Many thanks to the people who subscribed to this issue of Orthogenique and your donations are greatly appreciated. All others who wish to subscribe to this magazine can do so with the order form at the back of this issue.

SPECIAL NOTICE TO READERS

The next issue is scheduled for an August release. Anyone who wishes to contribute artwork or writing to Orthogenique can do so by giving the piece to Michelle Z. or Michelle P.

A special section will be made in the back of the magazine to showcase the artistic or writing talents of the contributors.
I am not sure if it is because they are getting more plentiful, or I am getting older and slowing down enough to notice them, but birds seem to be out in force this spring. Not only do they seem to be everywhere, but I have seen so many more species than I remember in past years. A resident woodpecker greets me in the morning as I take my dogs out, a cardinal has set up house in the tree outside my kitchen window, and I have even spotted a few of my favorite little flyers, hummingbirds, or "hummas," according to my two year old nephew.

Several years ago, while getting ready for the school year to start, I was getting my classroom organized in between the multitude of meetings that welcome teachers back each fall. After a very long meeting one morning, I returned to my classroom to find a hummingbird beating itself against the ceiling. Its luck had been low when it managed to find the small opening in my classroom window. I watched, helplessly, as the bird exhausted itself and fell to the floor, its legs and wings flapping as it began to accept its fate. I didn’t want to hurt the bird, or leave the scent of a human on it, so I tried to avoid picking it up with my hands. I grabbed some paper and attempted to scoop the tiny bird up, but each time I only succeeded in creating a futile flurry of movement as the bird scooted across the floor away from me.

I finally cupped the bird in my hands and gently moved toward the window. The tiny body felt so fragile that I feared moving too quickly would be disastrous. Its feathers were soft, and its body so light that I could barely perceive its presence in my hands. I held my hands out the window, the bird’s breathing slowed, and its feathers positioned themselves in preparation for flight. In what seemed like an eternity, but was no more than a moment, I took in as much of the bird’s beauty as I could. Everything about it was just as it should be. The shine of its eyes, the delicacy of its beak, and the color of its feathers were mesmerizing. After a fluff of its feathers, it was off.

Each species of bird is amazing and beautiful in its own way, but the hummingbird has a special place in my heart. Some Native American cultures believe that they bring gifts of healing, optimism, and joy. They are the only bird able to stop and hover even while traveling at top speeds, and the only bird able to fly backwards. These abilities have led to them being called "stoppers of time," as well as symbols of adapting to change. In addition to this, it is believed that these tiny creatures, who are so drawn to the beauty of flowers that they enable these flowers to continue to bloom, are also the bringers of good messages. What better representative of Orthogenic and the Orthogenic School as a whole, could there be?

Our students come here for healing, need our optimism, and often have to stand still in time before they are able to find joy in themselves and in life. They bring those of us fortunate enough to work with them, live with them, and grow with them, messages of perseverance, determination, and spirit that can only lead to good things. Through Orthogenic, our students have the opportunity to share the gifts of their talent, creativity, and teamwork with the entire Orthogenic community, including students, staff, and family in a way that is like no other, in a way that continues to evolve, take new direction, and reach new heights.

Like that reluctant visitor to my classroom so many years ago, our students come to the Orthogenic School and spend all of their time here trying to leave. The best that we can do to help them is try to prevent them from beating themselves into exhaustion. When they leave, it is bittersweet, because they are usually just starting to find themselves and to recognize that they are just the way that they should be; beautiful, shining and talented. It is hard to let them go, but looking at the work in this magazine shows us what their world can become. Enjoy.

Written by Michelle Pegram, Artwork by Michelle Zarrilli
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Tolerance for a Nation,
Written by Felicia.
Drawing by Julie
So many people, so little hope
Through their lives, they do grope
And to their weapons do they grope
But always to cope
With the differences that make us one
Say the word, and then, we’re done

But continue on with the blame
Leaving only our names to shame

The freedom or the oil
Our mission, to fool
The plans of the other’s soil
And plant our feet, toiling
Ground from which, we’re sent
And the money that’s been lent
To a country that’s been spent
Way past due it’s rent

And owes itself according
To the new President, boarding
His own place of legend
That, in time will end
And an eternity will spend
Being on the mend
Of a broken place
This surely was a race
To see who could keep pace
Not who could keep face

Because we didn’t win
Greed our secret sin
Coming, only from within
With no cares for where we’ve been
The debt, the threat
From which, we all get upset
Do not fret
We have freedom yet
“Whatever you see, is what you get”
And don’t forget
What they all say
But that’s just the critical, prejudiced way
Hoping for old traditions to stay
But should we leave it where it lay?
Or is it just fool’s play?
Leading the mighty to the prey

Little girls and boys crying
With their daddies dying
With the only time they’re buying
Yet sick and tired of lying
And through all of their lying
It’s only through love that they’re flying

So then, who is there to care?
With mothers who can no longer bear
The weight of the world on their shoulders
Weighing down on them like boulders

Of young children being harassed
Because they haven’t passed
The arena of the vast
Stretch of the past
For we think they’re different, when actually we’re the same
Our ignorance is the reason that we came
And our strict code of conduct
From all of the corrupt
With all of the abrupt (lies)
For when the world will erupt

12
Holding on to their pride,
For in their racism, everyone may hide.
And in me they shall confide,
No matter how hard I’ve tried
To stay away from it.
I mean, reducing others to spit.

“Filthy rags,” the ignorant, say as they only stare
“Why doesn’t their country care?”
“Why do I have to be there?”
“It isn’t my burden to bear!”

And I ask, “Why do they turn and stab their brother?”
I thought we were supposed to love each other.

Then you bomb another nation.
Ruin all of creation.
For which there is no compensation.
Forever forgetting this world’s elation.
In each of our own relation.
To someone in a different station.
A different status, a different location.
Subdue your own frustration.
Because tolerance is the foundation.
For which, we can have the sensation.
Of saving and starting a new nation.

So tolerance is really the debate
Don’t run, open your gate.
See everything on your plate.
And don’t pick from the irate.
Don’t wait.
Till they set the date.
To hurt, and sedate.
Those sitting there like bait.
Now you must choose, love or hate?
Intolerance can take many forms; people often discuss problems such as racial or religious intolerance, but one issue affects an equally large number of people and yet is rarely discussed—intolerance of mental illness. About one-third of the entire population will be affected by a mental disorder at some point in their life, and yet intolerance of these people has always been widely accepted in our society. This is an issue of particular importance to me as I have experienced this intolerance first-hand.

Intolerance of and discrimination against people with mental disorders is very common, and can be seen in the media and in the minds of the general public. Discrimination often takes the form of stereotypical views of mentally ill people, which usually deal with violence or incompetence. Negative depictions of mental disorders in the media often involve violent criminals; one study showed that television characters who are murderers are four times more likely to be depicted as mentally ill than healthy.

Beliefs in these stereotypes are also very common in the public. However, such stereotypes are almost entirely unfounded; studies have shown time and time again, people with mental disorders are many times more likely to be the victim of violence rather than the perpetrator. The stigma of mental illness has also led to widespread employment discrimination, which has been shown to be a significant factor in the higher rate of unemployment among mentally ill people.

Since mental illness has affected me all my life, I have felt the effects of intolerance nearly all of my life. Many of my first memories of school are of being excluded because of peculiarities in my personality, which have since been explained by a set of formal diagnoses. This continued on through high school, where, although I was allowed extra time on tests and offered other help through my Individualized Education Plan, or I.E.P., teachers were often dismissive and either denied me any extra help or did so grudgingly. I was still excluded by nearly all students and earned the nick-name “Tweak” for my personality and behavior at school. If I told anyone anything about my treatment or diagnosis they would begin to distance themselves from me.

This continued until I transitioned into the O'School, where I found not only tolerance but acceptance. Being tolerated, I am able to perform much better than before at school and find class, and life in general, more enjoyable.
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Why? Must we fight? Why? Must we kill each other?
Why can’t we just get along? Why?

George Bush says war is the answer. Just look, at his regime.
What does war do to a country?
What does war do to a family?
It tears them apart!

Why? Must we fight? Why? Must we kill each other?
Why can’t we just get along? Why?

What does your god say about war?
What were you taught in Sunday school?
What did your teacher’s say?
Love your neighbor!!

Why? Must we fight? Why? Must we kill each other?
Why can’t we just get along? Why?

Do we really need guns and bombs? Tanks, jets, or grenades?
What about rockets or bayonets? Hell No!!!!!

Why? Must we fight? Why? Must we kill each other?
Why can’t we just get along? Why?

What if 9/11 happened all over again? What should we do?
We should not start what seems to be an endless war.
We shouldn’t just let it go.

Why? Must we fight? Why? Must we kill each other?
Why can’t we just get along? Why?

(20-30 second bass solo)

What is the greatest treasure?
Is it gold, is it silver?
Is it diamonds, is it pearls?
Or, is it money?
NO! It is peace on Earth!

Why? Must we fight? Why? Must we kill each other?
Why can’t we just get along? Why?
Why? Must we fight? Why? Must we kill each other?
Why can’t we just get along? Why?

(10-15 seconds instrumentals, then fade out)
A story about a little girl and the witch across the street

Dovesville

Written by Julia
Illustrated by Felicia
There is a little town at the edge of the woods. The town is named Dovesville, and everyone in the town is happy. Everyone that is, except Maggie.
Maggie had a problem and she didn’t like to tell anyone else about it. Maggie didn’t know how to read. She was the only person in her 3rd grade class who couldn’t read.
Across the road from where Maggie lived, was an old woman named Rose. Maggie didn’t like Rose. She thought that Rose was scary because she lived with so many cats. Maggie had seen at least twelve! The other reason Rose was scary was because she always walked so slowly. Maggie had never seen Rose run, jump, or play.
One week when Maggie was new in town, she had a lemonade stand. She had her mom write ‘Lemonade, 25 cents’ on the top. She had many customers, and was making a lot of money!

Then Rose came walking by, and saw the stand. She smiled warmly at Maggie, then said in her old lady voice, “Oh honey, that’s such a sweet way to make money! Why, when I was young, I had a lemonade stand just like you, and we sold lemonade for five cents per cup! Oh, those were the good old days...”
Maggie stared, amazed at how Rose had lied. Rose had never been young!

Everyone knew that old ladies were old ladies for their whole life, and had never been young! Maggie glared at her, and immediately lost all trust in Rose.

Another time, Rose was making some soup in her kitchen, then glanced out of the window at Maggie, saying, “Hey Maggie, how are you doing?” Maggie shrieked, running away from Rose, looking at her cooking pot and thinking she was a witch.
One day, Maggie was sitting in a lawn chair in her front lawn, looking at the pictures in a very big book, pretending to be able to read very well. She was just looking at a picture of what she knew was an ant when Rose walked by.

“I see you’re reading the dictionary,” Rose said to Maggie. Maggie blinked, wondering what exactly a dik-shun-air-ee was, when Rose spoke again, this time asking a question. “Are you comprehending the definitions?”

Maggie stared at Rose, not having a clue about what to say. She really didn’t know what Rose was talking about!

Rose finally broke the silence, seeing Maggie’s problem somehow. “Maggie, do you know how to read?”

Maggie stuck her chin out angrily, and meanly said, “Of course I know how to read! Anyone who can’t read is an idiot!”
Rose smiled, and then said, "You don’t have to be embarrassed, you know. I had a lot of trouble reading when I was your age. Here, come to my house where we can have some cookies, and I can teach you how to read."

Maggie sighed, but followed Rose, afraid that Rose might tell people if she didn’t listen.
The cookies were good. They were chocolate chip cookies, crisp on the outside, but gooey and warm on the inside, with chips that melted in your mouth. They were wonderful, especially when washed down with a refreshingly cold glass of milk. Then, Rose started to help Maggie learn to read.
After a few months of flashcards, reading picture books with Rose, and many cookies, Maggie was able to read very well – even better than the other people in her class! She and Rose were very good friends now, and she didn’t know how she could possibly have disliked her to begin with!

Many years later Maggie began to write her own books, which all the children loved. She too became an old woman. One day, she saw a young girl struggling to read one of her books. “Here, come with me,” she said lovingly. “We can have some cookies and I’ll teach you how to read.”
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Babysitting is SO Not Fun

Written by Julie
Drawing by K.J.

Their high-pitched squeals sounded like little demons that had begun to wreak havoc on earth. She could just barely fathom what the next six hours would be like.

The ad in the paper said, “Sixteen year old seeking job. Very responsible and outgoing. Call Kory Tellman at 555-0895.” It wasn’t much but it would have to do.

Kory had just turned sixteen and was now looking for a job so she could save up to buy a car. It would take a long time, but she was a hard worker, so she expected she could earn enough sooner rather than later.

Of course, it had been three weeks since she entered the ad into the paper, and she hadn’t gotten a single call.

Kory had been doing some volunteer work at a local animal shelter. One day when she came home, smelling of wet dog and cat urine, her father called her into the kitchen.

“Good news and bad news,” he mumbled when she entered the room. “Good news is ya got a job.” Kory’s eyes lit up for a second when she heard this, forgetting for the moment how foul she smelled.

“Bad news is,” her father continued, “it’s babysittin’ for the Johnson twins.”

Kory’s heart dropped. She knew then that her father was doing nothing but mocking her. He did that on a daily basis ever since she started looking for a job.

She smartly replied, “Uh-huh daddy, I’m real sure about that. How long did it take you to come up with that one? Two hours? Maybe three?”

“None. Mrs. Johnson really did call. I’m not making that up. Seriously. Left her number too. Call her before six o’clock, she said.” Kory went over to the counter and, sure enough, her father really had sloppily written down the Johnson home number.
Classifieds

Sixteen Year Old Seeking Job
Responsible
Call Ron, (555) 555-0987
“Oh wow,” she thought aloud. “They really did call.” The next thought that ran through her mind sent shivers down her spine.

Dee and Danny Johnson were the two most rotten kids in town, and everyone knew it. They were spoiled brats who got everything they wanted, and when they didn’t, they threw huge fits and tantrums and would throw things and break things all around their house. Because they were “mommy’s little angels,” whoever was watching them took the blame of the mess and had to pay for whatever mess was made.

She had to take this job, though. She needed this job. So she picked up the phone and called Mrs. Johnson back. A time was set for the next day, Saturday, from four thirty p.m. to ten thirty p.m.

“What am I thinking?” Kory asked herself later that night.

She really needed this job, but she knew she couldn’t last one hour in there let alone six. She had to suck it up and deal with it, though, because she couldn’t get out of it now.

The next day came soon enough, and her father drove her over to the Johnson house, or should she say mansion? The house was huge! If you imagined the size of the white house, this is what the house seemed like to her. No wonder the little brats got whatever they wanted. They could afford to buy Rhode Island by the way it looked. Just driving up the driveway to the front door took what felt like five minutes. And the front door was huge. She could probably reach her arms up as far as they could go and still not reach the top of that door.

She rang the doorbell and immediately heard what she imagined hell would sound like.

“MOMMY! THE BABYSITTER IS HERE!”

It was worse than she had imagined. Their high-pitched squeals sounded like little demons that had begun to wreak havoc on earth. She could just barely fathom what the next six hours would be like. She wanted to turn around and go home, but her father had already driven away. She was trapped.

“Hello, You must be Kory. It’s so nice to meet you,” said a beautiful young woman with her long brunette hair tied professionally up in an elaborate bun, her shirt and suit pants ironed perfectly with not a single wrinkle to be found, beautiful blue-green eyes shining like the sun, and a smile that lit up the room, when the door was finally opened. “I’m Mrs. Johnson. Please, come in.”

Kory followed Mrs. Johnson into the enormous house. There was a huge marble staircase that led up to the top two floors. Tapestries and giant paintings hung along the walls. Vases filled with the most beautiful roses lined the hallways. In what she imagined was the living room, she could see a huge grand piano and an eerie bear skin rug that’s blank eyes stared at her and seemed to bore holes deep into her soul. As they walked through the kitchen, she felt as though she had entered a five-star restaurant. Everything in this home was beautiful.

“You have the most amazing home I have ever seen, and I haven’t even seen all of it yet!” Kory exclaimed to Mrs. Johnson.

She laughed and responded, “I’m still trying to get used to this place, and I moved in here nine years ago!”

Kory imagined herself living in this marvelous home, but then she remembered that there was only one problem. The twins.

“Where are your children? I thought I heard them when I rang the doorbell.”

“Oh, they’re around. I never know when they’ll pop up out of nowhere.” At that precise moment, the twins ran into the room squealing and screaming.

“MOMMY, DON’T LEAVE US! WE DON’T WANT YOU TO GO AWAY!”

“Well, speak of the devils,” Mrs. Johnson laughed quietly. If only you knew, was the thought that ran through Kory’s mind.

“Don’t worry you two. I’m only going to be away for a couple of hours. Besides, you have Kory here to play with you guys.”

“But mommy!” Dee squealed, grabbing hold of Mrs. Johnson’s leg, squeezing as though she was trying to cut off all circulation to her mother’s leg.

“Dee, honey, it’ll be ok. We do this every two weeks. You’re going to have to start learning that mommy’s going to have to go away sometimes and you can’t always have me around to play. Mommy’s a busy lady.” She turned to Kory smiling and said.

“Everything you need to know is taped to the fridge. Emergency numbers, what time the kids need to be in bed, what they like to eat for dinner and snack, et cetera. I hope you have a good night, and that my little angels won’t be too much trouble. I should be home around ten thirty, but I’m not exactly sure because this is a very important business dinner, and it may run a little late. If that’s the case, then I’ll call. Oh, and the children are both afraid of the dark, terribly afraid, so be sure to check
and make sure that their nightlights are on before they go to bed.”

“What should I do if someone else calls?” Kory asked.

“Answer the phone and take a message would probably be best. Well, I’d better get going. I don’t want to be late!” Mrs. Johnson moved, or, more appropriately, piled, Delilah off her leg, and began heading towards the door.

The twins were crying the whole time their mother was still in the house, but as soon as she walked out the door, and they could hear her fancy sports car, probably a Ferrari or something very similar, start up. They stopped, and turned toward Kory.

“Now you’re really in for it,” they said.

Oh God, was all that Kory could think.

An hour passed by way too quickly. Danny and Delilah were surprisingly good, sitting upstairs playing board games in Danny’s room. This, of course, scared the heck out of Kory.

As she was sitting on the most comfortable couch she had ever seen, the phone suddenly rang.

“Hello. Johnson residence,” she said into the phone.

“Yes, hello. This is Officer McMann calling about a phone call we just received. Is Mrs. Johnson around?” said a husky voice on the other end.

“Oh, no, she isn’t. She won’t be home for a few more hours. I’m the babysitter, Kory Tellman. Is there anything I can help you with officer?”

“Well, we just received notice that an alarm in that residence went off a few moments ago. Do you know anything about this?”

“Um, no. I didn’t hear an alarm. Is it something serious? Should the children and I leave the house?”

“No, but is there a number where I can reach Mrs. Johnson?”

“Yes, her cell number. Umm, let me get it for you.” As Kory entered the kitchen to look at the note with the emergency numbers, she suddenly slipped on something wet on the floor. Water. She knew exactly why the two kids had been so quiet.

“Hello?” she said into the receiver.

“Yes, miss Tellman, I’m still here,” the husky voice said.

“Ok, her cell number is 555-7291.”

“Ok. Thank you.”

“Is that all?” Kory asked sounding relieved.

“Yes, that should be all. Thank you.” The officer hung up the phone before Kory could say anything else. She put the phone back on the dock and went upstairs to Danny’s room, where the two of them had been talking, or plotting.

“Ok you two,” she said when she entered the room. “It’s time for dinner. What would you like?”

“Mac and cheese! Mac and cheese!” They squealed with their devilish high-pitched voices.

“Did you slip on the water I ACCIDENTALLY spilled?” Danny asked. The two of them giggled in the most annoying voices ever. They sounded like cackling hyenas.

“Yes, I did, but I forgive you, and I cleaned up the mess already.” Of course, she hadn’t cleaned up the mess, and, luckily, the two evil beings sitting across the room bought it, and immediately ran for the kitchen so they could coach Kory on how exactly they like their macaroni and cheese to be made.

Kory was still on the staircase when she heard the most wonderful sound she could imagine. THUMP! Then, another loud THUMP! The two were down. Score one for Kory. Then she heard something that tore her heart into pieces, and not out of compassion, but out of sheer and utter fear.

“WAAAAAAAAHHHHH!!” The two evil brats cried out.

“Oh god. Now I have to deal with them crying!” Kory groaned. She had been having a fairly easy night until the call from Officer McMann and her slip in the kitchen, but now she really was in for it.

She rushed down the rest of the stairs to see what kind of trouble she had just gotten herself into, but then she heard something else that made her heart skip a beat out of joy. Delilah thought that Danny had pushed her, and Danny thought that Delilah had dragged him down! They had no idea that they had slipped in the water that she had left out for them! She felt more relieved at that moment than she had ever felt before in her life. She went to the kitchen and told them,

“Maybe neither of you pushed or pulled the other. It could have been an accident, you know?” The two understood and went and sat at the table to wait for Kory to make them their dinner.
After she finished cooking, she scooped the macaroni and cheese into their “designated bowls,” and put them out in front of them. As soon as she turned her back she heard Deilah giggle. She turned around to see that there were three little pieces of macaroni hanging on the wall.

“I learned in school that if you throw pasgetti on the wall it sticks!” Danny squealed with joy.

“That’s with spaghetti, not macaroni and cheese. Mac and cheese makes a bigger mess when you throw it against the wall. Don’t do that again, ok?” no sooner had she turned her back before she heard Deilah giggle again. Hearing that obnoxious little giggle of hers sent shivers throughout Kory’s body. She turned around to see that the three pieces on the wall had now turned into a fairly decent handful.

“What did I just say about throwing the macaroni?” Kory said, trying as hard as she could not to yell at them and make things even worse.

“But I wanted to try it too!” Deilah screeched, followed by a loud and long giggle.

“I’m warning you two. If you don’t stop it right this second, I’m going to call your mother and get permission to lock both of you in your separate rooms for the rest of the night!” The two children looked really frightened, but they stopped throwing the mac and cheese.

After they were done eating, the twins wanted to do some crafts, so Kory took out a gigantic box of art supplies out of one of the many enormous walk-in closets. The twins seemed eager to make craft by using scissors, but Kory didn’t know if that was allowed, so she called Mrs. Johnson, and found out that it was. She gave them the scissors and sat at a table next to where they were doing their crafts. She was so amazed at the beauty of this house that she was now sitting in, that she began to daze off and not think about what was going on in front of, or behind her.

Before she knew it, Deilah was behind her with a pair of scissors in one hand, and Kory’s long ponytail in the other. SNIPL went the scissors, and Kory’s ponytail was gone.

“WHAT THE HECK DID YOU DO THAT FOR? WHAT IS YOUR PROBLEM? WHAT’S WRONG WITH YOU?” Kory screamed at Deilah.

Danny was giggling in front of her, but Deilah looked as though she might start crying at any moment.

“Ok. I’m sorry I yelled Deilah, but you had no reason and no right to cut off my hair like that,” Kory said a little more calmly, trying to calm Deilah down.

“I thought you would look less ugly with short hair,” Deilah stammered.

“Oh,” was all Kory could say. She picked up the piece of hair Deilah had just cut off and threw it in the trash. She was devastated. She had always loved how long her hair was, and now it was gone. And she still had four hours left in this living hell.

After crafts were done, Deilah and Danny decided they wanted to watch television for the two hours before they had to go to bed. Kory had no objection to that, as long as it would keep them quiet. Unfortunately, it didn’t. Deilah wanted to watch Animal Planet, but Danny wanted to watch Cartoon Network. The two of them went at each other in a full on fist fight. Danny was hitting Deilah and pulling her hair, while Deilah was kicking and biting Danny. Kory tried to separate them, but got knocked in the face and scratched while she tried. She had no idea what to do, so she called Mrs. Johnson.

“Hi Mrs. Johnson. I’m so sorry I keep calling you,” she said timidly when Mrs. Johnson answered on the fourth ring.

“Oh, nonsense. What can I do for you?”

“Well, the twins are fighting over what they want to watch on television, and I mean they’re really fighting. Somehow I got into the middle of it and was injured as well, and I don’t know what to do.”

“Oh, let them duke it out. They’ll tire out soon enough, and then you get to choose what you want to watch and they won’t even put up a fight. It’s ok. They do this all the time. I have to go now, but thanks for calling. Good bye.” And she was gone.

She was right though. Mother always does know best. The two of them got tired, and were soon slumped down on the couch breathing heavily. Kory picked out a show to watch, and for the next hour, the two children’s eyes were glued to the television and Kory got to rest.

Soon it was eight o’clock, and it was time for the twins to start getting ready for bed.

Kory turned off the television and said, “Bed time. Come on, let’s go upstairs and put pj’s on, brush hair and teeth, take baths, whatever it is you need to do to get ready.”

The twins didn’t put up much of a fight so Kory had the slight notion that maybe, just maybe, the rest of the night would go smoothly.

She had never been more wrong in her life. Getting Danny into his bath was no problem, but getting Deilah into hers was like trying to towel-dry a hyper-active wet dog at the animal shelter. It
was nearly impossible. She squirmed and she cried and she fought for twenty minutes before Kory finally gave up. She figured she would just have to tell Mrs. Johnson what happened.

The torment didn’t end there. She soon found out that the evil twins had been plotting against her the whole night. As she walked into Danny’s room to make sure that he was in bed, she stepped on something squishy as she entered the room. She looked down and saw what appeared to be a pile of dog poop.

When she entered the bathroom to wash her shoes off, she saw something moving out of the corner of her eye. Delilah was out of her room, and on the run. Kory didn’t bother to put her shoes back on as she ran out of the bathroom to catch Delilah and make sure she was in her room.

When she was going down the stairs, she tripped on something that hadn’t been there before. On the stairs, she noticed as she fell down the full flight, were what seemed to be hundreds of toys that were strategically scattered all over the place.

When Kory hit the floor at the bottom of the stairs, she immediately got up and followed the sound of the twins laughing into the kitchen. She found them there hiding behind the counter.

“Get out from behind there this second!” Kory yelled when she was close enough that she could see the color of their evil eyes. “I swear if you two don’t get your butts upstairs and into your beds right now, I’m going to scream!”

The twins refused to move. Kory didn’t know what to do. She was out of ideas, and if she didn’t get them in bed and the house cleaned up before ten thirty, she would get in trouble with their mother.

Suddenly the most brilliant idea came to mind. Her father had been a mechanic for a while, and she knew how to turn off all the power in the house and turn it all back on without ruining anything. She remembered how Mrs. Johnson had mentioned that the twins were extremely afraid of the dark, so hopefully her brilliant plan against the two evil beings crouched on the floor in front of her would work.

She went down to the basement and found the power box. She flipped some switches and pushed some buttons. The power was gone, and she could hear the twins screaming in total, utter fear upstairs in the kitchen.

When she got upstairs with a flashlight in hand, she went to the kitchen and said to the kids, “go upstairs to bed right now, and I’ll turn the power back on. Don’t go up, the power stays off, and you stay scared. Go upstairs and come back out again, the power immediately goes off again. Am I making myself clear?” The twins fervently nodded their heads and followed Kory upstairs to their designated rooms. When that was done, Kory went back to the basement and turned the power back on.

Finally the twins were in their rooms, and were dead asleep. Kory figured she could get some of her schoolwork done after cleaning up the mess they made, seeing as she had brought along her bag just in case she got some quiet time to herself. She went into the living room, but decided she didn’t want to be anywhere near that creepy bear skin rug, so she found what she assumed to be a home library, and set to work there.

About a half hour later she could hear little footsteps walking around upstairs. It was ten p.m., and Kory did not want to have to deal with another problem. She walked up the beautiful marble staircase to find Danny walking around crying.

“What’s wrong? Did something happen?” Kory asked as she approached Danny.

“I peed my bed,” Danny whispered as softly as he could.

“Oh no. Ok. Let’s go get you cleaned up.” Suddenly Danny’s eyes grew wide with fear as he exclaimed,

“You can’t tell Delilah! She’ll tease me!”

“Don’t worry, I won’t tell her. As much as I would like to tell her to see you two go at each other again, I won’t tell. Now, let’s get you cleaned up.” It took about fifteen minutes to help Danny get cleaned up, change the sheets, and put them in the washer.

“Thank you Kory,” Danny whispered as he lay his head back down onto the pillow.

“Sure thing Danny,” Kory replied. She closed the door and went back downstairs.

The next half hour seemed to take forever. She couldn’t believe she had survived the ordeal. When Mrs. Johnson got home and asked how things went, all she could do was laugh. She was bruised and cut up, she had a bump the size of Texas on her forehead, and her hair was almost completely gone, but she had survived, and now it was time for her reward. The money.

Two weeks later, when she got home from the animal shelter, her father said to her, “Mrs. Johnson called. Wants to know if you’ll baby-sit for them again. I told her you’d take the job.”

“NOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!”
I AM AWARE

written by KJ
drawing by Shelby
When you see me
Why do you stare
I am aware
I can see
Why does it matter
How I dress
Neat and clean or a mess

If I took an x-ray
Would it match yours
I think yes
So next time you stare
Be aware
Of that yes

When you see me
Why do you laugh
I am aware
I can hear
Why does it matter
The color of my hair
Rainbow bright or dark as night

If it was like yours
Would you laugh
I think no
So next time you laugh
Be aware
Of that no

When you see me
Why do you exclude
I am aware
I can feel
Why does it matter
The way I play
First one picked or last one left

If I read the rules
Would they be the same for you and me
I think yes
So next time you exclude
Be aware
Of that yes
route 59

Written by Ryan
Illustrated by Julia

Eight quarters jingle in my pocket as I run to the Stony Island bus stop to get on my ride home. The 59 bus actually stops at 60th and Dorchester but it normally sits and waits just off Stony Island to make up for being ahead of schedule. I’ve made a habit of running because the bus tends to drive away when I’m between the school and the stop.
When I finally reach the bus, I pull the quarters from my pocket and put them into the fare machine that eagerly sucks them down and grants me access to the seating. I sit down at any available seat and pull out either a book or my iPod. Occasionally I pull out both. For some, this may seem like the average routine.

The 59 bus is a route that runs down 59th Street from Stony Island to Midway Airport. Its only dip in its otherwise uninterrupted straight line is to 55th Street to drop CTA patrons off at the Red Line stop there. This route also passes through Washington Park, Englewood, Marquette Park and Midway, five culturally rich Chicago neighborhoods on the south side. They are also filled almost entirely with minorities. For the entire ride, I am the only white person on the bus.

Chicago is called the most segregated city in America. Its racial division is evident through riding the buses and trains, and walking the streets of the city itself. The North side, a middle-class area, is filled with nightclubs, high-end restaurants, fast-food chains, and white people. The Loop could be considered more diverse due to the throngs of ethnically diverse tourists that crowd its streets, but not entirely so – the condos above them are almost completely white as well. The West side doesn’t follow the trend of the previous two. It contains areas like Austin, Humboldt Park and the ill-fated Cabrini-Green projects, and its citizens face little economic opportunity. The South Side neighborhoods like Garfield Park, Englewood, Gage Park and Woodlawn are broken only by the occasional cases of gentrification such as Hyde Park, Chinatown and Bridgeport.

My bus ride is a long one. I ride the route for its entire length. During this route I see many people get on and off the bus. A woman comes on the bus, carrying groceries. Her two young children follow her closely and sit down near her. I smile as one eagerly shows her mother the transit card she received as a token of her bus ride. The other, being older and more used to bus rides, pulls out a Nintendo DS and begins playing it.

During this ride I always receive stares from others on the bus. They seem to look at me almost as if I don’t belong, as if something’s not right when I’m on the bus. I can partially share the same feeling. It’s as if I’m taking this bus through a foreign country and I’m riding until the final stop in my homeland again. People rarely sit near me unless the bus is crowded, and usually sit on the opposite side of the bus, eerily reminiscent of the pre-Civil rights era. I’ve learned to ignore this.

Towards the end of my route the bus begins to empty. Not many people actually take this bus straight to Midway Airport. It drives over a set of train tracks that immediately precedes the terminal. As it pulls in, I get out of the bus and get onto another one, and I head home.
"As I'm getting older, seeing and learning the bigger picture in life, I realize that my grandma isn't the way she used to be. Sometimes, it feels like I never had those conversations with her and they are all faded memories lingering somewhere waiting for the next person to uncover them...."
Part of the way you are raised, will reflect on the amount of tolerance you have for the diversity of society. Starting from a very young age, you grow, learn and adapt each day, learning something new from others or picking things up from the media.

I was raised to accept everyone the way they were, no matter how difficult it seemed. Pretty recently, my family has had to tolerate the loss of my Grandma, not physically, but mentally.

My Grandmother suffers from Alzheimer’s, a degenerating disease that destroys one’s memory. Alzheimer’s is known to destroy brain cells and can eventually be fatal. This disease has different affects on different people. Some people’s memories are affected worse than others. My grandma’s disease has affected her for quite a while. It is devastating to watch her go through this hardship and lose touch with reality. This disease has impaired her ability to function at the level that she used to.

Regardless, she is still a great person. In the years when she could remember more, we spent a lot of time at her house in southern Illinois. Our family would take summer trips to go visit her. I was always excited to show her anything I made in school or a good grade I got on a test. She would tell me stories about her childhood and how hard it was. I often wonder if she remembers anything now. She would also tell me how back when she was my age, she never wore a skirt shorter than knee length or died her hair. That would always make me angry and I convinced myself that she didn’t know anything because she was old fashioned.

She still does some of the things that she has always done like ask for our school pictures each year and say “I’m going to put a brick on your head if you get any taller!”

As I’m getting older, seeing and learning the bigger picture in life, I realize that my grandma isn’t the way she used to be. Sometimes, it feels like I never had those conversations with her and they are all faded memories lingering somewhere waiting for the next person to uncover them. I know that my grandma’s memory will never be back the way it used to be. I do know that I can always look back and remember all the things my grandma said when she had a better memory.

Although it is really difficult to see my grandmother go through this struggle, everyone is supportive. From neighbors to family, we would do anything for her.

If my grandma forgets who I am, she will live on in memory. If she passes on, she will live on in spirit. If any one goes away I can remember who that person is or was. The power of memory is an amazing thing.
SUPERSTITION

Black Cats
Ladders
Voodoo dolls
Salt
Witchcraft
Dream

Mosquito-spread West Nile
Good Luck / Bad Luck

Superstitions to bring
Passing the toad

Ricky Martin rituals
Knock on wood beliefs follow you anxiety paranoia irrational beliefs Lessons

Mirrors umbrellas
Bloody Mary Control
orthogenique

tolerance

superstition

boredom

mythology
Blame Game
Written and Drawn by Felicia
“Aaaaagghhhhh!”
Screaming wakes me from my wholesome slumber.
“Becky!!!”
Oh, it’s just Amanda.
“Becky! Wake up! Quick, it’s Hannah Montana!”
Silly Amanda, she’s in love with that Hannah Montana, especially her sidekicks on the show.
Ugh, I guess I should wake up. I clamber out of bed, and into the bathroom. I stare into the bathroom mirror, reminding myself of how tired I am. The dark circles under my eyes confirm it.
I get into the outfit I had picked out the night before, green hoody and black sweatpants. I walk down the stairs and am deafened by the sound of Miley Cyrus screeching her lungs off.
I walk into the kitchen and see my brother Sam making French toast sticks in the microwave. He’s my older brother, my big brother. As much as I talk smack, he’s still my protector; it’s like he understands. He understands my teenage hormones, and my girly crushes, my attachments to others, and my worried sense of paranoia towards death, which seems to occupy his thoughts as well.
Ever since my dad died in a car accident, we’ve stuck together and even though my mother seemed to fall into her own little spell of depression, we’ve been there for each other. We all took it pretty hard, but I think my brother got it the worst. The night my dad died, my brother had a little crash of his own; not that big, but he hit a tree, the front headlights went out, and something with the transmission got screwed up. My dad soon found out and was in a rage. He got into the car and left to get it fixed. Little did we know it would be the last time we saw him alive.
What happened that night still haunts Sam, and I think something in that made us have a stronger bond.
Sam snaps me out of thought, “Whatcha going to do tonight? For the sleepover I mean?”
“Oh I think we’re just going to hang out watch some movies, do a little gossiping, you know, girl stuff.”
“Okay, well remember I’m going to the movies with Amanda. She wants to see Horton Hears a Who.”
“All right, well, mom will be here.”
“Yeah right. Just be good.” He says.
“All right.” I laugh; he always seems to think I’m still his baby sister. He thinks I’m going to sneak in boys or something. He doesn’t realize I’m better than that, but I agree anyway.

Later that night I am setting up some snacks in the living room, and Sam comes down with a little princess, or so she says. Amanda’s dressed in a little Cinderella costume. Did I
mention that she’s six years old? I laugh and hoist her into the air in a little loop-de-loop and put her, giggling, back onto the ground.

“Later sis.” Sam says.

I stare at them walking out the door, and smile and wave worriedly as they drive away in mom’s scar.

Okay, it’s time; I’ll call the girls over.

After I’m done calling everybody I run to the bathroom, and get spa materials. I want to make this night as relaxed as possible. Little did I know that they had other plans in mind.

Amy arrives a little past five, and then Jessica, and then Tameka. We are a small lot, but we’ve been together as friends for a long time. We’ve been through some pretty rough stuff. We all have our secrets, but we respect one another enough not to even inquire as to what those secrets are.

So, we sit down together and ask about each other’s days. Then Amy brings out some things she brought with her. The first thing I see her pull out is a Ouija board.

“Oh Great” I mutter. She also brings out some candles and sets them around.

“No.” I say. “My mom’s asleep upstairs and the last thing I need is for the house to burn down. Can’t we do something else? No Ouija board please, we don’t need to be playing with “spirits”.”

“Okay Miss party pooper, what do you suggest we do then?” Jessica whines.

“Well, I don’t know!”

Tameka pipes up, “How ’bout truth or dare?”

“Whatever.” I mutter.

We start. First Jessica says truth and we find out that she likes a guy at school named Matt, and then that Tameka likes a boy named Mario. Amy was dared to kiss her crush at school the next Monday, and I, well, I was dared to say “Bloody-Mary” in the mirror three times.

I walk up the stairs to the bathroom, shaking with the fear. Not out of the fear of saying Bloody-Mary, but of waking my mother and feeling her wrath.

I walk into the bathroom, and stare into the mirror, “Bloody-Mary, Bloody-Mary, ugh, I close my eyes... Bloody-Mary!” It’s done; I turn to walk out the door, but I look in the corner of my eye and I see my shadow. Only it’s larger, and very menacingly dark. I immediately turn around only to see nothing there. Weird. Huh. BAM! BAM! BAM!

“Aaaagghhhhh!” I scream.

The door shrieks with the pain of fists against it, and then seemingly begins to howl with laughter. I open it. “You guys!! That was SO not funny!” No one was there.

“Creepy” I mutter. “You guys? C’mor you guys, this isn’t funny anymore. You guys?”

I walk around the hallway looking for them, but I don’t see them. Each time that I turn around, my shadow seems to shrink. I run as fast as I can, and when I get downstairs, I see them huddled around the Ouija board.

“Hey girly! What took you so long?”

“You guys, that wasn’t funny!!!” I practically yell.

“What? I don’t know what you’re talking about but we’re playing so get over here!” Amy smiles and says.

“But who was pounding on the door? And who made that creepy shadow in the bathroom? You guys are sure going to a lot of trouble trying to scare me!!! Well, you’ve succeeded, so CUT IT OUT!!!”

Jessica worriedly says to me, “Chika, we didn’t do anything, but you need to go get a band-aid or something. You’re bleeding!”

“What!!!” I look down at my green hoodly and see what use to be green, had turned into a dark maroon. I lift it up looking for a wound, but I cannot find any. I lift my hands to my eyes, in order to wipe away the tears. Only they aren’t tears; I’ve found the source.

Right as I’m about to scream, I hear a shrieking from upstairs. I know it’s my mother. I run, no, sprint, up the stairs only to not see her. She’s gone! I look around and she is no where to be found, I hear the others panting as they come up the stairs.

“Where is she?” Tameka pants.

“I don’t know.” I whisper.

I run down the stairs to the phone in the kitchen, trying to call my brother only to realize it was disconnected.

I scream, “Oh My God!!! What do I do, what do I do?”

I look around, only now noticing I’m all alone. “AMY? JESSICA? Tamekaaaaaaa!!!” I start to
cry. Why is this happening to me? Is Bloody Mary really going to get me? I remember the blood on my shirt and I go to the sink hurriedly in order to tend to the wound.

I hear a crackling right in front of me, in the mirror. I look up, shocked, and see this thing; a bloody thing. Then I realize it's not a thing, it's a girl! I scream.

She looks at me, and chokingly says, "I know what you did that night. It's your entire fault; you crashed the car, after your brother brought it back. You're the one who caused it, you're the reason your father left and died. You said the words and now you must pay!!"

I scream, and run to the phone, stupidly trying one last time to call my brother. I'm in shock, I'm bleeding and my only hope is him, but then I realize, it WAS my fault, and I don't want it to go after them. I put down the phone, and walk towards the mirror. My eyes burning on the way over. Desperate times can really bring out a different side in a person. All of this because of a stupid dare.

I think I can solve this. I'm going to break the mirror. Maybe that'll stop her. However, before I can do that, all goes black.

Am I dead? Did I do it? Is she gone? I start to scream, maybe someone will hear me. Nothing happens. I think about my dad, brother and sister, did them so many wrongs, and now I can't make it up to them. I wish I could have one more chance!

I awake screaming, in the bathroom, staring in the mirror, and listening to the pounding on the door. I look around right as I'm about to say Bloody-Mary the last time, and I decide, Screw that!!!

I walk out, and tell them I did not say it. They rag on me about being a chicken. They taunt me all night, even when my brother and little sis get home, and until they leave the next day, but I don't care. Superstitions may be real or, they may not be. They are what you make of them. Now, whether I scared the hell out of me, or something else did, I don't know, but what I do know is I'm not about to find out.
Bad Luck
Written By John
Drawing By Shelby

Two out of three of her dream-catchers had broken (it was having three of them that was good luck, so one was useless); she had to dial the phone number 654-198-9315 (which contained not only a six, but two nines) and attend a conference on the thirteenth floor of her office that day to keep her job. Lastly, on her way home she had no choice but to cross the path of another black cat to get into her home (there seemed to be dozens of them living in her neighborhood); it had not been Sandra Ramsey’s best day.

Sandra thought of herself as, generally, a reasonable, modern-day, intelligent person, and certainly not one to get caught up in centuries-old, ridiculous superstitions; however, certainly there was some merit to some beliefs regarding luck. She had proof of it.

When she was six years old, she had suffered from night terrors. It became a big problem for her and so eventually her parents took her to see a child’s psychiatrist. The psychiatrist talked to her about her fears, secrets, and other things that were on her mind and bothering her. She felt relief after talking to him, and the night terrors began to go away, but the real solution came with a visit from her grandmother.

“Hello, Sandy,” her grandmother said. “Your mother told me you’ve been having a lot of bad dreams lately. Is that true?”

“Yes, grandma,” young Sandra had said. “I talk about them with Dr. Eagleston.”

“Well, Sandy, you don’t have to worry about them anymore. I have something for you that my mother gave to me when I had nightmares when I was your age.” With that, Sandra’s grandmother gave her a dream-catcher. She put it up beside her bed that very night and was convinced it had worked perfectly. She didn’t have a single night terror. She continued using the dream-catcher, as well as having very important conversations with Dr. Eagleston; for years and never had problems with night terrors again.

When she had grown older and had a stressful job she began to have trouble falling asleep; she had since discovered the importance of numbers and the obvious solution seemed to be to buy two more dream-catchers, bringing her total to a very lucky and proper three. Tonight the dream-catchers had broken and she wasn’t sure what to do; she would never be able to sleep now.

The second wrongdoing of her day had been dialing that horrible number, 654-198-9315. Her grandmother taught her the importance of numbers when she was an adolescent; it was very complex, but the basics she tried to follow every day- three is a very good and proper number, seven is God’s number and is excellent, but six, in any way, shape, or form, is to be avoided at all costs as it’s Satan’s number. Nine was just as bad because everyone knows it’s just an upside down six. Of course she tried to avoid thirteen like the plague.

Keep in mind, Sandra was not one to attend church and was not at all a spiritual person, but the way she looked at it was that she knew she is a real person, in a real world, and these were all real numbers that could potentially have very real results. And there was more to this number than just the obvious six and two nines. In every string of numbers, every number that wasn’t a three, a six, or a nine added up to make either six or nine, which was also a very bad sign.

Then there was the conference on the thirteenth floor, which she had initially told her boss she was unable to attend, but her boss, who dealt with this kind of behavior from Sandra frequently, told her that she would lose her job unless she attended. Now she was driving home wishing she
had chosen to quit her job rather than dial that number and attend that conference.

Then there was the problem of the black cat whose path she was forced to cross to get
into her apartment; this was just a matter of common sense— you don’t cross the path of a black
cat. She had many problems like this in her building, and they were so frequent she got the
impression that everyone in the building except for her owned a black cat. The problem had
been easily remedied in the past; the most common occurrence of this type consisted of a
black cat walking across her path that led straight across the lobby and into the elevator. She
would have to walk up five flights of stairs to get into her apartment. Tonight one had walked
right in front of front door. She stood in panic for several minutes before she got the courage to
just bite her lip and enter.

She stood inside her apartment leaning against the front door, her winter coat still on. All
of the unlucky things that had happened that day raced through her head. For a long time
she was frustrated because she didn’t know what to do. She hastily went into the kitchen, and
before she had a chance to turn on the light she tripped over a chair and hit her head on the
counter.

In her mind, this meant everything; it was a culmination of all the bad luck she had re-
ceived that day. She felt around for the light and collected herself mentally. The fall had left
a large bruise on her head, but it wasn’t bleeding and she hadn’t lost consciousness, so she
decided it was nothing to worry about. She ran the events of the day through her head again
and again. It was clear as day now that it was imperative that she deal with all the sources of
bad luck in her life. She began to think about where to start, when she heard a cat meow just
outside her front door.

She opened the door and looked down the hall, and saw her next-door neighbor pick-
ing up a black cat, softly saying something to it, and taking it into her apartment. Sandra was
incredulous— her own neighbor was harboring one of those horrible creatures. She had never
taken the time to get to know so much as her neighbor’s name, and she scolded herself for let-
ting something so terribly unlucky live next door for as long as she had. Sandra realized that if
the cat lived in the building she would be crossing its path many times simply by walking into
the hall, but she had to speak with her neighbor. She knocked on their door, hoping a providen-
tial three knocks would help to start bring some balance back into her life.

A voice came from inside the apartment, “Who is it?” Sandra was for a moment surprised
to hear what sounded like a civilized person on the other side of the door.
“My name is Sandra Ramsey. I’ve lived right next door for the last four months,” she said. The door opened and Sandra looked in on her elderly neighbor and more cats than she could count. Sandra stared in disbelief.

“And how can I help you?” the neighbor asked. Sandra didn’t hear the question; her eyes darted from one cat to the next, trying to count how many black cats were among them. She wondered how often she crossed their many paths in that building, and with that she almost felt sick. She unconsciously took small steps backwards until she reached the wall. How could one person allow so many sources of bad fortune to live in their home? After another speechless moment deep in thought, she came to her senses and knew what she had to do.

Sandra turned and walked back into her apartment; she heard the neighbor say something to her but she wasn’t interested. Once inside she dug out a cardboard box, and then rounded up the smallest amount of items she considered essential and packed them in the box. It wasn’t much, just important papers like her birth certificate and few mementos and photographs that held a great deal of sentimental value; she was especially sure to take everything that may bring her some good luck. Once she was finished she threw it all in the trunk.
of her car and left that building, never planning on returning.

She drove with no destination in mind, lost in thought. It was getting to be late, and as soon as the thought of sleep entered her head she remembered she had never gotten around to replacing the dream-catchers. She knew the store would be closed, but she would drive by anyway.

When she passed by, Sandra noticed that not only was the store closed for the night, but it was under much renovation. She realized with a fright that you would not be able to enter the building without walking under a ladder. This meant that going back tomorrow when they would be open was out of the question. Sandra knew that sleeping without those dream-catchers would ruin her. She drove around aimlessly all night to keep herself awake until work the next day.

Since she had nothing else to do but kill time, and make sure she didn’t bring herself any more bad luck, she went into work early that morning. She knew she was a mess both physically and mentally- she hadn’t eaten, slept, or showered in a day. She took the elevator to

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her floor and was greeted by her boss and a man she recognized as her boss’ boss. Her boss paused for a moment at the sight of her disheveled appearance, but quickly caught himself and spoke. After exchanging greetings and making some ordinary small talk he said to her, “Sandra, the two of us need to have a quick chat with you in the conference room up on the thirteenth floor.

Something inside Sandra Ramsey snapped. The polite businesswoman smile she wore at work vanished, and she appeared furious. “You’re just like my neighbor!” she screamed. “You don’t care how unlucky a floor of the building is- you expect me to go there! And you it makes no difference whatsoever how many unlucky digits are in a phone number- I’m still supposed to call it! It’s like you two live in a fairy-world! Well I’m not like you; I live in the real world, where real things have real consequences!”

Sandra stormed away from her superiors and down the stairs. The entire floor of businesspeople whom she left in her wake was speechless, and wondered what must be going through her head.
The Truth Behind Superstitions

Written by Julia
Watercolor by Julie

Superstitions are facts.
Superstitions are completely true and totally real. I will provide you with many examples of superstitions bringing bad luck to people. Perhaps once you have read this, you will see how truly terrifying these paranormal sayings actually are.

Black cats crossing your path mean bad luck, according to the superstition. I agree entirely. If you are reading the newspaper, trying to become more knowledgeable about the world around you while walking down the street and a black cat crosses your path at the same time, this will spell disaster! You will trip on this wretched bringer of bad luck, and not only are you likely to fall on your face, but you’ll most likely end up with a beautiful display of bloody scratch marks all over any exposed skin. Surely you see how crossing a black cat’s path means bad luck now?

Another superstition tells us that walking under a ladder is bad luck, and once again, I completely agree! For example, pretend you’re walking under a ladder. You decide to look up at the sky to observe how beautiful the clouds are today, when suddenly you hear, “LOOK OUT!” Before you have time to react, two nails come falling from the second highest rung of the ladder and puncture your eyes! Now you’re going to be blind for life, all because you had to walk under a ladder.

Many people believe that little charms bring good luck. I find this superstition to also be true. In this example, your lucky charm happens to be a heart-shaped piece of bullet-proof glass. One day, you go to the bank to withdraw some money, and you have your lucky charm in your breast pocket, as normal. As you withdraw your money, gunfire erupts! You are almost hit by a stray bullet, when it hits your lucky, heart-shaped shard of bullet-proof glass. The bullet ricochets off your charm and hits the shooter in the arm, preventing him from firing the gun. The police arrive on the scene mere seconds afterwards, and, seeing your heroic deed, declare you a town hero.

As a town hero, you have a statue erected of you in front of the village hall, three billion dollars in cash given to you over a twenty year time period, and your very own mansion – all provided by the town’s government. Wouldn’t you say that’s lucky?

Breaking a mirror most certainly brings seven years of bad luck. This is easily explained: when you break a mirror, the shards of glass scatter all over the floor on which you are standing. Once surrounded by the remains of the mirror, there is no way to escape save walking through them, which will cause your foot to be a bloody, mangled mess once you have reached the other side of the room. By the time you are able to call 911, your feet will have been nearly drained of the blood previously in them. If you’re lucky, the surgeons will be able to repair your feet, though it will take at least seven years of extensive, costly surgery to completely repair them. If you’re unlucky, your feet may have to be amputated, in which case the seven years will drag on for the rest of your life.

Then there is the chain letter. According to many chain letters, if you pass them on to all your friends, you will end up getting the love of your life on a date with you. Like the previous superstitions, this is also completely real! Say you get a chain letter from your best friend telling you they want you to have good luck, and to pass it on to all of your friends. “The more friends you pass this to, the better luck you’ll have,” says the letter. This really does work! By sending it to all your friends, they will send it to all their friends, who will send it to their friends, who will send it on, and on, and on, and on! In forwarding this, your name will be attached to the letter, so that more and more people will learn who you are. By spreading your name around, more and more people will become interested in you, and therefore, more and more people will want to know you! The more people who you know, the higher your chances of meeting your true love are. This is real, people! Pass this essay along to all your other friends so that they can learn too, and your name will become famous!

By now you should have realized how real superstitions actually are. Superstitions are facts, and as such, you should always abide by them so as to ward away bad luck, and attract good luck. Always avoid black cats and walking under ladders. Bring your lucky charm with you everywhere, no matter what. Never break a mirror, and always pass along chain letters. This is my advice for you, and hopefully you will abide by the rules of life that are so often called ‘superstitions.’ Thank you for reading, and please, don’t buy any black cats; this will make the world a safer place.
Superstition
Written By Julie
Illustrated By KJ
Imagine yourself walking down a street on a beautiful summer day. It seems like nothing in the world could ruin this perfect moment. Suddenly, a black cat walks in front of you as you walk under a ladder while stepping on cracks on the concrete below you, causing you to accidentally drop your hand-held mirror and watch as it shatters on the ground. What do you do? You’ve just condemned yourself to years of bad luck. Do you even believe in superstition, and do you really think that now your life is going to hell just because of some inconceivable stories you heard from your grandparents, parents, or even your friends? What is superstition anyway? Who even believes in that stuff, and why should you? Could you really get seven years of bad luck just by breaking a mirror?

I believe that superstition is a state of mind that makes you believe in the most unbelievable things possible. For example, some people believe that when a black cat walks in front of you, something bad is about to happen. Some people believe that black cats are evil, due to the popular belief that black cats are related to witches and the devil, or may actually be witches in disguise. During the Salem Witch Trials, people would actually hang black cats, believing that the cats were witches, believing that the cats one way or another. So maybe bad luck isn’t so absolutely irrational.

However, I know many people who own black cats and nothing bad has ever happened to them in front of them. Even my cat, and she’s fine. Nothing in the eleven or so years she’s been around, nothing has happened. Yet, people are so inclined are evil, that in many animal shelters, they wont let anyone adopt or buy a of the year, for fear that to people’s beliefs of black

Another belief that mirrors and then receiving bad that belief were true, then I would the rest of my life. I have broken so seems to have happened. Many people, capture a person’s soul. This is such a popular belief that in many cases when a person dies, the surviving family members will cover up all the mirrors in the home. Receiving bad luck for breaking a mirror seems so absurd to me, but maybe if you break a mirror, it will steal your soul. Who knows?

According to Webster’s Universal Encyclopedic Dictionary the word “superstition” means “a belief or practice resulting from ignorance, fear of the unknown, trust in magic or chance, or a false conception of causation,” or “an irrational abject attitude of mind toward the supernatural, nature, or God resulting from superstition.” Superstitious acts may not simply be just a person breaking a mirror and then suddenly they have bad luck. Superstition could also be something so simple as holding a lucky charm and believing that it really will give you good luck. Superstition is not always a bad thing. Sometimes peoples’ irrational beliefs can be a good thing for that specific individual. Also, peoples’ beliefs come from stories told hundreds, sometimes even thousands, of years ago. People then were terrified about such things, and passed that fear along from generation to generation, until the stories were nothing but stories.

To me, however, superstition is a bundle of lies, stories told to people to put fear into their lives. Some people take them to the extreme, going so far as to seclude themselves from everyone and everything around them so as to be safe from the evils of the world. Sure, occasionally bad things happen for no apparent reason, and they are perceived to have happened due to some superstition that that person believes in, but that’s not possible. Just because your mother’s back broke after you walked down an old sidewalk filled with cracks, it doesn’t mean anything. Right?
flying brooms and all

written by kj
image by julia
Flying Brooms and All

6/26/10
I’m starting a blog you may not believe what you read, but, hey, it’s my life, so deal.

6/27/10
Ok. I’m back and the school year is getting off to a great start. Well, not really, but I’ll pretend. See you later.

6/28/10
She’s into superstition, black cats and voodoo dolls. They may just be lyrics from a Ricky Martin song, but that song seems to describe me. I’m Pandora Bast. Some people say I went off the deep end. They say it was out of the blue, but I saw it coming.

Anyway, back to black cats and voodoo dolls. A black cat is my familiar; its name is Lexus. A familiar is like a witch’s guardian angel. Ok, so, if you have not guessed yet, I’m a witch. It’s in my blood; flying brooms and all. Anyway, the power that comes with being a witch can get you into trouble if you are not careful. Like the time my teacher caught me talking to thin air. A fairy was there, but because my teacher is not a magical being she did not see it.

Ms. Featherstone is my teacher. You might hear her name alot. That’s because she is my least favorite teacher. She has black hair with short spiky bangs dyed in crimson, the color of blood; a little creepy, right? She just gets under my skin. Her voice sounds exactly like that actress Fran Drescher, you know, from THE NANNY. Ok, so the exact moment I knew I hated her was about two seconds after I into stepped that purgatory she calls a classroom.

The class itself might be interesting, that is if Ms. Featherstone was not the teacher. Buddhist studies sounded like just what I was looking for when I read the description on the course guide they handed out at the beginning of the year. It said “Do you want a more peaceful life? You will learn meditation techniques, and you will learn the cultures of the Asian people.” You should try a meditation class with fairies and spirits whispering in your ear while that screechy voice is telling you to just breathe.

Ok, well, I have to go to bed now, so bye.

7/8/10
Ok. So, its been a week since I last wrote my blog, and so much has happened since then. I found out that Ms. Featherstone is a witch. Not in a bad way; she is really truly a magical witch, flying brooms and all, just like me! You would not believe how I found out either. I was in the girls bathroom, in a stall, after school. I was going to teleport home, it’s faster than walking after all. Then I heard that screechy voice in the stall next to me, say something that sounded like nonsense, that is if you weren’t a witch. She was saying the teleportation spell “catoleeantaveeta.” Once I heard her say that, I was shocked, so I said a grounding spell, “veolotoramay,” to confront Ms. Featherstone.

Maybe I should explain what it looks like when you teleport. Its sort of like that scene from Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, where Mike Teevee gets shrunk, except you don’t change size, you just move from one place to another.

Anyway, at once we were both confused, shocked and annoyed, I just asked her, well maybe more like shouted at, her, “You mean to tell me you’re a witch!” As she answered, her voice no longer sounded like Fran Drescher, it sounded rather comforting for a change.
7/18/10
Ok, so I only get a chance to write about once a week now because of the witchcraft lessons I take at Ms. Featherstone’s house four times a week. I’m learning so much about the history of witchcraft and the good it has done for womankind. Ms. Featherstone taught me how to make a voodoo doll yesterday in our session. I’m going to make one for Haley, that stupid cheerleader who sits in the front row during Ms. Featherstone’s class. That may seem mean, but I don’t really care after she started that rumor about me during sophomore year. Oh and by the way, I did not do what she said I did. It’s a lie.

Anyway, in order for the voodoo doll to work, you need some of the person’s hair. A few magic spells later I found out Haley was getting her hair cut. What a perfect opportunity. All I needed to do was freeze everyone there, get the hair, and get out. It sounded simple enough.

7/28/10
The plan went perfectly. Afterwards I took the voodoo doll to school. I accidently dropped it when I thought she would be in cheerleading practice, and sure enough, I heard she fell

7/29/10
Haley’s arm is broken, she’s really upset, and, well, I feel kind of bad. It looks like there will be no more voodoo dolls in my future

7/30/10
Lexus ran away. I know that when a witch’s familiar runs away it because the witch doesn’t need its protection anymore. I just hope the next person that needs his help will treat him well. Can you say karma?

7/31/10
Ok. So I’m over this blogging thing. Well, just for now at least !!!!!!!!!!!!!

With love,

Pandora Bast,

Flying brooms and all

P.S. Remember, don’t walk under a ladder.
“Arthur, you’ve gone mad. What you’re talking about is utter nonsense.”

“Betty, don’t call me crazy. I just know.”

It was happening again. He had thought he was mad at first. It had happened once last week, while he was at work.

“Crazy? Listen to yourself!” Betty snapped back. “Have you even thought what about what you’re talking about?”

“Don’t question my logic,” Arthur replied. “My conversations have become alphabetical again.”

Beatrice just stared at him. Arthur stared back with a fearful expression in his eyes.

“Even if they were, you’ve probably just over exaggerated the whole thing. Maybe you should see the psychiatrist.”

“Freudelheim? That kook? He’ll think I’m mad!” Arthur sunk into his chair. He could picture the doctor’s eyes, rimmed by thick black glasses, staring through him into his very soul. He sat there for a moment. Finally, he gathered his resolve.

“Get my bag. I’m heading over to Harry’s.”

“Harry wouldn’t help you a bit. You’ve got to get professional medical care.”

But Arthur was already out the door.

“I’ll see you later,” he yelled as he walked down the street.

He walked down the packed street quietly. He looked at his feet, as most people on the street were doing. It was dark and dingy almost everywhere in this city, and Arthur considered that it was just as interesting to look at the dirty ground below him as it was at the grime-covered buildings above, stretching deep into the smog.

He stopped at a crosswalk. A boy and his father stood next to him. The boy was talking excitedly about something. He was actually very loud, and seemed not to be talking just to his father but really the whole street in general. Arthur stood, looking at the ground, trying to ignore him. The volume and shrillness of the boy’s voice proved difficult to tune out, and Arthur inevitably began to eavesdrop.

“James’ parents just bought a new radio last week.” The boy was now speaking at an incredible speed, nearly making his voice blur into a single uninterruptible stream of noise. “It’s so impressive! It tunes in twice as many channels than I even thought existed. When I was at the zoo last week, I saw a zebra. It was eating grass. Can we go to the soda fountain now? I do wish the sign would turn and let us go across the street. Are you even listening anymore? I’m probably boring you.”

“Keep going,” the father said, “I’m listening. You were talking about some radio.”

At this point the sign had changed and Arthur continued hurriedly down the street.

“Let’s go, son,” Arthur heard the father say.

He began to walk faster. He saw his doctor’s office on the corner. Remembering his wife’s advice, he suddenly got a nasty idea. If his conversations were alphabetical, he could twist it to his advantage. He promptly walked into the office.

“Mary, is the doctor in?”

“Freudelheim? That kook? He’ll think I’m mad!”
Remembering his wife's advice, he suddenly got a nasty idea. If his conversations were alphabetical, he could twist it to his advantage.
look into the slits of the zoetrope. Concentrate on what you see inside." The doctor pulled up a chair and Arthur looked into the slits. The doctor began to spin the device. Inside Arthur saw a cartoon. A monkey was eating a banana. It was short, tedious, and rather dull.

"Zoetrope, eh?" Arthur said. "This certainly is interesting."

The image inside, though, was certainly becoming much more interesting. As Arthur watched the monkey mundanely eating his food, it began to change slowly. The monkey’s face slowly grew recognizable. It became flatter, and more humanlike. A beard sprouted on its cheeks and its hair began to comb itself back. The monkey’s fur gradually became a suit, and its tail became a chair. The banana slowly formed itself into a sundae. Arthur gasped. He was looking at himself.

He couldn’t turn himself away. It compelled him to look closer. As he did, the figure began to get up. It threw the sundae away and began to walk backwards, first slowly, then faster. Soon it was running backwards, as if time itself had decided to change direction. Suddenly, a box appeared and little Arthur fell over backwards. Big Arthur jumped back from the zoetrope. He felt better. He was convinced now that he was cured. He took out his wallet and began to give money to the doctor, but the doctor refused.

"Weeks two in back come. Run long the in effects the know won’t we and procedure experimental an it’s. This for you charge can’t I."

Smiling from ear to ear, Arthur walked backwards out of the doctor’s office and headed home.
Maddy

Written By: Shelby  Drawing By: Ryan
“She ran quickly, but cautiously across the weedy sidewalk almost tripping over her feet. She was the only brave one out of all of her friends...”
She ran quickly, but cautiously across the weedy sidewalk almost tripping over her feet. She was the only brave one out of all of her friends.

Go figure. Everybody’s scared or their mothers don’t allow such behavior...other mothers care about more than just themselves, she thought.

It was pouring outside and she knew her mother would wonder about where she’s been.

She’s crazy I know she is, she collects toads and I heard she’s even a witch! I know mother denies it, and she claims she knows so much about witches.

These thoughts often crossed Maddy’s mind when she scampered clumsily through the tell-tale witch’s overgrown yard. She made sure she didn’t step on any cracks, even though her mother wasn’t the nicest, and she stayed clear of black cats.

As she walked in the door she said to her mom “That old woman is crazy! I just got done looking in her window and you wouldn’t believe what I just saw.....”

“Madeline!” screeched mother, with her annoying Valley Girl voice. “I’ve told you time and time again, Mrs. Wickerson is not a witch, she’s a wonderful old woman. She may be a little sour since her husband died and her kids don’t visit much, but other than that she’s perfectly normal.”

Well I can see why her kids don’t visit very much.

“In fact,” continued mother, talking while cutting Maddy’s daily apple, “I would really like to become more acquainted with our neighbors. I mean since your father left, it’s been hard for you and I to get out. Your father has left a real burden on us. We should really reintroduce ourselves, nobody likes strangers.”

She makes me angry. She never says “Things have been a little rough since dad left us,” or “I’m really sorry you had to go though that.” She refers to him as “your father,” like it’s a swear word or one of the seven deadly sins to say. She treats me like a child! I am clearly almost 12 years old. I have a lot of experience in these matters; I can tell when old women are more than a little rotten!

“Darling, about getting reacquainted....I think we should start with Mrs. Wickerson. We both know you didn’t start off on the right foot with her.”

Perfect chance, she thought as she threw some salt over her shoulder. I have to make sure not to do anything that could change my luck. No walking under ladders, umbrellas in the house, cracks in the sidewalks, broken mirrors, no hats on beds, and watch out for any facial twitches or warty frogs.

Just as Maddy finished that thought it started to pour. Her mom walked out from the kitchen carrying an OPEN umbrella with yellow and green polka-dots.

“Madeline, sweetie, I’m going out to the garden,” said her mother easily as she opened the terrible, unlucky, evil umbrella that was bound to put a curse on the house and Maddy’s only chance to get to the bottom of Mrs.Wickerson’s wickedness.
“MOTHER! HOW COULD YOU!?!?” screamed Maddy, as she stomped up the stairs nearly knocking off the mirror hanging on the wall.

“Young lady!” called mother knocking on Maddy’s door “What has gotten into you lately? First with the superstitions, and now thinking Mrs. Wickerson is crazy? You really make a big deal over everything lately!”

“Mom, You open an umbrella in the kitchen, how do you think I’m gonna react? I’m sorry I yelled, we just should take precautions, um….I mean be careful with umbrellas, that’s all. We don’t want to poke someone’s eye out. I’ve heard horror stories”, replied Maddy choosing her words carefully.

Great, now my own mother is starting to think I’m crazy.

“Apology accepted,” her mother said as she walked out of the room.

I walked downstairs and mother was on the phone with Mrs. Wickerson.

I have to listen to this.
BOREDOM

- Tired
- Sleeping
- Michelle's English Classes
- Anxiety
- Gray
- Waiting
- Lines
- Doodle

- Lunch
- Study Hall
- Yawning
- Time
- Clocks

- Autobiography
- Ex-Boyfriend
- Non-Fiction
- Dictionaries
- Skinny Fish
The World Less Traveled
Written by Felicia
Drawing by K.J.
Boredom; a possibility leading to greater things, greater things including starting a new life. Maybe not even starting a new life, but beginning your own. Many people are afraid that their lives will come to a tragic end, but the most tragic end would be if it never began. So many times have I been bored and resorted to doing some pretty stupid things, but I realize, not to condone doing something stupid, that these decisions have become a part of who I am becoming.

I remember once that I was really bored and I didn’t do anything. I sat around, ate and wallowed in my self-pity. That is not the extent of the stupid things that I have done, but I didn’t do anything and that was pretty stupid. If I could go back and re-do the situation, I would have done something worthwhile, something extraordinary, like starting a non-profit organization, going out into the community and volunteering my time, even watching the news so that I could know about the world around me and be able to make a more positive contribution to society. By learning from this, I have been able to try to change my perception of things, and rearrange my point of view on the world.

I’m afraid for our future generations, not because of global warming, well, actually, I am, but what I am most afraid of is everyone losing themselves; losing them-selves with this extreme wish to occupy boredom, especially with technology. So many teenagers just sit around and play video games, listen to their i-pods and watch television. That’s all well and good, and I do that as well, but what else could we be doing with that time?

I am not at all trying to hurt the idea of technology, but rather the idea that all of our time must be occupied, leading away from the time to think, ponder and question. Some of the greatest thinking in the world has come out of the excess time that has been left to us, including our boredom. As we change and adapt, boredom will as well. It will change in that we will find better ways to use it. It’s when we decide to use that boredom for greater things that we will find ourselves and find a new meaning to the way that we look at the world.

So many times I’ve come across boredom, and the funny thing is, is that it changes as we change, but that waiting for something, that stays the same. Somewhere in our lives we come to a crossroad, whether it is a crossroad of anguish or a crossroad of hope; anguish because we’re waiting for someone else to change, or hope, that we ourselves may change. This change could be leading way to a better life, whether it is a better job, finding a “soul-mate,” winning the lottery, not being so bossy, being smarter, or being more talented. Either way, we’re all waiting for something, and sometimes that something never comes. What can be amazing is when we pick ourselves up and decide to change, not for anyone else but for ourselves. That’s the adventure and that’s the journey; doing it for yourself and for no one else.

It’s like finding your way through this maze of life; at one end there is everything your family wants you to be, compromising your own happiness, at the other it’s everything society expects you to be, downsizing your worth. The hardest part is when you climb through the foliage make your own way out of the maze to be able to say, “I did this!” “No one but me chose that path that I made, and it is me that shall reap the benefits or the consequences.” That is what greatness made of, nothing more than that choice, that one moment held forever still in your consciousness; that
moment of remembrance, because that is what happens, you think back to it and either wonder what you could have done better, or remember it as the moment you took your life into your own hands.

As said by Ferris Bueller, “Life goes by pretty fast. If you don’t stop and look around once in a while, you could miss it.” It’s true, life does go by pretty fast even though a lot of times when we’re bored it seems to go by too slow. It is an advantage to have that time to do something. With the world revolving at so fast a pace, it’s hard to keep up, so when we do something in that time that does make a difference, it makes a difference in our lives and in others’. When you get into a state of boredom, think, “Do I want to make a difference?” Well, that’s up to you, but as far as I go, I choose to make a difference, do you?
Is It The Room That Changes
Writing & Photograph by John

You first notice it when you catch your mind wandering
And it's not long before it is all you think about
The next thing that you realize is
You're staring at the door leading out
In time the silence becomes so loud, so deafening
That the room is so painful you wish you were not there
You count ceiling tiles, stare at your shoes
You pinch yourself and pull your hair
The disinfectant floods the air and invades your nose
The piercing light from the fluorescent bulbs makes you blind
All your sentences are overloaded
And you are starting to lose your mind
You wonder why every-one around you is fine
You think about what it is they're doing that keeps them sane
So you take deep breaths, you close your eyes
You calm yourself and are numb again
SEVENTY-TWO MILES

Drawing by Felicia

Story by Julia
Peggy Sue gazed out of the car window, watching the endless fields fly past. Occasionally there were horses in pastures, cows grazing in fields, or people riding horses on the gravel road beside the car. It was a long car ride, at least that much she knew. Her father hadn’t been lying when he had said it would take a long time. ‘Oh wait,’ she thought, ‘yes he had.’ After all, he hadn’t said that it would take forever.

Charlie glanced in his rearview mirror and, seeing Peggy glaring at him, quickly averted his gaze. He had known she wouldn’t enjoy the road trip, but he had thought she wouldn’t find it quite this unbearable. He looked over at his ex-wife Patricia, saying, perhaps a little too loudly, “Well. How long until the next pit stop?”

She glanced down at the map, though it wasn’t really necessary as she had done that just three minutes ago. “Seventy-two miles,” she replied in a monotone voice, sick of having to say that every five minutes.

Charlie focused his gaze on the road once more, watching as the miles seemed to crawl past. He knew Peggy wasn’t happy about the trip, but then, who would be? He and Patricia, Peggy’s parents, had recently gotten a divorce, and now she had to travel halfway across the country by car to get to her mother’s new house while the custody battle raged on.

Suddenly, a large cluster of trees appeared on the horizon line, bringing some change to the endless string of farms. “Oh!” Charlie exclaimed, eager to bring some cheer to the dreary car ride. “Let’s stop there! How’s that sound, guys?” He tried to make his voice full of joy, but instead the result was more of an artificial, lifeless tone with a hint of monotony.

Patricia checked the map, looking all over the sprawling sheet that took over the entire passenger side of the truck. “That’s odd,” she began, double-checking, then triple-checking the map. “The map doesn’t say anything about a forest anywhere around here.”

“Well, screw the map! I’m pretty sure I know what I’m seeing.” His voice rose for his statement, the pent up frustration in the car taking form. “We’re stopping, and that’s that!”

Patricia clicked her tongue, shaking her head slowly. “I really don’t think this is a good idea, Charles.”

Charlie shuddered, his rage flaring up; a tiger springing forward to pounce on its prey. “Well, Patty,” he said, knowing full well how she hated to be called by that name, “I don’t give a damn what you think. We’re stopping. We all need a break. Peggy’s dying back there, I’m sick and tired of your whining, and you seem dead-set on making us all miserable.”

Patricia gasped, then turned her head and ignored him for the rest of the five minutes it took to get to the group of trees.

Charlie stepped out of the truck, slamming the door roughly as soon as he was out. Peggy, glad to just be away from the thing which was causing her so much misery, jumped out, not bothering to close the door as she surveyed her surroundings. They were in a clearing in a small forest, and had driven up a gravel road to get there. There was a brook moseying through the clearing, taking twisting and winding paths to get to the other edge. Her eyes immediately set on a movement seemingly coming from a small path leading away from the clearing. She skipped over there, eager to see what it was that she had seen. Once again, the flash of violet appeared at the end of the path. Giggleing, she ran towards it, trying to keep up as it continued to follow the path. Soon, however, she had lost sight of it and stopped, putting her hands on her knees as she leaned over to catch her breath. It was then that she realized she had no clue where she was as the path had disappeared. She sniffled, feeling that she was about to cry. A tree stump nearby looked like the perfect place to sit and get her tears out of her system, so Peggy sat down, and began to sob.

Just as she had started to shed the second pair of tears, she heard a soft, slightly high-pitched voice, “Peggy Sue, what’s wrong?”

She sniffed, her crying slowing down at the comforting tone of the voice, “I-I’m lost, and I d-don’t know where to f-find my p-p-parents. And it’s not fair!”

The voice giggled, and then said, “Who needs parents? You’ve got us!”

Peggy glanced up, then gasped, the shock of what she was seeing freezing her momentarily. There, gathered around her, was a group of people! They weren’t just people, though, for they were small – only around six inches tall – and they were hovering in the air by means of their butterfly wings! She stared at the bright garments, the brilliant wings, and the vibrant skin tones. There was one of the creatures that stood out, and that just happened to be sitting on her shoulder. She had a stunning magenta dress on, which was complimented
perfectly by her emerald-colored skin. Her dark pink tresses cascaded down her shoulders, ending with bright red tips near her waist. The eight-inch-tall woman smiled at her warmly, her dazzling jade wings fluttering in the wind.

“Wh-where am I?” Peggy was beginning to calm down now, since she wasn’t alone anymore. She felt strangely comforted by these beings. They reminded her of the storybooks she had read as a child, and the fairy creatures that had been in them.

“You are in the land of myths, the region where imagination takes form. We are the greetings sent to help you enter; the band of fae known as the Supreme Welcome Party Who Invite All Imaginative Beings to Our World. Now, please close your eyes, and we will help you to enter the The Completely Fantastical World of Wonderful Love and Happiness. Imagine a world full of wonderful creatures, where there are adventures aplenty.”

Peggy’s head swam with visions of merfolk resting on rocks in the sea, the sun helping them to stay warm in the frigid waters; dragons hording their valuables deep within the labyrinths of the mountains that made up their dwellings; phoenixes perched on the branches of old oak trees, screeching their shrill shrieks into the endless blue sky as their hatchlings rose from the ashes; and most important to her – pegasi prancing pristinely past clouds of cotton.

She grinned as the pegasi flew through the skies, imagining that she was riding one, soaring in and out of clouds, and breathing in the fresh smell of clean air. She could feel the wind in her face, the feelings of the vapor of the clouds brushing against her skin. She giggled, hearing a horse’s whinny, and the beat of wings that signified a pegasus. She beamed, opened her eyes, and then gasped. She really was on the back of a pegasus, and really was sailing through the clouds on wings of gold! She screamed, losing her balance, and then gripped the golden mane of the pegasus tightly for dear life. Luckily, she managed to stay on the pegasus’ back, for if she hadn’t she’d surely have fallen to her death. The pegasus she was riding turned it head to look at her, asking, “Are you alright, Peggy?”

Peggy stared in awe, for she had never thought that pegasi could TALK! “Um, y-yes, I am. Uh…” she had a question, but wasn’t sure if it would be rude to ask it. She considered for a moment, then decided that it would be okay. “If you don’t mind me asking, where are we headed?” She had a thought almost immediately after asking her question, and blushed at how impolite she’d been. “And sorry, I didn’t catch your name…”

The pegasus smiled warmly, answering, “I am The Embodiment of Acceptance and Kindness on Wings, and we – the other pegasi and myself – are taking you to meet the other beings here in The Completely Fantastical World of Wonderful Love and Happiness. We’re starting by heading over to the Great Emerald Sea of Many Dazzling Fish and Sea Creatures.”

Peggy was about to ask what that was, and why there were such long names here, when the pegasi dove downwards, breaking through the thick layer of clouds. There, right beneath them, was a scene which should have been a postcard – except that postcards were unable to capture such beauty. Peggy gawked in wonder, trying to take in every little detail; the rocky, grey cliffs jutted up from the brilliant jade ocean dramatically; the vast forests on the cliffs, home to so many species of life; the charcoal-colored rocks that poked up from the sea; the brightly colored bodies basking beneath the brilliant sunlight – WAIT. Peggy did a double take, her eyes bulging. Were those… MERMAIDS? The pegasi were slowing spiraling downwards, heading straight for the rocks on which the mermaids were resting.

Landing in the ocean, the pegasi swam towards the merpeople, Peggy’s amazement growing by the second. They were real! She got off the pegasus she was riding as soon she was within stepping range of the rocks. She clamored over to the nearest mermaid, only to realize it wasn’t a mermaid. The ‘mermaid’ was a man! She stared for a moment, then asked, “A-are you real?”

He snorted, and then retorted, “Are YOU real?”

Peggy glared at him indignantly, then realized that must have been how he felt. Blushing, she apologized, then decided to ask the question that had been on her mind for quite a while. “Am I dreaming?”
He chuckled, seeming to think this question was funny. His reaction only caused Peggy to put her hands on her hips, angry once more. “Okay, okay,” he began, “you’re not dreaming. We’re real – or at least – as real as you are.”

This answer made Peggy smile, and soon they were chatting away as if they had known each other for years. They talked about their lives first. Peggy told the merman, who she had learned was called The Man Of Great Blue Scales That Shimmer And Glisten In The Sun, all about her parents, Charlie and Patricia, her age and grade in school, 13, 8th, and everything else.

He smiled at the blonde girl, looking into her hazel eyes as he spoke about himself. She barely had time to find out about his occupation, fisher, hobbies, playing with dolphins, talking with fish, etc., and other such information, when a dolphin surfaced beside the rock. It squealed something, which The Man Of Great Blue Scales That Shimmer And Glisten In The Sun obviously understood, because he then looked at Peggy sadly, and said, “I’m sorry, but I have to go. This is The Sea Mammal Who Dances Through The Great Emerald Sea While Calling Out With Song, and her child’s gotten into some trouble, so they need my help. I’d love to chat another time, though!”

Peggy, while disappointed, was also a bit relieved. They had run out of things to talk about anyway. She waved to him as he slid into the sea gracefully, swimming through the water with the ease of a fish – not that she was surprised by that.

The pegasus she had been riding swam up and said, “We have other places to be.”

Peggy nodded, then climbed on to its back, almost falling backward as it took off steeply, heading towards the cliffs she had seen before.

The closer they got to the mainland, the more Peggy had to gape at. It was all so amazing! The forests were so lush! There were occasional flashes of color that could be seen through holes in the dense foliage. These made Peggy wonder, but just as she thought she had seen something, the Pegasus on which she was riding veered sharply upward and onto the ledge protruding from the mountain near the entrance of a cave.

“Why are we stopped here?” asked Peggy.

“For wisdom.”

Peggy was stumped by this answer, and walked on in silence into the cave behind the Pegasus, trying to make sense of the response. As they walked into the cave the temperature slowly began to drop, so slowly that Peggy almost didn’t notice it. With the same abruptness of the landing, the Pegasus stopped, causing Peggy to bump into it.

“What are we stopped f—”she gaped at the sight before her, her breath taken away; her mouth dropping open; her eyes seeming as though they were about to burst from their sockets. There, right before her very eyes was an enormous dragon, sprawled on a heap of golden coins, jeweled swords, silver cups, and gemstones as big as one’s fist!

After a minute or two, she closed her mouth for a split second, then opened it to stutter, “I-is-is that a r-real dra-dragon? I-I mean... It’s not black, red, green, or even gold! For goodness’ sake, dragons aren’t supposed to be a bluey-white!”

The dragon lifted its enormous head, a gargantuan eye peering at her intently. “U-u-u-u-uh, no off-offense in-tended, your Dragonness!” she sputtered, quite afraid that the dragon would eat her. “Pl-please, don-don’t kill me!”

The dragon blinked, then tilted its head back and laughed. It was a loud roar of...
a laugh, echoing throughout the vast cavern, bouncing off the walls, becoming even louder by the second. The dragon continued to laugh for a full ten minutes, slowly calming down. "Silly hatchling," it said in a loud voice, "I have no intentions of eating you. Human flesh is far too stringy and fatty for my tastes."

There was a distinctive quality about the voice that marked it apart from the dragons she had seen in movies, though Peggy couldn’t quite put her tongue on what at first. She glanced around the cave nervously, still anxious despite the reassurance of the dragon. Her eyes scanned the room, looking this way, then that way. Then, her eyes jumped back to a spot that just seemed more noticeable. It was the only spot in the room that wasn’t covered in precious metals and jewels. Instead, there were three large, blue, spherical objects, roughly the size of her head. Peggy’s eyes grew wide; these were eggs! So that was what it was about the voice; this dragon was female!

“If you’re quite done,” the dragon began, interrupting Peggy’s thoughts, “we could begin by introducing ourselves.” Seeing Peggy’s nervous nod, she sighed, “You know, I’m not going to eat you. My name is One of Light Blue Skin That is not Rea, and trust me, if I were going to eat you, I’d be well done by now.”

She chuckled, a blast of frigid air hitting Peggy, causing her to shiver. “Oh, I’m sorry. I really should be more careful about my frost breath.” She snickered, saying, “But at least I didn’t breathe ice as I sometimes do, freezing you into a large ice cube!”

Peggy shivered; this was definitely not reassuring. Seeing her discomfort, the dragon gave up, motioning to The Embodiment of Acceptance and Kindness on Wings to take Peggy away to save her nerves. Peggy’s relief showed as soon as they were out of the maze of caves, for she had thought the whole time that Light Blue Skin Lady Dragon or Whatever Her Name Was would attack them from behind and eat them for an afternoon snack.

Just as they were emerging from the cave, there was a loud shriek which made Peggy start with fright. “Oh, don’t worry,” The Embodiment of Acceptance and Kindness on Wings reassured her friend. “It’s just a phoenix dying.”

“Dying?” Peggy screamed. “Are you serious? And we’re not going the help?” She put a lot of emphasis on the word ‘help,’ for it seemed awful to her that they would sit idly there while a creature was dying. It was like murder!

“Why should we help—oh!” She suddenly became aware of what Peggy must have been thinking, and laughed soothingly. “It’s not dying permanently! Phoenixes are reborn from the ashes that they become. Would you like to see?”

Peggy nodded, fascinated by this report. When they reached the forest, she immediately saw a pile of charcoal and ash on the forest floor. Crying out, she ran over to it, scared, when suddenly there was a flash of brilliant, white light. When she opened her eyes once more, having closed them instinctively with the light, she saw a small bird sitting where the ashes had been. However, the ‘bird’ did not look like any bird she knew. Its feathers were not feathers, but rather, wings of fire.

“Hiya!” the scrawny, little, fire-chicken squawked. “I’m The One with the Red, Orange, and Yellow Flaming Wings who is Born from the Ashes! How are you today?” Peggy gaped at the tiny scrap of a bird, still in awe of how the name was so long, especially compared to the small thing.

There was another screech, and the phoenix looked up. “Oh, that’s my momma. I have to go now, bye!” It took to the air, and then was gone.

Peggy shook her head, still amazed at all that had happened that day. She sat down next to the tree, her eyes drooping. “Hey… I think I need to… sleep.” With that, she fell on to her side and was fast asleep.
“What kind of an ending is THAT?” the little girl whined. “I thought you said that this book was amazing, but that ending is stupid! I’m bored again now! This isn’t fair!!”

Her mother stroked her hair, waiting for the girl’s tantrum to subside before she could calm her with the blueberry muffins she had baked earlier.
Boredom
Written By Julie
Drawing By Ryan
Uninteresting lecture
Never ending
Must

I can’t focus on words
Clock is ticking
Must

Drooping eyes
Words combining
Must

Now I’m spacing out
Always staring
Must

Getting called on
No understanding
Must

One minute slinks by
Feels like five hours
Must
Bobbing my head
Teacher talking
Must

My eyes are finally closed
Dreams are coming
Must

Grabbing my stuff
Bell is ringing
Must

Class is finally over
Time for lunch
Must

EAT!
finding a pencil

Written by Ryan
Drawing by Julia
The Clock

He looks maliciously at me
Gleaming

I glance at him in hope
Waiting

He moves slowly
Mocking

I look at him in suspicion
Waiting

He smiles at me
Ticking

I stare at him
Waiting

Written By: Shelby
Painted By: Julie
Rain

written by kj
painting by shelby
Boredom. It’s well, boring. I’m sitting here in the living room. The room itself is in no way boring. A shade of brown floods the walls with warm green accents to bring the outside in. The art on the wall catches your eye. So, why am I bored? Well, the main focus of this room is a TV. The TV itself is not that boring, what is boring however, is what I’m being forced to watch.

I’m being forced to watch Zelda, that game where you are Link and have to save the princess Zelda. The game in and of itself is not boring, what is boring is the fact I’m not playing. I’m just watching. I’m watching while sitting in this huge diamond chair; watching and waiting to move and be free. No freedom will come unless I move. Why don’t I move? Well, I’m just too lazy, so I’d rather be stuck in this stupid chair watching the screen, being left to my thoughts. Nothing interesting goes through your mind when you’re bored, it’s nothing but dwelling; letting your mind wander back and forth between future and past. I’m remembering; imagining what could have been and what can be.

The past is just as boring as the present. I remember sitting, waiting for the rain to stop and bring a sunny day, but it wouldn’t come. I sat and waited, watching each drop hit the window pane. I waited on our old, blue, cigarette-burned couch. Did I play with the toys on the floor? Of course I didn’t. I was little and my brain didn’t register that thought. I wanted to play outside, and I wanted it right then. Mom said if I went out in the rain, I might get sick, so I felt stuck on that couch, watching the rain drip, drop. The rain got to play as I sat there bored; it was so unfair.

The future, in reality, might be bright, but in my pessimistic mind it will be boring. So, as I sit there watching Zelda, thinking about the past, I am led to think about all the boring things the future holds, like waiting in line to pay for food, or commuting to work, or even watching TV.

Do I enjoy being bored? One might think yes, but it is not the fact that I’m bored that I like, it is that when I’m bored, I get to think; think of now or think of then, or even think of when. I want to be free from this boredom game.

Still sitting in the diamond patterned chair, still watching that screen, I hear the phone ring, so I’m off.
“I remember sitting, waiting for the rain to stop”
orthogenique
tolerance
superstition
boredom
mythology
How Football Was Created

In the beginning of the world there were two gods, a god of good named Jerry, and a god of evil named Anthony. It was up to these gods to create the world and everything in it. During the creation, the two gods fought a lot. They fought over what color to make the grass, which animal would be the tallest, and many other things. To settle these fights they used people to wage war.

It worked for a little while, but then the people didn’t want to kill each other any more like the gods wanted. So the gods had to come up with another way to settle their differences. They came up with the sport of football. Football was a great way for the gods to fight without killing people. The people loved the idea.

Football was only for the strongest and fastest men. It was played on a 100 yard field, it had one goalpost on each end, and it required its players to wear protective gear so they wouldn’t get hurt. There were only 11 men allowed out on the field for each team, and a coin toss would decide who would kick-off first.

The first football game was big. The game was Jerry’s team versus Anthony’s team. It was a long, brutal, ferocious, and fantastic football game. The evil god’s team was down by 7, with 12 seconds left on the clock. Their quarterback went back, looked for the open wide receiver, threw it, and made the touchdown. Then the evil team made a 2 point conversion to win the game. When Anthony won, he got most of Jerry’s powers. Anthony used his new powers to make sure that every single human would eventually die.

Jerry, who was weaker, wanted a rematch of the football game. Anthony accepted. The second game wasn’t as good as the first one, but the good god was the victor. Now Jerry had some of the Anthony’s powers. Jerry used his powers to give humans free will.

The gods still used football to make decisions. When they were content with the world, they stopped. The people still played football, and even created books on every rule in football. After awhile the books were lost, and people stopped playing football.

Then, in the late 19th century, an American known as Walter Camp found one of the books about football. Other discoverers of the books included Amos Alonzo Stagg, Knute Rockne, and Glenn "Pop" Warner. They used the rules to play organized football in colleges. Football is still played today, and is America’s most popular sport.
THE CREATION OF BREAKDANCING

WRITING AND PAINTING

BY JUSTIN
Once, in the town of Urbana, which is the modern day Dog Town of California, there lived a cruel God named Yao. Yao was the God of anger. His father was Ryu, the God of the sun. His mother was Desi the Goddess of love, passion & desire. If people had any doubt about Yao’s existence and power, he would make them his victim and throw them on his or her head and spin them. Today we call the move a head top.

One day a kid named Mawuli, son of Baha’i and Lashana, worked on a pig farm slaughtering pigs. Baha’i tried to support his family on this poor land that he owned, but he came up short.

His family would have to ask Yao for food and forgiveness. One day, Yao had enough, and he spun Mawuli’s parents on their heads with so much force that they got sick and died. Mawuli was so angry at what he had just witnessed, that he swore on his dead parents that he would do to Yao what had been done to them.

Mawuli searched and searched to find a way to get back at Yao. At the age of 13, he found the answer to his prayers. There was a man named old Man Manson. Old Man Manson was 1563 years of age. This Old man taught Yao his cruel dueling ways.

Mawuli said to the old man, “My mother and father are dead. You taught the Gods how to torture their followers if they lost faith. My father could not provide enough food or money to satisfy the anger God, Yao, so Yao killed he and my mother. Please teach me to torture the Gods.”

This 1563 year man decided to teach Mawuli the ways of the Gods. “First thing first,” said the old man. “We need to teach you how to do the Windmill so fast that you start a tornado, the Worm so well that you can start an earthquake, and most of all, you must spin on your head so well you can shoot fire out of your legs.”

Finally, the boy was a young man at the age of 17 years of age. Now he could get back at that cruel God, Yao.

Mawuli invited everyone in Urbana to the town square. Ten thousand people, men, women, and children, came and were cheering Mawuli on. It was an uber intense battle.

You know how the dinosaurs are extinct? Yeah, that was Mawuli and Yao’s doing. The battle finally ended when Mawuli did a combo head spin and defeated Yao.

To this day people breakdance to celebrate Mawuli’s victory.
The Two Sides of Humanity

Written by Kaitlin
Painted by Justin

A long time ago in a faraway land, there was a deserted plain where nothing grew or lived. It stayed like that for many years in the land of Anelasia. Then one day, there was a huge storm and earthquake that shook the earth so much that it made a huge crack in the ground. Then huge bolts of lightning from the big storm struck the crack in the ground so many times that the two mountains, Mount Olympus and Mount Estes, were created. It was the great magic of the storm and earthquake that caused these two powerful mountains to form in the land of Anelasia.

When the mountains, Mount Olympus and Mount Estes were created, the magic from the storm created two Gods and Goddesses, and many thousands of people. The first God and Goddess, Hayden and Payton, who were good, ruled Mount Olympus with their two kids and the good portion of the thousands of people that were created.

The second God and Goddess, Henry and Autumn, who were evil, ruled Mount Estes with their two kids and evil portion of the thousands of people that were created. Both mountains were at peace for a while doing their own thing, minding their own business, and not interfering with each other at all. That was all about to change.

Both Gods and Goddesses had special magical powers that helped them rule and protect their mountains and people. The good God and Goddess of Mount Olympus had the magical power to create life, peace, and happiness, and grant three good wishes to the people of their mountain. Their main powers in battle were to create lightning from their hands and eyes, and use it to destroy their enemies.

The evil God and Goddess of Mount Estes had the magical powers to create death, destruction, and mayhem, and also grant three evil wishes to the people of their mountain. Their main power in battle was to create fire from their hands and mouths and use it to destroy their enemies.

Both Gods and Goddesses used their powers on their mountains to keep everything in order and at peace, and neither God or Goddess, or their kids, or the people of either mountain bothered one another. They ruled their own mountains and not one another's mountains.

Little did the good God and Goddess know that the evil God and Goddess were planning on taking over
Mount Olympus and being the almighty rulers of all time.

All of those years where both Gods and Goddesses ruled their own mountains in their own way and never interfered with one another, had made the good God Hayden and Goddess Payton and their two kids happy, because they thought that it worked well that way. Having all that peace was a great thing, and they wanted to keep it like that forever. The evil God Henry and Goddess Autumn didn’t like the way everything was, because they liked the idea of ruling both mountains, and having all the power to tell everyone what to do.

So, the evil God Henry and Goddess Autumn planned to fight and attack the good God Hayden and Goddess Payton.

Back on Mount Olympus everything was going smoothly and everything was still peaceful and calm, just like Hayden and Payton liked it. They had no idea of the evil God Henry and Goddess Autumn’s plan to attack and fight them, so they were taken by surprise when the evil God Henry and Goddess Autumn set out over to their mountain, and started attacking them.

Once Hayden and Payton realized they were being attacked by Henry, Autumn, their kids, and their people, they summoned their people and their kids, and started fighting back against the people from Estes.

As the battle went on between evil and good, there ended up being a lot of bloodshed of the people from both sides. The good God Hayden and Goddess Payton realized that they were winning the battle because they had taken out more of Henry and Autumn’s people than Henry and Autumn had taken out of their’s. Henry and Autumn were surprised by this, but that did not make them give up, and they continued to fight Hayden and Payton.

Both sides kept fighting, and fighting as hard as they could with all their might, until it ended up with the good God and Goddess and their people, beating the evil God and Goddess and their people. After they won, they went up the the losers with all their power ready if they needed it, and told them: “You and your people can surrender and serve under us and not rule anymore, or we can use our power and strip you of your powers, leaving you helpless out here with nothing at all, where you will end up dying.” Seeing as they didn’t want any of that horrible stuff to happen to them, Henry and Autumn decided to surrender.

Hayden and Payton continued to rule their mountain along with Henry and Autumn’s mountain. The evil God Henry and Goddess Autumn and their people had to serve under Hayden, Payton, their kids and the rest of their people for the rest of eternity.

As years and years went by, the evil God Henry and Goddess Autumn had done everything that Hayden and Payton told them, and never disobeys them, ever. The evil God and Goddess and the good God and Goddess eventually started to trust one another. So, they all decided to get to know one another’s ways of life in the world.

The good God and Goddess and the evil God and Goddess then came together one day and started to show one another the ways of good and evil in the world. Hayden and Payton taught Henry and Autumn how good represents the world, and that good exists in everybody in the world, but you have to know how to find it in yourself to know that you have it.

Then Henry and Autumn taught Hayden and Payton how evil represents the world, and that evil exists in everybody, but is only half of what someone is inside. You have to know how to find it in yourself to know that you have it in you as well.

As each learned about the opposite ways, they ended up gaining a lot of knowledge, and now the good God and Goddess had some evil in them, and the evil God and Goddess had some good in them. They all ended up learning something very important, which is that everyone in the world, including them, aren’t all good or all evil. They all have both of those things deep down inside them, it’s just that person’s choice whether or not they want to show the good or the evil.

So, with the new knowledge that both the good God and Goddess had about evil, and the evil God and Goddess had about good, they all ended up ruling both mountains together. They also restored the balance and structure of good and evil in Anelasia, so now everything is normal for the Gods and Goddesses of the land and mountains.

Then one day, both the evil and good goddess told their husbands that they were having another baby, and it made their husbands so happy. They had this really big celebration for them and their unborn children, and while they were having the celebration they all thought about how happy they were now that things were the way they were with them. They all lived happily ever after, all together in the land of Anelasia.
The origin of sickness
a Stargate story

written by nick
painting by justin

For a long time humans lived together with the Alterans in the great city of Atlantis. The Alterans were a powerful alien race, friendly to humans. One day, when the humans were advanced enough, the Alterans left through the Astria Porta, leaving behind instructions on how to contact the Furlings, another race friendly to humans. Everything was fine for thousands of years.

Then an alien race called the Aschen came through the Astria Porta. The Aschen announced that they were claiming Atlantis for themselves. The humans resisted but the Aschen had a fleet of warships in orbit above the planet. The humans let them into the city, but they had a plan!

There were a few rebellious teens that were determined to drive the Aschen out. Their names were Derricus, Fillionus and, Ethonus. They devised a plan to get to the Astria Porta. While Derricus and Fillionus snuck to the dialing console, Ethonus set off a diversion in the power distribution room.

Fillionus, whose father used to operate the dialing console, knew how to activate the Astria Porta. Derricus laid down cover fire. The Astria Porta was active. As Fillionus and Derricus ran through, the Aschen shot Derricus, wounding him.

The duo came through the Astria Porta on the Furling home world. When they looked around they were in a great hall. Everything was golden and covered with glyphs. Then a loud, booming voice questioned, “Who has entered the great hall of the Furlings?”

“We are Tau’ri. We seek your assistance,” Derricus replied.

“Our great city was taken by those who call themselves the Aschen. We have come for help,” Fillionus added.

“If your city was taken, how did you get to the Astria Porta?” the voice replied.

“We were able to distract the Aschen, but we barely made it out. Derricus got shot in the shoulder,” Fillionus said.

“Step into the circle on the floor and we shall heal Derricus and contact our allies,” The
voice commanded.

When Fillionus and Derricus stepped into the circle, a set of five rings came out of the circle on the floor encompassing them. There was a bright light within the rings for two seconds, and when the light faded, Fillionus and Derricus found themselves in a completely different room. They were surrounded by short, furry creatures that stood on two legs. These were the Furlings.

The leader of the Furlings took Derricus to a small chamber in the wall, where, as if by magic, he was healed.

The leader then walked over to a window where the Astria Porta was clearly visible. Fillionus and Derricus followed. The Furling leader told the duo his name, Chutis, but added that his friends call him ‘Chewy’. He instructed the duo to call him Chewy, because they
have proven their worth to be his friend.

Chewy pressed some buttons on a console in front of him, then images of three different creatures appeared on a screen. There was an Alteran, a short grey creature, and a human with funny hair. The short grey one was Thor, the leader of a race of aliens called the Asgard. The one with the funny hair was Nox, another alien race.

Chewy told these leaders of the situation and the leaders agreed to help.

"Fillionus! Derricus! It is not safe to go back through the Astria Porta. Those Aschen probably have the Astria Porta well guarded. We shall take a Furling warship and meet the others," Chewy explained, "We must go to the rings."

The rings activated and they were in another place again. All of a sudden, the entire building shook and lifted off the ground. Then Derricus and Fillionus realized they were in a great warship!

"Take us into hyperspace!" Chewy ordered the other Furlings. After several hours, the ship was above Earth. There were many other ships around, firing on the Aschen.

The rings activated, and Thor, the supreme commander of the Asgard fleet, appeared.

"I will transport you and your people to a safe location outside the city," Thor said.

In a flash of light, Derricus and Fillionus were in a desert, and in another flash of light all the other humans appeared.

Ten years later, the Aschen ships were destroyed. In a final effort, the Aschen launched a bio-weapon through the Astria Porta. The Alterans launched Atlantis into space to dispose of the bio-weapon, but some escaped, and to this day, the remnants of that weapon cause sickness and disease to those living on Earth.
The summer 2008 edition of Orthogenique was produced at the Sonia Shankman Orthogenic School in Chicago, Illinois. The magazine was thermal bound by the Orthogenic School. The covers are 1/4 inch linen tab covers from General Binding Corporation in Northbrook, IL. The content pages were printed by an HP color laser jet 6015 dn on 32lb. Hammermill Color Laser Gloss with 90 brilliance. Sixteen fonts were used in the magazine. Avant Garde LT was used for all body text, while magazine staff chose fonts in keeping with style and content for titles and pull quotes. The following fonts were used for titles and pull quotes: Apple Chancery, Bank Gothic, Edwardian Script ITC, Blair Md ITC, Blasphemy, Herculanium, Zapfino, Harrington, Lucida Blackletter, Comic Sans MS, Schoolhouse Printed A, Braggadocio, Kids First Print Font, Brush Script, and Blackmoor. Orthogenique is a full color magazine. Layout was created in Adobe In Design CS on Apple Macbooks. Adobe Photoshop CS was used for image processing. All submissions were judged using standards agreed upon by the staff. All text submissions were typed using Microsoft Word on Dell PCs running on Windows XP, and Macbooks running on MacOSX.
Policy

All of the students at the Sonia Shankman Orthogenic School are invited to submit their literary and art work to Orthogenique.

The Orthogenic School is a small private school consisting of students who represent school districts throughout Illinois and California. The school has limited extracurricular activities or after school meeting times. As a result, Literary Magazine is offered as a for credit course in which the enrolled students alternate writing units in which they write in reference to a specific theme and art units in which they illustrate for a classmate’s writing. All students then create spreads that incorporate their writing piece and the illustration completed for the piece.

Students not enrolled in the course are welcome to submit their work to the advisors at which time the staff of enrolled students will decide which pieces can and will be used based on the themes employed and the fundamental belief of the school that all student work is of value. The literary staff reserves the right to edit the body of the works for spelling, punctuation, and grammar.

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