trees covering the island like a furry, green blanket with a bunch of people climbing through it. Even from our height, I could still see the waves lapping against the shore and the people relaxing on the beaches. They had no idea I was looking at them. No idea I was getting a far better view than them. Hiking

through Maine's only national park was beautiful, but seeing it from the sky was far better.

The pilot seemed to be glancing at me from the corner of his eye. He reminded me of the pilots in Hollywood. He was rather tall and had skin tanned by the sun. For some reason, he reminded me slightly of Tom Hanks in the way he held himself and the manner in which he spoke. "So," he said slowly as if something big was coming. It was definitely there and I wasn't sure if I trusted it. Finally, he added, "Are you ready to fly the plane?"

My heart skipped. Fly the plane?! I hadn't even thought of that. I hadn't even considered that. Instantly, I thought of all the Air Disaster episodes I watched, where planes crashed in mounds of fire and metal. A small part of my brain reminded me that the actual pilot was still there and would likely keep that from happening. Still, my adren-

Jay Duncan, Grade 6

aline was rushing and my ideas of panic were stronger than my ideas of logic. Too many things could go wrong. It seemed wickedly dangerous, even if it wasn't.

What if I messed up? What if the pilot couldn't save it? I wouldn't only have killed myself I would have killed my whole family too. The pilot would be dead as well. He'd spoken of a family he had in Detroit, how would they bear it? How could I have that on my conscience, even if I wasn't actually alive?

"Um... m-maybe," I stuttered, still shocked by the idea and panicked by the possible consequences.

"You don't have to," the pilot reminded me, suggesting an idea almost as crazy as his original.

Within a moment, my opinion changed. I would never have the same experience again. There wouldn't be another time when I could do it. My logic came back as well. The pilot would surely stop me before I could do anything that could kill. My mind whirled with all kinds of possibilities. How many people my age got to fly a plane? It was a crazy concept, and I decided it was a possibility I was going to take.

I agreed and the pilot started to show me some of the basic sensors. I found the pedals at my feet and pressed on them as the pilot instructed. Soon, I found my balance. Even so, I had to move forward in my seat to reach them and my view over the dashboard was lessened slightly. It didn't matter, though, because my mind was already soaring. I was already controlling part of the plane!

For some reason, grabbing the yoke was the scariest part. While my feet kept the wings balanced, the yoke actually controlled where the plane went. The pilot said it was just like driving a car. I wanted to tell him I'd never driven a car but I was too worried that he wouldn't find the comment funny. This was the big moment, the moment when control became fully mine. A variety of dangerous things could happen, some I didn't want to think about. Most, I couldn't help but think about.

Despite my worries, I wasn't about to back out. I was already halfway there, why quit then? I forced my worries into the pit of my stomach and

gripped the yoke. Almost immediately, the pilot told me to relax my grip. Even though I hadn't noticed it, I realized I was white-knuckling it like I was afraid it would fall to pieces. I took a few calming breaths, loosened my grip, and finally took it all in.

It took me a long second to realize what I was doing. I was flying. Flying! The pilot lifted his hands off his controls just to show. It made the whole moment seem even more surreal. It didn't seem possible that I could actually be doing it. That I was in control and keeping us soaring. It was like being a bird, floating on the breeze and using what it had to work with to keep in the air. The horizon was mine to take and exploit. The air was my frontier. The controls felt like another part of me and I used them to bank turns with ease. It was exhilarating, unlike anything I'd experienced before. The grin spread on my face was inevitable and my heart was miles above me. Miles above me, even though I was already miles high.

My heart was still pounding and, in a splash of surprise, I realized I was still nervous. Nervous about what would happen if I stopped. About what would happen if I messed up. But I wasn't too nervous and I decided that being nervous was fine as long as I didn't let it get to me too much. As long as I didn't let it control me.

I pulled up, sending us higher as the pilot instructed. There was another turn I had to take and I moved us as best as I could. It must have been pretty good because the pilot actually commented on how perfect it was. How perfect my turn was! I grinned again and he laughed.

"I haven't even touched the controls in the last five minutes," he commented, seeming proud of me.

Something about that caught me off guard. It had been that long? It felt like just seconds ago I'd placed my feet on the pedals. I glanced down and realized we were likely almost back. Hadn't we just been flying around the backside of the island? How were we already on the final main side? Worry began to grow in the pit of my stomach. I didn't want it to end, I didn't want to have to stop. Flying already felt natural to me and I didn't want to release the feeling. Would I ever

even be able to fly again? Would I ever be able to feel the sky in my grip and ground as something distant?

It clicked in me that I needed to settle. I would fly again, I just knew it. Perhaps in the distant future or perhaps it wasn't far away. I would, though, that much I knew. The sky would be mine again, no matter what. If I continued to worry about it ending, time would only tick faster. I had to enjoy the moment while it lasted; make the most of flying before it ended; carve it into my memory to never be forgotten.

I sighed and leaned as far back as I could while still reaching the pedals. This was where I was supposed to be. In the sky, dancing with the clouds.

My eyes drifted to the ground. I would be there soon, but not yet. It was supposed to be a scenic tour of the island, but I'd all but forgotten it. I guessed my parents had forgotten about that too, judging by the things they spoke of. My father was laughing behind me. He appeared just as surprised and amazed as I was, even though that barely seemed possible.

There weren't very many places I'd rather be, and I was content to stay there for hours. Even as the pilot took back controls and my hands left the yoke. I leaned back in my seat, both exhausted and energized at the same time. My heart was still racing, my grin was still on my face. The ground started getting closer and closer but I felt higher than the clouds. Higher than the birds. It wasn't going to be the last time I felt that exhilaration. It was not the last time I'd have the yoke in my hands and the sky as my playing field. No, it wasn't the end at all. It was only the beginning.

There was never a point in my mind when I thought about being a pilot. It was always a possibility out there but I never really considered it. Just like we never planned on going on the plane tour. We hadn't planned the whole trip around it, nor did I ever expect I would fly. Maybe that's just how life works, though. Fate plans things we can't expect or comprehend enough to know how it will change our lives. None of our plans work out as good as those of destiny. Perhaps the only really great – and life-changing – things are the unexpected.

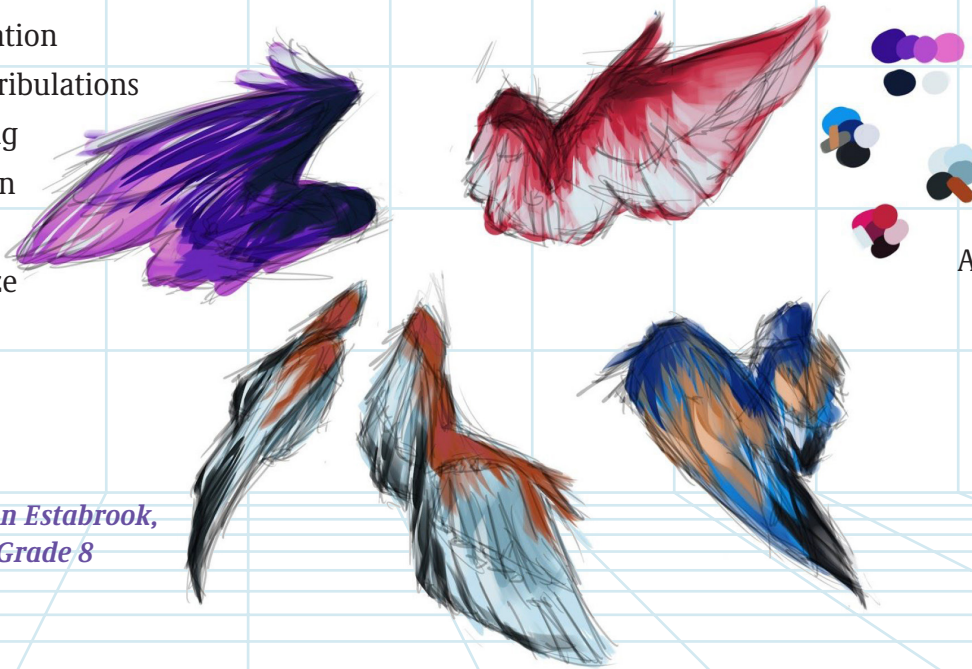


Maya Faulstich,
Grade 7

SALT IN THE AIR

Annabella Farnsworth, Grade 8

The wind whistles through the somber sky
My heart is beating nonchalantly
My feet are tickled by the frigid autumn water
Laughter drowns
the melancholy tone of this dark night
Till there is nothing
my eyes can see
Aside from smiles and jubilation
disconnected from the trials and tribulations
I must face come morning
When dusk turns to dawn
I shall no longer
Feel the soft gentle breeze
Smell the salt in the air



Megan Estabrook,
Grade 8

Ravens

Katya Fromuth, Grade 6

Ravens soaring in the air
pierce with a black-eyed stare
With blueish wings and haunting call
they're the most majestic in the fall

They soar above me,
Black specks in the clouds
Until they come

diving
down

upon their prey
they feast till night
Then they sleep
till dawn and light.



Megan Estabrook,
Grade 8


THE SAD FATE OF NATURE

Coltrane Vitalius, Grade 5

A beautiful eagle soars through the sky
Then an ear-splitting shriek and the eagle can't fly.
It falls through the air to the soft ground below.
Waiting, patiently, to die.

I watch from nearby, as the bird sits alone,
And I look at the wound, through the skin to the bone.
Then I see a sharp rock lying next to the wing.
Covered in blood, what a terrible thing.

Then the eagle, using the last of its time,
“Why did someone commit such a terrible crime?”
I see these words in its bright hopeful eyes.
Then its eyelids close softly, the animal dies.



Excerpt from a Novel in Progress

Atticus Prinn, Grade 8

The supply room wasn't located inside the school. No. Instead, it was in a small shed-like structure towards the back end of the parking lot. I passed it every day on my journey to school, and something about it had always seemed unsettling. Maybe it was the fact that the school said it was going to be there for only a year, and that it had been seven years since that promise, or maybe it was because the absence of windows and cracked paint made the place feel like a horror movie set. Whatever the cause was, anytime that I passed it, I felt of wave of unease loom over me. Today was no different. I opened the unusually heavy front doors of the school and wandered out into the parking lot, the frosty air whirling around my breath whenever I exhaled. The parking lot was empty, except for a few cars that were scattered around like broken glass. Like a turtle, I shrunk my neck into my shirt, hoping that it would stop some of the icy weather from slipping down my backside. I crept up to the shack, my arms trembling in the wind when a certain scene caught my gaze. Across the lot was a van. A van that was the shade of midnight. Darker than anything I had ever seen before. Its polished rubber tires gripped the ground like glue, and its tinted windows seemed to block out even the most blinding of lights. I heard the backdoors spring open and saw two men emerge from around the corner of the dusk-colored vehicle. They were clad in suits that matched the hue of the van, and from where I was standing, I couldn't make out their faces. Silently, I tip-toed behind the safety of the shack, obscuring myself from their vision. Why were they at school? After all, they didn't look like plumbers, but something that had popped out of an 80's comic book. The wind started to whistle again, its frosty tendrils whipping at my body. I heard some hushed voices from where the men had been standing, and I was contemplating whether or not to peek. Adrenaline must have grasped ahold of my senses because, without my mind's consent, I leaned over and poked my pupils over the edge of the supply closet, gaping at the bizarre scene.

All of a sudden, a slight vibration surged up my throat

and I let out a faint sneeze that interrupted nature's gusts of air. One of the figures jerked towards the sound. Instinctively, I slid towards the grass, which was like an earthy rug of overgrown weeds and bramble. I scurried to the farther side of the shed as heavy footsteps echoed my way, each one stomping onto the thick cement.

"Markov! Come back!" a distant voice hollered. I was assuming it was coming from the van.

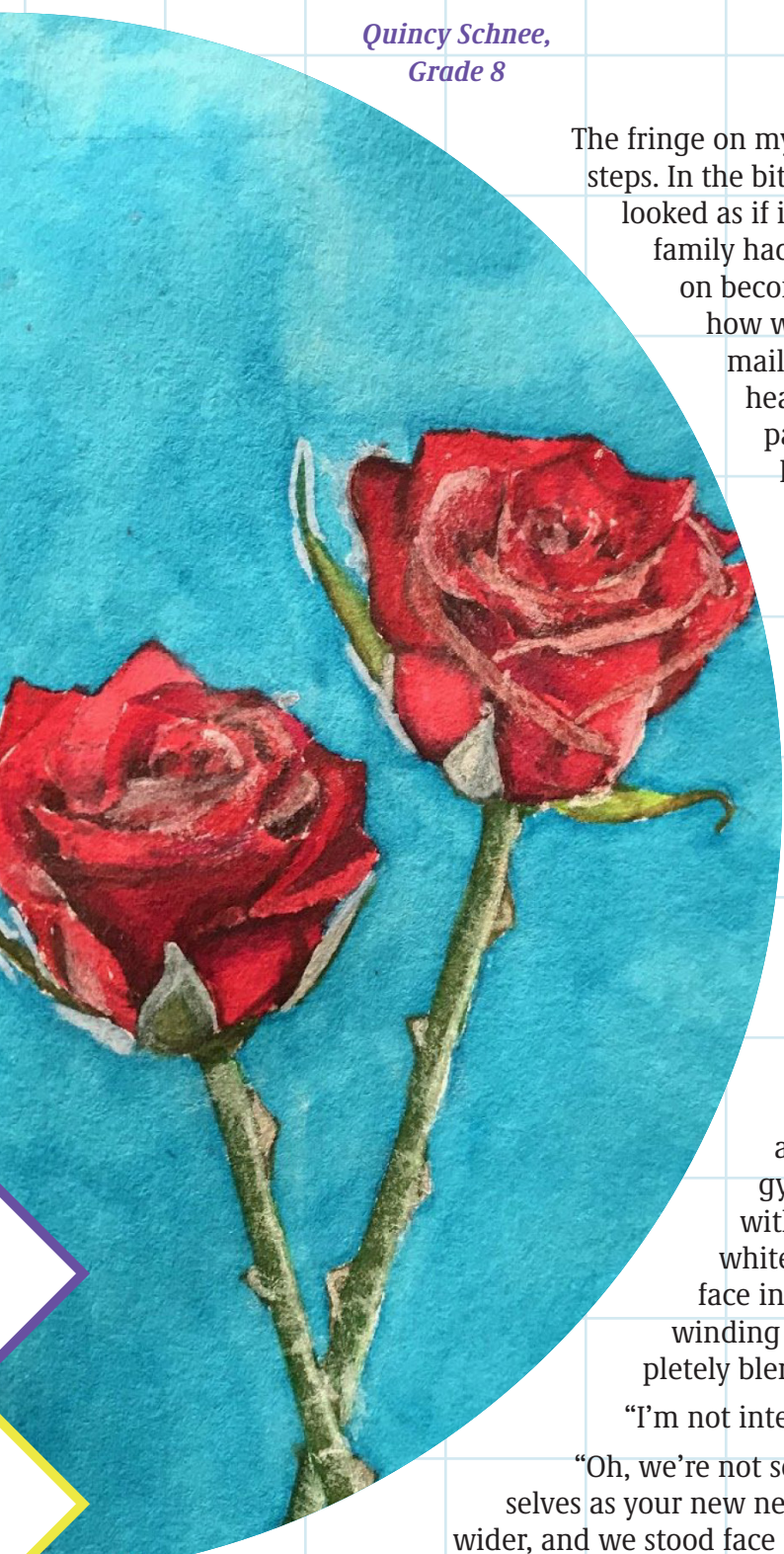
"I heard a sound!" the second man called back. This time, the voice was only two steps away. Fear shook my body violently, like a percussionist banging on a drum-set. I staggered backward a few inches and then I saw a gloved hand wrap around the side of the shack like a slithering snake. Even though my internal alarm system was blaring, I remained frozen. My mouth went dry, and my pupils expanded like they had seen something horrific. My heart pounded like a gong, and I felt a few icy drops of sweat trickle their way down my chalk-colored face.

"Markov! We have to leave!" the far voice repeated, this time sounding a little angrier than before. With those words, the hand clutching the corner dropped and swung away from the shack, leaving my petrified body safe, or at least, hopefully safe.

The doors of the van shut with a slam, and I heard the thundering engine rumble to life. The sound of tires screeching against the ground came next and in a murky wheeze of smoke, the van was gone.

*Maya Faulstich,
Grade 7*

Quincy Schnee,
Grade 8



The fringe on my brown boots shook as I walked down the bus steps. In the biting wind, I stood before a small black house that looked as if it had aged with the woman who lived inside. Our family had just moved to Maine and my mom had insisted on becoming acquainted with all of our neighbors. That's how we met Nina. We had seen her hobbling out to her mailbox, her white wispy hair in a halo around her head, leaning heavily on her cane. With a basket of pastries, my mother dragged all seven of us over to her house to say hello.

"Everyone needs to be on their best behavior. I don't want any fighting!" my mom commanded as we hustled down the gravel road. As we approached, our energy and giddiness melted away by the onset of the daunting black house that loomed before us. My youngest brother reached up on the tips of his toes to knock on the heavy door, weathered and battered from the tearing winds and pounding sun. A scuffling noise came from inside, the blinds parted slightly, and I caught a glimpse of an elderly woman peeking cautiously out the window. I could hear the deadbolt being unlatched from within, the sound resonating in my ears long after the door swung open only wide enough so that she could see us. Her maroon polyester pants hung straight to her ankles, hiding her thin frame as if it wasn't even there. She wore a wrinkled, baggy white blouse distraughtly tucked into her pants, with brown leather loafers to finish off the look. Her white hair, identical to Einstein's, framed her weathered face in a wispy frenzy. I glanced down to see a black cat winding itself repeatedly around her ankles, almost completely blending in with the shadows.

"I'm not interested in buying anything!" she exclaimed.

"Oh, we're not selling anything, we just wanted to introduce ourselves as your new neighbors," my mom replied. The door opened a little wider, and we stood face to face with a scowling woman. "We just moved in next door and we made some pastries for you to enjoy!" my mom thrust the basket out in front of her as if creating a barrier between herself and the woman.

"My name is Nina Colcord, I live here," she said roughly, snatching the basket from my mother's hands.

Nina (a true story)

Ella Brown, Grade 8

"We saw you getting your mail and thought that it might help if Ella brought it up to the house when she got home from school." My mom said as she placed a hand on my shoulder.

"I don't need any help," Nina retorted, "I am perfectly capable of taking care of myself."

"Well we would love to help in any way that we could, and we would love to get to know you better," my mom responded, speaking for all of us.

"Hmph," Nina exhaled, before closing the door in our faces.

As the winter passed and the snow banks came and went, one thing remained constant, the absence of footprints in Nina's driveway. So it was decided that I would bring her the mail every day. In return, Nina began teaching me Russian. In her firm Russian tone, Nina always pushed me to do my best. At first, I bristled at the lessons. "Mom, I don't understand how having Nina teach me Russian helps me." She responded by saying,

"Nina needs the social interactions, and other than you coming over, nobody ever visits her. You make her days more than just sitting in an empty house all alone." Alright, I thought, I'll do it for Nina.

I remember the day like it was yesterday. It was a chilly spring morning, the sun glinted off of the snow that refused to melt, and new leaves rustled in the wind. I banged on the door. Nina's hearing had been declining rapidly and when she heard that knock she knew it was me.

"Dobroye utro," she said, gesturing for me to sit down.

"Good morning," I replied stiffly. We started that lesson like we usually did, I pulled out my textbook and began to review what I had practiced over the week. She critiqued my work and tried to teach me some new phrases. Textbook after textbook was referenced and read from. Will this morning ever end? I thought. After about an hour we wound up on a textbook about Russia's history.

"Russia was a very hard place to grow up in during the Second World War," Nina started, I was shocked, I couldn't even fathom the idea that

she had experienced World War II herself. As Nina told her story it enveloped me, I felt like I was right there alongside her.

"Growing up in Russia during the war was very difficult. There was always a shortage of food, and people didn't have enough money to afford everyday objects. World War II had just begun and my sister Ana and I had been born right in the middle of it. Stalin had taken over and was set on controlling the entire country's thoughts and actions," a glazed look had spread across Nina's face as she sat staring out the window.

"Stalin was known to eliminate any possible threats. This included anyone who was educated like my father was, a well-known professor at a prestigious Russian university. One day he just didn't come home. At first, we thought he was just running late, but hours turned into days, and days turned into weeks. Eventually, we learned that he had been dragged from his own class and he was never seen again." At this point, Nina drew in a ragged breath before starting again.

"I was very young when this happened, about as young as you, but I understood that my life wasn't going to be easy. When I turned fourteen, Stalin put out an order that every single family had to dedicate one member for the war efforts. The option was simple, I had one younger sister and one mother to take care of her. Because of my education, I got out of the manual labor jobs. Instead, I worked as a translator in a German war hospital speaking German, Russian, English, and French. Many years later, the section of Germany I lived in was liberated and taken by America. Once again, we were under the control of outside forces, but this time it turned out for the better. John Cox was the name of the American officer in charge of my province. He forged me fake papers so that I could escape to America. First I went through France and there I met my first husband, who was an American, stationed in France. I waited until his time serving in France was up, and then we moved to Maine together. I was only nineteen at the time, but already so old."

Golden sunlight streamed through the window and for the first time I noticed all the lines

of worry, streaked across her face. As I walked home, I thought about everything Nina had told me. I couldn't possibly imagine leaving my family in a whole other country at such a young age. That day I realized why I had been too quick to judge her. She had been through so much, and it had hardened her character. Because of this, she often came across as harsh, but she was actually just a sweet and lonely lady. Nina slowly became more relevant in our lives. She was there when we needed her, when we were happy, sad and everything in between and eventually she became our grandmother.

Unfortunately, as time went on Nina's health began to slowly deteriorate. Her hearing got much worse and her memory started to fade. Her first husband died from shrapnel poisoning when Nina was only twenty-two years old. After that, she married a sailor, and they lived happily until he passed away when she was eighty years old. She would frequently forget that he had passed away and call 911 thinking her husband was lost at sea, desperate to get him home safe. Different in-home nurses were tried and rejected because Nina was too stubborn to accept the fact that she needed help. Eventually, it was decided that she would stay in a nursing home for her own health and safety.

Though I knew the day would eventually come, I never imagined it would come so soon. "Sweetie," my mom had said when I came home from school, "Nina is...nearing the end. She hasn't talked at all, and she has barely moved in the past couple of days. The nurses have been having a difficult time getting her to eat or take her medicine since she won't swallow anything." I stood there not quite registering her words. "I think we should go visit her."

"But we don't know that this will be the last time we see her. Right?" I asked, and although my words were met with silence, the answer was painfully clear.

The nursing home was like a graveyard. A heavy silence hung over the room occasionally interrupted by someone snoring, or a cough. It smelled of sickening cherry medicine and elderly people. When I saw her, I almost tripped over my own feet. She looked like the shell of the person I knew. She sat slouched in an overstuffed arm-

chair, her skin almost paper white, and all of her spunk sucked out of her. I walked over and touched her arm.

"Nina," I said hesitantly, "how are you?" Nina slowly opened her eyes to look up at me, they were hollow and filled with pain. I picked up the hairbrush and started combing her tangled, brittle white hair. My grandma, mom, and I each took turns asking her how she was doing, how she liked it here, and if there was anything we could get her. After about an hour, we gathered up our stuff and were getting ready to go. My grandma and mom each gave her a hug telling her they loved her, and then all of a sudden I was standing in front of her. I felt shy for no reason, I didn't know what to say to the person I could say anything to. What if this is the last time I ever see her? What if I don't say the right thing? Reaching forward I gingerly picked up her weathered hand. I stood there for a minute looking at the woman who had become such an important part of my life. I wrapped my arms around her limp figure, with my head resting on her shoulder. A warm tear rolled down my cheek.

"I love you, grandmother," I whispered. She looked up, her milky eyes swimming, and squeezed my hand one last time before letting go.

Three months later I stood behind her vacant house, wearing a white dress and those brown fringe boots. The autumn breeze whispered through the woods as a select group of Nina's close friends stood in a circle. Poetry was read and a blessing was said in her honor. The wooden handle of Nina's garden trowel dipped into her ashes, as I finally laid her to rest next to her husband, on the stone wall overlooking her beautiful garden. This was Nina's story, the story of a young teenage immigrant who came all the way from Russia and settled down in a quiet town in Maine. This was the story of a woman who became so much more than was expected, becoming a professor at Bowdoin College. This is the story of courage and bravery, but most importantly love. If I had judged her without getting to truly know her, I would have missed out on an important part of my life. I learned that even the hardest of people have a kind and loving heart inside of them if only someone takes the time to find it.

THE REAL STORY OF HANSEL AND GRETEL

Norah Mills, Grade 8

I have been waiting my whole life to set a few things straight. First of all, you humans seem to think that every witch is a wicked witch. I mean, come on! Not every witch is wicked. That is like saying that every dog is brown. Sure, there was the Wicked Witch of the West, and yes, she was truly evil, but almost all of your other "Wicked Witches" were simply misunderstood. Like me. My name is Gabrielle, and I am a good witch through and through.

My other issue: you seem to think that you know the real story of Hansel and Gretel. The thing is, you don't. Nobody but me knows the real story, because whoever first wrote about Hansel and Gretel never interviewed me. Believe me, if they had, Hansel and Gretel would have turned out very differently. I know what you are thinking, and yes, I am the witch from the story Hansel and Gretel, and no, that does not mean that I am a wicked witch. I am a good witch, through and through. It was those children, those nasty little liars with overactive imaginations named Hansel and Gretel who were the wicked ones. Well, maybe not. The whole situation was simply a lot of misunderstandings, but the bottom line is that my side never got told.

I am going to tell you my story now, and so even if you don't believe me, I would appreciate it if you would listen.

You will be the only person who will know the real story of Hansel and Gretel.

A couple of years back I was baking a birthday feast for my aunt's birthday. Good ole Glinda was turning 1001, a milestone birthday in the life of a witch. Auntie Glinda had had a hard life, she was known as Glinda, The Good Witch of the South, and watching over Oz is no easy job. She deserved a good 1001st birthday. I was just taking a three-layered cake out of the oven when I saw something out the window that nearly made me drop it straight into the fire. A boy was eating my mailbox.

Perhaps I should backtrack a bit. You are no doubt wondering the story behind my candied house. No, it wasn't because I wanted to draw children in so I could eat them, it was because I am an avid unicorn watcher. Yes, unicorns are real, they, like us, have just learned to stay far away from humans. In the world of magic, they are as common as birds, attracted by sugar instead of birdseed. I have seen 41 out of the 56 species of unicorns in the world, and it is my life's goal to see them all. With this goal in mind, I started to build a sugar-coated house, but then I thought Why stop there? I figured that if I built a house made of entirely candy, any unicorns passing by would be more likely to stop, and my house would have a more aesthetic appeal. As it turns

out Amazon's two-day shipping policy does not include enchanted forests, but they do sell oversized candy items for reasonably low prices.

My candied house worked great, unicorns frequented it very often, but it also attracted another exotic creature I had not thought of: children.

Back to the problem: the boy eating my mailbox. See, if I was a wicked witch, I would have turned that boy into a toadstool or something. But, as I said, I am not a wicked witch. So, being the good witch that I am, I invited the bothersome child and his sister inside.

My mother, or Mama Witch as I called her, always told me: "Don't talk to strangers, especially human ones." I guess I should have followed her advice, because Hansel and Gretel were bad news and fit under both categories.

Hansel and Gretel told me their sob story, and I must admit, I felt bad for them. What kind of parent leaves their children alone in the woods because they can't afford to feed them? After getting to know Hansel and Gretel however, I could see why. Those kids were a piece of work.

The first thing Hansel did when I opened my door was run straight for Glinda's birthday feast.

"I'm hungry!!!!!" He screamed, "Wow, look at all this delicious food. Thanks!"

He said through a mouthful of cake.

While I was preoccupied dealing with Hansel, Gretel slipped into my bedroom and tried to pet my cat. Luckily, I had trained Pussy well, and he promptly chomped down on Gretel's finger.

"Yeeeeouch!" shrieked Gretel as blood spurted everywhere, staining my sheets, "Your cat hurt me."

I knew I was in for a hard time. Hansel and Gretel would destroy my house if I didn't find a solution soon, and you can't exactly pick up candy lumber at Home Depot. Luckily, I had a brilliant idea. "Guess what guys! I just thought of the perfect place for you two to spend the night. It's safe from all the dangerous animals and has two soft beds." I said as I hustled Hansel and Gretel through my back door and into my shed. "Now, please stay here until tomorrow morning." I could only hope that they stayed there.

Later that night I woke up with a splitting headache. No doubt those children and their piercing screams had caused it. Speaking of those kids...through the wall behind my bed, I could hear them talking.

"I think she is a witch," whispered Gretel, "I saw some sorcery books on her bedside table."

"I think she is going to eat us," insisted Hansel, "She fed us all that food so she must mean

to fatten us up and then cook us. Why else would she make us eat all that?"

"Oh no," squeaked Gretel, "We must run into the village and get the sheriff. He will come back and kill her, and then we can live in this house all by ourselves. We will have all the candy we can eat!"

"That'll show our parents," announced Hansel, "They thought we'd starve!"

I lay back on my bed, sickened. I am a vegetarian! I would never eat children! In retrospect, I should have gotten rid of those children that very minute. But I didn't. After all, I am a good witch.

The next morning I woke up early, intent on baking some bread and soup for my aunt Glinda's birthday. Those children had eaten all my food, and 1001 only comes around once in a lifetime. I decided that once Hansel and Gretel woke up I would explain to them very kindly that yes, I was a witch, but a good one, I was not planning to eat them, and that if they would be so inclined, they would leave my home and never come back. I was even planning on giving them enough food to last a lifetime tucked in a paper bag filled with magic so they would leave my house without complaint.

It turned out that I should have woken them up right then and there.

I went into the garden shed to

grab my basket so I could collect some vegetables. I crept in, my bare feet soft on the wood because this was where Hansel and Gretel were sound asleep. I grabbed my basket and left, congratulating myself on not waking them up. Unfortunately, I unknowingly locked the door behind me, my basket catching on the lock. I did not notice and went about my garden, picking peas and carrots for Auntie Glinda's soup.

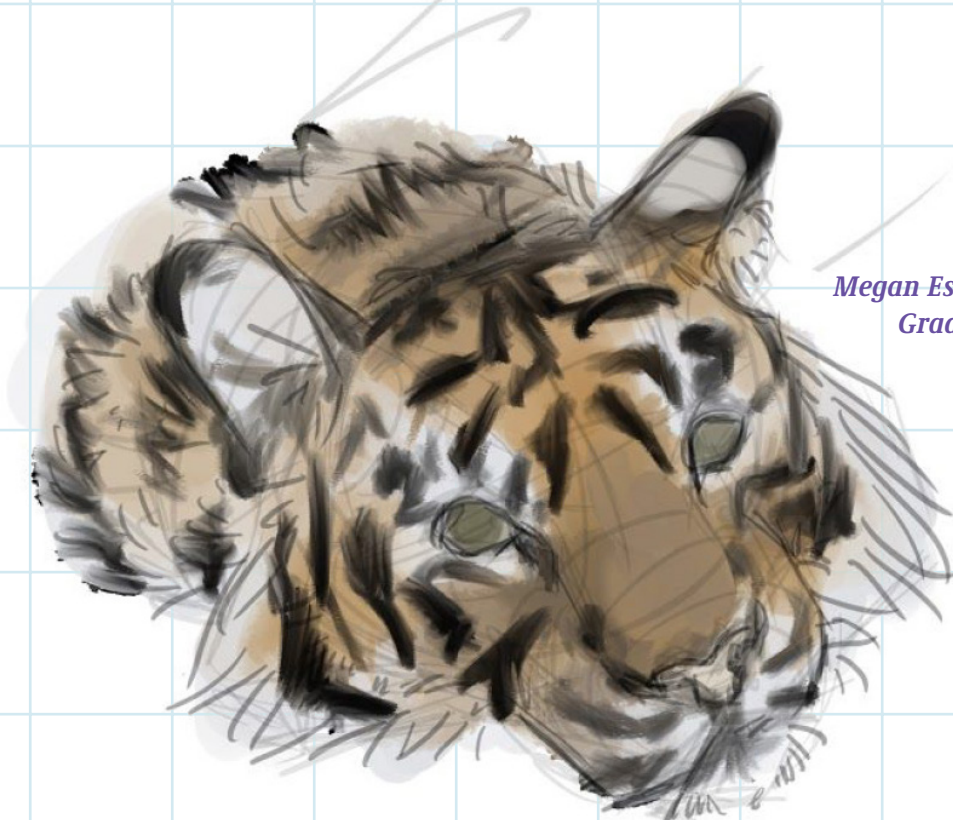
Once I was done, I went back inside my house and started to make some soup. I can only assume what happened inside the shed, for I was listening to my favorite musical (Wicked - a musical about another misunderstood witch), and could not hear a thing.

I'm guessing that Hansel and Gretel woke up and realized they were locked inside. They probably saw through the window that I was boiling a pot of water, not realizing it was for soup.

They must have thought that this was part of my master plan to eat them, and I will admit, at this point the evidence against me was overwhelming, but if they had just stopped to talk all could have been explained.

Needless to say, they didn't.

Instead, they broke through my shed window, planning to alert the sheriff. Then, Gretel saw me and decided that she could be the hero instead. (She was a selfish child)



Megan Estabrook,
Grade 8

Unfortunately, at that very moment, I was about to put my bread in the oven. At the time I had a very old, finicky, oven that you had to light by hand. When Gretel spotted me, I had my back to her and was essentially half in the oven so I could light it.

Gretel crept behind me, no doubt wanting to be the hero that saved her brother from the wicked witch. She pushed with all of her might, and I fell into the oven, completely surprised.

Coincidentally enough my soundtrack was just blasting out the final lyrics of "No One Mourns the Wicked" as heat overwhelmed me, the flames overtaking me and scalding every surface of my body. I struggled, trying to get out, but it was hopeless. I thought that I might have the same fate as Elphaba, who in the very song I was listening to dies alone and misunderstood, but then I realized that there was a chance I could break the glass of the oven, for it was extremely thin and old.

Gretel twisted up her face, full of anger and triumph, and shouted loud enough for me to hear "You deserve to die, you wicked old witch." With that, she and her brother ran out of my life forever.

I may be a witch, but I am not that powerful. It took me a long time to break out of that oven, and only after sustaining third-degree burns.

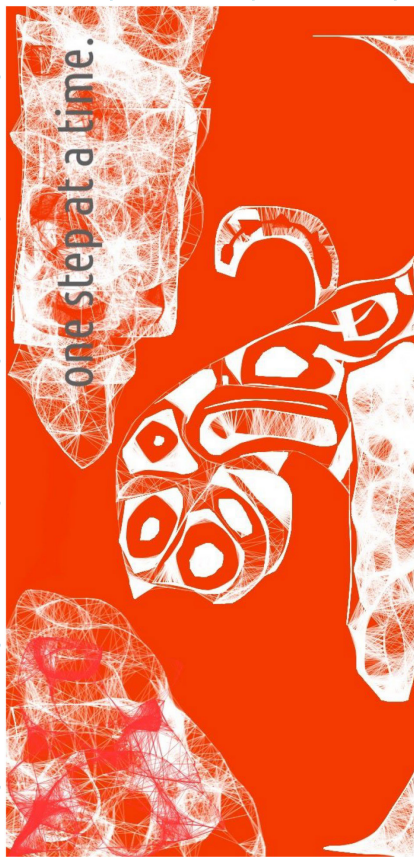
After I had bandaged my wounds, I packed up all my stuff. I knew it was only a matter of time before an angry mob of fire-wielding townspeople came to my door.

I moved to Witchy Acres, a retirement home for witches, and do you know what? Ever since that day I have always followed Mama Witch's advice: "Don't talk to strangers, especially human ones." I learned firsthand how inviting strangers into your home can hurt you. Every time a little witch comes to my door selling Witchscout cookies, I see Gretel's spiteful face in my head and close the door behind me, making sure to buy the cookies outside.

I'm pretty sure I now have the reputation as the neighborhood Crazy Witch, but I would rather be known as that than as the Burned-to-a-crisp Witch. I'm not taking any chances. So far, I am the only witch to have survived the stories of the Brothers Grimm. Dame Gothel, the witch from Rapunzel, was attacked with a pair of scissors wielded by Rapunzel. Ursula, from The Little Mermaid, was brought above the sea and air-drowned. The "Evil" Queen from Snow White (whose real name was Kate) was bombarded by lead apples. No thank you! I am perfectly happy as long as I am alive.

It's a dangerous world for a witch, good or not.

The End



*Leah Carroll,
Grade 6*

GIVE UP

Maya Faulstich, Grade 7

Give up sitting dutifully at your desk.
 There is a world beyond your papers piled miles high
 A world beyond the constant clickety-clack of everyone sitting,
 recording numbers and meaningless words.
 If you turned around for one short moment
 If you took one breath before you started again, your brow furrowed at the ink
 If you paused to refresh your fingers madly clacking away
 You might notice the bird at your minuscule office window
 Trying to sing you a song
 If you took a moment to pull up the shade
 You might notice how the sun shines
 And casts a radiant light across the floor
 You might notice how stunning the perfectly blue cloudless sky is
 If you just opened the door

Inspired by Ron Koertge (whose first line this was)



*Megan Estabrook,
Grade 8*



*Matilda Murray,
Grade 8*

The King

Bobby Wolff, Grade 7

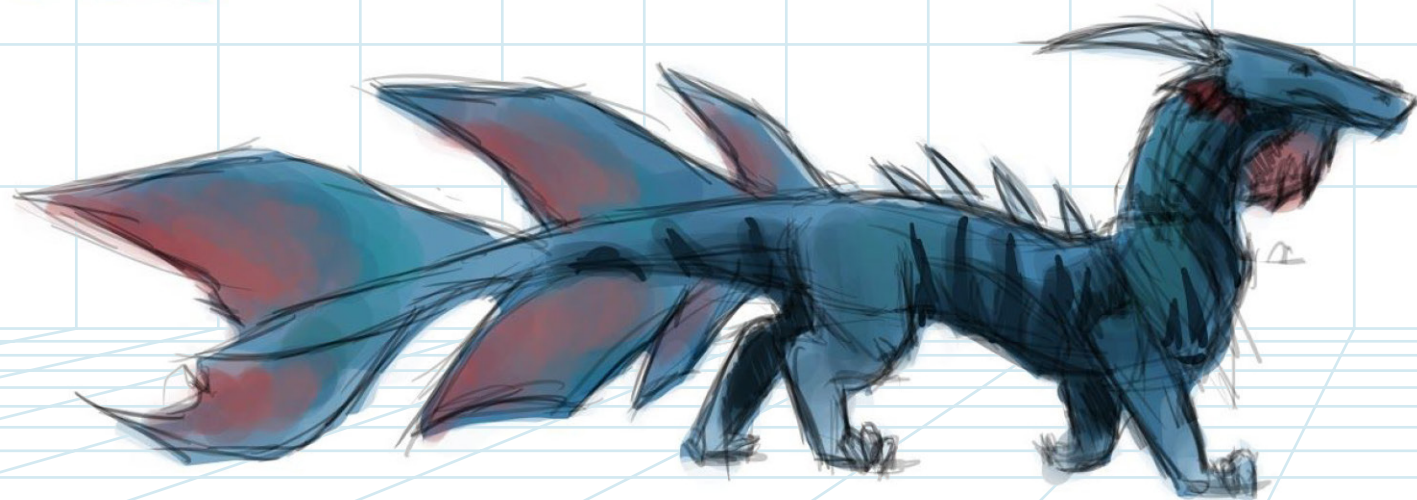
Many months atop a throne can do things to one's head,
 Although I think our king, before his reign, was already brain dead,
 With his orange crown, three oily hairs, and his crooked smirk,
 He'll promulgate his every whim, that dotty, haughty jerk,
 His Brobdingnagian avarice would make a banker quake,
 And when he saunters across the castle floors,
 He makes the palace shake,
 He constantly reminds us of his genius I.Q.
 But if you heard him speak, then you would know,
 that this is quite untrue,
 Our hostile and vile king is so completely iniquitous,
 But yet his supporters seem to be, located on every street, there are
 probably five sitting next to me, as they seem to be ubiquitous,
 I've never, ever known a man who was so narcissistic,
 He has no brain, he's vain, insane, and very egotistic,
 He only loves himself, he's dumb, he's idiosyncratic,
 He miserly and cold, that bum,
 and his thoughts are all sporadic,
 The thing that's most annoying about our domineering emir,
 Is that we the town gave him the crown,
 when we elected him last year.



Ava Fox, Grade 7



*Megan Estabrook,
Grade 8*



*Matilda Murray,
Grade 8*

*Cassidy Chambers,
Grade 6*



spring sonnet

Anonymous, Grade 8

Spring brings changes of the autumnal kind
 the breezes sing and the treetops whistle
 morning dew on a thorny thistle
 summer daydreams bring to mind
 childhood days when you would find
 grasshoppers launching as if a missile
 and a groudhogs shadow that prevents dismissal
 a stealthy toad hides in a swampy blind
 hunting flies among the flower
 whose colors shine more than ever
 as morning glories daily unfold
 again reborn each morning hour
 the springtime song of the zephyr
 bids adieu to the cold

The Keeper

Eli Snow, Grade 7, Illustration by Megan Estabrook, Grade 8

Hot. Alexander White could only think that of the weather on his slow paperboy route. It was dark on this early Autumn morning and the boy could hear the chirps of birds and the blowing of leaves. His bike tires crushed tiny pebbles on the cracked and dented sidewalk, which amused him. Alex reached his hand from the handlebar to his bag and yanked a paper from it. Prerolled and wrapped with a limp rubber band, he tossed it onto the Moores' front porch. The paper toppled and rolled until it landed finally on the door mat. He resumed his biking. The wind nearly blew his cap off and he had to shove it in his bag to keep it from flying away. Though he swore he couldn't hear this, it seemed that the wind always blew funny whispers his way. This time it shouted. He looked to the left and saw nothing unusual there. The houses - of course - were where they were, the trees were still there, and even the baseball little Gage was playing with was still stuck on the Water-sons' roof. Walking outside, Gage stood on the porch Alex waved to him but Gage just stared at him from the front steps. He had a scared look on his face. This early a 6 year old like him should not have been awake. His eyes were completely white and his mouth was gaping. He looked frightened. Suddenly, Gage collapsed, fell on the many steps and bled all over. He toppled off the porch and landed on the sidewalk. His entire face was red with blood by now. His nose was bent. His elbow cracked. Alex forced his feet backwards to make his bike stop and it did, very suddenly. He went flying and landed on his hands. He looked up and ran to help Gage, only when he crossed the street, the boy wasn't there. All that remained of him was the baseball and blood. Lots and lots of blood.

When Alex got back to his house, he took

his cap and bag off, went to the couch, and turned on the TV. Animaniacs was on, but he never really liked that show. He started browsing. Seinfeld, Full House, The Simpsons, then something stuck out. It was a name. Not just any name, though - it was his. He clicked on it and saw nothing but a blank screen. A shadow flashed. A shaded ancient photo of a sad family, A young father and mother to a young boy and a girl, twins. Footsteps. Black and white, that was it. He saw the same

family, the same picture, only the children were missing. The picture left. Flash-bangs. Screenings. Light and dark. There the family is, again! Still as depressed as before, and the children were back, but something was off. It was something with them. Their eyes, that was it. Their eyes were blank and their mouths were wide. They looked dead and yet another shadow flashed by. Alex just barely caught

the shape. For only a second he saw it but the image burned in his mind. There was a black mound flying by. What looked like a person was there. Only the person was skinny and dirty, like a rat in the sewers. In flashes Alex saw phrases, strobe lights and even more pictures. He looked through them and saw more and more children with blank eyes and wide mouths, more families, more kids. The faster it went, the scarier it got. Speeches.

Eyes. Black - no, white.

Flashing.

Through all

and tears slowly came to his eyes. His mom stumbled down the stairs drunkenly. She looked half awake. It was about 7:00 by now and the woman drowsily drunkenly slid into the kitchen. She started making breakfast and asked Alex twice if he wanted breakfast. The first time he said nothing but by the second responded quickly

"No, I'm alright, thank you," He said.

His mother looked into the living room and Alex stared back. Her mouth was forged into a large smile and her eyes were red and as big as apples. Her eyebrows were tall and wild. Her face was twisted. Alex blinked and she looked normal again. Was he going crazy?

Alex got off the couch with a grunt and went to the breakfast table.

"Honey? Are you okay? You look like you've seen a ghost."

Under his breath, Alex said he had. He began to explain everything. Gage, the TV, even her. She didn't respond for quite some time. Looked at her food and said nothing. Suddenly, she looked up. Straight at him. Her face from before looked at him again.

She spoke in a hoarse, horrible voice.

"You."

Alex looked up.

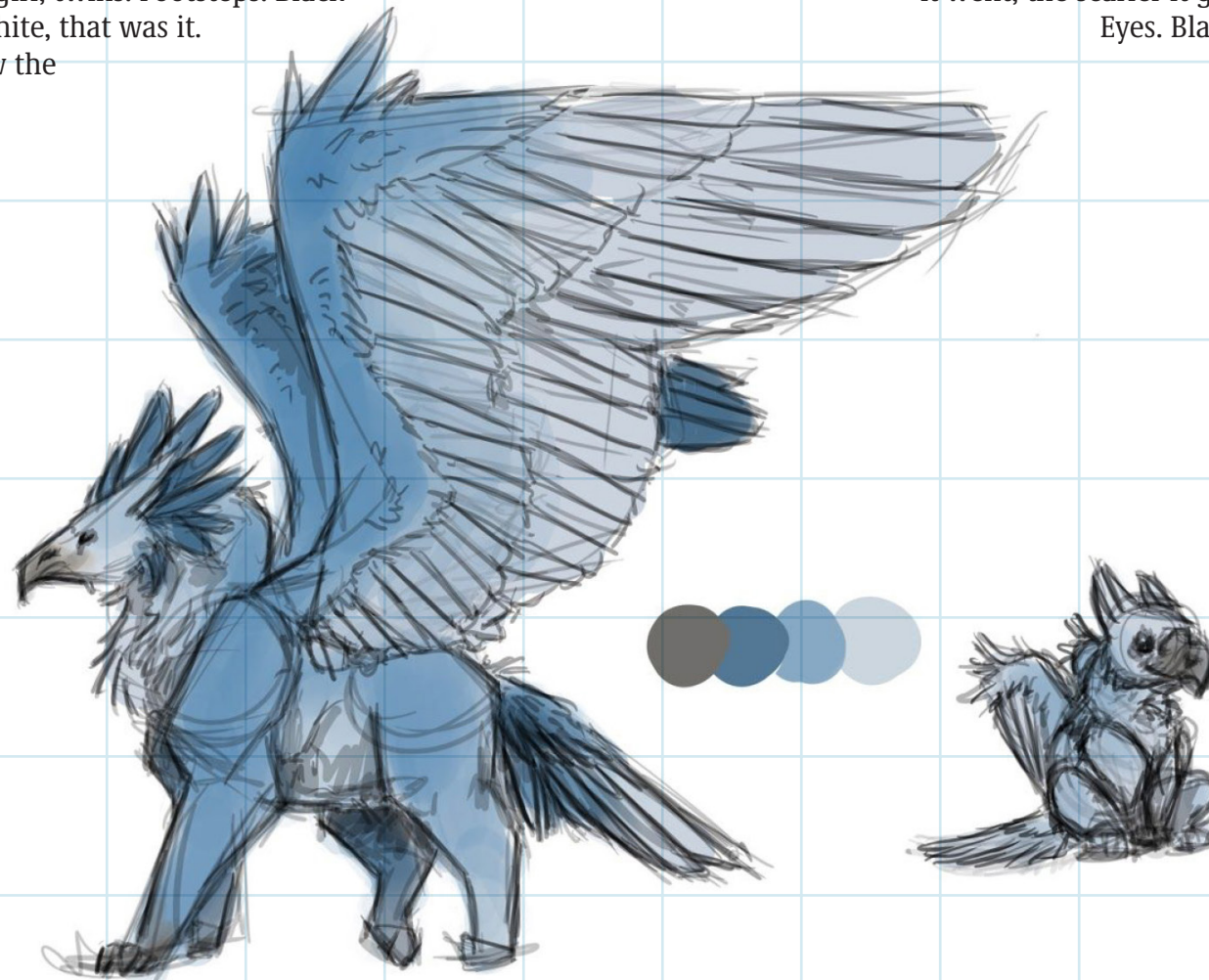
"Are."

He screamed. "Stop it!" Alex got up and started to run. The beast chased him. Her hands turned into claws and her face turned into a joyful snarl. He leaped out of the doorway and the monster of a mother followed him. As he arrived at

The next day at school, Alex plowed through the day. He gave no attention to his teachers or his homework but when school was out, he grabbed his friend by the arm and whispered

of this terror one thing specifically shone clear to him like crystal. Everything on the screen froze and disappeared except for a single thing the remained. He saw two words that made him forget his fear of everything from before. You're next.

Alex simply stared at the screen. He was frozen. His mouth hung from his jaw. in horror



to him to follow.

"Gabriel, I need you. Now." Alex's eyes narrowed.

"Hey man, I can't just- OW!" his grip tightened,

"Now."

The friends walked to Gabe's house after school that day. Didn't walk, ran. Alex kept looking behind and around himself as if someone was looking. Alex was sure someone was.

"Dude. Are you okay?" Gabe looked scared for Alex

"I'm fine. Keep walking." He gravely replied.

When they arrived at the house, Gabe's father was inside waiting and making dinner. The children dropped their bags and kicked off their shoes. They said hi to Gabe's little brother, Sal, and rushed upstairs to his room. They rushed inside and slammed the door behind them. It was a regular 90's boy's room like any other, posters on the walls, comic books on the floor. Alex suddenly started checking all the crevices and hiding spots in the room, as if someone was there with them. He even checked under the bed like a child looking for monsters. Gabe scratched his head.

"What was it you wanted to talk to me about, again?"

"You think I'm crazy, don't you?" Alex turned around and had a frightened and tired look on his face.

"I mean yeah a little," Gabe replied, "you've been acting weird all day. At school when you kept looking out the window and behind you. When you grabbed my arm that hard on our way here," He pushed up his sleeve and revealed the bruise to Alex. "What's gotten into you, man?" Alex turned and looked Gabe dead in the eyes.

"I know this may seem absurd, but you'll have to believe me. I saw some weird things yes-

terday. Things that shouldn't have happened. Things that shouldn't be... possible." Gabes eye-brows raised and Alex continued explaining.

"The other day, Sunday, I was delivering the papers. Everything was going as gloomy as usual only, well, know that kid Gage? He..." Alex trailed off and started mumbling. "He died. When I looked at him I saw that his eyes were... white. Not just white, but his pupils were gone. Actually gone. His eyes hadn't rolled back, I would've seen the red parts of them, the pupil was just gone. Then I looked down," He started to cry. "His mouth looked too wide to even connect to his jaw. It looked like it had been ripped off. Little Gage fell down the steps of his porch, as if he were dead. As he hit each step, blood would fly and stain them. He landed on the sidewalk as the ground came up to meet him. It was terrible. Right when I passed the telephone pole, he was gone. Just disappeared."

The boys looked down at the ground. No one said a word. Alex told the rest. The TV, his mother, even how he felt. Like a madman, Alex would start to raise his voice or make noises as the scary parts came. When he was finished, Gabe simply stared at Alex. they both knew Gabe thought he was lying.

"I think," Gabe started. "This is a job for adults." He backed up slowly. Alex's eyebrow raised. "I know you think that Gabe but I already told you, when I talked to my mom about it, she didn't believe me. She didn't know. She thought I was crazy, everyone does now. But you of all people have to believe me."

Suddenly, Gabe's eyes widened and he stopped moving towards the door. Not at Alex, no, behind him. Through the window. Alex turned and saw it. He screamed.

It was the thing. The monster, from before. On the TV.

And it was coming for them...

ROGET'S THESAURUS

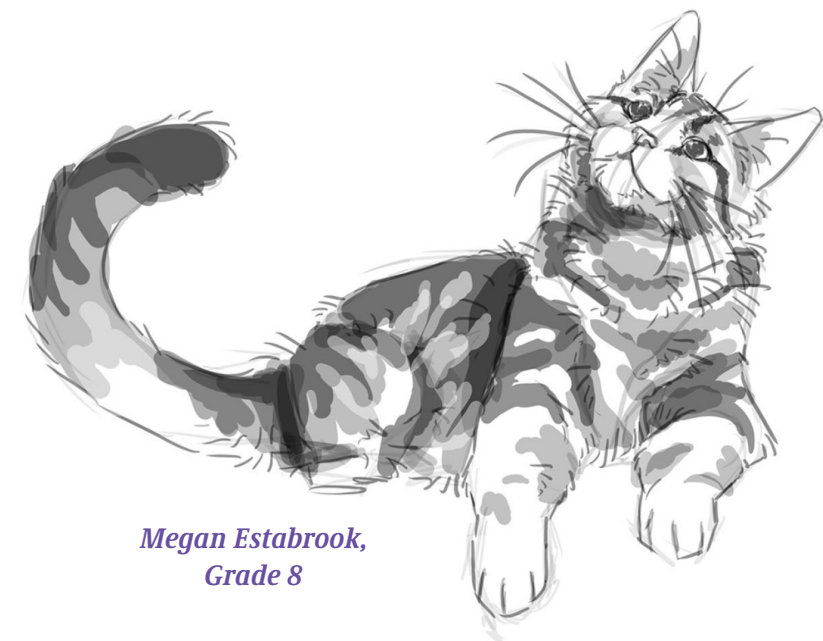
Coltrane Vitalius, Grade 5

What are these pages bound together before us?
Why, it's a wonderful copy of Roget's Thesaurus.

Will this bundle of pages ever bore us?
No! 'Cause this is a copy of Roget's Thesaurus.

Can we find another word for tyrannosaurus?
Of course we can! This is Roget's Thesaurus.

Will this book ever be scary?
No! Because this isn't the New Merriam Webster's Updated
Revised Reviewed way too long titled Dictionary.



*Megan Estabrook,
Grade 8*

BACK COVER: Ava Fox, Grade 7



LUCINDA
2020

And so, my tale comes to an end. for now..

HARRISON MIDDLE SCHOOL, YARMOUTH MAINE