

YA NEWS

DECEMBER 2021

Winners for the Fall 2021 Creativity Contest are posted below, and winning entries are featured in this newsletter. 53 teens were represented by 80 entries received. We thank everyone who took the time to participate. If you're eligible to enter again in future years, please do so!

ART — Grades 6-8

- 1st – Lexington Lynch (RCHC, 7th)
- 2nd – Addie Yoder (Graber Elementary, 6th)
- 3rd – Sophia Stoltzfus (Cottonwood Creek Christian, 7th)

ART — Grades 9-12

- 1st – Ellie Miller (Twisted Pine Fine Arts Academy, 12th)
- 2nd – Annabelle Stohr (Homeschool, 11th)
- 3rd – Amelia Masar (Homeschool, 9th)

PHOTOGRAPHY — Grades 6-8

- 1st – Brooklyn Wallace (Homeschool, 8th)
- 2nd – Ava Parsons (Prairie Hills Middle School, 6th)
- 3rd – Kiana Otto (RCHC, 8th)

PHOTOGRAPHY — Grades 9-12

- 1st – Lily Stivers (Buhler High School, 11th)
- 2nd – Gillian Eddington (Hutchinson High School, 12th)
- 3rd – Shelbi Brady (Buhler High School, 9th)

POETRY — Grades 6-8

- 1st – Madison Lynch (RCHC, 6th)
- 2nd – Leah Foos (Wiley Elementary, 6th)

POETRY — Grades 9-12

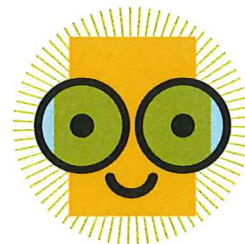
- 1st – Megan Ratzlaff (Cedar Ridge Homeschool, 12th)
- 2nd – Ana Post (Buhler High School, 10th)
- 3rd – Kaia Smith (Homeschool, 9th)

SHORT STORIES — Grades 6-8

- 1st – Claire Lewis (Prairie Hills Middle School, 6th grade)
- 2nd – Taylah Mason (Graber Elementary, 6th)
- 3rd – Arianna Ahrens (Homeschool, 8th)

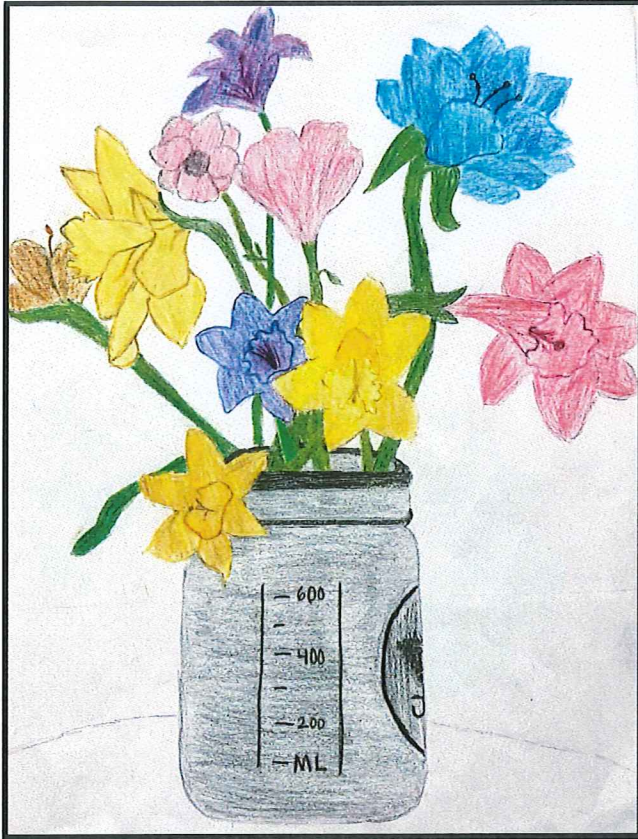
SHORT STORIES — Grades 9 - 12

- 1st – Gage Anthony (Hutchinson High School, 11th)

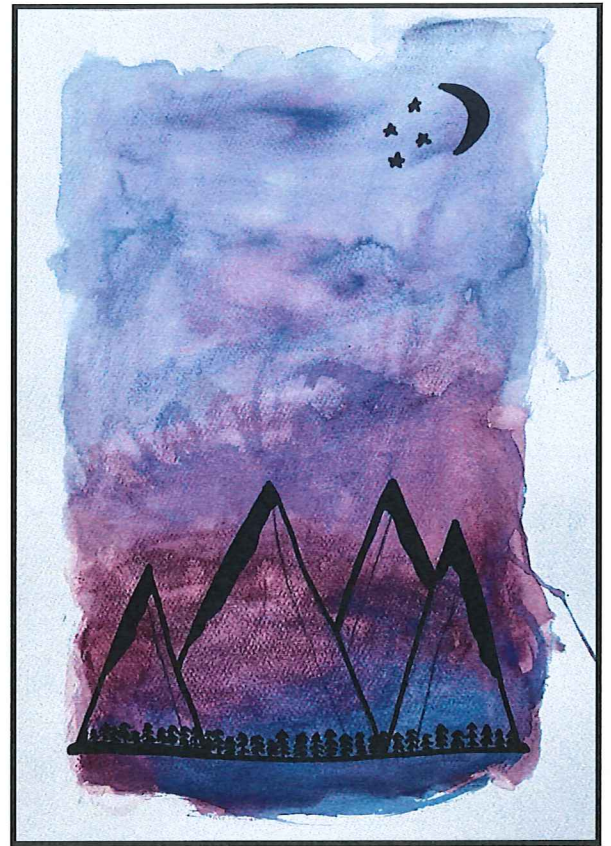


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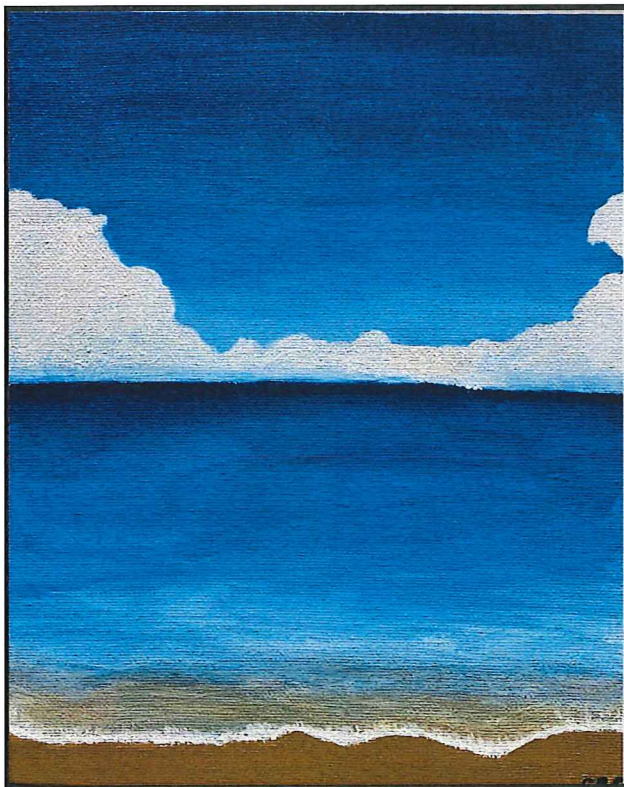
ART — Grades 6 - 8



1st place, by Lexington Lynch



2nd place, by Addie Yoder



3rd place, by Sophia Stoltzfus

ART — Grades 9- 12



1st place, by Ellie Miller

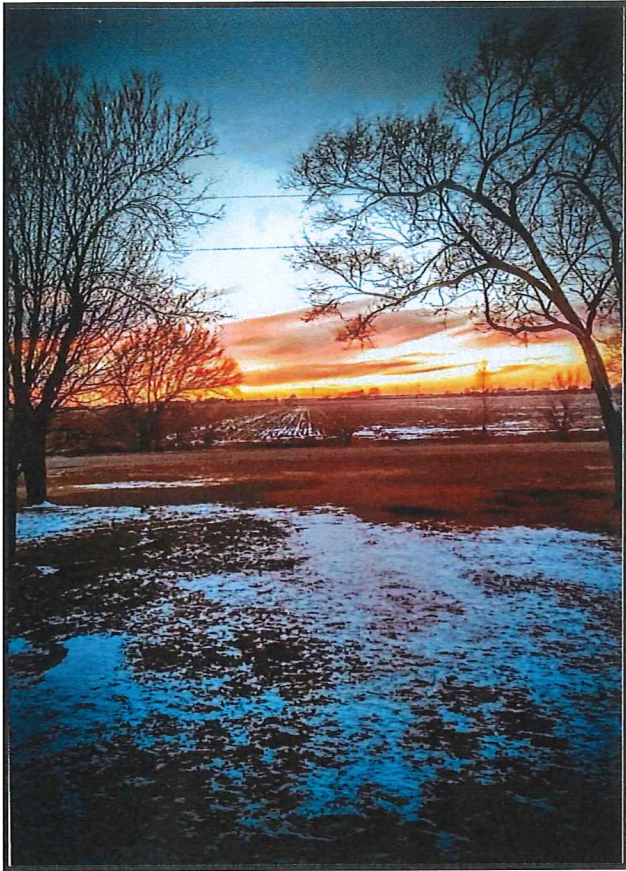


2nd place, by Annabelle Stohr



3rd place, by Amelia Masar

PHOTOGRAPHY — Grades 6-8



1st place, by Brooklyn Wallace



2nd place, by Ava Parsons

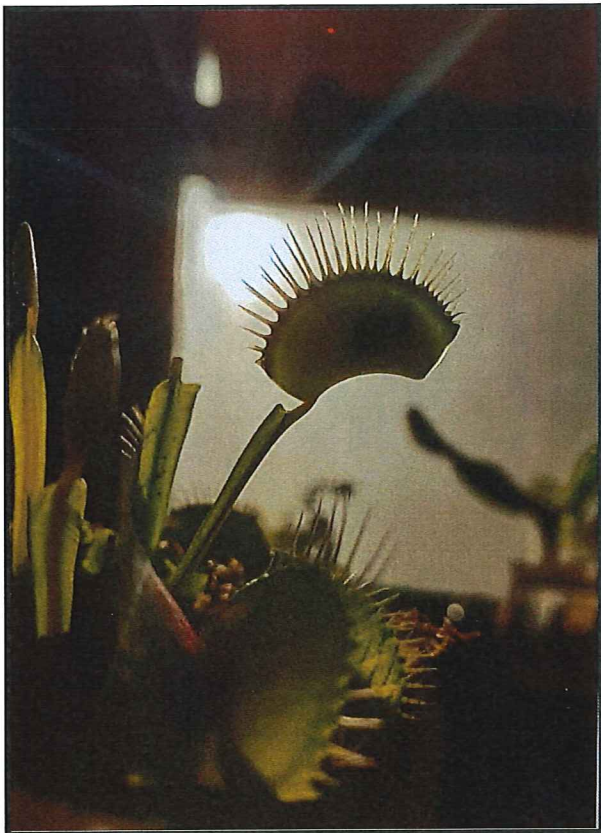


3rd place, by Kiana Otto

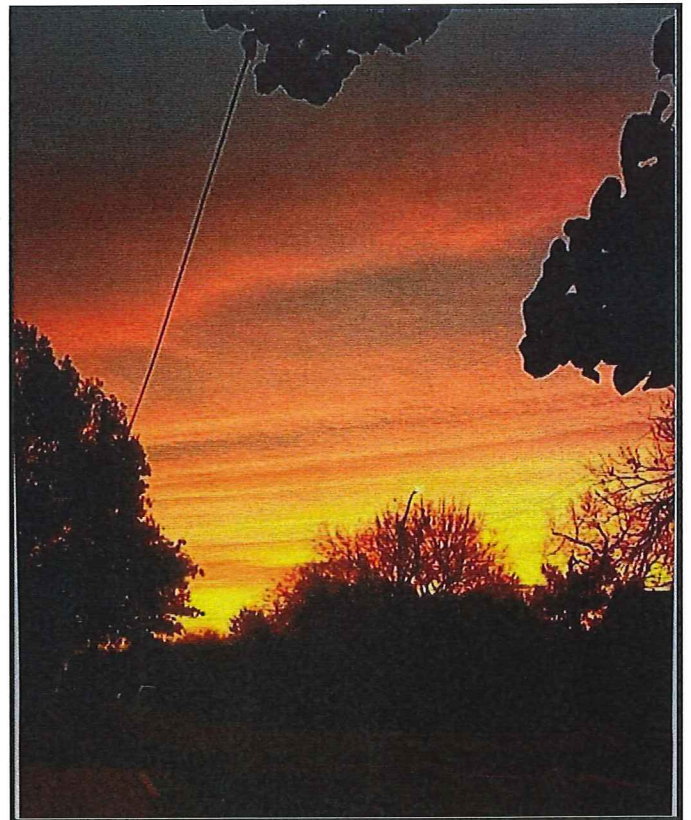
PHOTOGRAPHY — Grades 9-12



1st place, by Lily Stivers



2nd place, by Gillian Eddington



3rd place, by Shelbi Brady

POETRY



Grades 6-8

1st – “Covid 19” by Madison Lynch (RCHC, 6th)
2nd – Leah Foos (Wiley Elementary, 6th)

Covid 19 ♥

The Country shuts down
At home we stay
Getting back out
But stay 6 feet away

Masks work
on wait not today
wash your hands til they hurt
6,000 times a day

School starts up
Masks we wear
Getting back out
Can be quite a scare

Barly cough
Get a glare
Dont even think of sneezing
Dont you dare

Ring ring goes the phone
you have been exposed
only a week back at school
and now they are closed

A book is made
of pages filled with
words that lead
to a door of
Adventure

POETRY

Grades 9-12

1st – “The Mill” by Megan Ratzlaff
(Cedar Ridge Homeschool, 12th)

2nd – “Begin Again” by Ana Post
(Buhler High School, 10th)

3rd – “Black Girl” by Kaia Smith (Homeschool, 9th)

The Mill

In a green and golden hollow
near an azure river of water
lies a mill deformed and crippled with time.
Many years ago it was a proud structure,
painted white, with green trim,
to match the greenery of the hollow.
This mill was a bustling place throughout the
year.

In spring the mill would begin to awake after
a winter of idleness,
in summer farmers brought their wheat to be
ground into flour.

Fall brought the final push to grind wheat
before the river froze,
and even in winter the mill was not forgotten,
as children came and skated on the river,
near the old water wheel.

But waves of change drifted over the hollow.
The wheat began to be taken to the cities,
where it was ground into flour more cheaply.
The mill saw less and less business, until it
was closed,
forever.

But it was not completely forgotten.
The children still came to skate on the frozen
river until, one by one,
they grew up and moved away,
and the mill became completely forsaken.
Slowly, it began to show its age.
The white and green paint began to fade and
flake, the old timbers began to rot.
The water wheel next to which so many
children had skated and frolicked,
lies forgotten.

The people living nearby look with sad eyes
at this once beautiful landmark.
But instead of carrying the image of a
dilapidated mill in their minds,
they choose to remember a proud structure,
painted white and green,
in the middle of a golden hollow.

Begin Again

The first thing I saw were his electric blue eyes;
They pierced through me like I was a sinner on Sunday morning.
I wanted to know him, needed to know him

I asked around about him;
Constantly forgetting to pay attention in class because I'd daydream
Then I finally worked up the courage to talk to him

He had a brilliant mind, maybe a bit too brilliant
We stayed up until 2 am video chatting until one of our phones died,
I shared with him my deepest fears and most personal secrets.

Then he messed it all up.
Why did he ruin my reputation for his own personal gain?
I didn't know if I'd ever be okay again

Suddenly I was looking at a stranger;
The stars in his eyes had turned into knives,
And I couldn't look at him without feeling the pain of how he had hurt me.

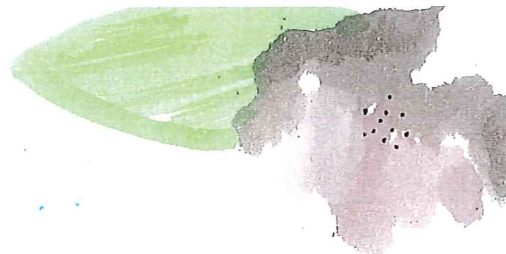

One dreary Monday morning we ran into each other
He begged me to remember the fun we had and everything we did together
He begged me to take him back

All I could remember was the pain he caused me
The way he had left me to pick up the broken pieces of my shattered heart
There was no fix

I could only remember the way I had cried myself to sleep
Everything that I had used to love could be no longer, for it had reminded me of him
He left my mismatched puzzle pieces of a heart by stealing a piece along the way

I've had to guard my heart closely ever since
It is now an intricate labyrinth that one must tread carefully
For only I possess the key to my own feelings now

I swore to myself that I won't let my guard down again
Which for a while, it held true
Until one chilly autumn morning, when I looked up and saw you



Black Girl

Do you ever wonder... why aren't I as pretty
as those white girls?

Why is my hair curly?
and theirs straight

Why does my hair get so ratty?

Why is it that all they have to do is
run a comb through it?

Seems like magic... but you have
Black Girl Magic


When you look in the mirror...
what do you see?


Well I see a beautiful, brown,
stunning face

One that silences the mouth of
the oppressors

One whose eyes show love, compassion,
and trustworthiness

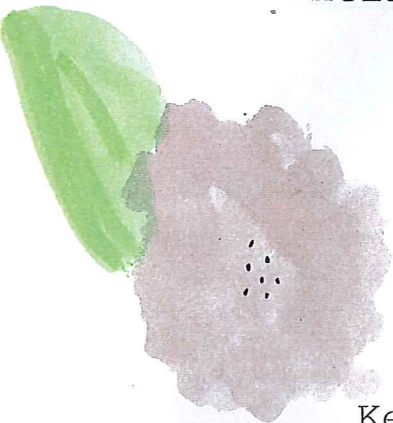
Your beauty is one of a kind - a perfect
shade of melanin





Even the flowers bow down
to you

Their buds bloom at the sight of your
radiating face



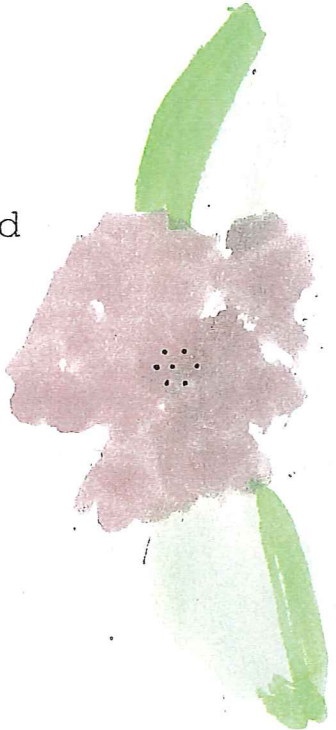
Your beauty mesmerizing them
overtakes their minds

Stand tall

Keep those curls up to standard

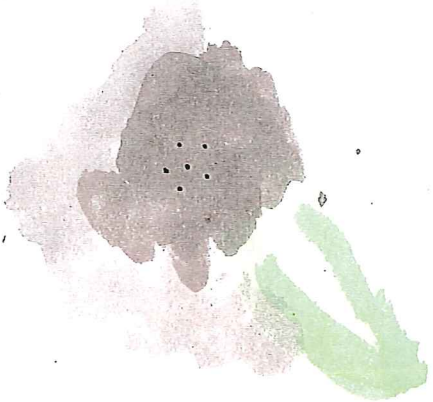
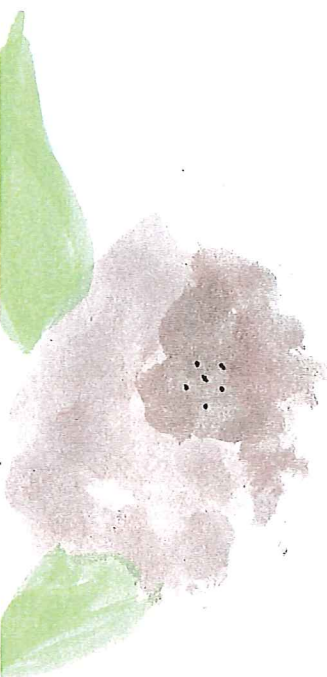
Your curls can't be mannered

You are just as beautiful as
anyone else



Always remember you are black,
brown, unique, and
GORGEOUS

Don't fit in with anyone
else but you



SHORT STORY

Grades 6-8

1st – “The Basement Horror” by Claire Lewis (PHMS, 6th)

2nd – “The Girl Who Could See Spirits” by Taylah Mason
(Graber Elementary, 6th)

3rd – “Dynamite” by Arianna Ahrens (Homeschool, 8th)

The Basement Horror

The wooden stairs groaned and moaned under my feet. The noise I made was followed by a sound from an unfamiliar creature; a creature not like a cat, mouse, dog, wolf from outside or anything, but more like a horror that you see in movies that scares you out of your pants and stuff.

I turned on the light to see my cat sleeping with my friends. "Cute..." I said in a hushed voice. I was terrified to see what happened next. It was like a giant hand. The hand was attached to a claw, a pretty big-sized one too. I tried to hold back my scream, but it was no use. My shrill, ear-piercing scream woke up my friends. The hand was gone.

I knew my friends would not believe me but they had to. What I saw was real, too real to say that it was fake. I was shaking at that point, too scared to say anything. My friends started to get concerned. "EEEEEEEEEE.....!" We all jumped. We looked around to see what that screech came from. Nothing...or nothing that we saw. We all looked at each other. Jenna was gone! We heard her scream but we could not locate where it came from. We continued to look for her, still finding nothing. I felt like something was off in this room but I did not know what. I looked in the generator room. I stood in the doorway in shock, shock that turned into fear. There was Jenna's body. Her cold limp body just laying there, a pool of blood by her stomach, her body torn to shreds.

I looked back to see her sister Macie on the floor crying. I couldn't blame her, seeing your sister torn to shreds in a pool of her blood. I felt a cold and icy shiver run down my back. I ran out of the generator room and looked at the ceiling. There was Ava's body hanging from the

ceiling, her throat cut open, her eyes wide in fear from what she saw when she was still alive, blood dripping from her body.

I thought to myself who was next, me, Allison, or Macie? Allison's scream broke the spell I was in. I ran to see where it came from. Her suffering body was nailed to the wall. I saw Macie follow to see what the scream was about. Her eyes were wide with terror. We ran up the stairs to find my twin brother, Chase, and his friends who had been playing games.

We told the boys what happened, and Macie and I went back down to the basement to show them, and the boys followed. They found Allison's, Ava's, and Jenna's bodies. Macie could not take it anymore and ran upstairs to escape the horror. Chase suggested we all group together so we would not be alone.

About five minutes later, we saw a doll on a shelf that looked at least 100 years old. "Creepy," is what my brother and I said. Suddenly we saw its eyes fly open and head move violently, and the screams of Chase's friends haunted me. We turned around to see his friends' pale white faces; I didn't want to see what they were looking at. One of my brother's friends, Colby, started to choke, his body went paler than before. His body began floating! The shock we could see in their faces was deathly. If only this was a prank. But it wasn't. This was real, a real demon at work, in my basement. And in a snap of a finger, Colby was crushed, blood splattered everywhere, all over us, all over the walls.

Chase's other friends tried to run up the stairs to get away, no use. They were decapitated and crushed together. I looked at Ava's body that was upside down now, the red beads of blood dripping down from her long hair. "I'm sorry guys, I never meant for this to happen," I said as my eyes filled with tears. I started to think to myself, maybe the monster can smell fear?

I looked at Chase, his face was stuck in shock. I shook him to bring him back to earth and I told him my thinking to see if it might work. The bodies of our friends came to life. But they were possessed and they started to rip both our bodies apart. Just like that, we were dead. Then my friends' bodies collapsed on top of us. The demons left and never returned to that house.

Macie, the only person left alive from that night, called the police and nothing was ever found but our bodies. So they called the case, Mystery of the Demon Kids. That night still haunts her to this day.

The Girl Who Could See Spirits

Have you ever seen something you couldn't explain, something paranormal? Well so could this girl and here is her story.

One day a girl named Isabella went downstairs for breakfast and saw her mom, but she was acting strange. She was being quiet and she was never quiet, finally she said, "Honey I have some news. We are moving to Colorado." "WHAT!" said Isabella. "No we can't move." Isabella started to cry and ran upstairs to pack.



"We're here," says mom. "Don't you just love it?" Isabella rolled her eyes. "I'm going upstairs." said Isabella. Once she got upstairs she found a room so she went in to see if it was hers. After she went in she found two doors. She opened one and found a big closet. "Wow!" she thought. Then she opened the other and what she saw made her scream. "A BATHROOM! I GET MY OWN BATHROOM!?!!" Then her mom barged in. "Isabella, are you ok?" "Mom, Mom is this my room?" Her mom nodded. "YES!" Now I won't have to share one with Liam. *He always gets toothpaste on the towel* thought Isabella.



"Come on Liam. Let's go play outside."

"I'm coming, I'm coming."

Then all of a sudden a soccer ball flies over the fence and hits him in the head.

"Ow," said Liam. Then a girl comes over the fence, "Sorry guys. You must be the new neighbors."

"Yep," said Isabella. "I bet you won't live there long." "Why?" asked Liam. "Because Grandma Mary and baby Lulu live there."

"Baby what and Grandma who?" asked Isabella, confused.

"The ghost," said the girl. "Anyway my name is Peyton."

"I'm Isabella but you can call me Isabel or Izzy." "And I'm Liam." "I heard you got your own bathroom," said Peyton. Isabel blushed. "I was that loud?" "Yea," said Peyton. "So you play soccer?" "Yeah only because my dad wants me to, but I would much rather play softball." "Really? I play softball," said Izzy, "I wanna be a catcher," said Peyton. "No way I played catcher!"

"Huh?" Isabel said as she woke up. "Is that crying?" It must be baby Lulu. What? No that's just a dumb game Peyton made up. "I know... I'll just go get a drink from the kitchen," Isabella thought. As Izzy went downstairs. She hears the microwave beep, she walks in and sees a real old granny with grey hair pulled back in a bun, and then notices a baby with brown hair, "Baby Lulu," she thinks. Then the grandma looks straight at Isabella and walks to her. Then "AHHH!" Isabella sits up in her bed. "It was a dream."

Isabella realizes, and then... "thump thump wwwaaahhhh " is all Isabella hears. She grabs her flashlight and gets out of bed and slowly walks down the stairs and sees the grandma from her dreams and the baby walking in the living room. Then Isabella fainted

"Isabella wake up," said Liam. " GHOST " said Izzy, waking up. "Huh?" said Liam confused. Izzy realizes it's morning and that Halloween is tomorrow.

"I'm gonna be a ghost for Halloween!" said Liam. Just then the doorbell rang. Isabella walks and opens the door.

"Oh hi Peyton."

"Hey," Peyton says. "Wanna go play outside?"

Isabella answers unsure, "Uhh yeah I guess."

"Okay let's go," said Peyton. "Hey can you tell me more about the ghost at my house?"

"Well, I've never seen them before, but the stories say that only kids that are chosen can see them," says Peyton.

"I've been chosen?!" realized Izzy.

Just then her mom calls. "Izzy I found something. Come look."

"Coming Mom!" "I gotta go. Bye Peyton."

"Bye."

Izzy finds her mom and she sees her special music box that her dad gave her before he died in the car crash 3 years ago when Isabella was 8 and Liam was 4. She went upstairs and put the music box on her dresser.

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That night at supper Liam was complaining about how he hates the new house and finally Izzy yells "YOU HATE THIS NEW HOUSE? I BET YOU HAVEN'T SEEN THE GHOST, I WOKE UP TO A BABY CRYIING!"

Mom cuts in, "ISABELLA LANE TANNER THAT'S ENOUGH. GO UPSTAIRS AND GO TO BED!" Isabel runs up stairs crying and goes to bed.

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The next morning Izzy was mad at her family, so she went to get her music box to calm her down but the music box was gone.

Dynamite

Chapter 1- Enlisting

One morning at 6:00am, the sun peaked on a little green house. Behind the house was a dog whining to come in. This dog was always determined and ready for anything. Gunter who was his owner, let him in. "Are you ready for some news?" Gunter asked. "ROOF"! , Dynamite barked happily as if to say yes. "Ok Dynamite, you want to in the Army?" "ROOF!" , Dynamite barked again. Gunter had opened his mail. It was a box from a friend of his. It said that they needed more men. It also had a collar printed 'DYNAMITE'. The next day they packed and were off. It was a long, hard, cold day at the Academy. Even Dynamite was tired. They had run for miles. Then they had to do 100 push-ups. However, Dynamite was just keeping his hind up in the air trying to do the push-ups to. Dynamite liked to do the exercises alongside the men. He didn't understand what was so hard about this?

At lunch, Gunter sat alone with Dynamite. Then a tall pale boy came over and sat with them. Gunter stayed silent because he was very shy. Dynamite was contrary to Gunter. He liked to see new people. He thought Gunter was boring sometimes. "Hi", Gunter said in a shaky voice. "Hello, said the boy. You're very quiet, I'm Ollie, What's your name"? "Gunter", he replied. Just then the bell rang. It was time for more drills. Which seemed bad, but to Gunter the shots were worse. "Time for shots"!! The Sergeant yelled after running. "Are you having a hard time Gunter"? , Sergeant asked when Gunter was fighting the Corporal with it. "No" he answered quickly. "Are you sure about that"?! Sergeant asked Gunter. "Yes". He answered again. "Ok", he said watching curiously. "1, 2, 3," Corporal counted as he stuck the needle in. "How did it go rookie"? Ollie asked sarcastically. "Story of my life", Gunter answered intensely. Ollie just laughed. "Dinner time"! Sergeant yelled.

Chapter 2 – The Bible

The 3rd week had passed when Sally sat at the table with Gunter and Ollie. "Hi, Gunter", Sally said, I like your dog". "Thanks", Gunter replied. Sally pet Dynamite and was off. Sally just wanted to make friends with people. That's why she would talk to people even for a short time. RING!! The drill

bell rang. It was time to go. "Let's go Dynamite", Gunter commanded.

Once Ollie was alone with Gunter he told him, "You are starting to be a little weird". "Don't be ridiculous", Gunter replied trying to end the conversation. "Remember that when you just say thanks." Ollie said. "Ok", Gunter replied not really listening to Ollie. "Goodnight Ollie", Gunter said after they talked and the "night bell" rang. "Night", Ollie whispered back.

The next day, Sally asked Gunter, "Got your Bible"? "Got my Bible,"? Gunter asked sharply. "Your Bible, you don't have one"? Sally continued. "No", he answered quickly looking ashamed. He used to have one but it fell out of his pocket. Here, she said thoughtfully as she handed him a Bible. "Thanks", he responded. Then the 2nd lieutenant said "1 Peter 4:6 quotes, love cover's a multitude of sins. That is TRUE love. It's the only kind of love that can cover or truly forgive sins. It's because FALSE love still holds grudges, the heart of a FALSE lover can hold grudges. If anyone knows God he knows love for God IS love (1John 4:8)" he said quoting scripture. The 2nd lieutenant was a pastor before the draft so that is why he quoted scripture so well.

Chapter 3 - A Story

"We've got a long way to go men ", Sergeant announced. Wow, I didn't enlist for this, Gunter thought. "I know how you feel about this trip", Sally told Gunter. Gunter didn't know what to say but that he was fine. On the plane, Ollie shivered , he was ready to bomb it and leave. But why was he ambitious? As Gunter pondered on that thought he felt complete despair. Then he remembered something his Mom taught him, "Don't look at the world, just you." At that time he forgot what that meant, and he didn't have time. They had landed for battle. "We're here men". He always said men because he "forgot" the girls were there.

When Gunter got out, he saw a group of guys eating and talking under a tree, because the war wasn't in this exact spot. "Go talk, and be with those guys", Sally urged. "Ok", Gunter replied. When Gunter sat down, a guy told a story of when he was in war prior to now. His name was Albert J. Carpenter. He started, "The German's were shooting and were bombing us. I didn't have my mask on

quick enough, and my lungs were throwing up blood. Then the Calvary took me, gave me a few pills, then sent me back out". "Whoa!" Gunter exclaimed. "What's your name son?" Albert asked Gunter. "Gunter Bryant Miles" he answered.

Rick Hanski and his dog Cracker was with him. Cracker was a good messenger dog and for now was relaxing at the base. Dynamite was not fond of Cracker. He just barked at her to get away. Rick Hanski was then called to go to Sergeant. He had to go with his regiment to Vietnam before the war started. Quickly, Rick took Cracker to report to Sergeant once arriving. So, Dynamite decided to find a shady spot to nap. "Let me see where Sally and Ollie went". Gunter told them so he could go. Dynamite barked excitedly when he heard Gunter and he went and followed him. "Sure, kid", they answered.

Meanwhile, Sally got carried away looking at small tanks with Sergeant U-Haul. He also showed her the Ancient Battering Ram. (He was the Sergeant of Rick's squad). Ollie went with them a ways from Gunter too. Surprisingly Sergeant U-Haul didn't usually go on missions with the squadron. While Gunter searched, Sally got ready for "adventure", as she called it. Jack, a Captain that was responsible for overseeing the base, walked awhile with them. Then Cracker came back carrying a letter that read "The war is looking really bad hurry!!!! signed Rick Handski."

"Well, I can go there", Sally stated as they talked, looking at a map and pointing. "That's too far for a girl", Sergeant replied. But he went anyways to protect her. "Well, you could go with this squadron", Jack said as they walked over to an armed squadron. The squadron that Gunter talked to was the one that was armored by then. "Ok", Sally replied. Ollie said "Let's go"! "Dynamite, do you have their scent"? Gunter desperately asked. Dynamite whined. "We've followed them all over base"! Gunter shouted, as he read his Bible on patience. "Who are you looking for"? Jack asked after hearing what he said.

Chapter 4-A loss or a Hope?

"So, how long has it been"? Beth asked, Mark her husband. He answered "5 in a half years", trying

to keep his voice calm, because he knew he answered that question multiple times. "It feels like 5 decades"! Beth replied trying to hold back tears. "You think it's only been 5 years"? Beth asked crying.

Back at the base, Jack was walking around with Gunter. Finally, he told him that they left. "Oh no, you know the way to Vietnam"? Gunter asked knowing they would have gone there. "Yes", he answered. "You can go with Andy's squad", Jack replied. When the moon was full, that night, Sergeant Andy's squad woke Gunter. Dynamite was desperate to get off the tipsy boat. They had flown to get there but were asked to go by boat. That is why Sally and that regiment had to go on the river too.

"Sally, when have you been so nervous"? Ollie asked. "Well, I'm just trying to plan this out", She answered. "You have nothing to worry about now that Sergeant is going", Ollie reassured her. If only Gunter were here she thought. While she thought, Gunter was holding a paddle to the kayak. His eyes were heavy, only seeing fog. A lot of worries flooded his mind. "You ok"? Sergeant asked. "Sure", Gunter responded. "Wait, I see Ollie"! Gunter whispered with his voice cutting out. "There's our hope", Jack replied quietly. "Maybe", Gunter answered hopeless. "It is Ollie"! Gunter yelled. Once they were on land, they heard the sound of dogs and gunfire. The dogs were here to supposedly scare back anyone who landed. But not Dynamite, he killed all of them before running for cover.

Chapter 5- Attacked!!!

The next day, they had a warm welcome. They experienced more enemy fire. "Keep up, Dynamite"! Gunter yelled back to the tired dog running behind him. "ROOF! ROOF!" Dynamite barked back running out of breath. The smoke stinging in his eyes, the wind howling the sinister sounds of men running and gun fire, made him whine. Still, deep down Dynamite knew he was the ONLY dog there with the potential to be a life-saving war hero. Gunter knew or thought he was the only one there who was hungry after finding cover. Soon that morning at 6:00, they set out to Cambodia. Sergeant told them to go to Cambodia following President Nixon's orders. Once they landed, Dynamite could not wait to see action. They had done a lot of waiting and rowing in the little boat. So he had been ready to get more

done. Him and Ollie were very tired and hungry. Food was scarce. Fish or flour cakes (a paste of flour and water on hot stones) were the only options. Dynamite only ate fish from nearby ponds, because they didn't have extra for the dogs. After the substantial bomb, all were ready to leave. "We're done for!" You'd hear the men shout, only seeing they're petrified faces disappear through the foggy film. As they ran, the winds blew strong in their faces, pulling the fog behind them. BOOM! Another bomb went out. BOOM! FRAG OUT! They all had gotten separated as before. A shot rang out. Gunter fell as fast as lightning, squeezing his arm trying to ale the pain. Then he pulled a dog whistle out and blew as hard as he could, trying to hold himself up with one arm. Dynamite heard it and dashed through the fog. He barked for help when a man named Cody Brian Butler ran over. He carried Gunter to the Calvary. Dynamite was very unhappy, he felt despair. Had he let Gunter down? But still, he had not let Gunter down. Because they just needed to rap it and give him medicine. When he was sent back out, he walked along the red stained ground, and loaded his gun. Suddenly, he came across a lieutenant, it appeared. It wasn't an American lieutenant, Gunter thought to himself. He eased on the trigger, BANG! Gunter didn't even miss. The horse he had been on ran on , it looked strange. It said US on it! Gunter knew that in Calvary you don't always stay on the same horse because they get shot, but this was strange. "This horse has a phone # on it", Gunter said to himself.

Chapter 6- Dynamite is alone

Sally was running through a blanket of fog. She was still lost all alone trying to find the squad or her boys. "Ollie! Gunter! Dynamite! She called all day, but the wind blew away the words. Maybe, if I keep going... Whoa!" She was slipping on a slippery slope from all the rain. Then, Dynamite caught her! So he did hear her! They weren't alone anymore. "Good boy Dynamite"! She said just giving him a word of praise. Dynamite was running trying to find Gunter when he heard Sally. Gunter was on their tail even though it didn't seem like it. He was good to go. On the way out, Gunter met Finny who was an old friend of his. "It's been a war alright", Finny said after greeting Gunter. "Certainly has", Gunter said desperately. "Have you seen my dog"? Gunter finally asked. "Before I got shot", Finny replied.

"Let's go"! Gunter said not waisting time. "But I think he was dying", Finny admitted. But he wasn't dead he was only playing dead when he was grabbed by the throat. Sally was right by him trying to choke the man who was trying to kill Dynamite. His name was Swanye J. Johnson. He the pulled her in front of him and chain cuffed her. "Swayne, the dog!" Luke a man from that regement yelled. "He's dead we've got our prize"!! Swayne yelled back. Dynamite lift an eyelid to see which way they went. When they were out of sight, he was on his waay to help her.

Chapter 7- Champion Saves Sally

Sally was pushed into a long, dark, underground tunnel. The underground tunnel was Swayne's headquarters. "We know how to take care of these rebels", Swayne hideously said. Sally gulped hard, as he pushed her in her prison. She sat there, with her sparkly blue eyes swelling with tears. Her forehead was wet with sweat. Her heart was pounding hard. All she could think of was how she missed her horse, she wanted to escape on her horse. Champion was a good well trained horse that loved her. He would go anywhere looking for her. But would he now?!!!

Meanwhile, Finny and Gunter searched all over hopelessly. In a few hours they found Dynamite trying to find Sally. Dynamite was happy to see them and walked with them. Finny sat on a stone on the side of their path. "I'm done," Finny said as he flipped back his floppy dark brown hair. "What is this place"? Finny asked.

"Well, I don't really know," Gunter answered. "This is strange", Finny said back. Dynamite was eager to go home; he wanted this to be over. The thought of it made him whine, could he just retire? Could he go home? Moments passed, until Finny saw the guards to the underground tunnel. It seemed hopeless. Could this be were Sally is? "I have an idea," Gunter whispered as they hid behind an old stone wall. Gunter dressed as a guard from the guy he had killed weeks before. This guy was from Swayne's regiment. I have the map to give to Swayne". He started when he got to the guards. "Ok, go on in", one replied. Dynamite and Finny were behind the wall watching it take place.

Meanwhile, Champion was on the mission to find Sally, so he ran and ran. He was the horse the

lieutenant was on! He was only a few miles away. The guy had stolen Champion!!

Swayne knew what he was trying to pull because it was a fake map. "Stop!" Jack yelled so they wouldn't shoot Gunter. Bang! Quickly, in return, Swayne shot Jack. Gunter knew he was caught too. He whistled the dog whistle. Dynamite ran in there seeming to have been ready for whatever was ahead. Champion knew where to find Sally with all the commotion. It was easy to hear when the wind was still. He reared up, he neighed with confidence. Once Swayne was done and had enough he yelled "I quit,!" He knew he didn't have any back-up men too. Most of his men were killed. So he was killed by Gunter and they cheered that the war was over. As a victory march, in a distance they heard "ONWARD CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS", it was Sergeant U-Haul leading all his men from the platform! Even Rick Hanski! "Let's go"! Sally yelled, who had been ready to leave.

Chapter 8- At the party of goodbyes

"Is Gunter home yet mommy"? Abel, Gunter's younger brother asked. "No Abel", Beth replied. Then a box was delivered. From Gunter B. Miles it read. FRAGILE THIS SIDE UP it said on one side. "Let's open it"! Abel shouted. Gunter then suddenly jumped out like wind in the house. "YEAH!" They all shouted. Dynamite was most excited though. He knew he was finally home and that made him glad.

Later at Sally's house music played in the back round. Sally was in her best dress playing the piano after happily putting Champion in his stall. She was excited to have a fudge block, fruit cocktail, and sparkling water she was also excited to have Champion back. Gunter couldn't wait to talk to Ollie and Sally about how amazing Dynamite had been. Dynamite was sound asleep when Gunter hurried out. But not for long because when Crackers' tail waked him in the head he jumped up. Cracker is it really you? Dynamite wondered. It was her! He had finally made a friend!! "C'mon Cracker," Rick commanded as he tugged on her. To his surprise, Dynamite barked her a goodbye. Meanwhile, Ollie caught Gunter walking out to the gazebo. "UH, Sergeant would like to see you", Ollie told him. "Where"? Gunter questioned. "Out in the cemetery", Ollie finished. The cemetery was next to Sally's house. Once he walked though the mowed front yard, he went into the mini cemetery. "Yes Sergeant?"

Gunter asked after he saw him sitting on a stone bench looking down. He was sadly but sternly looking at a gravestone that said, "I dedicate my life, ability, and hope in God to America". Jack (the same one who oversaw the base). "Come sit, Sergeant commanded after a moment of silence. He was sad because he was responsible for Sally and letting Jack go. I give you this badge because of your bravery and effort". "Is this usual"? Gunter asked. "No, son", he answered. "Food's ready"! Sally called from a distance. "Let's go rookie", he told Gunter. "Wait, who's that,"? Gunter asked pointing to a gravestone that read, "As easily as I loved this Country... I died for it", Jason P. Garthy. "Oh, that was a friend from a long time ago and he taught me a great lesson, Sergeant started. He taught me that there's no greater love than this than one to lay down his life for his friend's, {John 15:13}. He'd always quote scripture to me. He also told me that TRUE love isn't a feeling. He explained with emphasis. Gunter wished he'd seen or even known the guy, so he could learn more about TRUE love. Working with something"? Sergeant asked Gunter as he usually did when he was fidgeting. "No", he answered. "Let's go". Gunter said.

They both walked through same mown grass up to the house in direction that they came in. "What took you so long"? Sally asked when they got there. "Nothing", Gunter mumbled as he walked passed her, because his mind was full on the talk. "Woe, I didn't see that coming", Ollie said folding his arms. "Do you care deeply for any one"? Ollie asked almost joking. "Because it's a choice, I'll try", Gunter told Ollie. When Sergeant heard it he said "good boy". Gunter did a solute, he couldn't have been more proud. "Working with something,"? Gunter asked Sergeant jokingly. "You know there's a retired Army plane across the street... let's go ride it!! Gunter shouted. It was "retired" because it couldn't fly for a long time. So they all rode in it, even Dynamite! Dynamite was happy. Because he knew that though he was the only dog there, with the historical potential to be a life-saving war hero... he was the ONLY dog there to be Dynamite.

THE END... HOWLLL!!!!!!!

SHORT STORY

Grades 9-12

1st – Gage Anthony (Hutchinson High School, 11th)

Found among the remaining documents
of Global Reformation Settlement #six

Source: Personal log of Lindsay H. Phillip.

Entry #one: October, 12th, 4031; I guess everyone has to write logs like this. I still don't see why the board needs my account of the settlement's research. All I do is water the plants and change out the UV bulbs. I know better than to ignore orders from my superiors though. So I guess I'll suck it up and complain about stuff. That's a joke please don't fire me. I suppose I'll just talk about my daily routine. Well today I watered the flowers and the trees not the succulents though, they don't need to be watered until tomorrow. The UV lights are fine for now. Although the lights all of the lights just shut off for about five minutes at the start of my shift. Odd but probably not my business. I'll leave the settlement's power issues to the experts. Also there was another glowstorm when I went home today. I swear I'm starting to feel like the hazmat suits don't help. I always have a headache by the time I get to my bunker. whatever, maybe I'm just tired after my shift.

Entry #two: October, 13th, 4031, So my sister informed me the board won't see this unless I'm dead or have been for years. So I can say whatever I want without getting thrown out. I wouldn't survive a day in the wasteland. Anyway the lights went out again. I tripped over the janitor's bucket. He should have taken it with him when he left. My jumpsuit has bleached blotches now. which isn't horrible I'll just have to remind him when he comes in in the morning to pick it up. I found this weird liquid on the floor. It was dark green, almost black. I assumed it was the janitor's chemicals or something like that so I reported it to my superiors and they sent me home early. I've never gone home at that time, it was so dark. And rainy, I didn't need the hazmat suit but it's easier to

wear than to carry. I still had a headache when I got home, even worse this time. I'll have it checked out tomorrow before work.

Entry #three: October, 14th, 4031, well the doctor said I'm fine just need to take a break. Probably not gonna happen. I've never had a day off. Truthfully I didn't know I was allowed days off. So I just went to work. And what do you know the lights went out again. Not only that but the janitor's bucket is still in the same spot. The weird liquid has been cleaned up but I expected as much. I've been hearing these weird noises. I'm pretty sure it's the AC or maybe something else. Whatever it is it's coming from the vents so it's probably just a broken AC. The janitor didn't come in. He's gonna be in trouble when my superiors find out. I'll leave that to them though. On my way home I could have sworn I saw someone standing on top of the mountain. Their arms were strange; they seemed too long for their body and it's legs seemed to be bent backwards. I turned to see if anyone else could see it. Then I realized I'm the only one out at this time. The figure was gone when I looked back. Maybe I really do need a break.

Entry #four: October, 15th, 4031, I've gotten a day off never thought I would. Still thinking about the figure I saw yesterday. The only reason I'm writing this today is because I feel crazy when I talk to my cat. Maybe I am crazy. I guess that's okay. At least I'm not dangerously crazy, just the normal amount of crazy. Maybe I'll hang out with my sister today. We work opposite shifts so I barely see her. I hate this. I'm not used to sitting around my bunker. I can't handle this. I need to go to work. Maybe I'll just sleep through it.

Entry #five: October, 16th, 4031, Slept my break away. Now I'm back at work where I want to be. The vents are still making weird noises. Maybe I'll go check it out. The lights again I seriously need someone to fix that. I'm tired of sitting in total darkness. I swear sometimes I think I hear voices when the lights go out. You know what I'm tired of waiting for someone to fix the vent problem. I'm gonna go do it myself. Can't be too complicated right? **I SHOULD HAVE NEVER GONE INTO THAT VENT. THE JANITOR IS DEAD, THAT'S WHY HE NEVER**

CAME IN. THE VENT WAS FULL OF THAT DARK GREEN LIQUID. AND THERE WERE STRANGE GROWTHS ALL OVER THE SIDES OF THE VENT. WORST OF ALL I SAW THAT FIGURE AGAIN. IT'S LONG ARMS WEREN'T ARMS AT ALL; THEY WERE LIKE TENTACLES. IT DIDN'T HAVE EYES OR A NOSE. ONLY A MOUTH IN A PERMANENT SMILE. IT TRIED TO GRAB ME, TRIED TO BITE ME. I GOT OUT AND RAN BACK HOME AS FAST AS I COULD. I CALLED MY SUPERIORS AS SOON AS I GOT THE CHANCE. THEY TOLD ME THEY'D TAKE CARE OF IT AND TO GET SOME REST. HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO REST AFTER THAT? THE IMAGE OF THAT THING IS BURNED INTO MY MIND. I'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO REST AGAIN. THE MERE SIGHT OF IT HAS DRIVEN ME TO MADNESS. AND IT HAS BEEN, MY HEADACHES HAVE BEEN GETTING WORSE. NOW I REALIZE WHY. I'VE STUMBLERD ACROSS SOMETHING MY MORTAL MIND ISN'T FIT TO COMPREHEND.

Entry #six October, 20th, 4031: MY FEAR HAS BEEN REPLACED WITH OBSESSION. MY HATRED OF THE THING HAS TURNED INTO A LONGING. I MUST KNOW MORE ABOUT IT. THERE IS AN INKY BLACK MIST OF FORBIDDEN KNOWLEDGE I CAN FEEL IT NOW. I MUST KNOW I DON'T CARE IF I'M CRAZY I WANT TO BE. I CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT VENTURING INTO THAT INKY MIST OF MADNESS. AND I'LL DO WHATEVER IT TAKES TO DO SO. MY SUPERIORS WANT ME TO STAY IN MY BUNKER BUT I'M DONE LISTENING TO THEM. I'LL BREAK IN TONIGHT AND CONFRONT THE CREATURE THERE IS SOMETHING IN THAT VENT THAT THE UNIVERSE WANTS ME TO LEAVE ALONE. I'M GOING TO FIND IT.

Entry #seven October, 21st, 4031: I found it, I found that which was hidden from me. I know now the creature's purpose. I understand There is no true end to anything. Death is but an obstacle to overcome, what you believe to be true and possible is a lie you tell yourselves. You fear what lurks beyond the veil of sanity. And you avoid it but in the end you will all know. I will show you all. We will show you all.

There were no survivors of Global Reformation Settlement #six.

The body of Lindsay H. Phillip was never found. It is suspected that she was responsible for the massacre of GRS #six. She is to be executed if ever found alive.

They are waiting for us beyond the Fog