

THE GRAYHOUND GRAVEYARD

A collection of scary stories and original artwork
by Burlington students





ABOUT THIS BOOK

“The Grayhound Graveyard” is a compilation of horror stories written by Burlington students.

More than 130 stories were submitted by students in the Burlington Community School District’s first-ever Scary Story Writing Contest.

From those entries, a panel of judges selected first-, second-, and third-place winners for

each building level, as well as honorable mention in some cases.

The artwork accompanying these writings was provided courtesy of students in Burlington High School’s Visual Arts Achievement Program.

Thank you to all who participated.

Read on if you dare!



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THE HAUNTED MANSION

*By Emersyn Baker, 2nd grade, Black Hawk Elementary School
Honorable Mention*

Once upon a time, there was an abandoned house and ghosts have been haunting it.

And know one ever wants to go inside because people say that when you go inside you never come out.

Until... one day a few kids decided to go inside. They never believed in the story but what they didn't know was that it was TRUE.

So they went there and when they went inside and when they opened the door, the door made a weird sound.

"Creek."

The little girl jumped in fright so she kept on walking. Then the door SHUT and she screamed and she said to herself, "Oh, great. I'm inside a totally haunted house."

But she still didn't believe the story and so she went on walking.

She saw a clock dangling and she thought that it was suspicious. She started to get a little scared, but she kept on walking.

She went upstairs and there is a

**'YOU ARE
MY NEXT
VICTIM'**

balcony but it had a big crack and then she almost fell so she ran into the hallway and then the lights flickered and she jumped in fright.

She ran downstairs and into the kitchen, but she looked around and she said "EW it's so gross" and then she heard a voice.

"Come here. I just want to play."

She said, "No. Who are you? This is scary. I don't like this."

But she didn't care. She said, "Well I'm in here so I guess I'll just try to be brave and just look around."

And then she went into the secret movie theater and she looked around and in one seat there was

blood, a lot of it, and she started to wish she never went in here.

She said "I should've listened to the story."

Then she kept on walking and then she saw a body by the blood and then she walked down all the stairs and then she looked back and all there was just dead bodies.

She ran out of the movie theater room and then she heard a voice.

"You are my next victim."

Then she went back upstairs and she saw a little girl's room and a very creepy doll. She went out of the room and she looked around and there was no other rooms in the house, but then she found stairs and they didn't look familiar so she went up the stairs and up the stairs was an attic.

The window in the attic was broken and she almost fell, so she ran all the way down stairs and she tried to open the door but it was locked and she started to cry and she was never to be seen AGAIN.

The end...or is it?

THE EVIL DOLL

*By Natalie Hicke, 4th grade, Black Hawk Elementary School
3rd Place*

Once there was a family who lived in a small town named Tiny Ville.

They were celebrating Christmas and they were shopping for Christmas presents.

“Dad, I want to go home. I already got presents for you guys,” said the kid.

“Fine, I will call your mother to come get you. Besides, that will give me time to get your present,” said Dad.

“Mom’s here, bye Dad,” said the kid.

Now what would she like, thought Dad. Look at that doll, she will love it and it’s perfect because Christmas is tomorrow.

The kid said, “Dad, you finally came home! So what did you get me?”

“You just have to wait for tomorrow,” said Dad.

Then they had dinner and then it was time for bed.

“Good night, Dad,” said the kid.

“Goodnight, sweetie,” said Dad.



Jerri Allison, 9th grade

**'THE DOLL DAD
GOT ME IS
ALIVE.'**

Finally, he went to bed and it was time for the kid to see what he got her.

As she walked down the stairs, she saw something running by the stairs, but it was so fast so she did not see what it was.

The kid went back to bed, but she could not sleep because she was

scared. She closed her eyes trying to sleep, but when she opened my eyes, there it was, the monster!

What? That’s not a monster, that’s a doll. Was that her present? Where did it go? Is it in the kitchen?

It’s holding a knife!

“Nice doll, I mean no harm,” she said.

“Hello,” it said.

The girl screamed, then her parents jumped out of bed and asked why she screamed.

The kid said, “The doll Dad got me is alive.”

They said the kid was imagining it. Then dad asked, “Did you open up my present?”

The kid said, “No, it opened itself! There it is!”

Then her parents saw it and realized she was not imagining it and it was holding a knife.

The doll said, “I’m going to get you.”

The kid grabbed a knife and hacked it up into small pieces and that was the end of the evil doll.

THE 2 DAYS OF THE DOLL

*By Jaxston Waller, 4th grade, Black Hawk Elementary School
2nd Place*

One night I was walking with my mom and saw a doll.

I asked my mom if I could have it. She said yes and I was so happy. That night my friends came over and I showed them my new doll. Then my mom came in and said, "Go to sleep, girls."

My mom said good night and closed the door. That night my friend woke me up and said, "Where's your doll?"

I said, "I don't know where it's at."

Then we head footsteps walking up the stairs.

"Mom, is that you?" I said.

Nothing was said.

The door opened and the doll was standing there looking at us.

We woke up my other friends and we were screaming help. My mom walked in and said, "What is it?"

She saw the doll on the floor laying down. She was like, "What is the matter?"

We looked at her and said, "Th- th- th- the doll was standing up and looking at us and sh- sh- she was walking."

My mom said, "You guys were just have a nightmare."

We said it was real but she didn't believe us. We said we didn't want to go back to bed. Mom said, "You have to," and she left.

The next day we got a rope and tied up the doll. Then we tried to throw it away and then we went in my room and it was tied up on my bed.

We got my brother and then we told him to throw it away. He did it. Then the doll was in the kitchen by the forks and spoon.

She threw one at my brother and he told me and my friends to run. We all were running.

We ran to my mom but the doll was right behind us. We ran in my mom's room and then we locked the door.

My mom said, "What's banging on the door?"

"The doll," we said.

"How is the doll moving?" my mom said.

I didn't know.

The doll then broke in the room

'WHAT'S BANGING ON THE DOOR?'

and my mom kicked it and we were running.

Then she was right at the front door. My mom said, "How did she do that?"

We said just "RUN!"

The doll had a fork and I was so scared. Then we ran to the basement to make a plan.

My brother had one. He said, "We could get outside get in the shed and then lock the doll in there."

Mom said that it was a good idea. My friends said that they would stay down here.

I said, "I started this, now I have to end it. I'm coming with whether you like it or not."

We ran to the back yard and then she had a fork I said it won't hurt you.

We were in the shed. Then we jumped over her and closed the door then locked it.



THE FIRE ALARM

By Milo Osbourne, 4th grade, Black Hawk Elementary School
1st Place

One day at my school the fire alarm went off. There was no fire drill scheduled for that day. Everyone was thinking, “why is the fire alarm going off?”

We went outside and it ended up that there was not a fire. We all thought that it was a child who pulled it.

The next day I went to the office because I was not feeling too good and I may have kind of peeked at what they were doing. They were looking at the security cam footage. Then, at the same time they saw it, I saw it.

Exactly 10 seconds before the fire alarm went off, the footage changed from what it was to a guy in a rabbit mask. He tilted his head and said, “Give us all the teachers money or else there will be consequences.” The rest of the footage was static.

Then there was a scream from down the hall. The principal looked down then let out a shriek of her own. Everyone else, including me, looked down and saw the body of my classmate laying on the ground. We all left the office and the principal checked their heartbeat.

He was still alive, but he had

‘I AM NOT SURE IF THIS IS AN ACTUAL FIRE ALARM.’

fainted.

When he got up, all he could say was “help, help” very faintly.

The next day the fire alarm went off again and we all went outside.

“I am not sure if this is an actual fire alarm,” I said.

“I bet it is just a surprise fire drill,” said my friend Cason.

After he said that, I told him about the security footage. I lightly whispered to him, “I am guessing that they pulled the alarm again.”

“Don’t be such a scaredy cat,” he said.

Right then a black Chevrolet pulled up and people with weapons and rabbit masks walked out of every door. They all had different weapons.

Everyone was freaking out and we all ran in different directions. I got to my grandparents’ house because it’s close enough to the school that I can see it during recess.



Gwen Bilderback, 10th grade

When I got there, I went upstairs. I turned a corner and saw one of the rabbit masked people. I was gonna go downstairs, but then saw a rabbit masked person down there too. I took a chair and threw it through a window. I crawled through. I ran home and they never bothered me again. In fact, no one I knew ever saw them again.

The only problem was the police never caught them so they might still be somewhere, hiding, planning their next attack, but for now, I don’t know. There was one question still gnawing at me, will they attack again, and if so, when and where. We all knew they could hurt us badly. I was forever changed.

FLOWERS DON'T GROWL

*By Mayliana Fox, 6th grade, Aldo Leopold Intermediate School
Honorable Mention*

It was a very stormy day, and an old man named Gareth Miller set out with his dog, Dakoda, to go on a final lap around this farm.

Dakoda was a Great Dane. She was very intimidating, and his friends would always ask if she would bite them.

He walked to his barn, which housed chickens, pigs, and a few cows. They were heading back when they heard an ear-ringing bellow. It practically shook the ground.

Gareth thought it was one of his bulls that got out of their pen, as he walked through the pitch black trail.

As soon as he got near a darker area, his dog growled. This area seemed to not have the moonlight shining down.

A swift figure roamed around them, a low hiss escaping its chest. His dog snarled softly. Gareth had a feeling that this wasn't a bull.

He ran home, his dog ahead of him. When he got inside, he locked his doors and headed to his bedroom, breathing heavily.

He felt like an anvil was on his chest. The house felt like it was

shaking and the world seemed loud. It all soon stopped. A moment of absolute silence rang his ears.

The next morning he noticed his dog was gone. She always had waited for Gareth to open the door but he was asleep. He looked for her inside, she wasn't able to be found.

He went outside and there she was, she looked ill, or dead. He did his chores, convincing himself it was a mountain lion. Night came around and he was at a bush, a flower bush his dead wife had planted.

Suddenly the bush let out a low rumble.

Flowers don't growl.

He looked behind him. There was his ill-looking dog, with an exasperated look on her face.

He ran into his house, his dog scratching at this door, practically slicing it open. His house phone rang, it sounded distorted. He ran to answer it, begging for help over and over.

His wife's voice spoke, "Open the door."

It echoed in Gareth's ears. She spoke louder, and louder, her voice

getting deep.

A screech was heard, his dog limping from the basement. She looked traumatized. A crash was heard, a slim figure crashed around the kitchen, roaring and tearing apart cabinets, tossing them aside in a fit of rage and anger.

It had a deer skull for its face, a bony appearance, clearly not a human, or animal. When it noticed Gareth, it looked relieved.

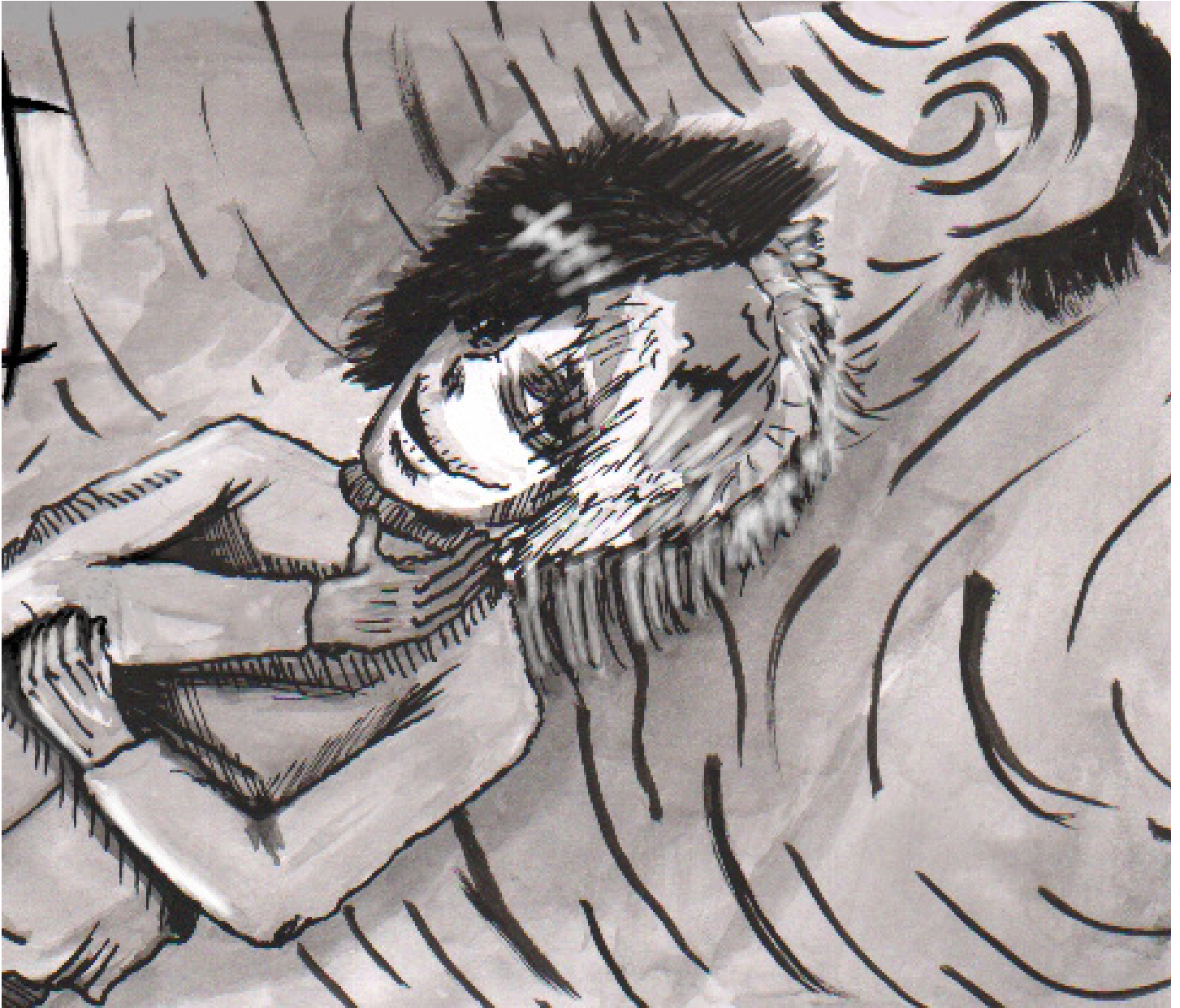
Gareth was paralyzed in fear, a single tear ran down his cheek. As the creature walked closer, the sound of its hooves clacked on the ground.

It walked to Gareth, but it seemed like it didn't want to hurt him. Gareth and the creature made eye contact, having a mellow, easing look on its face. Gareth accepted his fate and closed his eyes, soon to be disturbed by a cold hand on his cheek.

He slowly opened his eyes and looked into the hollow eyes of the creature, a tear shed from them.

"I'm sorry," the creature spoke.

The voice was familiar. Gareth almost had a heart attack when he realized that it was his wife's.



Brock Brockhart, 12th grade

“What happened?” he asked in disbelief.

“I must go.” she said softly, walking out the kitchen to the doorway.

A black smog appeared, a loud roar was heard as the house shook violently.

“Hide!” she screamed.

Gareth ran to the barn, gagging at the sight: pigs gutted out, eaten brutally.

Before he could find a place to hide, the monster ran into the room, snarling and acting rabid.

Gareth stood still, not afraid. The creature ran at him, stopping when they were face to face.

It was defeated, it huffed and walked into the nothingness of the night.

He knew she was back when the flowers growled, one every 5 years, and he was prepared.

OUIJA BOARD

*By Liam Wiseman, 6th grade, Aldo Leopold Intermediate School
Honorable Mention*

It was Halloween and three friends found a Ouija board.

Jake said that they should go play it in the graveyard that was next to Sam's house. It did not come with rules so they looked it up. The rules are: no playing alone, second do not play in a graveyard, and the third always say goodbye always.

"The rules said that we should not play in a graveyard," Max said.

"Max is scared of mostly everything," Jake thought to himself.

Jake thought it was just a toy so he and Sam just started playing, and after a bit Max started playing, too.

They played the Ouija board and at first nothing happened until the planchet started to move.

Jake and Sam were scared because they did not move it, then Max started talking. Max started to laugh.

"OK, so which one of you moved it because I did not," Max said.

It went silent, they all looked at each other. Jake asked a question:

"What is your name?" asked Jake.

The Ouija board answered with "K M."

"Your name is K.M.," said Jake.

"Are you a nice ghost?" asked Max.

The Ouija board answered with "NO."

"I almost had a heart attack," said Jake.

"Me too," said Sam.

"Me three," said Max.

We all jumped from the board. We went to Sam's house and had a sleepover. We threw away the board, so we thought.

That night we heard a noise in Sam's basement. We went down to the basement to see the horrifying sight of the Ouija board sitting right on his table. In front of us was the planchlett.

On the rule site, it said that you can see ghosts threw the panchlett, so Sam picked it up and looked and through it.

Right there behind the board was a disfigured demon.

Sam dropped the planchlett and ran. They knew something was wrong even though they did not see what he saw. They went outside and started a fire in Sam's fireplace. They went and grabbed the Ouija board and put it in the fire.

They were thinking about the ghost name.

"Sam, wasn't the people who owned your house, the family and the father was Kyler Morts, right?" said Jake.

"Yeah," said Sam "K.M is Kyler Morts.

"Let's just go back inside," said Max.

They turned around to see the Ouija board right in front of the door inside. The planchet was on the ground right in front of them.

Sam looked through it again. Right when he did, there was a piercing scream. They all dropped to the ground.

They woke up but all had the same feeling and the dream felt all too real.

The Ouija board is still out there haunting and possessing people.



REGRET

*By Aila Plein, 5th grade, Aldo Leopold Intermediate School
Honorable Mention*

I'll tell you the bone-chilling story of how four normal teenagers lived and possibly even died.

It all started on a stormy Halloween night, with the moon so big and bright that it looked like it would engulf the sky, and the rain so strong it shook the house with every drop.

Stacy Louis, a 16-year-old tall girl with long brown hair in curls down her back, was sitting on her couch, watching a horror movie. Her brother, Preston, who was 19, was out with her sister Prestley Carter, but they were planning to go to the movies together later.

Stacy was in the middle of her movie when suddenly, the phone rang, making her jump. She answered.

"Hi, Stacy." It was her friend, Carley.

Stacy sighed in relief and said, "Hi Carley."

Carley was also 16 years old. Long straight blond hair. And loved all things fashion and always had a nail file in her pocket.

Carley then told her that their brother was still at her house and

suggested that they should all go to the movies together. However, the movie was rated R and it was raining heavily outside. Stacy was hesitant, but Carley insisted that her sister could sneak them in, and it would be fun. So, Stacy reluctantly agreed.

Walking to Carley's house, she felt a strange sensation, as if someone was watching her.

To her surprise, Prestley already had a plan to get them into the movie. But when Prestley left to get something for the plan, Stacy told Carley, "It scares me how good she is at that."

"At what?" asked Carley.

"At sneaking people into movies," replied Stacy.

"Well, she had one hour to come up with a plan," said Carley jokingly.

Stacy checked her phone and realized that it had only been five minutes since they left her house. She felt a chill run down her spine.

As they were walking to the movie, an old man suddenly appeared out of nowhere. His cold eyes stared at them with a look that only showed

danger.

"I was hoping you would come. Now, come with me," he said.

Stacy and Carley were terrified and refused to go with him, but he kept following them and said, "You will regret this."

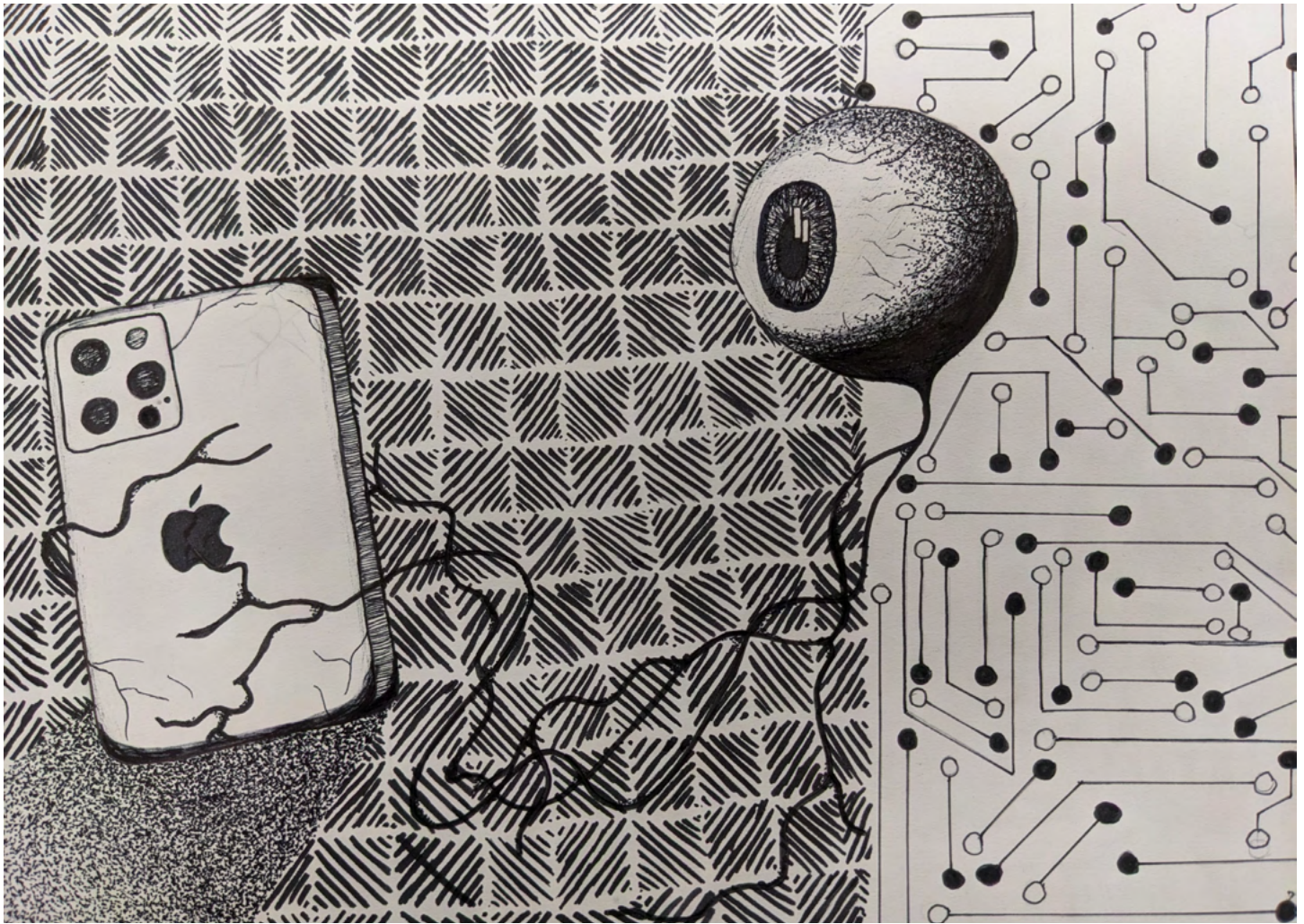
They broke out into a run, weaving in between buildings to try to lose him, but he kept following them.

Suddenly, he disappeared, and they were left alone, shivering and wondering whether he would come back.

As they continued walking, a sudden wind knocked them off their feet, and they could swear they heard eerie whispers in the air. Their hearts were racing, and they knew deep down that they were not alone. The wind got stronger, and they could see shadows moving around them.

Suddenly, the old man reappeared, and he was not alone. Behind him were several other figures, their faces distorted and twisted into grotesque shapes.

The teenagers froze in terror as the old man and his companions started to advance towards them,



Christine Ashby, 11th grade

their eyes filled with malice and hunger for something sinister.

Stacy started to scream but before the sound reached her lips ...

Darkness. That's all Stacy could see.

She went to scream but found she was gagged and her arms were tied behind her back.

Before she knew it, she saw masked figures emerge from the darkness. She tried to yell. The

masked figures grabbed her and started to pull her to what she did not know was her death. Her death and her friend's were intended to be one but I won't give it away yet.

Stacy and Carley were about to be hanged. The men left to get the boss so he could see.

Little did they know that Carley always had a nail file in her pocket.

Carefully but quickly, she started to cut the rope. By the time the men came back, both Carley and Stacy were safely at Stacy's house. They

never saw the man again.

As for the others, Preston and Presley were reported missing to the police but never found.

One year later

Stacy Louis ran down the street to show Carley what she saw. When they arrived at Stacy's house, Carley saw it.

The blood-red letters written on the driveway said, "You will regret it."



IT'S NOT JUST A STORY

*By Julia Grieves, 6th grade, Aldo Leopold Intermediate School
3rd Place*

Just a house

It all started in 1983. While the rest of the world was exploring vibrant colors, frizzy hair, and huge mega malls, Franklin, Tennessee, was being disturbed by a sudden spike in kidnappings and unexplained disappearances.

Rumor had it that the old house on Willow Street was the site for several kidnappings and gruesome murders.

There were reports of screams coming from the house at 2 a.m. Nothing had been done because the neighboring houses in a close enough radius to hear the screams either were abandoned or had residents that were considered crazy, and whenever the cops would go on a stakeout at the site they would never hear the screaming.

Entering

Until one night there was such a blood-curdling, horrifying, unnerving scream that almost the entire town heard.

Several reports were given to the local police station, and they sent out officers right away.

**'THIS GUY'S A
PSYCHOPATH.'**

The officers burst through the old rickety doors, front and back. Slowly, they checked every dusty room to the 150-year-old house.

The amount of dust they stirred up almost made their flashlights look like lightsabers.

As they walked around every now and then, they would hear very soft footsteps that would make a normal person's heart flutter.

They tried to pretend that the old house was just echoing their own footsteps, but inside they knew that they weren't just figments of their imagination.

Up the stairs and through the door

After inspecting and barricading the first level, the only place to go was up.

As the officers ascended up the rickety stairs, they heard more footsteps behind a door.

Slowly, they approached the locked door. As stealthily as possible they kicked it in.

As the old door hit the ground and shattered into several pieces, some of the officers were able to see just the top of the perpetrator's head, and heard the thud that followed.

"He's on the ground, he's on the ground!" an officer yelled to the officers on the ground waiting on standby.

While this was happening on the ground, most of the officers in the old house were preoccupied by the blood, bones and body parts all over the walls, floor and ceiling.

"We got him," they heard from the cops on the ground.

"This guy's a psychopath."

"You're telling me," repeated one of the upstairs officers.

Trial

The investigators came to the crime scene and tested all of the blood found at the site.

The tested blood matched the ones of the missing people reported. The case was rock solid.



Vedetta Grasso, 11th grade

The prosecutor was sure that they were going to win, but the defendant still had hope, for some reason.

Of course the entire jury decided that the defendant was guilty as charged, and he was sent to prison with 9 life sentences.

He was never getting out, or so they thought.

He spent five months in prison before his first attempt at freedom.

Let's just say that it wouldn't be his last. Until December 3, 1989, when

his daring escape wasn't busted, because the prison guard dozed off in the middle of his shift, and boy would that mistake be costly.

He escaped the prison that day and hasn't been found since. He's still at large somewhere.



THE COLORED PENCILS

*By Lydia Barnes, 6th grade, Aldo Leopold Intermediate School
2nd Place*

Back in 1966 there was a little girl named Joanne.

Joanne had always wanted to color and make new creative things, but she didn't know one day this would lead to terror.

It was soon Joanne's birthday, and of course she wanted the most popular art supplies that all her friends had, colored pencils.

On Jo's birthday, she opened her presents and got many of her favorite things, like Razzles, Doritos, and many fun games like Twister, a pogo stick, and many new Barbie dolls!

Just when Jo was about to open all her new things, her mom and dad brought in one more special present.

When Jo opened it she felt as if the box was shimmering like Cinderella's glass slipper. It was filled with colored pencils.

She jumped excitedly and ran up to her mom and dad and gave them the biggest squeeze she could, not knowing it would soon lead to terror.

You see, Joanne soon got attached to these colored pencils and used them everyday, but one day this

would all change.

On October 17, 1966, Joanne decided to color things for Halloween.

She took out her ripped up colored pencil box and took out the half-used black pencil.

She then started to color a black cat with lime green eyes.

She then pulled out an orange, dark green, and lime green and started to color a pumpkin.

Then she drew a vampire, Frankenstein, a big black spider, and many more.

After she completed her drawings, she decided to hang them up because she was so proud of them.

After she hung them up, she looked at the time and immediately jumped into bed.

The next morning, when Jo first got up, she went right to her pictures to see them.

She thought her eyes were deceiving her because there was a big hole right in the middle of all of them like something had jumped out of it. But when Joanne turned to re-draw them with a frown, she

saw a black cat with lime green eyes and a pumpkin.

"Wow!" Jo said in shock. "They came to life! But where are the three other ones?"

As she looked out of the window, she wished she didn't.

Joanne watched as the souls of her parents were eaten by these creatures that looked exactly like her drawings.

Big wonky eyes and imperfect stitches for Frankenstein. She also noticed she forgot to add one of the legs on the spider.

Jo felt a tear begin to roll down her cheek as she saw the blood gushing out into the yard, dying the grass red.

She then grabbed her phone that had a crack that cut her finger every time.

As soon as she dialed 911, she started speaking, her voice cracking with each word.

"Please help me, my parents are getting eaten by these..." Jo didn't know if she wanted to tell them about her colored pencils. "They're getting eaten by these weird creatures!"



Penelope Osbourne, 9th grade

She said now with even more tears rolling down.

“OK ma’am paramedics are about to leave, what’s the address?”

“It’s on Oak Street.”

“OK paramedics are on their way please stay on the li-”

Jo hung up because she couldn’t speak to them any longer. “Why is this happening to me? Why, why, why, WHY?!”

Jo felt as if she could just explode.

About two minutes later her drawings were still roaming around

the yard, chewing on what looked like a collar bone and a kneecap.

Jo then went outside as the officers tackled the creatures and shot them each twice.

After they questioned Jo, they brought her to her grandma’s house.

When Jo was packing her bags, she made sure she brought everything from her parents’ so she could always remember them.

Jo lastly put her colored pencils in her bag to make sure she could still draw. Jo could never give up drawing and she felt like it was her

home.

When Jo picked up a blue colored pencil she could feel as if there was magic running through her hands as she then started to color the ocean or even a Blue Jay.

Once she got to her grandma’s house, she felt a weird sense as she walked up the stairs.

Then out of nowhere, her grandma pulled out a big kitchen knife ready to stab.

Jo then grabbed her colored pencils then drew a big spider.

To be continued ...

THE LADY IN BLUE

*By Gavin Augsburger, 6th grade, Aldo Leopold Intermediate School
1st Place*

One day, a girl named Katie was visiting her grandparents who lived in the woods in Japan. It was a small house that was similar to a cabin.

Katie went out to play before her grandmother finished making lunch.

Katie saw the woods. Her grandmother had told her not to go inside, but out of curiosity, she went inside the woods to explore.

When she reached the edge of the forest, she heard something behind her. She turned around to grab some flowers and that's when she saw it!

A tall lady in a blue dress standing right in front of her. The lady had long black hair, very pale skin, pitch black eyes, and she was screeching like a crow.

Katie was in shock, her eyes were wide open, as well as her mouth. The lady made a slight screeching noise, and Katie decided to run back to her grandparents' small house and away from the tall lady.

Katie told her grandmother about the lady. Her grandmother had a serious face all of the sudden and said, "Listen to me, get inside and go down into the basement. Find



Kalina Zippe, 11th grade



the doll down there.”

Katie was confused, but listened to her grandma and found the doll. The doll looked just like the lady Katie had seen.

She ran to her grandmother and her grandmother said, “Go into the attic and take this bowl of rice with you. I will call your dad to come and get you. After this, you can never return again.”

Katie took the bowl of rice, the doll, and food. Her parents were called but could not make it until the next day. When it was night time, she heard a knock on the door that led up to the attic.

“I brought you food, let me up!”

It was her grandfather’s voice, but when she went to open the door, the doll suddenly had a frowny face and the rice suddenly turned black.

The door banged louder and louder and she looked down through the crack. It was the lady trying to get in. Katie laid on the door so she could not get in. Katie cried to herself while the lady tried to get in.

It reached daytime after what felt like forever for Katie. Her dad picked her up and drove away. It was over, finally.

When Katie reached 20, her grandfather died and her grandmother called her.

**'YOU NEVER
WANT TO
SEE US
ANYMORE,
C'MON!'**

“Why don’t you come to the funeral? We haven’t seen you in forever!” her grandmother said.

“But what about the lady? You told me to not come back.” Katie said in a confused tone.

That somehow made her grandmother very angry.

“You never want to see us anymore, c’mon!”

Katie was about to speak, but her grandmother had said, “Us,” and it was strange.

All of a sudden, her grandmother said, “Hide.”

Katie dropped her phone and rushed in her car to get to her grandmother.

Katie thought she was in danger, but when she got there she saw her grandmother just sitting on her chair.

Then, Katie realized her grandmother never had a phone. Katie felt something grab her. It was the lady.

Katie tried to get away, digging her fingernails into the lady in blue. Katie was running out of options to try and get the lady to let go of her.

She decided to scream and cry. Katie realized the lady stopped when she started crying.

The lady looked like her mother. Katie hugged the lady. She thought it was the ghost of her mother coming back to be with her.

Katie suddenly felt a tight pressure on her neck. The lady was choking her.

“Mom, what are you doing?” Katie tried to say.

Katie fell for her trap. The lady was never her mother. Katie started to cry and tried to grab the hands of the lady and push them off.

The lady may have looked like it, but she was just tricking Katie to think it was her mother. Katie finally let go of the lady’s hands.

The lady took Katie to a nearby house, and Katie was never seen leaving the forest.



THE DEAD CAN SPEAK

*By Karley Waller, 8th grade, Edward Stone Middle School
3rd Place*

It was late at night and Lilith's went to visit her family at the cemetery.

They had passed this day last year in a house fire. She had lost everyone. Her brother and sister were only 13.

Both of her parents had been found in the hall by the kids' door but died on impact when a beam fell on them.

The kids died in their sleep after their beds caught fire. She was away at a friend's house when she got the call. She was 17 at the time so she was able to live on her own.

Now it had been a year, and she was walking to their graves when a boom came from the sky. The thunder scared her and she fell back, hitting her head on a gravestone.

When she woke up, there was a bright light above her head. After her eyes adjusted to the light, she realized she was in a hospital.

A few minutes later, a nurse walked in.

"How long was I out?"

"Oh, you're awake," the nurse said. "You were only out for two days.

Let me get the doctor so he can run some tests."

A few minutes went by, and no one came. She got up out of the bed and found her clothes. They were a little muddy but dry. She put them on and walked out of the hospital.

As she was walking down the street to her house, she kept hearing whispers. She looked around but saw no one.

When she got to her apartment, she walked in and heard her family in the kitchen, but when she got in there no one was there.

At first, she assumed she was hearing things because of her concussion, but then she heard a voice.

"Hey, Lils. I am sorry we haven't come sooner. Being a ghost can be confusing."

"Who are you? Only my family called me Lils," Lilith said.

Then a different voice spoke.

"Sorry, honey. I forgot you couldn't see us. It's us, your mom and dad. Your siblings are here somewhere, too."

"There's no way," Lilith cried out. "My family died a year ago."

"Yes, we did, sissy, but we're ghosts now." It was the twins. They always were doing that, talking at the same time and all that weird twin stuff.

"Tell me something only my family would know," Lilith said.

"When the twins were being born, you wanted a sister, so when we said you had a brother, you cut us off, saying to return him before we could tell you you had a sister, too."

"But this doesn't make sense," Lilith said. "Why are you talking to me now?"

"Sweetie, I know it's confusing but we are here for you now," her mother's comforting voice said. "You don't have to be alone anymore."

It went on like that for a couple of days. They would just hang around with each other.

Then Lilith asked, "Why can't I see you?"

"Because, sissy, you can't see ghosts."



Aasiqa Janmanchi, 12th grade

“But why can I hear you?” Lilith asked.

“Because you are special.”

“Do you guys still look the same?” she asked.

“Yes, we look like we looked before the fire,” her dad said.

A couple more weeks passed and everything stayed the same with her family till one morning.

She woke up to her family screaming at her.

“You monster! You killed us,” her father bellowed.

“You are such a disappointment,”

her mother screamed.

“You should have died. We had an entire life ahead of us,” the twins yelled.

She covered her ears with her hands but could still hear them.

“I am sorry, it was my fault,” Lilith said over and over.

That went on the whole day until midnight.

Enveloped in sudden silence, Lilith went to bed.

When she woke up, she couldn’t move but could feel hands grabbing her. Then the voices started screaming.

“We’re not real. You’re just going insane.”

She sat there with them screaming till the clock struck 3 a.m. Everything went black.

She shot up out of bed to find she was in a hospital. A doctor walked in and said, “You were in a car crash. Your sister, brother, mom, and dad are fine but you were in a coma for a month.”

Then as he finished, her family walked in with a evil smiles on their faces. The doctor walked out and when he was out of sight, her family looked at her.

“Now you will have to hear, see, and live with the dead,” they said. “You will regret killing us.”

A HALLOWEEN IN HORROR

*By Hannah Stott, 8th grade, Edward Stone Middle School
2nd Place*

Tonight is everyone's favorite night. Carnivals, haunted houses, festivals, sleepovers, candy, the list goes on. Our town does Halloween like no other; it's basically Christmas before Christmas-only with no gifts. But we don't need gifts, we get Scaretown. It's the best event of the whole year, nobody dares to miss it.

At Scaretown, a giant committee gets together to transform an old field to the Halloween event of a lifetime! A big haunted house, a corn maze, carnival games and rides, the best apple cider, and so much more. Only tonight, they said things might be a little different.

"Ugh, why does it have to rain on the biggest night of the year?" My friend Evelyn complained to me.

"I don't know, but apparently some of the scare actors won't show up because of it. Some people are saying that if they can't find volunteers it might get canceled."

"That can't happen! We've been planning this night since last year's Scaretown."

"I know, Evelyn, I know. I'm sure they'll figure it out."

"Brrring" The bell rang for the last class of the day.

That class felt like it went on and on until the end of time. That teacher, Mrs. Coveney, never shuts up. But now it's finally time for tonight's preparation. We have to plan outfits, arrange rides, who's houses we're staying at, dinner, and most importantly, what to do first!

So, Julia, Evelyn, Sierra, Amanda, and I are all wearing matching ripped black jeans and bleach dyed crew necks. The boys-Tyler, Michael, Cam, Jay, Julian, and Evan are wearing black sweatpants and bleach dyed hoodies. Now that I'm thinking about it, it probably isn't the best idea to wear black, but they give us glow sticks at the front, so we should be fine.

6:00. Finally time to go to dinner. This is the first year we're all 16, so we all decided to drive ourselves. We are going to meet at a nice restaurant downtown, I'm just glad it's not too expensive. I'm not sure it ever works, but this is our way of hoping we don't eat too many snacks and make ourselves sick.

Finally, finally, we can make our way to Scaretown. I think we're waiting until it's dark to go into the haunted house, so I'm pretty sure we're doing the corn maze first. Honestly, who knows anymore?



Cadence Crose, 12th grade

"The corn maze was so boring this year," I said to Julia, "Can't we do the haunted house now? It's almost 8:00. I've eaten too many snacks, done too many carnival games, and have spent too much time waiting!"

"Okay, okay, calm down. I think all that sugar is finally getting to you. We can do the haunted house...in like 20 minutes. We have to spread things out, Ruby. It's not as fun if we do everything all at once."

"Ugh, can't we have a little fun around here? We haven't even had the best experience of the night yet. Let's go!"

As I get closer, all I hear are screams of terror. I figure they're just from the scare actors.

Inside, I see some of the scare actors with props. One has a fake ax, another has a fake chainsaw. There's also fake blood spread along the floor and walls. They really went all out this year.

"Wow," I whisper to Julia, "It's really realistic this year."

"Yeah it is, I'd be fooled if I didn't know any better."

We continue walking for quite some time, until we hear tons of terrified screams from the next section. Groups of kids come running the opposite way, almost like big flocks of birds heading south for the winter.

"Everybody run out!" I hear one yell.

"It wasn't a prop!" Another exclaims.

I don't know what to do, but everybody is yelling and running, so Julia and I have no choice but to follow. We run for what feels like forever. We sprint up and down stairs, through tunnels, around mirrors, and through fog. Even by the time we get outside, we keep running. I don't even know what's happening. I'm just holding Julia's hand, as scared as ever.

"What's happening? Why are we running?" Someone asks.

**'I HEARD
IT, I HEARD
HIM YELL.
AND THEN
THE SCREAM
STOPPED.'**

"The chainsaw," another starts, "It's real. Someone just got killed. In the haunted house."

People start talking among themselves. I'm just sitting in shock when I hear Julia start to cry.

"The scream. It sounded like Julian. I heard it, I heard him yell. And then the scream stopped." Julia said through tears.

Julian isn't just a friend. Julian is Julia's best friend. They've been friends since first grade, all because of their names. Their bond has never been broken, they've never gotten into an argument. And now, he might be gone.

"I can't lose him, Ruby. I can't"

"I know, Julia. Neither can I. We'll

find him."

After what feels like an eternity, cops finally show up. People who were there started explaining what happened.

The cops walk into the haunted house and don't come out for almost two hours. By then, most people are asleep. When they come outside, there's only one person walking out with them, and he still has half his costume on.

The cops come to us, as if we were the victims.

"I'm sorry, girls. We found the ID of the victim, it was Julian Andrews. I believe he is your friend; I saw your names and pictures in his phone. Am I correct?"

Julia immediately falls to the ground in tears.

"Yes, sir, that's correct." I manage to get out through tears of my own.

All I can think about is why someone would do something like that. Who could be so cruel?

The cops continue walking with the scare actor, so I try to get a better look at his face.

"Oh my god. It can't be," I begin.

Julia starts too, "Is that-"

"It's Evan. But they were best friends. How could he do that? Why would he do that?"



THE CAVE

*By Miriam Petersen, 8th grade, Edward Stone Middle School
1st Place*

"I wouldn't go over there if I were you," whispered Mary.

The cold water numbed my feet, but I continued deeper into the river. I turned around and grinned at her, tying my hair back into a ponytail. "Come on, it isn't that bad. You could've said no if you didn't want to go."

Her red hair blew in the breeze, and I could see a smile start to appear on the corners of her lips, even if she was trying to hide it. I try to hide the fact that I'm blushing.

"Okay, fine," she said, rolling her eyes. She jumped into the water just behind me, scattering a school of fish that had been nibbling on a piece of algae. "But that means you can't chicken out either, okay?"

"Me? Chicken out? I'm sorry, have you met me?"

Mary giggled and stepped backward, away from the shore. "I'm sorry I have to do this, but..." An evil look washed over her as she splashed me in the face, and I winced before the water hit my eyes. "Last one there's a rotten egg!"

I scoff and dive in after her even though I know she's going to win. She's been on the swim team

for as long as I can remember; I only started last year. She's been my best friend since I was little. I haven't wanted to do anything without her recently.

The water around me got colder, and I stopped swimming to look up. Mary was already at the shoreline, and I was at least five yards away.

"Come on!" She yelled. "Are you coming or not?"

I dove under again, this time not coming up until my fingertips touched the smooth rock of the cave. Mary was standing above me as I rose out of the water.

"It took you long enough. Are you ready?"

I peered into the cave, which looked a lot bigger than it seemed on the opposite side of the river. Water poured into the cave from the river and down the slope of the interior, making a tiny waterfall that descended into darkness.

"Are you sure you want to do this?" I said, eyeing the tunnel. "It's getting dark anyway, and we didn't bring flashlights."

Mary gave me a smug grin. "I'm sorry, what happened to the Rose

who didn't chicken out?" She put her hand on my shoulder, sending electricity through my whole body. "Besides, you're the one who wanted to come here in the first place."

I couldn't say no.

It was almost 80 degrees outside, but I swear it felt like 60 in there. As my eyes adjusted to the darkness, I could see that the path ahead narrowed, and the water that swirled under our feet collected into a pool just before that. Stalactites dripped with water overhead, and little crinoid fossils scattered the walls. Mary stopped and turned to me once we reached the pool. She crouched down to look into the opening, and I joined her. I could feel her warm breath on my arms.

"It looks like it opens back up after this," she said, looking up at me. "Ladies first."

A strange, echoey noise came from inside the tunnel, like a pattering of some creature skittering across a rock. I stood back up, looking down at Mary. "Nah, we should probably head back. I think we've done enough spelunking for one night, don't you think?"

She raised her eyebrows. "But it

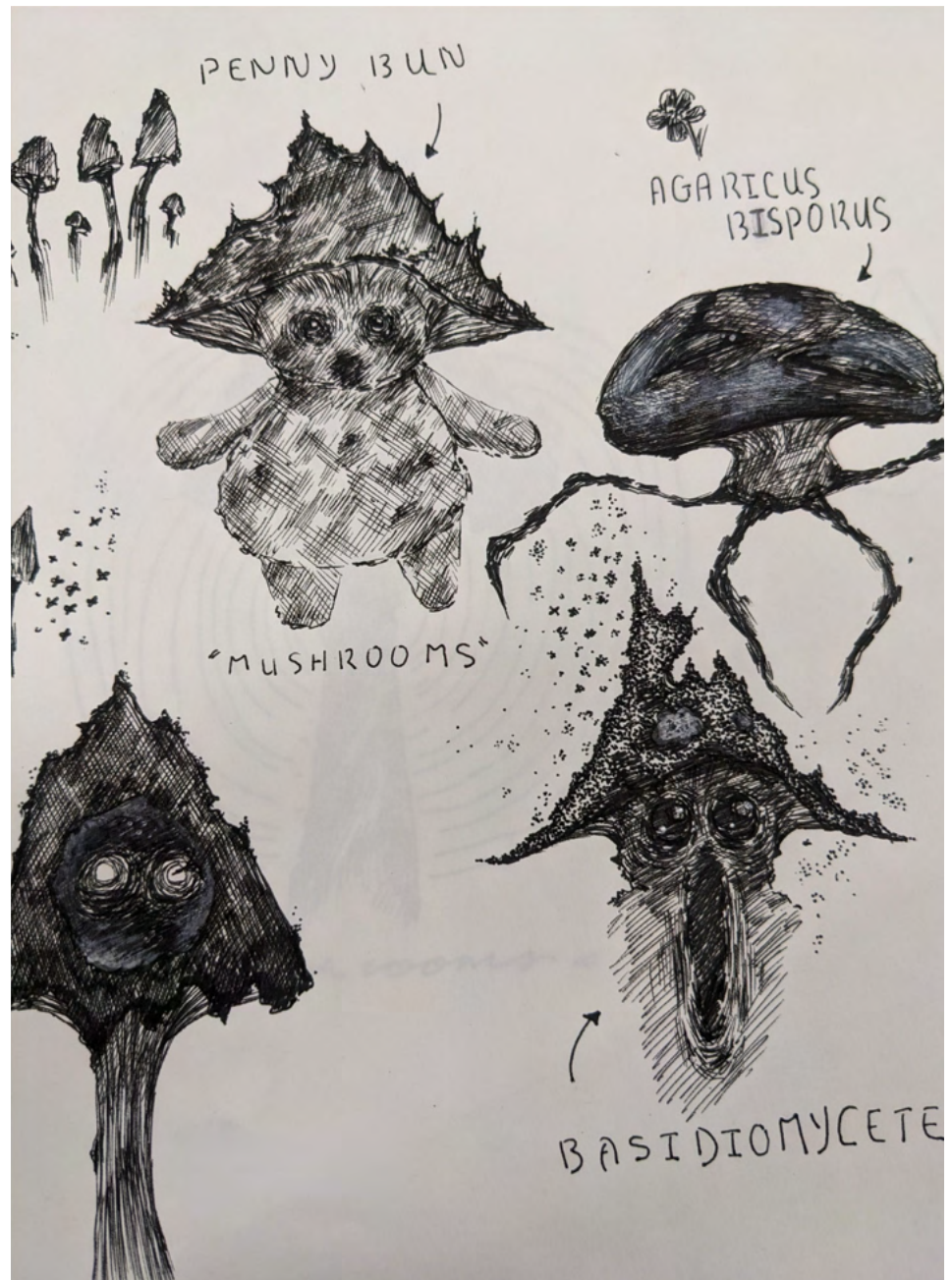
'...PLEASE COME BACK. I HEARD SOMETHING. I DON'T THINK WE SHOULD GO ANY DEEPER.'

isn't even that late! Besides, what if we find something cool down there?" She started crawling deeper into the cave. "I'm going whether you are or not."

I could hear her crawling deeper into the narrowing tunnel. Crawling farther away from me. "Mary, please come back. I heard something in there, I don't think it's a good idea to go any deeper."

I heard a splash from the hole, then silence. I was suddenly filled with adrenaline, determined to save Mary from whatever was inside the cave. I raced through the tunnel; my knees scraped against the jagged rock as I crawled, and I was sure I wouldn't make it in time. The floor dropped out from under me and I fell into another chilling pool of water. I couldn't touch the bottom.

"Mary!" I screamed, my voice bouncing back at me as I yelled up at the ceiling. "Mary, where are you?" Suddenly, I felt Mary's warm arms around me, and I relaxed in her grasp. "Oh my god, I thought



Ava Wiley, 11th grade

something had happened to you. You have no idea how scared I was," I sobbed. I let my head rest on her shoulder.

"Jeez Rose, it's ok! I'm fine." She laughed.

I raised my head to look at her, even though it was pitch black.

Mary hugged me tighter, and for a split second, I felt as if I were the happiest I would ever be; that nothing but this mattered right now, and everything after this would be okay. I wanted to stay in that moment forever.

And then she pushed me under.

THAT'S NOT MY DOG

By *Ell Riddle, 9th grade, Burlington High School*
3rd Place

"Mommy! Buster got out!"

I looked up from my spot on the couch where I had been reading upon hearing my sister yelling to our mother, who was in the kitchen cooking supper. Tears ran down her rosy cheeks as she swatted blond curls from their eyes.

"Someone left the gate open and when I let Buster outside he ran away!" My sister sobbed, clearly distorted by the situation.

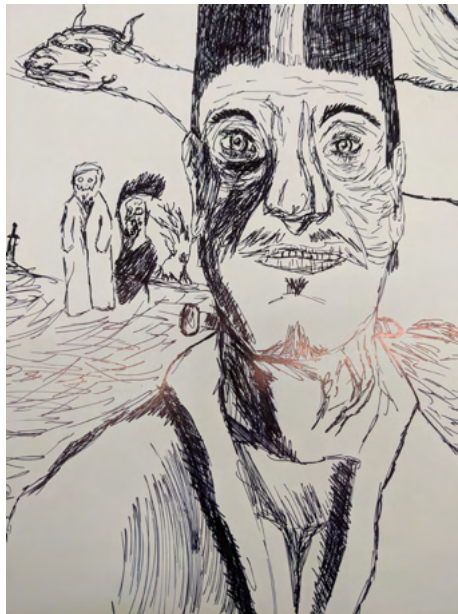
"Lily! I told you to check the gate before you let him out!" My mother scolded me as she continued to chop potatoes for tonight's supper. "Get your brother and go look for him."

That caught my attention.

"What!? No fair, she's the one who lost the dog. Why do I have to go out and look for him?" I protest, not wanting to get up from where I had been reading.

"Because, Tom, she's five. I'm not letting her roam the streets alone," my mother states, pouring the potatoes into the pot of simmering water. "I would go if supper hadn't started, but, since I'm cooking, I need you to go out with Lilly."

I have to admit, my mother did



Paxton Vandiver, 12th grade

make a good point. Not that I was happy about it.

"Fine, come on, Lilly, let's go," I grumble as I pull on my shoes and a jacket.

"What way did he run?" I ask as we walk outside, the warm spring air hitting my skin.

"That way. You have to find him, Tommy! Please," Lilly begs as she points to the left.

Great, he ran towards the woods.

"Lilly, I don't know. The sun is going to set in less than an hour, I don't think it's a great idea to head

into the woods."

I try to reason, but, have you ever tried to reason with a five-year-old? Let me tell you, you can't.

"Come on Tom! Please! What if a bear eats him!" Lilly says as tears begin to roll down her cheeks.

"Okay, okay we can go look." I give in. "But there's no bears in Hawaii," I add as I take hold of her hand, walking into the woods.

We looked for that darn dog for an hour with no luck.

"Lilly, it's getting too dark out. We have to head back," I mumble as I turn us around.

"What about Buster, Tommy? We can't leave him out here!" I hear her voice crack and waver as she tugs at my arm.

"Lily, I'm sorry but it's too late. We can't find him in the dark anyway. We can look again tomorrow I promise."

It was getting darker by the second, it was going to be hard enough to find our way back home, near to impossible in the dark.

"You promise?" Lilly asks, tears building up in her eyes once more.



Paula Aguilera, 9th grade

“I promise” I sigh, knowing she was going to wake me up in the early morning to try and find the dog.

“Okay, fine. We can head home. I’m hungry anyway.” She mumbles, sounding defeated.

I took her hand again and began to lead us back home. The sun had all but set now and I was trying my best not to fall over the roots that stuck out from the ground.

“Wait, Tommy, listen” Lily all but whispers.

“What?” I question as our walking

comes to a halt.

Once we stop moving I can clearly hear rustling around us.

“Maybe it’s Buster!” Lily said excitedly.

I groan loudly. “It’s probably some wild animal. Come on Lily, we need to get home. It’s way too dark out to still be in the woods.” I try and reason, but, as I said before, reasoning with a five-year-old is nearly impossible.

Lily takes off running towards the noise. I feel my blood run cold as I

chase after her, stumbling over tree roots and twigs.

“Lily! Stop, now!” I scream as I chase her.

The rustling is getting closer. This could be bad, what if it was a wild pig? I couldn’t live with myself if she got hurt. With the lack of sun and the density of the forest, I could hardly follow Lily. It was no time before I lost her. I take a minute to calm my breathing before I hear rustling behind me.

“Tommy?” my sister asks in a small voice.

I whip my head around to see Lily standing behind me.

“Lily, oh my gosh, you cannot just run away like that! You could have gotten hurt!” I say, more relieved than angry.

“I’m sorry, but look who I found!” Lilly says excitedly as she points beside her.

There sat Buster. Just a black outline in the dark.

“Oh, well I guess that’s good. But you cannot run off like that, okay?” I mumble, taking her hand firmly and walking home, Buster in tail behind us.

It was almost 9 p.m. by the time we got home. Supper was cold and I was tired so I skipped supper all together that night and decided to go right to sleep.



The next morning I woke up to the smell of burning toast. Great. Mom was at work by now so that meant Lily was probably trying to cook by herself. I drag myself out of bed and go downstairs. I walk into the kitchen and yawn.

“Lily, what are you burning?” I ask.

“I wanted to make you toast because you helped me but I kinda burnt it,” she spoke sheepishly.

“Well, it’s the thought that counts, thanks hun,” I chuckle.

Buster comes into the room. At first, I think he’s hurt. He’s walking kinda off. But, the more I looked at him the more strange he appeared.

“Um, Lily?” I mumble, “Are you sure that this is our dog? He looks, well, different,” I say as I go over and look at his collar.

Sure enough, it was our dog’s.

“Of course that’s him!” Lily pouts as she cleans her mess of spilled milk and burnt toast.

“Okay,” I mumble.

Maybe I was just tired. The day went on as normal, only Buster was acting so strange. He never barked, or went outside, or anything. He just kept sitting by me and staring. His eyes looked different. I don’t know what about him it was, but he was just, different.

Days pass like this and Buster’s

‘ARE YOU SURE THAT THIS IS OUR DOG? HE LOOKS, WELL, DIFFERENT.’

behavior never changes. I brought it up to my mom and my sister but they said he was acting just fine to them and I must be paranoid or something.

I shrug it off for a while until one night I hear a loud crashing sound from the kitchen. I groan as I walk up and walk downstairs, wondering who could be up so late.

I peek into the kitchen and freeze. My heart dropped and my blood felt like it froze in my veins. In the kitchen stood Buster. But not stood as a dog would. He like stood, stood. He was upright on two legs and messing with a broken dish on the floor he must have knocked over.

I ran back upstairs as I tried to convince myself it was a nightmare. I somehow fall asleep but wake again to my door creaking. I peek one eye open slightly and almost gasp. Standing in my doorway was Buster. Still on two legs.

He creeps into my room and stands next to my bed. I pretend to be asleep, not knowing what else to do. He then crawls into bed with me and lays curled up by my legs like he

used to. I almost sob. I didn’t sleep that night. How could I?

This happened each night after that. I told Mom, but of course, she didn’t believe me. She said it was nightmares.

One night as I read on the couch, Buster sat next to me and whined. I unconsciously pet him for a bit before I stop. My hand hit something cold.

I look over at him and move his fur to show something shiny. A zipper. I gasp and pull my hand away. Buster just looked up at me, cooking his head. I went back to petting him, trying to pretend like I hadn’t noticed.

That’s what I had been doing this whole time. Trying to not let him know I knew. Because I knew this wasn’t my dog. Later that night Buster crawled into bed with me again. This night, though, he curled up by my chest. We stayed like that for a long while before I heard something.

I hear a man’s voice speak from beside me on the bed.

“I know that you know.”

With that, Buster stood up on two legs once more and walked out of my room. I was terrified. I didn’t see him the next day, but two days later we got a call from the pound.

They had found Buster four days ago in the woods.



SHADOWED HUNGER

*By Victoria Lock-Smith, 10th grade, Burlington High School
2nd Place*

Beneath the pale moonlight, the forest stirred with an eerie energy. The wind whispered through the trees, carrying a sinister presence that sent shivers down the spine of anyone who dared venture near. In this desolate wilderness, a young man named Ethan found himself trapped, unaware of the nightmare that awaited him. Ethan had been hiking alone, seeking solace in nature's embrace.

Little did he know that he had wandered into the territory of a malevolent creature known as the Wendigo—a fiendish entity said to be born from the darkest recesses of human desperation and hunger. The legends whispered of its insatiable appetite for human flesh and its ability to assume the forms of those it had devoured.

As Ethan trudged deeper into the woods, a sense of unease settled upon him. The once familiar path became twisted and distorted, leading him further away from the safety of civilization. The trees seemed to loom overhead, their gnarled branches reaching out like skeletal fingers, threatening to snatch him away into the abyss of the unknown. A sudden chill coursed through the air, causing Ethan to pull his jacket tighter around himself. The forest fell unnervingly silent, save for the distant howl of a lone wolf. His

heart raced, and a cold bead of sweat trickled down his forehead as he sensed a presence lurking in the shadows.

The Wendigo watched from the darkness, its glowing eyes fixated on its unsuspecting prey. It relished in the fear that emanated from Ethan, feeding off his terror like a vulture feasting on carrion. With each step, Ethan unknowingly drew closer to his impending doom. Nightfall descended like a shroud over the forest, casting a veil of darkness upon the land. The once serene beauty had transformed into a nightmarish landscape where every rustle of leaves and distant hoot of an owl seemed to taunt Ethan's fragile sanity. He quickened his pace, desperate to escape the clutches of the unseen predator that stalked him.

The Wendigo was relentless. It reveled in the hunt, playing a cruel game of cat and mouse with its terrified victim. It whispered haunting melodies through the wind, its voice carrying the echoes of lost souls. The forest itself seemed to come alive, the trees contorting and shifting with a malevolent intention, guiding Ethan deeper into its treacherous heart.

Exhausted and disoriented, Ethan

stumbled upon a dilapidated cabin, its decaying exterior a haunting testament to the horrors that had unfolded within its walls. Desperation gripped him as he pushed open the creaking door, seeking refuge from the relentless pursuit. Within the cabin's confines, a sense of temporary respite washed over him, but the Wendigo's presence lingered just beyond the threshold.

As the night wore on, the cabin's walls seemed to close in on Ethan, suffocating him with a sense of impending doom. Whispers echoed through the rooms, filled with the agonized cries of those who had met their grisly demise at the hands of the Wendigo. Shadows danced along the walls, taking on monstrous forms that twisted and contorted in macabre patterns.

The Wendigo's hunger grew insatiable, its need for human flesh overpowering any sense of rationality. It prowled outside the cabin, scratching at the wooden walls, its claws leaving deep gouges as a warning of the torment that awaited Ethan if he dared to escape. Days turned into nights, and nights into an endless cycle of terror. Ethan's mind teetered on the edge of madness as he grappled with the horrors that surrounded him.

Sleep became an elusive luxury,



Victoria Lock-Smith, 10th grade

for nightmares plagued his every waking moment, blurring the line between reality and the twisted realm of his fears. Finally, weakened and broken, Ethan made one last desperate attempt to escape.

He burst through the cabin's decaying door, his heart pounding in his chest. The forest loomed before him, its darkness swallowing him whole. With each labored breath, he pushed his weary legs to carry him as far away from the Wendigo's clutches as

possible. Just as hope flickered in his eyes, an icy wind cut through the air, freezing him in his tracks.

The Wendigo materialized before him, its skeletal frame towering over Ethan like a grotesque specter. Its eyes burned with a hunger that could never be sated. With a bloodcurdling scream, Ethan succumbed to the Wendigo's grasp, his body becoming a vessel for its insidious power. He joined the countless others who had fallen victim to the creature's relentless pursuit, forever condemned to

wander the forest, their anguished cries blending with the chilling winds that whispered through the trees.

The legend of the Wendigo lived on, a terrifying reminder of the darkness that lurks within the human soul. Whoever dares to wander into the depths of those haunted woods must be prepared to face the horrors that await, for the Wendigo's insatiable hunger knows no bounds, and its eternal hunt for prey continues to claim unsuspecting souls.

ANGEL WITH THE DEVIL'S MIND

*By Riley Villont, 12th grade, Burlington High School
1st Place*

The mirror reflects
a form
unrecognizable to me.

My hair is too fine
too damaged for proper care.
My eyes appear beady
bloodshot and blue.

My skin appears too cool,
too muted in the color.
My makeup covers
all sin.

My reflection speaks out
pleading for release,
begging for me
to let her speak.

Glass shaking as our fists
pound on the other side.

She yawps
as I curl our hair
delicately around
my finger.

Nails red as her blood,
glistening in the bathroom light.

Her mouth forms
in a silent scream
as I apply more concealer,
hiding the circles
that have formed
a permanent mark
under our eyes.

Though I don't know why
she's behaving like this.
I have given her the beauty
she so desperately seeked.

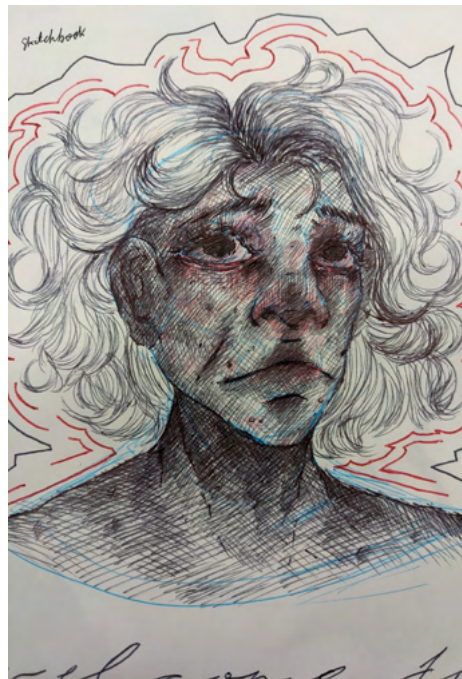
Beauty is pain,
that's what they say.
The loss of a soul
causes the biggest ache.

And on the other side,
an angel
with the devil's mind
cries for her life.

The Devil's smirk
reflects off her face.
God weeps.



Ava Wiley, 11th grade



Paxton Vandiver, 12th grade