



YOU ARE HERE: THE NEW LEVEL OF SPARTAN LITERATURE  
ART CONTEST WINNER:



COUNTRY OF  
TURKEY BY VICKI  
SHEN

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# INTRODUCTION

BY MS. CHRISTIAN: EDITOR IN CHIEF

Thanks to overwhelming student and staff support, our magazine's first issue was a huge success! Immediately after its release, our student staff began working tirelessly on this second issue: pinpointing desired improvements, helping to advertise, and studying every submission carefully when making acceptance decisions.

Our magazine is growing, and I am so happy to share our staff's hard work every month with everyone at STEM! This month also marked our first contest. Submissions of extremely high quality poured in, and our staff had an impressive challenge of making decisions regarding each work. I was humbled by the interest and the skill that I witnessed for our April issue, and I cannot wait to see what May will bring!

If you are interested in submitting to our May issue and being eligible for our May contest, please fill out [this form](#) and email your submission to [erin.christian@stemhigh.org](mailto:erin.christian@stemhigh.org).

# OUR LOVELY STAFF



I am sixth grader at STEM. I love to draw and make artwork. I also love to make people laugh with my funny but stupid jokes.



I'm Vivian; I am 13 years old. I love reading and writing. I love reading anything from books to billboards.



My name is Evan. I am 12 years old, and I am a sixth grader at STEM. I enjoy running and reading. I really enjoy reading fantasy books, but I enjoy most all kinds of books. I am an editor and fiction critique.

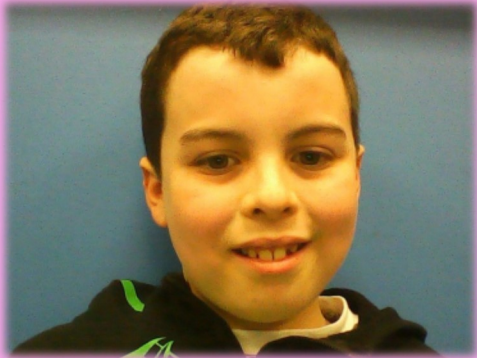


Hello, my name is Elijah Colwill, in 6th Grade. I joined the magazine staff because I like to do designing and be a part of putting creative art and writing out there. I have had a good time at STEM, and I hope to be a computer designer when I get older. I enjoy computer programming, soccer, and reading.



Hi, I'm Matt Moran. I am 13 years old and in 7th grade. I like tennis, the Olympics, and Minecraft. I hope to be an architect when I grow up.

## MORE OF OUR LOVELY STAFF



My name is Isaac Davidson, and I'm 11 years old. I like playing video games and programming. I wanted to join the literary magazine because I wanted to be part of it.



I'm Azra Gallano. I'm a seventh grade student at STEM, and I plan on staying throughout high school. I don't know where I'm headed in life, but I know it's going to be something great. I usually take on more than I can handle, yet somehow make the best of it. I over think, try too hard, and overreact. I'm not perfect, but I'm definitely a perfectionist. I get obsessed with things easily. But, I do all these things because I know that life is too short to live in without risks, so I'll take any opportunity I get.

My name is Elise and I am 11 years old. I have an 8 year old sister and I have a dog. My sister and I like to play Minecraft together. My whole family likes to watch movies together and have fun. We also like to play with our dog Brownie; she is the best dog anyone could have.

Hi! My name is Leah Kim. I am a sixth grader, and I love art. I have found an interest in this magazine club and I love it!

Hi, my name is Josh Jones, and I am a 7th grader. My favorite color is darkish white or a lightish black.



# OUR EVEN MORE AWESOME SUBMISSIONS

DRAWINGS, PHOTOS, PAINTINGS AND MORE:



## COUNTRY OF TURKEY

Vicki Shen, Grade 6

## THE MUDWING

David Kulish, Grade 7



The awesomeness continues on the next page, don't worry...



## ICE

Maddison Tenney



## A STEM-TOON

Tyler Williams

If you are unable to read it:

Dumbledore (Left): "Here is your new Defense Against the Dark Arts teacher, Professor Gandalf"

Gandalf (Right): "YOU SHALL NOT PASS!!!"



## THE LONELY PLANT

Jacob Sawyer



## VANTAGE POINT LACROSSE

Nicholas Gilbert, Grade 8



## THE AETHER

Kylie Howerter, Grade 6



## LITERATURE

### The Worst Halloween Ever

by Ashley Becker, Grade 6

It was a normal day in Highlands Ranch, Colorado for everyone but my two best friends, Mariana and Olivia, and me. It was the night before Halloween, and we had persuaded our parents to let us have two days at my house instead of one. This was the first stupid mistake we made.

Legend has it that in the year of 2004, three best friends – all girls – were hanging out in their room. They were named Audriana, Daisy, and Patty. Audriana had invited them over. They chatted about Halloween stuff, and their parents had to leave the house for two minutes.

One minute later, the 11-year-old girls heard the door creak open, and Audriana called out, “Hi Mom and Dad!”

There was no response, only silence. The girls heard scraping of nails screech up the stairs. Slowly and steadily, they heard the sound progress.

Audriana whispered to her friends, “Hide!”

The girls were never found again. All that was found was a note saying, “If any three girls have a two-day hangout the day before Halloween again, they, too, will feel my wrath.”

My friends and I were all nervous, but we laughed it off. My parents said that they had to check on something outside and that they would be back in 30 seconds. Letting them do that was the second stupid mistake we made.

Ten seconds later, we heard two shrieks. Those were my parents. I peeked outside to see what looked like a nun with no feet and hands with nails as long as I was. Next to her were two piles of skin and bones.

The woman looked up and hissed at me, “You made a mistake. Now, you will feel my wrath!”

To be continued...

## The Odd Case of Marco Carson, Volume I

By Sofia Bates, Grade 8

Hmm.... I wonder where I ought to begin. I suppose it would make sense to start it at the beginning; otherwise, we would be lacking context, wouldn't we? So, my name is Marco Carullous Carson, and I have the power to control electricity, which is great during a power outage. Not so great at a school full of hundreds more kids with powers like me. Gather round, I shall tell you a fun story about my origin.

I was staying late at my old school, practicing my monologue for a play I was working on, when my mom called me. She was outside and wanted me to come back home. I didn't blame her, since there was a crazy lightning storm happening at the time. I came out and was just about to open the car door when there was a sudden static friction, as if someone was rubbing a cat against a balloon, and then everything went completely black.

I woke up almost a week later, but I wasn't in any hospital I had ever seen before. The entire room smelled like burning rubber that was mixed with stale perfume. I gagged, trying to get my bearings in this platinum array of sheer brightness. I sat up and felt all the blood rush to my head, causing me to fall back into the rough pillows with a pained sigh. I looked over a bit and saw my mom, smiling softly at me through the lenses of her glasses. Her hair was slightly tangled and the strap of her purse was worn from worried fiddling.

"Relax honey, you're fine." I turned slightly red at my mom's soothing and instead opted for staying still, watching the door. Before I knew it, almost an hour of silence had passed before the door opened and a man, about middle-aged, entered the room, shutting it behind him. I watched him with rapt attention as he crossed the room and checked my vitals and similar before sitting in a chair and looking at my mother and me with kind eyes.

"He seems fine, which is great with all he has been through," he said, turning to my mother and then back to me.

"Do you remember what happened in the parking lot of the school?" he asked me, looking interested and concerned at the same time.

Slightly aware that my mom was reapplying her makeup in the corner of my eye, I simply shrugged and then asked the main question on my mind.

"Why am I not in a normal hospital?" The question came out a bit ruder than I had preferred, and my mom made a sharp noise through her nose. The doctor waved it off with a chuckle.

"It's fine. The reason you aren't in something familiar is that you have picked up something from the lightning that struck you. Scanning shows that you have picked up an alien particle inside the lightning which has entered your bloodstream, possibly giving you peculiar powers."

My eyes narrowed in annoyance. *All I want is a **simple** answer. Not this made-up baloney! Finally, I voiced my true opinions on the matter. It came out more as a shout rather than a hiss, and my mom jumped in alarm as it came out.*

“Are you saying I’m in this...this...prison just because some phony technology says I have something in my blood that has a chance to give me powers?!” As soon as it came out, several blue sparks flew in between my fingertips and the lights went out, along with the rest of the power in the room, and as I would later find out, the whole building. The lights flickered back on, and the steady whirring of the machines around me came back up. The doctor’s eyes narrowed and he gripped my arms, even as sparks zapped all around me.

“Careful, kid. There are a lot of people who really need the electricity in here. Anyways, I have more patients to tend to, so just get comfortable. We’ll be sending your stuff here in about a week. Welcome to Oakthorn High, Mr. Carson.”

And with that, he let go, stood up, and walked out of the door, leaving both my mom and me speechless, my mouth hanging open dumbly. *Welcome to Oakthorn High?*

To be continued....

## The Thing from the Basement

by Devon Erickson, Grade 7

My friends and I love to hang out at my house. We never dreamed of what happened next. We were in my room in the basement. We had been playing Xbox for a while and decided to go play on our laptops. As me and my friends logged into our laptops, we started to get strange feelings. I kept on turning around. I swore someone touched me. We all started to feel weird. There were five of us; we all were getting the creeps. As we decided to go back into the main room of the basement, Scott froze.

“Holy crap!” Jack screamed.

There was a red liquid coming out of the sides of Scott’s computer. He backed away from it.

“We got to get out of here” said Scott. We all ran back into the main room, closing my door.

We all worked together to get the couch in front of my door. I quickly went into the storage room with Scott, and we grabbed the three baseball bats we had and two metal pipes. I took the blue bat, Scott took the black one, and Jack took the red one. David and Aaron took the two pipes. We decided to build a little safety fort. We took the two remaining couches and put them into a corner; we then made a ceiling, with pillows and many blankets. We decided to take turns sleeping. Right as we made that plan, we heard the couch move and my door open up. We all lay down, turned off our flashlights, and stayed completely still.

Five minutes passed, and we all waited. Finally, someone turned on a flashlight, and in the middle of all of us was one, single Ouija board.

“How did that get from my room to...?”

We suddenly remembered how we had heard a couch move and a door open.

“It, whatever it was, was in here...” Aaron said.

We all looked around and saw nothing, so we all got up, turned on our lights, raised our weapons, and looked.

We saw nothing, and David and I made a dash for my room. We grabbed my pump BB rifle, and we ran back. When we got back, I loaded my bb rifle and gave it twenty hard pumps. Fully loaded. Suddenly, we realized.

“Where’s Jack?” Scott said, almost in a whisper. We checked his sleeping bag and found a single black balloon and a note. It read, “In the morning, only one will live.”

After I read it out loud, the balloon popped, and the hunt began.

First, my bathroom door opened, and the mirror shattered, glass shards flying everywhere. My friends and I tried to run, but Aaron got grabbed by the leg. Suddenly, everything went hazy and strange as I looked at what grabbed him. Then I realize, nobody was there.



He fell. We grabbed him and ran for upstairs. We got up there and immediately grabbed all the knives I could find and passed them out. We grabbed flashlights and went upstairs.

My parents still weren't home from their work party. Suddenly, a grey mist filled the room.

"Guys?!" I yelled.

Suddenly, we all heard a snap, and Aaron screamed, "My leg!" That's when we saw him. No, it. I wasn't human; it was human like.

It had glowing white eyes, and it crawled towards me. I raised my BB rifle and fired one shot into its face. It flew back, and blood, glowing white like its eyes, flew out. It crawled back up. One of its eyes was no longer glowing; I must have hit it. David came out of nowhere and hit it right on the head with a pipe; the creature flew away.

I yelled, "Run to the upstairs!" And we all ran. When we get up there, we locked ourselves in a room. It was only me, Scott, and David. We heard it on the other side, searching, smelling. We heard a screech, and then a huge long claw hit the door. It tore through, and we set position to fight.

It ran at me and grabbed me. I raised my large cooking knife and stabbed into its remaining eye. It screeched and ran out of the room, bumping into things as it went. I closed the door and moved a large chair in the way; Scott and David held the door, as I searched for any other weapons. I suddenly saw our fire ladder that we could use to climb out of the house. We hung it out the window, and Scott climbed down, then David.

They called for me, but the beast was banging on the door. I got a strange buzzing in my head and set my determination. I moved the chair and raised my bat. The thing burst through, and I started to attack. I bashed it with my bat. It screamed and attacked. It got on top of me, and I shoved my knife into it. It jumped back. I grabbed its neck and hit it hard on the skull. It fell to the ground and stopped moving. I walked to the window to see them back up there, watching what I did. I grabbed the phone and tried to dial 911. The only thing I heard was the monster's scream. I looked at the dead monster, and it wasn't there anymore. Then I screamed as a large claw came straight through me....

To be continued...

## The Christmas Gift: Chapter 1, The Fight

by Grace Holland, Grade 7

Hi everybody, I'm Cody. I'm a 12-year-old girl, and I live with six brothers, a mom, and my dog, Coco Bella. My brothers' names are Liam, Noah, Ethan, Mason, Jacob, and Hunter. Oh yea, and my mom's name is Cynthia. I live in Denver, Colorado, and have a very sporty neighborhood. In school, I have very good grades, and it's nearly Winter Break. I can't wait to go shopping, bake, eat, and most of all, have the entire family together. My Christmas gift was nearly impossible; I was sure it was until it happened. It all started one cold, winter day.

First Let me introduce you to my brothers. The youngest is Noah; he's 11 and is in my middle school. The second youngest is Hunter; he is 14. Next is Jacob, 14-years-old too. Mason is 13, and then there is Ethan; he is 16. Last is Liam; he is 18. Now, its time for my story.

"Cody, I'm so mad we have to make an impossible Christmas Wish," said Kambri. Kambri is my best friend; she is almost like my sister.

"It's not that bad," I said. "What's your wish anyway? Your life is perfect!"

"HA HA HA, very funny. I wish my grandma could come to Colorado! She's in a wheelchair and can't come because of the in-mobility!"

"Oh, I'm sorry," I said. Kambri just looked down and didn't look very happy. I tried to cheer her up, "Don't worry! You can always call, or face time, or text."

"YOU JUST DON'T GET IT DO YOU, CODY?!" She screamed in my face then stormed off!

"What's her problem?" asked Piper; she's my other BFF. Piper, Kambri, and I are like three peas in a pod. We can do anything with each other and never get tired of each other.

I wasn't really sure what happened with Kambri, so I said I'd find out and tell Piper at lunch. The day seemed to drag on and on! My first class was math; sometimes we just sit there and take notes! BORING! Mr. Long usually makes it so much fun! Today when we walked into class, all the tables and chairs were gone! We set our backpacks right outside the door, and we sat in a circle.

He announced that we were going to make a coordinate plane and would have to find the right coordinate that he wrote on the board. It was guys against girls.

My friend Eli started! He was the only boy on our team because they had one more boy than girls. We had five points, and the boys had zero. We kept playing, and the second to last round we had 29 to 1. I was up on the last round. We won by a shocking 34 to 1!

"Girls and Eli RULE!" all the girls and Eli chanted.

"We creamed those guys," said Eli. "Am I turning into a LM?"

"Ladies Man? No way! Why did you ever think that?" I said.

"All the guys called me that!"

"No they're just sore losers!" We both laughed. I saw Kambri at her locker and rushed up to meet her.

"Hey!" I said.

"What do you want?"

"I just wanted to know why you were mad at me?"

"Why does it matter? It's not like you can go back in time and change it!"

"OKAY, I'm done. I want to know what the heck is wrong with you. You're acting like a jerk, and I have no idea what I did to make you mad or offended you. So spill NOW!" I said with a stern face.

She sat there with her mouth open, just staring.

I said it again, "Spill NOW!"

She hesitated. She chuckled, then burst out laughing.

"I just can't believe you believed me!"

"WHAT?" I questioned.

"I was acting! I have my big performance tonight, and I was just practicing on you!"

I smiled and said, "I hate you!"

We just sat there laughing! I didn't really hate her; I just used it as a joking matter.

"I see you are all friends again," said Piper.

"OMG piper what is wrong with you?" said Kambri.

"Okay the tables just turned, why are you mad at me?" asked Piper.

"HAHAHAHAHA OMG this is so funny!" I laughed.

"WHAT? I'm so confused, puzzled, confuzzled," Piper said.

"Never mind, I'm not mad at you; I just need to practice on you guys! Tonight is my big show!"

"We'll totally be there," Piper and I said!

"Wear dresses and get dates because there is a big party after for the actors, actresses, and their friends."

"Piper, please don't bring Mason; he's my brother and it's so weird," I said.

"Okay, okay. You have my word," said Piper. Just then Mason showed up.

"HEY GIRLS and Cody," said Mason. "What are you all talking about?"

"Mason, go away!" I remarked. I turned around to walk away and saw Liam leaning up against the wall, hugging a girl.

"Mason?"

"Yea?"

"Are you ready to make an easy 10 bucks?"

"Are you kidding me? I'm always ready."

"Go up to Liam and embarrass him, but whatever you do don't tell him I put you up to it," I said.

Mason approached him and Liam was telling him to get out of here, and then the madness came. Punches were being thrown and Mason was on the floor. There was blood everywhere, and then I rushed over. Mason was knocked out, and then Liam looked at his hands then ran. I ran over and picked up Mason, then I ran to the nurse. Not far behind were Piper and Kambri. Piper really liked Mason, so she was nearly in tears.

People were going, "Oh no" and "Oh My Gosh look, MASON!" It was sickening.

"What happened?" said the nurse

"Sibling fight; it was Liam and Mason fighting," I said.

"I MIGHT NOT EVER BE ABLE TO SEE HIM AGAIN!" bawled Piper.

"Shut up, he's just knocked out!" said Kambri, not in a very soothing voice.

"Who are you obnoxious girls?" asked the rude nurse.

"Mason's girlfriend, and his friend, and I'm his sister!" I nearly screamed.

"Cody..." said Kambri.

"No, this lady needs to learn how to use respect and needs to use toothpaste," I literally shouted. I think the principal heard me because the next moment...

"Cody?" asked Mr. Blackburn.

"WHAT?!" I said. "Oops."

"Oops is right! Missy, my office now! As for you two, my office as well!"

"Crap," Piper whispered.

"Crap," Kambri whispered.

"Crap," I shout-whispered.

"Girls, please. My office and lose the attitude and the dirty mouth!" said Mr. Blackburn.

I must have groaned too loud because the next thing he said to me was, "Cody, do I need to give you detention?"

"No, I'm sorry sir."

"So, how are your girls' grades?" he asked.

"Can't you just look them up on your computer? You have all the grades!" said Kambri.

We all stared at her in shock; I seriously think Mr. Blackburn could have caught a rainbow fish with his mouth that open.

"Kambri?" he asked. It stayed silent with all eyes looking at Kambri. The next second, Noah came running in.



"What happened with Liam, and..." he started asking. We just stared at him and then Mr. Blackburn told him to stay and sit down next to me.

The nurse came in and asked me and Noah to come with her. I looked at Mr. Blackburn, and he nodded so I walked out right behind Noah. He kept whispering to me, asking what happened. I shushed him so many times! I saw Liam holding an ice pack on his head, sitting right outside the nurse room.

"What happened to the kid?" questioned the nurse.

The other nurse walked in and said it was time for her break. "Thank goodness, I don't want to stay here another moment!"

"Hey kids, I'm sorry about old, grumpy Mildred," said the new nurse. She was younger and happier, "I could hear her yelling at you kids!"

"Yea, she's a grumpy, old witch!" said Noah.

"NOAH?! Did you just say that?" I screamed. He covered his mouth and got bug eyed.

"I'm Martha!" she smiled very big when she said this.

"Hi, so why do you need us?" I asked, then regretted it.

"Well, your brother should be fine!" That was great news; it was music to my ears! "But he was knocked out and has a concussion!" she said sadly.

"At least he's not dead!" said Noah. We all turned and looked at him. She told us he was going to be all right and he might need to see a real doctor at a hospital or something. I was super happy to have one worry off my list, just 10 more needed to be taken off.

## POETRY

### Swallowing Rain by Jacob Speckman

The shy rain raises  
rare sadness  
that slowly swallows  
the sad souls  
that once were full  
of happiness  
and flew fast,  
but now holes  
devour now the souls  
who are anxious  
to get to their home

### “Who are We Changing For?” by Hope Lowry, Grade 7

I see it every day.  
In the halls at school, online, and in myself.  
I see the want to conform into the “perfect girl.”  
If you don’t have a certain brand, it’s like you’re a rock, dull and useless.  
What people don’t see is that if that rock is polished, with non-tangible things,  
It will be the most beautiful diamond.

I am a plant; I change with different people around me.  
I don’t quite understand it, but I feel the need to “blend in.”  
I feel the need to change myself, when really I need someone that will accept me, for me.

I see it in other people, too.  
As if they don’t amount to anything, because they don’t have tons of friends.  
Why would a lot of friends make you a better person?  
Wouldn’t having a couple close friends be just as good?

I don't understand it,  
But everyone is trying to fit in with one another,  
So who are we changing for?  
Ourselves or everyone else?

**Alice in Wonderland**  
by Natalie Sage, Grade 6

If you think life  
is going in  
a downward spiral,  
like Alice through  
the looking glass,  
remember what made  
the Cheshire cat smile,  
warmed the queen's heart  
even if only for a while.  
Who slayed the Jabberwocky  
and made sane  
the Mad Hatter.  
Who silenced Wonderland  
after disaster. You  
see, you affect  
the lives of those  
around you. Alice.  
Who was just a girl  
is now known  
far and wide.  
So will you  
express yourself or  
will you stay in and hide?

**"Paper Airplane"**

by Caleb Laping, Grade 6

It didn't take long, not an hour used.  
I could soon fly, prepared to amuse.  
He threw me up, high as the sky,  
But I went too far, and he started to cry.  
I flew over mountains, trains and planes,  
Buses and buildings, and fields of grain.  
But after a while, I had to stop.  
I flew in the hat of an unknowing cop.  
He traveled for miles, still unaware,  
That I had hitched a ride in the tufts of his hair.  
We traveled for hours and hours on end,  
And after a while I could see a trend.  
We traveled in a circle, 'round the whole city,  
And as we traveled I felt pity  
For that boy I left, at the age of nine.  
It was time to end his continuous whine.  
So I took the next stop and flew all the way home,  
Made out of a big, shiny blue dome.  
There I found that boy, sad and alone,  
So I said "Don't feel sad, for I have come home."  
He smiled with great joy, as he looked up at me,  
And we went on and played with glee.



# CONTEST!!!

Congrats to all of the nominees! Good luck all! And here are the standings:

## ART AND PHOTOGRAPHY

### WINNER:

Country of Turkey by Vicki  
Shen

### POETRY WINNER:

Paper Airplane by Caleb  
Laping

### LITERATURE WINNER:

Odd Case of Marco Carson by

Congratulations you guys! Please

contact Ms. Erin Christian at  
[erin.christian@stemhigh.org](mailto:erin.christian@stemhigh.org) to receive  
your prizes!

Don't forget that any poetry, art,  
or literature will automatically  
be nominated for our May issue!

# CONTEST RULES:

## Poetry rules:

- Must have at least two literary devices (simile, metaphor, sensory description, etc.).
- Must be a specific type of poem (free verse, haiku, sonnet, etc.).
- Must not have grammar/spelling errors.

## Fiction/Non-fiction rules:

- Must have at least one five-sentence paragraph.
- Variety of sentences.
- Must have at least two literary devices (simile, metaphor, sensory description, etc.).
- Must be virtually errorless.

## Art work rules:

- Must be own work.
- Must have effort.
- Can be any type of art.
- Must be clear (not blurry).

EVERY submission for our April 2014 issue will be considered for the contest.

Prizes will be awarded to the first place winners in each category!

