

I heard a scream! I gasped, as I curled the bed sheet more, onto, myself! "Mom... please come to me... to my room, right now, please, I need you!" I murmured, like an idiot, knowing no one could hear me! I had my eyes closed tightly and I breathed so quietly that it seemed as if I never existed in that room. The black, quiet background of the night, added to the fear! As I was chanting some prayers, I heard a door creak open. I was freaked out and covered my whole self under my comforter. I dared to keep my foot on the ground. The cool, freezing wind, added to the goose bumps. The continuous weird noises made me really very scared and I felt awkward. All of sudden, the power went off and the tiny bit of light, near my study table, which was my only source of courage, that time, went off. This was the scariest moment of my life and was not supposed to happen to me! "Why me?" I muttered... thinking about that day's flashback... when I stood out the math class for not doing the sums... I detest math to the core... who is doing math all night, like I have no other job! And then computer science ... where my file of all the 40 documents, had to go missing! "Seriously, why are you kidding with me, life?" Coming back to the current situation... while these thoughts were meandering through my mind, the hall light alone came back to power. Since my room, was up the stairs, and the second room, facing the hall, downstairs, I could see the difference in the darkness of that night. I gasped, as I heard a noise and saw a shadow near the couch in the hall. I could then manage to see a figure near the couch, through the slightly, open door. At this moment, my heart was beating as fast as possible and I could feel my heavy breath. I closed my eyes tightly and cried to sleep.

The next morning, I woke up due to the sweat that filled my bed and my pillow. "Disgusting... yuck..." I screamed. I was so glad, the sun was out and the light fell on me. With a jerk I got up and ran to my mom's room which was 2 rooms away. I searched the entire room. I found neither my mom, nor my dad. I barged in to my bro's room, where he was still, fast asleep, with his headphones on and the T.V. on. "Oh yeah.. Oh yeah..." he screamed, as I entered his messy, awful room. "When did he become completely mad?" I said to myself. I closed the door, with a loud bang and rushed down to the hall. There they were... my mom, my dad and my sister. "Mom... you know what happened last night?" I said running to the door, where all of them were, talking to someone. "Mom, what are you doing there? Mo..." I screamed, as I saw the police men, with a stick and a notepad, with a pen and were taking down notes as reported by my mom and the others. My sister turned and gave me a signal, which I understood as, "keep your mouth shut Jamie and come over here!"

After all the conversations between my family and the police men, I could make out that they had already investigated some part of a 'case' in our house when I was sleeping and had found something. A few minutes later, my mom rushed in with the others, after closing the door. When I asked her what was going on, she said, it was some kind of paranormal activity. "What? Are you kidding me... wait, this is a joke right? Please tell me it's a joke!" my sister and I then sat down on the couch... she said that night she'd seen something and was really freaked. So when they asked about the history of the house, they had said that there was a murder in this house in the past, as most of the horror stories depict! But they claim to have seen no such things, until we moved into this house. We had just moved in and had not even unpacked all our stuff. "I am not staying here another minute" said mom, accompanied with my dad! "So, you mean to say what I saw and heard yesterday was actually happening... oh my god!" just then, my brother woke up and came downstairs, with his sleepy face, which soon turned into 'freaked - out face,' after hearing all the so called 'happenings of last night. "Yeah... now I understand who banged the door like hell yesterday" he grumbled. "That was me, you idiot, this morning..." I screamed at him. "Anyways, makes no difference!" he said.

Mom and dad had it all packed by noon and off we left. We reached our 'new' house by evening and settled to unpack our stuff. The house was really very nice and was situated near a lake, unlike the other one. This house was accompanied with a lot of greenery nearby and looked like we had a lot of neighbors... fortunately, no 'paranormal' activity happened that night. The next day, after school, I came back and to my surprise, my room was really very neat... I thanked my mom and went back. I was just wondering who hung all the photos up, in my room. I fell asleep, with an unfinished book in hand, when I heard the same, freaking scream. I opened my eyes. There, something stood, near the door, leaning against the wall, with a black hood and no shadow.

Ananya R, 9<sup>th</sup> Grade

In the next issue >>>

READ >> THINK >> WRITE

## BOOK REVIEW

### THE WOLF AND THE DOG

A dog slipped off his leash one day and went for a walk in the woods. After a time, he met a wolf. The dog said to the wolf, "Brother Wolf, you look so thin! How can you be happy when you are so thin? You should come live with me and my master. I eat every day and I never want for food". The wolf thought for a moment and replied, "Yes, you are right. Why should I be out here in the wild hunting for small bites of food when someone else will give it to me? And you are so well fed. Very well, I will come to live with you." "Good, then follow me" said the dog. As they trotted off to the dog's home, the wolf noticed a patch around the dog's neck where the fur had been worn off.

"Brother Dog, " asked the wolf, "why do you have that patch around your neck where there is no fur?"

The dog slowed down, stopped and turned to the wolf with sadness in his eyes. "That is where they place the leather leash around my neck. They do this so they can control me and keep me in my place." replied the dog sadly. "Never!" said the wolf as he began to trot back into the forest. "I would rather be starving and free than to be fat and a slave".

Karun Sai Shankar, 4<sup>th</sup> grade

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In this issue >>>

There is no rule on how to write. Sometimes it comes easily and perfectly: sometimes it's like drilling rock and then blasting it out with charges.

-Ernest Hemingway

# I AM WOW!

Current issue – CREATIVE SHORT STORY>>>>

### THE FREAK HAIL STORM

It all started on a very dark cloudy day in Chennai when I was sitting on my recliner sofa at my house playing on my XBOX. My dad then told me to get ready for football class and so I got ready, hopped in to my dad's Sedan and we were off. We knew the route, we knew how long it takes to get there but what we didn't know was that we were going to get caught in a freak hail storm.

While on our way, I suddenly heard a bang on top of the car and then a tennis ball shape ice cube cracked on the windshield like a massive bomb. My mom then called and asked us to hurry back home since the hailstorm was all over the news. That was when we realized the seriousness and that we made a mistake. Immediately, we tried to stop but the road was so slippery that we crashed into the back of a parked SUV. I don't know if the range rover had insurance but my dad definitely had one for our car.

My dad and I tried to run into a Mall nearby and survived getting hurt. Others were not so lucky. The mall had 24/7 power and backup solar energy. We stayed there watching the news of the storm. I could see the clouds raining cats and dogs and hail like the spray of machine gun bullets. At 9:30 pm, it showed no sign of stopping. I ended up sleeping on a showcase bed in a furniture shop with my dad nearby. The next day, the storm stopped, we found that our car was still drivable and reached home to find out the roof was damaged. I would leave that to my parents to fix - I would only had to worry if I had school or not.....

Yeshwant, 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

### THE UNFORGETTABLE ADVENTURE

The weather was pleasant. My friends and I planned to go boating in the river. The three of us went to the river and rented a boat. We felt the cool air on our face. Many people were boating in the river. All were happy. We even heard children singing songs. Water was everywhere our eyes could see. There were fishermen in their boats with huge nets to catch fish. But soon the weather took a turn. Dark clouds filled the sky. A strong storm began to brew. When it started to rain heavily we lost control of our boat. The happy picture earlier turned grey with fear. All of us were terrified. We began to shout for help! Water began to fill the boat. We put on the life jackets. We were lucky to have them on-board. The owner of the boat came in another big boat and saved us! We were rescued just in the nick of time! We all felt shocked by the experience. But for the owner's timely help we would have had a great tragedy. After profusely thanking the owner of the club, we went back home. It was one unforgettable adventure!

Gowtham R, 8<sup>th</sup> grade

Weekly dose of positivity and inspiration



### THE DESERTED HOUSE

'Uncle! Uncle! There is a ghost in that house'. It was my nephew Vicky, always excited and curious. He took me to the deserted house. I remember the time when this house was full of life. The Gills family lived in it. They were famous for holding large parties. Then all of a sudden everything changed. Mrs Gill was not seen by anyone. Mr Gill said she had gone to her mothers. Many days passed. People noticed a strange change in Mr Gill and his son. They preferred being aloof. One day they too left. No one knew where.

The unattended house began to lose its hold. The outer walls crumbled. There was once a lot of greenery all around. Vicky took me to the big staircase where he claimed to have seen a headless body moving with a lamp in one of its invisible hands. There was nothing to see as I had expected. I snubbed Vicky as a useless fellow. Both of us prepared to get out. A deep mourning shriek came from a dark room. It startled us. I rushed towards the room. The moment I reached the threshold, the shriek turned into a hollow laughter. And a headless, half-visible outline of a human body appeared... but only for a few seconds. A moment later, there was nothing but eerie silence all around. I shared my experience with many friends. The head of the village was also informed. Soon it was decided to dig up the room where the mysterious figure was seen. The digging began and five or six feet under the earth lay a human skeleton. Everybody knew whose skeleton it was. Enquiries were made. Mr Gill was taken into custody. Without much fuss, he confessed killing his wife. Vicky became the detective hero. And I was happy to help!

Kamal, 10<sup>th</sup> grade

### THE COMPETITION BETWEEN THE TWO SEASONS

The sun and the wind challenged each other's strengths. To prove their might, they decided to test on a traveler walking on a lonely road. Whoever removed the man's clothes wins the contest. First to try was the wind: The wind blew as hard as he could. The traveler put on his jacket very tightly. It was the sun's turn, so the sun was as hot as he could be. The traveler just removed his jacket and was puzzled about how the weather changed so fast. The sun won the contest.

Pranit Sanghi, 7<sup>th</sup> Grade

## THE RAINBOW PRINCE

Once upon a time, there lived three girls in a small cottage in the middle of the forest. One rainy night, someone knocked the door. The first sister opened the door. A very old lady was standing at the door. The old lady asked for a blanket as it was very cold outside. But the sister slammed the door on her. The old lady knocked again. This time, the second sister opened the door. Now, the lady asked for some food as she was very hungry. The second sister asked her to get out of that place. The lady was sad but still she knocked the door again. The third sister opened the door. The old lady asked for some food and a blanket. The sister politely asked the lady to come in. She gave the lady some food and a blanket. She also asked the lady to stay with her that night. Next morning, when everyone woke up the old lady was missing. But instead, there was a handsome man standing. The three sisters were shocked. The handsome man walked towards the third sister and said that he was the Rainbow Prince. The prince wanted to marry a kind, gentle and a beautiful girl. Now, he found the right girl. So, with the permission of the third sister he married her and lived happily forever.

Ssesha, 7<sup>th</sup> Grade

## ICE AGE

"Wake up, wake up, you sleepy head" screamed Ruby, trying to pull Nicky out of bed. "We have to go the crumbling Ice Castle and rescue King Waveshaker". As Nicky was dressing up, Ruby, Nina and Will gathered all their gears which they could use in their rescue mission. Nicky, Ruby, Nina and Will were four best friends for the world, but actually they were secret fairies who loved to help others. As Nina was packing her backpack, Will reminded Nicky to wear his magical necklace which always helps them in finding directions. All four friends immediately started on their rescue mission. After walking for a while they were lost in the forest. "It is time to use my necklace", said Nicky. With the help of the map in that necklace they arrived at the frozen land and located the King's Castle. To their amazement they saw the snow was melting very fast. Everybody were screaming and crying, as nobody had a clue why their peaceful land was melting away so quickly.

In that chaos it was hard for the four of them to locate the king and his family. Then Nina took out a special watch which helped in locating trapped victims. As they started moving towards the castle snow started to break in small pieces. "Take it, it will help you all to glide over the snow" told Ruby handing over special boots to her friends. They all walked through the castle searching for the King. They found the King and his family hiding under a wooden plank. "Take it, and wear it fast. It will help you move better on snow" said Will handing special boots to the King and his family. Soon everybody came out of the castle safe. The King and his wife started to cry as their castle was converted into pool of water. The four friends explained to the King that because of unchecked pollution temperature rose and melted their land. They asked the King to appeal to his people to reduce pollution, then only they can live peacefully. After promising the king that they will come back and help them rebuild their homes, the four friends said good bye and headed home as they had school to attend in the morning.

Manya Mehrotra, 5<sup>th</sup> Grade

## FLASHBACK >>> I WISH >>> WISH FOR MY DREAM TO COME TRUE

"I had a dream that I would be flying high in the skies. swimming deep under the sea, walking on land and doing everything that was not done!" said Babblor. Babblor was a tiny fur covered animal that could not walk on land, could not swim under the sea or fly in the skies. He was never on land, Water, or air. He was just.....there! All he did was eat some insects and smaller animals, sleep, daydream and wish. What a life! His wishes were infinite and his dreams could possibly never come true. "One day I will do all that I wish for. I would be a part-bird, part-fish and part land-walker" the high-pitched and squeaky creature said.

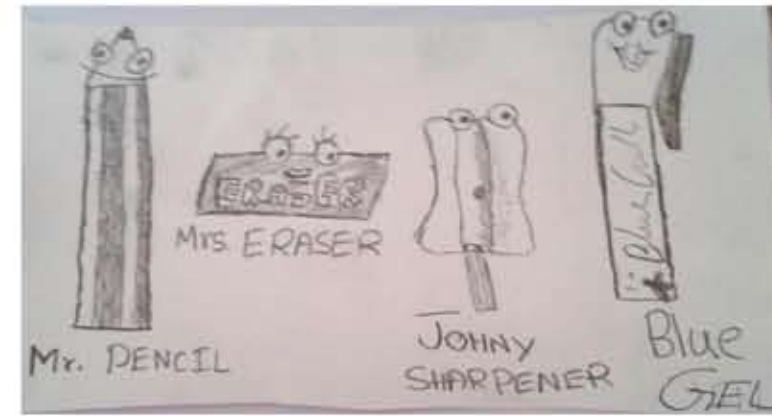
Babblor dreamed and wished that his dream would come true. Hours, days, weeks, months, years went by. Finally, he met a fish that could fly! It was called a flying fish. The fish said that she could go to the water-lord and ask him if he would give Babblor the power of water and the skill of a mariner. She went to the water-lord and requested to help Babblor. The water-lord was indeed happy to have another water-user in his colony and granted Babblor's wish. Babblor was overjoyed! He spent the next few years in water. One day the flying fish asked Babblor "Babblor, do you want to see what is outside the water and in the low sky?" "Oh yes! Of course I would want to!" replied Babblor excitedly. "Then, I shall bear you on my back. Come!" said the flying fish. They glided in the low skies and suddenly Babblor fell off the flying fish!

He fell, and seconds later a large eagle's back was what he was sitting on! It said "I am Quickbeam, servant of the wind-lord Gwaihir. I have found you in the realms of our territory and therefore I shall have to take you to our lord." Babblor was amazed! He was going to the wind-lord, and maybe he could earn the power of flight as he had earned for the water from the water-lord! Finally they landed. He was in a place in the skies and he was standing on clouds! He was presented to Gwaihir and the wind-lord looked at him and asked him a few questions. And then Babblor asked in a small voice "Your majesty the wind-lord Gwaihir, May I have the skill of flight and the power of the skies please?" "I would grant your wish if you pass our realms openly and not in the silent space of secrecy." Babblor was so happy he felt like he fell off the cloud. But he didn't fall, he flew!

Babblor spent few years in the skies. Now that he had the power of the skies and the seas, one day he wished the power of the land. He went to the crocodile in the waters and asked him if he could go to the lord of the land-walkers and ask if he would meet Babblor. The crocodile came back and told him that the land-lord Peregrin would be pleased. Babblor talked with Peregrin and finally his wish was granted! Now he could fly in the skies, swim in the seas, and walk on the land! One fine day he tried to do all at once and used his power wrongly. The lords of the world were furious and took him to the great lord of all the universe and beyond, the most powerful ever to be seen, the kind and generous, Lord Elessar. Elessar was kind, but he had to do justice and said that he would change Babblor's shape and form so that he would be able to do all but indirectly. Babblor had become a human being! He could fly in planes, travel the water in ships and walk the land with feet. He multiplied and more human beings were born. All human beings are here today because of Babblor's three wishes.

Ananth Ashok, 5<sup>th</sup> Grade

## THE HAPPY PENCIL BOX



Once inside a pencil box there lived Mr. Pencil, Mrs. Eraser, Johnny sharpener and Blue Gel (pen). They were happy friends, until one day Tape Inspector came to their pencil box and arrested Mr. Pencil, telling him that he has to be taken to the Judge Court pencil box. Mr. Pencil didn't know what crime he had committed, so Mrs. Eraser protested saying "he did not commit a crime". The Tape Inspector did not care. He dragged Mr. Pencil to the Judge Court pencil box.

The Judge asked "what crime has he committed?" The Tape Inspector told a lie that he had stolen money from the bank pencil box. Mr. Pencil was terrified and told "I didn't steal the money Tape Inspector, show me the proof". Tape inspector told the Judge that he will get the proof and he went to get it. The Judge knew that whenever something was stolen the bank's head will write a letter and sign it. Meanwhile the Tape Inspector had gone to Mr. Pencil's pencil box. He saw Blue Gel and forced him to write the letter and sign it as the bank's head. The Tape Inspector took the letter to the Judge and showed him the proof and said "The bank's head always writes a letter and signs whenever something was stolen".

Usually, the ink which the bank's head uses is shown clearly when you scratch it with the pencil; when you erase it, the ink disappears. The Judge knew about this, so he asked Mr. Pencil to strike the signature. Mr. Pencil did as he was told and the ink did not appear clearly. Next the Judge summoned Mrs. Eraser and asked to erase the sign. She did as told, but the ink did not disappear it was same as it was before. The Judge was very angry and arrested the Tape Inspector for the way he cheated and put the blame on Mr. Pencil. The Judge released Mr. Pencil and the four friends lived happily ever after.

Vasudha, 5<sup>th</sup> grade

## MURDER MYSTERY

A calm deep dense dark forest was suddenly aroused by a loud growl and we got scared. Our camping was not fun anymore as we heard the same sound again. We went in the direction to see where we the sound came from. We saw a small cottage and went close to it. There was blood everywhere, on the walls, the floor and hand print of blood on the walls. There were spider webs and the windows were broken. We heard a different noise this time and got scared. As we started to run away the noise seemed to follow us. Thankfully there was a cottage nearby. There was an old lady living there. We told her the whole story. She said you guys went to the cottage where the ghost is living and some noises come from there often. From now do not go that side it is risky. We decided to finish our camping and leave early the following morning. There was a scream...again... I woke up and realised that it was just a dream.

Gayathri R, 7<sup>th</sup> Grade

## THE SPACE ADVENTURE: A TEST MISSION

"Seat belts on! Emergency kit ready! We are going to launch 10, 9, 8..." announced Jay, an astronaut and the captain of **Akash**, a space shuttle on a space mission. A hundred other astronauts were ready for the thrilling launch. "...3, 2, 1..." Launch! Out of the solar system, through stars, giant planets. Akash was on a test mission to identify if planet Shinjuki was suitable for life. At about 15 light years, Shinjuki was the nearest planet, far enough to escape Supernova *Apocalypse* expected to occur in Earth's vicinity within 300 years. After many years of travel Akash was ready to land in Shinjuki. Jay and his team did not foresee the possibility of Shinjuki being inhabited. This proved to be a costly mistake.

"SPACE INVADERS! Weapons ready, all of you" shouted Pirapoing. Gosh! It happened to be a military field. The astronauts, caught unaware, took out their emergency kits and wore their life jackets. Loaded with laser guns, bombs and ammunition, they jumped out. Raging at the humans, the Shinjukans took out their powerful weapons and started to fire.

First it was guns... then Jay instructed to blast bombs... then a major war with bombs... at last, they located another part of Shinjuki. This happened to be the rocket-launching field! Leacaroiing shouted "SPACE INVADERS! Get the green exploding machine! They are from Earth; let us blast earth away. Jay intercepted Leacaroiing's signal and instructed everyone to give their best to save mother earth. The Shinjukans were ready with their neroid green particle, powerful enough to annihilate earth. After a while, both teams decided to launch rockets. When they were near Earth, Jay and his astronauts fired their missiles. There was a space war, and it went on with full fury, Shinjukans trying to annihilate and humans tried to protect earth. Finally, Jay managed to alter the course of the green particle by hacking into their navigation system. The green particle ended up in empty space harmless to earth. Enraged, Shinjukans attempted to destroy the entire team of astronauts. With great difficulty, humans finished off the Shinjukan astronauts. A few remaining Shinjukans responded with a heavy firing on Akash. Jay and his team skillfully evaded the fire and escaped from the weapon range soon afterwards.

After an uneventful journey, Jay and his team reached Earth. The retrorockets were fired to reduce the speed of shuttle and the astronauts jumped out with their parachutes on. Jay and the astronauts were rewarded for their hard work and the mission was a successful one. Though Shinjuki was not a choice for human race to relocate, at least humans were saved from immediate destruction.

Tejas, 5<sup>th</sup> Grade

## Teen Talk

Katie meets her old friend Jessica after a very long time. They talk about where they lived, what they each did and everything else friends talk about. Katie asked about Jessica's mobile phone. Jessica showed her galaxy grand note. "ohhhhhh! That is so big" said Katie. "What about you Katie?" asked Jessica. She said "I use Nokia 1. I know it is old but it is cool". The girls decided to take a walk to the nearby park. "Do you read books?" asked Katie. "Yes I do, I love books" said Jessica. Katie opens the tablet to read her favourite book, but does not know how to open the book. "Press the button on the side, then click the book in the display and read" says Jessica. "How do you go to next page?" and thus continued the conversation between the two friends.

Madhumitha, 6<sup>th</sup> Grade