



# NOTES FROM THE FUTURE

A Climate Fiction Anthology by Young Authors (aged 9-17)



Story Studio is a charity that **inspires**, **educates** and **empowers** youth to be great storytellers.

We create innovative, 'fun-first' workshops that develop narrative capacity in youth, and celebrate young writers by crafting beautiful publications from their words.

This anthology is composed of stories written by children and youth across Canada, between the ages of 9 and 17 as a result of our April 2024 creative writing contest.

We asked young authors to write their vision for Earth's future. We looked for forward-thinking tales that captivated readers with dynamic plots, compelling characters, and immersive settings.



#### THIS MONTH'S WINNERS

- **First Place:** Year: 2174 by Kaamya Hunter (age 14)
- **2nd Place:** Population: 97 by Geo Roy (age 12)
- **3rd Place:** Our Family Tree by Caitlyn Moon (age 13)

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# Year: 2174

By Kaamya Hunter, age 14

Ikara's vibrant green eyes surveyed the barren landscape from her nook on the cliff. The harsh winds swept her hair onto her face, and the sand blew in her eyes, but Ikara didn't mind. This was her favourite place, a secret she kept to herself. Somewhere she could go when the noise of the bustling city became too much. She reached up, almost wishing she could take off the ugly, plastic mask covering her face, and breathe.

She just wanted to breathe.

She sat, resting her back on a rock while watching the sun set, thinking about the startling events that had occurred earlier that day.

Ikara was sitting in the living room with mama, when an older man, maybe 80, had been broadcast on the projection screen in front of the square. He ripped off his mask, and was accusing The Guard of being corrupt, forcing the world to wear masks while reassuring that everyone was safe and there was no reason to worry.

Within minutes he collapsed, hacking, coughing and spewing out words that were almost impossible to comprehend.

"Why...do this?" he grunted, "...monsters you are ...we are fine?" Soon, he was barely moving on the hard concrete floor. Soldiers in all black dragged his body away, and within seconds, Prime Minister Caddel appeared on the screen.

"What you all have just witnessed was an unfortunate accident that could have easily been avoided." Her serene voice echoed off the now quiet walls of the city. "Why do this to yourselves? Just listen to our humble requests and you will live. We know this is a confusing and challenging time for many, but we are working on a solution. You only have to trust us. Thank you." Her image clicked away, bringing Ikara back to the present.

She buried her face in her hands and let the tears rush down her cheeks. What had their world become? Nani had told her stories of green forests and free people where masks were not needed. Animals of all kinds roamed the Earth alongside humans... Ikara had never seen any living thing besides humans.

Her eyes scanned the desert terrain. It was getting late. She was about to grab her bag when a movement off to her right caught her eye. A scaly tail darted behind a sand dune. Ikara stood up, goosebumps electrifying her body. She moved, about to take a closer look when her wristband began glowing. Ikara tapped to accept the call.

"Ikara, where are you?" Mama's voice shouted over the whistling wind. "You need to stop running off. Do you know what The Guard is doing to people out past curfew. Get back here!"

"Yes mama, I just went for a walk. I'm coming." Ikara replied, standing up and shutting off the call. She rolled her eyes. Curfew was over an hour away, and Mama always overreacted.

She grabbed her bag and began trudging through the sand, back towards the bright lights of the city. She had just climbed the large hill that formed a barrier between her nook and the town, and was about 50 meters away from the buildings, when ash began to fall all around her.

Ikara coughed, looking up at the sky to see black clouds forming over the desert. The ash touched her skin and a searing pain erupted from her arm. She flinched. The dark flakes sank below the skin leaving a burn that would take months to heal. She began twitching as the ash fell all over her face and hands, and made a run for it.

Ikara sprinted towards the city as her skin began bubbling, turning red and black. She screamed, but kept fighting through the pain. 30... 20... 10 meters left. She could

make it. She just had to get through to Mama's apartment which was on the outside of the city. She was five feet away when everything went wrong.

Ikara tripped and fell on a boulder just outside the city limits. She groaned, her entire body screaming with pain. She couldn't get up. She writhed, trying not to roll onto the burns and reached for her wrist, attempting to apply pressure, and began crawling slowly towards the town. She had almost made it to the dome when she saw two guards running towards her.

"She's been burned." One spoke, reaching for their wrist, like they were about to call someone. The other knelt beside her and lifted her up onto their back, her head rolling to the side. "Check her ID and call..." The voices faded out and Ikara drifted away.

\* \* \*

Pain surged through Ikara's arms and neck, and she tried to sit up.

"Shhh, you're okay, beta." Mama's familiar voice calmed her, and she opened her eyes. She was back in their house, at home in her warm bed. Mama had bandages and alcohol on her bedside table, as well as food. Her stomach growled at the sight of Mama's famous lemon loaf and some salad.

"What happened?" Ikara asked as mama positioned the pillows so she could sit up.

"Well, you ran off again without telling me and got hurt." Mama glared at her.

"Oh. Right." The memories flooded back. "The guards. They brought me home?" Ikara asked.

"Yes, thankfully. You could have died out there, Ikara! How many times have I told you not to go out of the city limits?"

"I'm sorry, Mama, you know I can't stand being trapped inside all day. I just went for a walk. And I'm fine now, see?" Ikara tried reaching for the lemon loaf, only for her wrist to begin burning as soon as she moved it.

Mama raised an eyebrow.

Ikara slouched.

"Why do these things keep happening?" She asked, "Snowstorms out of nowhere, and falling ash, and not being able to breathe the air? Why the sudden changes in temperature? It didn't used to be like this."

"Well, beta," Mama began, "Do you remember the stories your Nani has told you about the world with animals, and without masks? I don't remember much but when I was young, younger than you, we didn't need masks. All the other animals had perished because of the toxic air, but we could breathe it still, for a little while.

"Nani said it used to be sweet and fresh, but when I was young, all I tasted was filth. Slowly, the air became polluted with carbon dioxide and began killing everything and everyone that lived and breathed it. We had cut down all the trees to build highrises and apartments, and the amount of clean oxygen was dwindling. Nani and Nana took me away to the mountains, where a small group of people had built masks that supposedly filtered the air. We trekked for days, and Nana was lost along the way. He sacrificed himself so we could keep going. So we could live." Mama's voice cracked and she brushed a tear from her eyes.

"Against all odds we made it to the mountains, however, we became overtaken by a government that wished to hide the truth from us. I know we are spiraling towards our own downfall. The gasses we let out when driving, and the plastic we are littering, and the ground we mine for wealth. It is killing us bit by bit. It is our fault, Ikara."

"What?!" Ikara tried to sit up more. "Why have you never told me? Why have you never spoken up before?"

Mama looked down, "Have you seen what happens to people who speak up, Ikara? Don't you remember that man in front of the Parliament? There's nothing I can do." Mama stood up. "I think you should get some rest. I'll be back up with some cold compresses later."

Ikara moved her pillows and lay down, staring up at the ceiling. She had to do something, she had to find a solution. The future couldn't look this bleak. Ikara

remembered the tail in the desert earlier. Was there another species that lived beyond the city? If so, there could be hope for life beyond the desert. Somewhere free, where animals and humans thrived. A safe space where the carbon dioxide hadn't polluted the air.

She closed her eyes and began imagining this world that was unbound and fresh, filled with trees and animals.

Now, how could she get there? Where could she start?



# Population: 97

By Geo Roy, age 12

The wind violently slaps my face, my eyes squinting from the blinding sun. I can see my breath forming clouds in the air. This desolate wasteland is no place for someone like me, yet it is the only place I can be in this moment. Red sand kicks up behind my feet. Since when did the planet that humans call home become a place so similar to Mars?

Bricks and wood remnants are beside me, showing that at one point, there was a thriving civilization here. Looking around, I can tell that there hasn't been life around here for years. In fact, I'm probably the first one to set foot here in over a decade.

In front of me, I can see the sand thinning out, revealing shining gray concrete. Why this is here, I do not know, but I do know that this means I am heading in the right direction. As my feet carry me further and further through this desert, I notice certain pieces of junk that I haven't seen for the past 4 days. Slivers of glass, sheets of plastic, and the rubber of some sort of tire. As I go further, more pieces of junk appear, eventually forming whole things, like televisions and bottles. These are the things my grandpa told me of, about how they were a part of his normal life when he was young. Now these objects are unfamiliar and strange to someone like me.

The world has changed a lot in the past 200 years. For a while, nothing was too bad, and it seemed as if this was just a phase of a bad economy. Most people carried on with their normal lives, and didn't notice anything strange. However, there were people like my grandpa, who realized something was wrong. At that time, he was only seven, but still more intelligent than some adults. So, my grandpa Felix got

together a group of people who believed him, and worked together to figure out what was going on with our planet. For a while, nothing was found. Until they realized that there were forces larger than humans making a difference in the way our planet worked. Of course, when trying to spread the news, no one believed this group, and considered them just another bunch of conspiracy theorists.

These people were very wrong.  
These people were very wrong.

They were affected by the signals, the televisions. Telling them everything was okay. Telling them that the only way we would die out was when our sun explodes. People believed it. They ate it all up, and were still hungry for more comforting words. So they lived normal lives, not questioning anything, and assuming that everything was fine.

Some people weren't affected by the televisions. These were people like my grandpa. People who were young, free, and weren't influenced by the things that the media said. They didn't care, and lived their life questioning everything, rather than believing what some lady on a screen says. Yet, when these people went to say something, anything, their ideas were shoved down by the majority. In a sea of fish, they were the few shrimp. The spoons in all the billions of forks.

Our world is falling apart at the seams because of people affected by the media's assumptions. In total, the current population of Earth is 97. This means that 97 people have continued to live on Earth, but as they live, we lose more and more of the place we call home. No longer is it a home, now just another planet in our solar system. People's prejudice caused our beautiful planet to fall apart.

Now I am staring at the blank screen of a television, seeing the reflection of my hooded face. One flip-flop flies past my face, swirling in this sandstorm around me. I feel emotionless, empty on the inside, but something about this device irritates me. I curl my fingers into a fist, and slam it into the screen. Pieces of glass are lodged in my knuckles, but I don't notice the pain. I've felt worse.

I climb up the mound of sand in front of me, hoping this is the last one of the day. I don't think my lungs can handle any more smoke. Over the mound, I can see more garbage on the horizon. Sighing, I slide down the side of the mound, and get back to trudging along in this wasteland. Slowly, I see some sort of metal and plastic

structure, one that seems round but pointed. It seems to be quite far away in the distance. Looking at the sun, I assume that I will probably reach it at the end of the day.

The sun has now started setting along the orange horizon, illuminating all the clouds of smoke in the air. I've practically reached the structure, and upon further investigation, I've realized that it is made of all the trash I've seen along my journey. Tires, televisions, bottles, lamps, boxes, and so many other things. At the very top of this pile was some sort of glowing object.

Finally, after so long, I've come to my last object. The last thing I need to restore balance to my life. The last thing I need to go back. So as I climb up the structure, garbage falling beneath my feet, my mind is racing. Around here, I've seen some camps, so people must be guarding this mound. What if it isn't even what I'm looking for? What would I do then?

I ignore these 'what ifs'. Sometimes you just need to move past these thoughts. My hands grab the very top point of the pile, and I pull my body up. Looking in front of me, I see the source of the glowing light. There is a small crystal, one that fits perfectly with the rest that I have. It's blue, and is emitting a light stronger than any I've ever seen, despite its size. Quickly, I grab the gem, and jump off of the structure. Feet on the sandy ground, I take off running. There's only a little bit further that I have to go to reach my final step. One last place. One last day.

Time to make my grandpa proud.

# Our Family Tree

By Caitlyn Moon, age 13

I woke up to beams of light shooting from outside my window. The sun harshly attacked my eyes.

"Seriously? I should've closed the blinds last night before I went to sleep... wait, where am I?" I asked myself in a hushed tone that only I could hear. The sunlight was warm and it felt like summer time. I covered my eyes and basked in the sun for a bit.

I lay in bed and was covered by an odd blanket made from pine needles. Then I shot up, frantically looking around, realizing I wasn't in my own room. I looked around and found that I was in a large wooden room with windows. My window curtains, which were strangely large leaves, had not been closed. It looked as if I'd gone back a couple of decades into the past and yet it felt as if I'd gone into the future. I must've made a bit of a noise while squeaking around in panic because I heard my mum's voice.

"Tari, honey, are you awake? I am just prepping breakfast, do you mind waking your brothers while you come to the kitchen?" She yelled, sounding all weary. I heard the quiet crackle of a fire but I thought it was just all in my head. I was probably just hallucinating and spiritually hearing or something.

"Uhm, mum? Can you come here for a sec? I need to ask you something," I yelled back at her, sounding concerned. She immediately came to my room within a split second.

"What's wrong? Oh, looks like either Lumi or Rico must've changed your blanket to some sort of pine cone rug? I'll go and look around for your blanket. Is that all you wanted to say?"

"Not exactly, I'm just a bit disorientated. Where am I?" I urged, trying to sound calm, but I couldn't help but be uneasy.

"Whatever are you rambling on about, dear? Did you overexert yourself in the weekly garbage pickup challenge? You're always competitive when doing those," my mum replied.

"Weekly garbage pickup? What are YOU talking about? Where are we and why are we in this old-timey wooden box?" I asked, sounding somewhat agitated. I was in a state of dysphoria or at least I think I was.

"Tari Peach Rosaceae! Please keep yourself together! This home is state-of-the-art, modern, and eco-friendly! Now go do as I say and wake your brother and sister," she sounded annoyed. She strode out of my room and didn't close the door behind her. I groaned to myself and rolled out of bed. I trudged out of my room and yawned quite loudly. I couldn't tell if this was some surprise vacation or just a big prank.

I walked along a hallway with doors decorated with signs, flowers, plants, and all sorts of things. All the items I came across seemed second hand or DIYed. I couldn't really understand what my mom meant about state of the art and modern but it was definitely eco friendly. I came across a room that had a sign that read: 'Lumi's room: Beware of the dog!' I knocked on her door. Nothing. I did so again and got no response. I burst through the door and a dog leaped onto my face. It was one of our family pets: Pluloom (Plulu or Lulu for short). Pluloom yipped and hopped around excitedly. "Pluloom, quiet down... zzz... just five more minutes... zzz," Lumi snored loudly and lay on her bed (barely). Her left arm and leg hung off the bed side. Lumi's right arm and leg were covered by a blanket. She wore baggy pajamas that had a black polka dot print on it.

I remained quiet and looked outside her window. She had a breath-taking view of a lush and green forest. The sun slowly rose higher and higher. We must've traveled far from home. I stood admiring the beauty of nature. Back in the city, we never saw much nature. Just gray, polluted skies, littered sidewalks, and no animals. Well, other than rats, raccoons, pigeons, and most disgustingly cockroaches. Wherever we were



I really liked it and I was surrounded by nature. In fact, I loved it and I felt like I wanted to stay here forever.

*Clang! Clash! Clank!* An ear splitting sound erupted from behind the door. It practically made me jump out of my skin. The door slammed open which made me jump, again.

"Wake up! We have pancakes! If you don't wake up I'm going to eat them all! Wait... why am I telling you this? I have to go before you two wake up!" My younger brother, Rico, marched in with a pot and a drum mallet. Well, the drum mallet was actually just a stick with a pine cone attached to the top. I wondered if the house was some sort of craft hut or something. He wore his pajamas and had a bamboo woven basket on his head like a hat. He continued to hit the pot and whacked me on the head. I yelped and placed my hands on my head. Then, he proceeded to move towards Lumi and smiled maliciously. Lumi's eyelids shot open and she snatched the mallet.

"Don't even think about it, Rico," Lumi spoke with danger in her voice. Most people would be able to sense not to continue to mess around, but Rico was young. Hence, he couldn't read a room, at all. Rico proceeded to bash his hand on the empty pot and Lumi just rolled her eyes. Lumi gave him one singular firm hit on the head.

"Ywouch! That hurt! Why would you hit me so hard on the head? I am just an innocent little boy who is kindly waking you from slumber. Right, dear sister Tari?" Rico fluttered his eyes in my direction, all innocent like.

"Yeah, sure Rico. You are quite the pacifist, aren't you," I said sarcastically, yawning.

We all walked out into the wooden hallway and walked to the dining table. The table had plates with three fluffy pancakes on each. Syrup and berry compote were drizzled luxuriously onto each plate. My stomach growled and I snarfed it down within a second.

"Woah, someone's hungry. Too bad there aren't any more left. Oh! Tari, if you wouldn't mind, could you go to Shrew and Moes? I wanted to drop off some apricot and peach jam to Mrs. and Mr. Talpidae. I just picked them out yesterday and made the jam today! It's as fresh as it can get?" My mum handed me a gift basket of jams and scones. She was always giving out gifts to neighbors.

"Wait a second, you picked them? Where?" I asked. Mum never went out to pick fruit. She laughed, "From our home silly!"

I was still very confused about all this nonsense and started to wonder if she had actually gone crazy or something.

"You probably already forgot where your own friends live! Just take the lift down the tree trunk to the underground area," my mum smiled looking amused.

I looked around and at our front door, sure enough was a lift elevator. Not one of the electrically operated ones, no. It was made from a large basket and weights that were just rocks. I held onto the gift basket with much strength and grip, not daring to look down. I stepped into the small elevator and made my way down to the so-called underground.

I noticed that everything seemed to be recycled or upcycled. Nothing was run with fossil fuels or gas. I met my friend Shrew and his little brother Moe.

"Gee, thanks for the jams and scones! Tell Mrs. Peach, it was very kind of her," Shrew explained in his high pitched voice.

I ended up doing multiple errands for my mother. I went North, West, South, and East. To the deserts, oceans, lakes, rain forest, and other strange ecosystems. I was starting to think that this was all just a dream. Like, how could this possibly be my home?

I fetched water for Ms. Fennec in the desert. It was hot and dry. I even went diving, for clams for my cousin, Ollie. I climbed to the mountains to retrieve pure and clean snow for Harriet, my other friend. I ended up doing so much, I practically collapsed back in the elevator. There was a small note for me in the lift that read 'Go to the main floor ;)'

I thought, 'Great another errand.'

I went to the main floor actually leaving the building or my 'home' for what I realized was the first time.

I looked up and what I saw was extraordinary. The entire building I had been running around was a gigantic tree. Each branch leading to an ecosystem and each twig leading to each ecosystem. It was absolutely stunning. Our home was Mother Nature and this tree represented it. The leaves blew and fell from the tree. Each part of the tree had people and organisms living in it. It looked fruitful and so alive with energy. Animals, plants, and all sorts of species thrived and moved as one. I then realized and figured out that I had been blinded by the pollution and garbage. However, Mother Earth will still be there and will always be. No matter the hardships she goes through she'll always be there. Us, humanity needed to protect her and keep her safe.

This was like the tree of life. I sputtered and I couldn't breathe because it absolutely took my breath away. This new world could be the real one, maybe... better! My siblings, friends, and family all appeared, putting their hands on my shoulder. "The future of our Earth is in your hands," They whispered in unison. They smiled with great warmth and I couldn't help but smile too.

I gasped and woke up from this dream. I was shocked, had it really been a dream? I looked outside my window only to see the city and its dull nature. I couldn't help but notice the gray, polluted skies, littered sidewalks.

"Tari, honey, are you awake? I am just prepping breakfast, do you mind waking your brothers while you come to the kitchen?" She yelled, sounding all weary. Has Mother Earth come to me through my dream? Were they trying to show me the future? Or maybe what could be the future? I wanted everyone to get to experience that. No more dark skies or polluted grounds. I stared at the walls and then back at the window.

"The future of our Earth is in your hands," I jumped a bit. There was a small sprout outside on the littered sidewalks. A small sprout that looked like it had the spirit of a tree. It called my name. I don't know why and I don't know how but it called out to me.

The future was truly in my hands and so does it lie in yours.

# Bob and Friends in the Climate Case

By Mmesoma Chukwu, age 11



"RING RING"! Bob and Brielle woke up to the sound of their alarm.

"Ugh, already?" Bob groaned.

"Yes already!" Brielle exclaimed, smacking Bob with a pillow. Bob slowly got off the bed and looked outside.

"I wonder why it's always so dirty outside?" Bob asked, squinting at the gray city.

"That's a question to ask Mom and Dad!!" Brielle shouted, walking to the kitchen where the robot, Cheddar, was cooking. Bob followed Brielle and they both sat on the kitchen island.

"Hey! There's my favourite kids!" Cheddar said in his funny chipmunk voice, as he flipped the pancake.

"I'm so hungry!!" Brielle groaned as her tummy rumbled.

Just then Cheddar finished making his special blueberry pancakes. Bob and Brielle cheered and drooled as they looked at Cheddar's special pancakes, with syrup drizzling down and sweet blueberries and strawberries on the side. To add to that, Cheddar also made some scrumptious scrambled eggs and hashbrowns.

"Thank you Cheddar!" Bob said, as he stuffed his mouth and Brielle could only just say, "Mmmm," and do a thumbs up.

After breakfast, they both decided to go to their friend Evelyn's house. Evelyn lived down the street in a beautiful duplex covered in flowers.

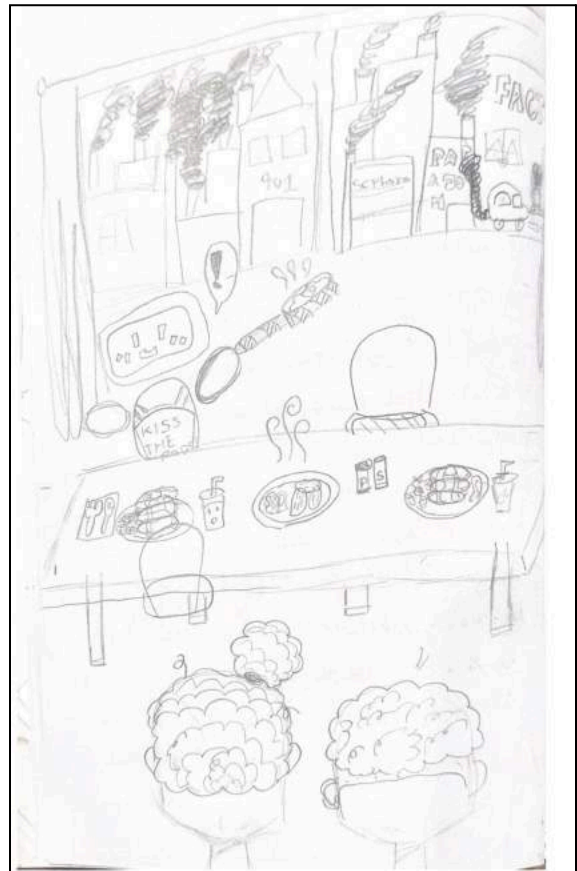
Bob and Brielle put on their gas masks, brought out their hover-taxi and rode it all the way down to Evelyn's house.

DING! the door opened and Bob and Brielle ran inside.

"Hi Evs."

"Hi Bri, how are you?"

"Good."



Bri and Evs went upstairs to talk and play while having some kimchi.

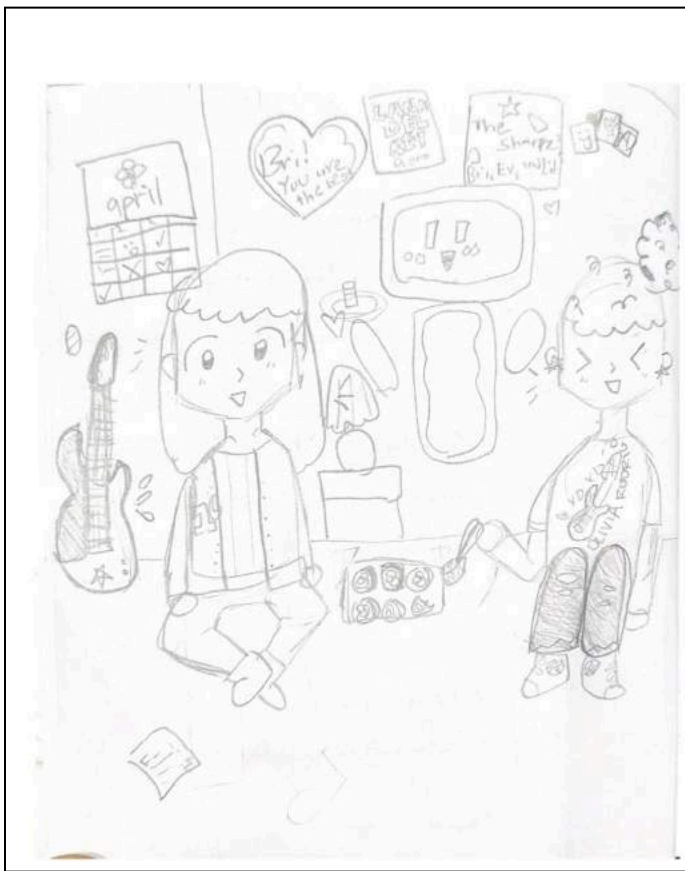
Bob couldn't stop staring out the window. 'I wonder what is causing this air pollution?' he thought. Bob had seen many good pictures of beautiful countries, like Netherlands and Norway, and they were always clean and sustainable. The air was so breathable, it even smelled so crisp, and the sky was so blue he wasn't sure he



could match it with the shades of blue in his colouring box. Unlike the city they lived in.

"Hi guys, maybe we can investigate. Brielle, please come here," Bob screamed at the top of his (small) lungs.

"Coming Bob," Brielle came running to where Bob was, but he was already almost at the door.



"What is happening in that head of yours?" Brielle asked.

"Let's go investigate this city!"

Brielle loves adventures so she didn't need to hear anymore. She got ready so fast.

"Can I come with you both?" Evs pleaded.

"Yes, of course."

Brielle and Evs jumped up and down together as Bob rolled his eyes..

"HURRY UP. We're this city's only hope."

for this adventure.

The trio all left Ev's house excited

"Ok first of all, we need to find the cause," Evs said while looking at the gray dark sky.

"Hey, I can actually see the gas and not just smell it!" Brielle exclaimed looking at several giant smokestacks that were overshadowing our daring trio.

"I know where we can begin," Bob said. "Follow me!"

Brielle, Bob and Evs went into the Black Cat Café.

"Hey, can I have an iced americano?" Brielle began to ask.

"That's not what we are here for, Brielle!!"



Brielle took the lead, asking the man behind the café desk, Bryan.

"Excuse me sir, do you know what is causing this pollution?"

Bryan paused for a moment, leaned towards the three of them and said in a very low voice, "Have you heard of the BIG BOSS? He owns all the major factories in this province, he thinks that gas is the only power source."

Bryan stood up straight and said, "So, you guys ordering something to eat or what?" He continued making an oat latte.

"I'll have two iced americano and an English muffin," Brielle said, ordering for all of them. They got their order and... CHING-A-LING. The chimes on the door

rang as Evs, Brielle, and Bob left the café to continue their adventure.

"Do you know where the BIG BOSS lives?" Evs asked.

"I think he lives in ...that big pointy, sharp and scary building," Bob whispered, pointing at the Triumph Tower.

They all sped up and ventured towards the Triumph Tower.

## STORY STUDIO ANTHOLOGIES

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"Guys, if you happen to stop the gas what can we use for power then?" Bri asked.

"Well, we could use solar power, electricity maybe, anything but not gas," Bob said as looked ahead and realized that they were standing in front of the huge door of the Triumph Tower

"It's so large!" Evs exclaimed.

Bri, Evs, and Brielle walked to the sliding door that automatically opened and ahead of them was a big shiny elevator. They all went into the elevator and clicked on the button that had 'Office' written on it. The dreamy elevator music played and Evs and Bri danced to the tune.

DING. The elevator chimed as the doors opened on the 90th floor.

"Hey, state your business," said A big security guard who had really big shoulders and a square chin.

"We are here to talk to your boss."

"You three, going to see the BIG BOSS? You are all so small, why do you think you need to see the BIG BOSS?"

"Just let us in," Bob said as he saw a silhouette come out of the office.

"Let them in," the BIG BOSS told the security man. "Why are you all here?"

Bob spoke up, "We are here to discuss how to stop this air pollution."

"Air pollution? I don't see any air pollution. Do you mean our smoke stacks?"



"Yes," Bri, Evs and Bob nodded in unison.

"They are making our city more gray. When we go outside, we have to wear gas masks because the air isn't clean. So yes, your smokestacks are causing this once-beautiful city to turn ugly," Bri said angrily.

"But what other source of energy is there apart from gas?" The BIG BOSS asked, hoping for an answer.

"Well there is solar power and we do have the sun beyond the clouds that you caused," Evs remarked.

"Hmmm, why didn't I think of that sooner? That could work."

Evs held up a colourful blue paper with stars on it. "Take a look at this, we worked so hard on this plan. It has so many suggestions in it."

"That looks colourful," the BIG BOSS exclaimed, as he took the paper to his big desk and started reading through it. It said:

*From Evs: Stop using fossil fuels everywhere! Don't be a fossil fool!*

*From Bri: Use solar panels and get this city shaped up already!*

*From Bob: Clean up more often. Littering shouldn't be allowed!*

"Well, if you say so, these are some nice suggestions that I have not thought about. I believe I have heard whispers about some people who have agreed to stop using fossil fuels. We can even plan to have an emergency renewable energy workshop and who knows, maybe we can give the people who agree to use renewable energy solar panels," the BIG BOSS mumbled.

"For the people who want to use gas, they could use hydropower from flowing water!" Bob exclaimed.

The BIG BOSS nodded as he walked out of the shiny Triumph Tower.

"Let's go and fix some houses!" Evs shouted excitedly, jumping up and down.

The trio, the BIG BOSS, and his crew, including the big security man at the elevator, ventured to the first house. That family had chosen to use solar panels.

Later, after replacing every house in the neighbourhood with hydropower or solar power, and putting beautiful posters up about the upcoming workshop, there was one more building left... Triumph Tower.

The construction crew demolished the tall smokestack while Bri, Bob, and Evs went into Triumph Tower and added solar panels on every floor.

"I can't believe we actually completed this," Bri exclaimed.

"I learned something new today. Kids can change the world," The BIG BOSS said happily.

"Kids *can* change the world!" Bob and Evs cheered to the whole city.

A week later, Bob and Bri were at home. Seeing the city sparkling clean made them so pleased. Bob went upstairs to his room and got a blank sheet to draw.

"Now I can finally use my shades of blue!" Bob said, as he got his crayons and coloured a beautiful picture of the city, showing its true colour with its crystal-clear blue sky.



# A Different World

By Elliot Jani, age 9

## Prologue

I've lived in a world of harmony for years. I will tell you how this happened if you would like. If not, you should immediately shut this book and put it on an airplane to China or Japan, plus find another good book to read instead.

## Chapter One

I couldn't believe it, I was going to the finals! As the goalie of a fifth grade hockey team, going against the seventh grade team is a miracle. Hockey is my happy place, everything else just disappears. I only focus on stopping the puck from entering the goal.

"Lucas! You do that one more time and you will have detention for the rest of the week," says Mrs. Bonckwhart.

"Sorry, I can't skip hockey!" I reply.

"All the more reason to listen then. Now as I was saying... prime numbers can only be divided by one or itself." Uhh, Mrs. Bonckwhart would give me detention if I got one math fact wrong. Everyone in my class even made up a rhyme about it:

*Mrs. Bonckwhart*

*Mrs. Bonckwhart*

*Had a student, little Hart.  
Mrs. Bonckwhart  
Mrs. Bonckwhart, said to little Hart,  
Detention today  
Detention tomorrow  
I don't even know how to feel sorrow!*

I feel like it's kind of mean but... like... it's true. Everyone else knows that too. But now I put all my focus into Mrs. Bonckwhat's stupid lesson.

### **Chapter Two**

"Hey," Dylan jogs up to me. "Ready for the big game?"

"I sure hope so."

Dylan's my big brother. He's on the seventh grade hockey team (they were very offended when they heard they were going against us), and would you believe it, he's goalie too! He has a girlfriend named Alice. Sometimes Alice will come over. She has pretty red and brown hair and she looks younger than she is. She talks to me about how she's worried that Dylan might go on drugs when he's older.

### **Chapter Three (25 years later)**

I couldn't believe it. I was getting a job!

"I have to go through three tests," I explain to my wife Kristina. "Then all I have to do is wait about a week and... voila! I either have the job or don't."

"Sounds kind of risky but once we have a little one," she looks at her belly, "we'll need a proper house." She refers to the hotel we've been in for two years.

*The next day:*

"First, you will have to prove why a lunch bag inflates when you put baking soda and vinegar in it. Next you will have to make a catapult in under thirty minutes, after that all you have to do is write an essay about why you want this job. In about a week,

you will get accepted or you will be refused. And that's basically it." I can't believe it, this guy sounds just like Mrs. Bonckwhart from grade five.

### Chapter Four

"A lunch bag inflates when you put baking soda and vinegar in it due to a chemical reaction." I say. Then I quickly dash to the next room grabbing popsicle sticks, rubber bands, and a tiny container and construct a catapult. Then I run to a tiny desk to write my essay. This is what I write:

*I want this job because I need money to support my wife and my soon to be born daughter so I can get us a proper house. I also know a lot about gravity because I learned it to get better at hockey when I was younger. So I have some experience with science plus I have enjoyed doing it over my years. I have learned about health and healing because I do not have insurance for me, my soon to be born baby, or my wife. Which means I have to keep all of us healthy. I am also looking into animals due to a hunch of my own.*

Someone peeks over at my essay. "Hunch of your own?"

"Yeah, I think sitting with animals can cure you of the cold. Of course, I haven't tested it out yet. It's just that my wife sat outside next to some birds when she was sick, and the next day she could run a marathon." Then I start writing again.

### Chapter Five (1 week later)

"You have the job of a supervisor of the biggest dig they've ever done!" Kristina exclaims. "You should be digging with them!"

"Sweetie, calm down. If I complain, they might fire me so just go with it for now until you get your own job and after this little one is born. Okay?"

"Alright, you've got a point there. I'll search online for a fairly easy and short job," she replies.

"Sorry, got to go, can't be late," I say, rushing out the door slamming right into Mr. Warbuks, the hotel manager.

"You. Will. Leave. Right. NOW!" He bellows.

"Alright. I'll get our stuff and my wife and we'll go."

*Four hours later*

*\*Bring Bring\**

"They've been born!"

"Who?" I ask.

"Our babies."

"Babies?"

"They're twins"

"I'm comin-"

"No you're not, we need that money."

"Fine."

### **Chapter Six**

I run all the way back to our minivan and find Kristina holding two really small and cute girls.

"I thought we could name them Emma and Lily."

"Okay," I say, "I got 500 dollars today and free lunch, which I brought home for dinner."

"Umm... I think we need a bigger dinner for them," she says as Emma and Lily start to wail.

**Chapter Seven (five years later)**

"Hey Em, is Lil awake yet?"

"Yep. Daddy, have you found my 'Meet the Ponies' book yet?"

"Yes I did, my little Emma."

"Thanks Daddy!"

"Honey! Could you maybe take the kids for a walk after breakfast? I've got a patient waiting to try my technique for colds. Says he hopes it can cure cancer though I'm not so sure."

"Course I can, Lucas," said my wife.

I head out and I find my patient standing there. "I thought we'd go up to Mount Bigfoot if that's okay with you."

"Why not?" I replied. Once we get to Mount Bigfoot, we slump down under a big tree.

"Close your eyes and be very quiet" I instruct. Then all of a sudden, a fox silently slipped out of the trees and crawled up on the man's lap.

"Don't freak out," I whisper.

*Two hours later*

We got up and left. "I'm sorry, but if you want to know if you're free of cancer, then you'll have to spend a night in the hospital."

"I really don't care. As long as it's gone, even if it's not for good."

"You sure?" I ask.

"Yep, pretty sure."

As I headed home, I started to think about what would happen if my treatment didn't work. His family might sue me or... even worse... just the thought of having to move gives me shivers up my spine.

"Honey I'm hooooome," I call out, but hear no response.

*\*Bring Bring\**

I look down at my phone. 'New Message from Kristina,' it reads. I go onto Messenger to see a photo of her and the girls at the community pool. I send a text back, "Why didn't you inform me it was water park day? :)" Then I go to bed.

### **Chapter Eight**

The next morning, my boss yells at me for being five minutes late. I woke up after the girls went to school and I accidentally put all the eggshells in the bowl and all the eggs in the sink. But my patient was cured and that was all that mattered to my career. But when I head through a nature park, there is nothing but people.

"What are you doing?" I say to one of them.

"Curing ourselves, of course."

"That's not how you do it. You sit down, calm down and let the animals come to you."

"Oh."

Further along the way to work, I see the pet store is overflowing with animals that should be in the wild. I run in and scream "You're putting the animals in too much stress to heal you!"

"No, we're not, we're just selling them because everyone wants them in their house."

"And putting them in more stress, they can't run around and the ones still outside are in stress of getting captured."

Then I head to work. Just to get an hour of yelling from my boss.

### Chapter Nine

I could not believe how careless people are with all these wild animals. "We need to tear down some major cities," I say to my co-workers. "How are we supposed to tear down New York?"

"It shouldn't matter how, people will start suing us if we don't fix their problem soon. Aaaand I don't think any of us want that so much."

"So? There's nothing any of us can do about it."

"Except to share it on the news?"

"Great idea but how, and I'm not proposing it, Nicky?"

"Not me. Lucas, it's up to you"

"Okay, why not."

*Two hours later*

"And that's why we need to take down New York," I explain on the news.

### Chapter Ten (One month later)

I pitched in to evacuate New York. The people were angry that they had to leave. But eventually we got them all out. That's when we took down all of New York. We had to bring giant machines in and take anything dangerous, and slowly either pull it apart or find somewhere safe and leave it there. We also took anything compostable and turned it into soil to transplant full grown trees into this giant space. It took about an entire month in all, but it was still worth it for everyone with cancer!



Lucy Kim

L.K

Saving



the

WORLD

Be a hero



written by  
Lucy Kim

### PART I

The hot air blew in the middle of Brazil. It was a hot winter. It should have been even a little chilly, but this winter was hotter than any summer.

"Morning, Summer!" Summer's mom called.

"Morning, mom." Summer looked at the sky.

Airplanes filled the sky, blocking the sunshine.

Ever since the Earth pollution got serious, countries have been destroyed one by one. Then no other land survived, except Brazil. Brazil was the last hope and many rich greedy people went on a flight to Brazil. They thought Brazil would be safe, but as the population of Brazil grew, eventually it wasn't a good place to live.

"Summer, do you mind closing that window? It makes me feel ill." Summer's mom suggested.

"I'll close it later." Summer wanted to look at the sky full of airplanes, reminding her parents how serious the pollution is. Dad sighed, "You know, Summer. You don't need to be so stubborn, do you?" Summer shook her head. She kept staring at the window.

In the sky, there were airplanes. On the ground, there were dead bodies of people who killed themselves. Summer knew that she would be like them, the dead bodies. She couldn't bear it when she thought of that.

"Breakfast is ready. Come gather," Summer's mom said. Summer walked toward the table.

On the plate, there were frosted bugs, the future food. Summer poked the bug miserably.

One month later. Summer woke up crying. She couldn't find her parents. She remembered that they went bug-food-hunting. But now, she saw no one until the

next morning. She was sure that her parents died during the fight over a tiny little piece of a beetle.

Summer was hopeless.

Summer looked at the food-saver. There were a few frozen bugs. Oh! And her favorite bug, cricket! 'This might be enough,' Summer thought, sighing for relief. She slumped into the sofa and put the TV on.

A week later, after her parents left, Summer was starving. She couldn't bear it. She opened the food-saver. There was nothing, but her worst food, frosted worm. She didn't like the way it felt when she chewed it. It was slippery and silky. Not like a Jell-O, like a disgusting slime. However, she couldn't even resist it, because of hunger. She took out the last food, and swallowed it without a single chew. *Gulp-* Summer started to cough, her face went red. She was choking. She thought that was the end of her life, choking. She coughed and coughed. Everything went black. She slowly opened her eyes. She saw a faint light getting closer and closer. The light came right beside Summer and quietly chanted...

*"Back in time, from the future.  
Make the world a better place.  
This is it, the only chance.  
Back in time, from the future.  
Make the world a better place.  
This is it, the only chance.  
Back in time. From the... "*

### **PART 2**

There was a flash.

Summer woke up. She looked around. She wasn't sure where she was, but it felt familiar.

When Summer was wandering around the four year old babyish room, she smelled something tasty- like bacon, which she ate before all the disaster off... Anyway, she peeked through the door.

There, she saw a kind mother who was also familiar, handing a little girl the bacon. Summer stared really hard at the woman. "Mom!" Summer shouted.

The woman was surprised. She looked at Summer. She looked confused. "Uhh, hi," she muttered. The little girl almost spilled the milk she was holding.

"Who. Are. You?" The woman asked. The woman did not know who Summer was, but Summer knew the woman. Her mom, Daisy Gravely. Summer explained who she was.

"So, you mean you are future Summer?"

"Yeah, I am. I know it's confusing. Time travel is confusing, huh?"

Mrs. Gravely's mouth dropped open. "You ..time travel..? Wow, the technology is quite great."

"No, it's nothing like that. I just ate a worm and choked."

"A worm?" Mrs. Gravely was totally stunned. "You are kidding me, Summer."

The conversation was challenging. Mrs. Gravely hardly understood Summer's story. Summer was also exhausted with talking and talking about some crazy chant and time traveling.

"Okay, that's it for today, Summer. You're making me crazy," said Mrs. Gravely. Summer agreed and that was it for that day.

When Summer just sat on her bed, she remembered the chant. It felt like she had to do something in that world. Something that'll change the world, a better place. She couldn't sleep. The chant was still going on in her head, waking her up for the whole night.

Next morning, Summer woke up quite late, but she was still tired.

"Morning, Sweetheart. Summer, try some of these."

"Try what?" Summer asked.

"Oh, not you. The young Summer." Mrs. Gravely chuckled lightly. The young Summer was four years old. She had a short ponytail and blonde hair. She didn't stop giving Summer a dirty look. Summer thought that the younger version of her was jealous of her right now.

Summer chuckled lightly too, she realized how complicated she and her young version Summer was. However, little Summer seemed like she was left out.

"Hey, little Summer," Summer asked. "How is it going?" Little Summer looked annoyed.

"I'm concentrating. So shut up."

Mrs. Gravely heard that and scolded, "Summer! Whatever you're thinking, come off it."

"Mom! You can't do that to her. She is me!"

"Oh, yeah. Sorry Summer." Mrs. Gravely kept washing the dishes. "How about you girls go to a library or something. I'd love to have some free time." Summer hated the library. It was filled with boring books and librarians saying, 'Be quiet!' But she couldn't disobey her own mother. On the way, they talked.

"So, Summer, what are you thinking?"

Summer whispered. "A way to change the world into a better place! Don't you know?" Little Summer groaned.

"How, how did you...?" Summer muttered.

"...know what you're thinking? You are me and I am you! Our thoughts are connected, Summer." Little Summer held Summer's both hands.

"Be brave and confident! I'm sure we'll find out."

Summer was amazed. "Wow, I mean that's awesome! Wait, but we need a plan."

"Well guess what? I already have one."

That afternoon, Summer and Little Summer talked about their major plan.

"So here's the plan: You should draw a picture of the polluted future and write down an essay about it. And then, boom! You are in a TV show! Everybody in the whole world will watch that. Then you show the picture and read the essay. Blah-blah-blah. And then, happily ever after." Summer couldn't stop laughing.

"This is so ridiculous."

"Excuse me?"

Little Summer put her hands on her waist and tilted her head.

"I mean, the TV show? We can't literally create a TV show."

"Well, you'll see. My friend Robert is a computer genius. He'll do all the programming. Deal?"

Summer was pleased. Little Summer made her awfully light hearted. She was way more intelligent than she thought!

"Deal," Summer said.

It was the day. The plan needed to be successful. Robert quickly typed some words on a computer. He gave them a thumbs up. That meant that in three seconds, all of the TVs in the whole world would be automatically on them. One, two, three...

"Hi there. I am Summer. I live in the future. The reason why I am here is to alarm you about the Earth pollution." Summer showed the picture. "Many plants and animals are dead in my future life. Even humans... if you don't want this thing to happen. Please recycle, reuse, reduce everything and plant trees. Use less private traffic and use public buses and subways, or even better, a bike! Think about your young children's lives. Don't you want them to be safe? Living in a good future is your choice, your action. I trust in you..."

The TV plan was over. When Summer was heading back to her home, she saw plenty of people riding bikes and picking up some trash and recycling. It was supper time. Summer's mom cooked a delicious turkey for the celebration.

"Dinner time!" Everyone gathered, even Robert, but not Summer.

"Summer!" Summers' mom called.

"I think it's time," she said quietly. "To go back to the future." Mrs Gravelly hugged Summer. She said nothing. Her tears fell down on her cheeks. "I bless you, Summer. I bless you so much."

"Don't be so sad, mom. We might get to meet each other again."

"I know, Summer. I know that you need to, well, go on. Back to your life." Summer went to bed early. She dozed off.

Summer woke up. She smelled something tasty. Like bacon! She went out to the living room. Her mom was cooking some bacon and eggs. She looked at the window. People were planting a bunch of trees near the street.

Except instead of roads, there were bicycle roads. People looked happier. Everything was great.

The plan actually worked, but Summer couldn't remember anything about traveling to the past.

But at least, everyone was happy, in their eco-friendly world.



# The Future of Jonny

By Soyul Kim, age 10

It was Sunday, March 16th 2063. An eleven year old named Jonny Wilson, in his incredibly awesome technology mansion, texted his A.I. friend.

"Why does fresh water cost money? And does fresh air cost money?"

A.I. texted back, "There are not that many trees to make air, CO<sub>2</sub> is heating up the ocean and rivers, so most of the rivers and ponds are dry."

"Then how can we breathe easily and drink lots of water?" texted Jonny, then his gemY universe XiY 18 phone died. Then even worse, his mother called him for lunch.

"Spaghetti time!" she said. "Aw man, I hate spaghetti!" answered Jonny. So his family ate spaghetti, even though Jonny only ate 1/3 of his spaghetti. Then a hologram came out from the table, it was about the gigantic fire and super hurricane in our city!

"That is worse than my phone dying and my mother giving me spaghetti for lunch!" screamed Jonny,

"And..." continued the producer, "This is all because WE ARE NOT CARING FOR OUR NATURE!!!"

Then the city screamed for help, dogs howled, cats hissed, and the ground was rumbling like crazy! Some buildings had already collapsed. Jonny's Father screamed, "Get in the car!"

This was the 1345th time that this had happened, but this was worse than the other 1344th times. Jonny just took his monkey doll that he had for six years into the car. Meanwhile, Jonny's mother and father were packing up food, water, a first aid kit, money, phones, and a phone charger.

"But mom!" Jonny asked, "How will we get fresh air?"

Jonny's mother replied, "Just take this mask!"

Then Jonny ran into the car and put on his seatbelt, so he wouldn't fly away. Just then, Jonny saw a hurricane on top of a fire! A big fire, a gigantic fire!!

"A.I., start the engine!" said Jonny's father. Then the car drove in the opposite direction of the hurricane and the fire.

"Go to QQ105SEACRET45/1040 right now!" screamed Jonny's mother.

"Has no file called QQ105SEACRET45/1040."

Then Jonny's father said, "Go to QQ105SEACRET45/1040 please, A.I."

"Yes, Mrs. Fedo."

Jonny was sleeping because his mother said it was about a four hour trip to Paris, which is where his Aunt Lee and Uncle Keven lived. Meanwhile, Jonny's mother and father were talking about the things that happened after people made A.I., forming lots of carbon dioxide, too many technologies, and how they killed animals for money.

"That's why my mother said to take good care of our dog!" Jonny thought for a second, and realized that they left Jonny's dog!

Jonny screamed, "My dog! My dog is missing!" Jonny's family gasped, Jonny had tears in his eyes. Then his mother cried and said, "Rest in peace little fella."

"Her name was Fella! Not little fella!" Jonny screamed, his mother and father stared at him with their super deadly stare. "N- never mind," Jonny whispered.

There were two hours left on the trip. "Look! It is the dinosaur from the movie called 'Jurassic Planet 5' that is trapped in a cage!" Jonny said,

"Oh, boy! It is going to break the cage like in the movie!" But it didn't escape.

"Mother, it's too hot in here! Can you turn on the air conditioner?" Jonny screamed, "It is like a desert, no trees or buildings, no water, no life!"

"Dude! It actually looks like Mars!" said Jonny's father. Jonny and his father didn't speak after Jonny pulled his pants down in his father's special meeting, which his father got kicked out of, so his father got super duper mad and he did not speak to Jonny for four years.

They finally arrived in Paris. This place has the least technology in the world! They saw Aunt Lee shopping, so they ran to her.

"Hola!" she said

"Hey, Aunt! That is Spanish, not French! You have to say Bonjour!" said Jonny.

"I know! I just like to use Spanish!" she said.

"Aw, dang! That bloody virus is here!" screamed uncle Keven.

They saw people vomiting blood out of their mouths! They ran as fast as they could to the car. Jonny complained, "Awww, I hate being inside!"

"Then let's play UNO!" asked Uncle Keven. Later, Uncle Keven was winning.

"You are so bad at UNO!" laughed Uncle Keven.

"I am your dad!" said Jonny and blocked him,

"UNO!" Jonny said with a smile. Jonny put down a "+4 change color to blue!" card.

Then a tsunami washed the car away.

The way to make this not happen is to pick up garbage then sort it out, turn off any devices when not used, do not use too much paper, save up water, and make a thing that does not need energy but to make Earth a better planet. And at the end of the story, Jonny and his family lived in an old city inside a little tent 'unhappily ever after.'

# Vision of Earth's Future

By Amitoj Kour, age 10

Talking about my vision of earth's future, it totally depends on the behavior of humankind. As long as we humans keep polluting our mother Earth, the condition will get worse. 20% of the Amazon forest has been ruined by deforestation over the last 40 years. Think about the loss!

Only if we could plant more trees, promote the concept of 3Rs - reduce, reuse, recycle- the earth would be impeccable. As per my perspective, if we stop our excessive reliance on non-renewable sources of energy like petroleum, crude oil, or many more, and start using sustainable resources of energy like solar energy, tidal energy and geothermal energy, it will definitely help mother Earth to overcome the challenges it is facing every second.

Let everybody come ahead and take a pledge to reduce our carbon print as much as possible, so that our future generations could also survive here.

# Be Careful What You Wish For

By Mary-Katherine Prestash, age 12

In a small lab in the middle of nowhere, something began that had never happened before. Energy was made and no footprint was left. They didn't even know if they could replicate it or if it would work. They just knew it was possible. You would expect cheering... back slapping... something. But there was nothing, except for the warm whirr of the machines. They were like lost sheep who knew they must find their flock, but when they do they are too tired to be happy, or even grateful. They just stare and stare.

The next day, every newspaper in the world announced that nuclear fusion had been created. They found out that they could replicate it and in six months they made cars and heat and air conditioning and almost everything powered by nuclear fusion. The words "nuclear energy" were scary to people, so they changed it to "planet friendly energy" and made gas illegal. They estimated that by the year 2050, global warming would not exist. At first everything was fine - temperatures went back to normal. But by 2060, scientists began to worry. They didn't say anything, they didn't do anything - they just worried.

Then in the year 3033, they disappeared. The scientists, the politicians and the nobles all left. This is the state they left us in: no information, just nothing. Back then is when it started to look bleak for the Earth. On the edge of a small town called Rosedale, there was a family, and on the other side of town was another family.

These families were the Nelveons and the Lagochs. These families were record keepers of everything that had happened in the town for the last 200 years. It was all written down in big books - some with pages that were new and white and some with pages yellowed with age.

It was May 3, 3033. The Nelveons and the Lagoches were gathered in the Nelveons' house. Mrs. Lagoch was bouncing baby Bessie on her knee. She was the youngest member of the family and Grandpa Listva was the oldest. They, and everyone in between were gathered in front of the Nelveons' TV. They all sat, posed with their pens, ready to record what was about to happen. This morning the board of close-enough-scientists had an announcement to make. They tuned in with millions of others for the same moment. The board of close-enough-scientists announced the new global crisis - a global ice age.

Joe was a Lagoche child. Of the thirteen Lagoche kids, he liked baby Bessie the best. Everybody managed to plod along for the next few months. The world was freezing, food was scarce and costs were rising. Then the disease came. It was awful. It killed within a couple of hours. It started with mild retching and rapidly progressed to throwing up the patient's inner organs. There was no cure. It had never been seen before because it only existed in extreme cold. It passed very quickly through the population. It was made worse, because the whole population was crammed into the northern regions - the province of Alberta was particularly important, since the climate still allowed for some growth.

Joe, Bessie, Mrs. Lagoche, and Grandpa Listva were among the few remaining people left on Earth. Joe held Bessie tight as Mrs. Lagoche threw the last shovelful of dirt on her dead children. He was too tired to weep. He'd been mourning steadily for the past few days. He crawled into bed that night, holding Bessie tight, and he prayed that Mrs. Lagoche wouldn't get it, prayed that Grandpa wouldn't get it, prayed that he would stay well. Unfortunately, he forgot to pray for one person. Then he fell asleep with baby Bessie in his arms. He awoke at 5am to Bessie retching. He ran with her to the bathroom to find his mom and Grandpa dead. He began retching too. He put Bessie to bed and then he started doing something he had never done before. He started recording everything that had happened since the last entry in the big book. When he finished, instead of writing "until next time," like every other entry, he just said, "Goodbye." He crawled into bed next to the cold, dead body of his sister and had the final realization of the human race. The dinosaurs had ruled the Earth and prospered and then were killed off. Then humans had ruled the Earth and



prospered, and were now becoming extinct. He wondered, as he had his final retching, what the next species would be.

This is speculative fiction about what could happen if we act recklessly in dealing with the climate crisis. We need to be careful what we wish for...

# Rhea's World

By Hayumi Viala, age 12

Rhea was a little girl, at the age of four and three days. She was very proud of her home, which she had worked so hard to help build. It was made of a very large tree that was hollowed out, and it was very cozy and welcoming. That tree was one of billions of other trees that were almost twice the size of it. She had just turned four the other day, she had a birthday party at her grandmother's house, and she received a book for her birthday present. It was the perfect time, for she had started to become in need of books that were higher level. It was called, 'Why Our Earth Is In Its Current State.'

She sat down, in her little wooden seat, and looked at her first page. It read:

*Once upon a time, there was an earth that was ever so hot. People said it was cursed by demons, others said it was old, and getting ready to explode. But no one knew exactly what the problem was. But really, it was their way of transportation. Not only was it transportation, but there were also factories, barbecues, heaters and fireplaces. Every single one of them used a substance known as gas. This particular type was carbon dioxide.*

"Phew," she said, "That is quite the page! I'm surprised that adults are able to read this kind of stuff." She took a sip of hot cocoa, and continued:

*There became more and more gas and eventually, the heat from the sun that was coming into the earth's atmosphere was not able to bounce off of the earth and come back to the sun, because the gas acted as a blanket and the heat*

*was not able to escape. This caused the earth to get hotter and hotter, and it was given a name. Global Warming.*

"What? I don't understand! What in the world is gerbil worming? Were people back then insane?" And she couldn't help but laugh with hot cocoa in her mouth, so it spilled all over her Calathea dress that was adorned with blue rose petals. "I guess I could read just a little bit more."

She continued to try her best to read:

*People began to suffer from how hot it was getting, until they thought of a solution. They found out that if they planted trees, all that carbon dioxide would be sucked up, because trees breathe carbon dioxide. They planted trees. They planted more, and more, and more, until the earth turned completely green, except for a few blue patches. That, in fact, is why our current earth is taken over by trees.*

*By Brende Thottings*

"Oh man, that sure was a tough book, even though it had pictures. I'm not sure why grandma gave such a book anyway. Well, I guess I'll have to ask her about gerbil worming next week, since she'll be teaching me how to build a proper tree fort, unlike the one that fell over last week. I'll just wait until then."

And she did. She was taught to build a sturdy tree house, as well as what global warming was. She got really into it too. She taught her whole class about it and became a historian when she grew up. In the meantime, she also found and met Brende Thottings and became very good friends with him.

# The Hero of San Francisco

By Larry Wang, age 13

In the 23rd century, the earth was radiated with nuclear waste that had been launched by different countries and the earth's ecosystem was changed by nuclear waste. Different plants, animals, and biomes are changing their genetics to weird or dangerous animals, plants, and biomes. The fresh water and food resources are limited due to everyone fighting and sending nuclear bombs to each other.

*In America, San Francisco.*

In a poor, damaged house, Bob Johnson and his younger brother, Barun Johnson, were packing to leave San Francisco. San Francisco was inhabitable and there was chaos in the city. There was no food and fresh water supply in the city and people were starving to death. Every day, thousands of people died of dehydration and starvation.

Bob was 6 feet and 2 inches, and he weighed 100 pounds. He was tall for a thirteen-year-old boy. He had black hair, and his hair was cut so short that everyone thought that he was bald. He had ice-blue eyes that were so blue that everyone thought that he was an alien. He wore a light blue jacket and pants. He liked to wear sunglasses because he could attract pretty girls easily (it didn't work for him though).

On the other hand, Barun was 5 feet and 1 inch, and he weighed 80 pounds. He was eleven years old. He had shiny-black hair and opposite to his brother, he had

exceptionally long hair that was down to his neck. He had dark blue eyes that were so dark that everyone thought he had a black eye. He wore a black jacket, and dark blue pants.

Bob was thinking about what plane company ticket they should buy. A cheap or expensive plane ticket? In addition, where are they going? Greenland? Canada? Iceland?

"We will not go to Mexico because it is dangerous and hot. We will go to Canada for a few weeks then we will go to Greenland to find the nuclear bunker so we can be safe!" he thought.

"Dude, where are we going?" Barun asked, his legs were trembling, and he was jumping up and down.

"Maybe we should go to Vancouver, Canada for a stop, then we will go to Greenland," he replied simply without hesitation. "Are you ready to go now? I've finished packing and booked the tickets to Vancouver!"

"I am ready!" said Barun.

"Good. Then we should leave right now!"

Bob towed his and his brother's suitcase, opened the door, and closed it with his brother. He looked at his house with sadness in his eyes. This would be his last time to leave the house. This house was his life and he used to play in the backyard with his brother, do his homework with his brother in his bedroom, and eat in his kitchen with his brother. He did not realize he had tears in his eyes, Barun was dumbfounded by his reaction, and he was worried that they would miss their plane. Bob wiped his tears with his hand, and stopped crying.

Bob spoke, "Let's go, Barun. We need to leave now; our ticket is at 10 a.m. and we only have 40 minutes."

Bob took out his smartphone and he called a robotaxi. He waited for the robotaxi for a long time. He went back and forth and kept checking his smartphone to check what time it was. His brother was staring at him with boredom in his eyes.

"What is wrong with the robotaxi? Why are the robotaxis as slow as turtles? They should be arriving right now. We are going to miss the plane!"

Suddenly, Bob saw the robotaxi coming recklessly, like the robotaxi was drunk. He did not care about the robotaxi's reckless driving, which was a big mistake because this car nearly killed Bob and Barun. He put their suitcases in the back of the trunk and put his seatbelt on with his brother at the same time.

"San Francisco International Airport please," Bob said with an anxious voice. They had twenty minutes before the plane started to fly. San Francisco's traffic was unbelievably bad, and it takes a long time to go from one place to another.

"We will arrive at San Francisco International Airport at 10 a.m. Enjoy the ride," said the cold robot voice.

"Can we go faster?" Bob asked.

"Sure, it will be a more expensive ride, but you will arrive at 9:30!"

The robotaxi started to drive and the speed was 100 km per hour. You might think that the car's driving is way too fast in our world, but that is perfectly fine in the 23rd century. In San Francisco, the normal speed is 90 km per hour and people do not get carsick easily. The reason they do not get carsick easily is because the car inventors made some changes on the car to make them not get sick.

Bob was looking out the window of the robotaxi. It was full of radiation and plants were dying on the sidewalk. He was thinking about which hotel they should book. What are they doing in Vancouver, and how could they survive when there is no food?

Something was wrong with the robotaxi. It was not driving to San Francisco International Airport and was going somewhere that Bob did not know.

"Stop!" Bob screamed.

*Smash!*

The robotaxi smashed into the wall on its side and the door locked with a click. Bob looked angry, and he realized he was trapped. He noticed that the door was useless against lasers. (Readers, you will have no idea what weapon we are using. In the 23rd century, we used blasters and different laser rockets to destroy army bases and different vehicles.)

He took out a blaster and blasted the door. There was an explosion, and the door flew away like a strong wind pushed the door away. Suddenly ten gangsters appeared out of nowhere and yelled.

"Raise your hands up!"

Gangsters in San Francisco are united together to create an enormously powerful army. They are the United San Francisco Gang, or USFG. They destroy houses, kill random civilians, and destroy crops to starve the civilians. In addition, they control the government of San Francisco like a puppet. If USFG captured any civilian or important people, they would kill you or ask for ransom. Bob guessed it would be the end for him and his brother because there was no way he and Barun would be a hostage and someone would pay the ransom.

He raised both hands with his brother. At the same time, Barun's legs were trembling and his eyes looked frightened. He was scared too. What would happen if they blasted him? Would he be dead immediately? Bob guessed that if he died, he would not have to find food and water. But what happens if Barun is still alive and he has no brother to care for him? Bob guessed if Barun died, he would die with him. If Barun did not die, he would not die either.

Suddenly, one of the USFG blasted Bob in the face, and he passed out.

When Bob woke up, he was lying on a hospital bed. Barun was lying next to him and breathing slowly. He looked around the room. The wall was painted white and there was a bed table right in front of him. On the bed, there were two sandwiches and a cup of apple juice on the bed table. There was a bed table near Barun's bed, and the same food was put on the bed table.

He wolfed down the sandwiches and drank the apple juice hastily. Suddenly, the door opened and a middle-aged man came in. He had light green eyes with slightly gray hair. He wore a black blazer and black khaki pants. His expression was almost



unreadable. He wore sunglasses, but you could still see his light green eyes behind the sunglasses.

"Hello, Bob Johnson," said the middle-aged man. "I am Steve Robson, but you can call me Steve instead of Mr. Robson!"

"Who are you?" He asked with curiosity, he had no idea what the man was doing here. He felt like he had never met this person in his lifetime.

"I am the head of the CIA," Mr. Robson said. He had no expression on his face, Bob even wondered if he had smiled in his lifetime.

"But why are you here today? I have nothing to do with spying," Bob said

"No, you have something to do with spy work. I am coming here today to give you a secret mission to save the world from being wrecked by nuclear bombs and nuclear radiation."

"But how?"

"Let me tell you a story about your mother, father, and the thing you need to steal for this mission." Mr. Robson answered. "A long time ago your mother and father, Juila, and John Johnson, were the best spies in the CIA. Both received top marks at Harvard University. After they finished university, they joined the CIA immediately. They did not marry at that time. Once, your father was sent on treacherous missions. Do you have any idea what the mission is about?"

"I don't know."

"Your father's mission was to spy on the USFG, when they were enormously powerful decades ago. Now they are the most powerful evil organization in America. They almost bombed the White House. After your father was sent on a secret mission, your mother and your father were married, and after a few years, your mother was pregnant.

"After your mother was pregnant, your father was worried about you and asked me if he could quit spying and live with your mother. However, I denied it and I said he

should not quit spying and told him that he was good at it. After this mission, I told him, you can quit your job - you are remarkably close to getting the job done!"

"After your mother's delivery, your dad got some very top-secret information. He got the information that the USFG stole a weapon called an anti-nuclear bomb that removes all the radiation at the range of 5 km square from the Russians. They planned to destroy the bomb and the blueprint. Your father acted amazingly fast. He put the blueprint in a laser-proof safe with a password that is unbreakable, sent the bomb to us and switched the real bomb to a fake one.

"Sadly, the Russians knew that your father was a double agent, so they killed your father and your mother. At that time, your mother delivered another baby which is your brother. So, you should know by now what your mission is about?"

"My mission is about stealing the blueprint and safely bringing the blueprint to you!"

"That's correct!" Mr. Robson said. "And now I will show you the secret weapon that I will give you. First, I will give you a sedation gun. Just pull the trigger and you will fire a sedative that will knock out the enemy for thirty minutes. There are a hundred sedatives, so I do not think that you will use them all. The second one is Invisibility Clothing, which will make you invisible. The third is a map that shows safe places. If any locks require a password, you just stick the map on the door. It is magnetic so it will not fall off and the password will appear on the map. This is all I can give you."

"Can my brother come?" Bob asked

"No, you need to do it yourself. It is a dangerous mission. You could get killed in this mission. Now grab the parachute and jump to the USFG headquarter!"

"WHAT? We are in a plane right now?" he yelled. He was shocked by this news.

"Yes, we are in the plane right now. Just a reminder that when you get safe out of the headquarters, it will fly to our CIA headquarters. We will solve it easily because the password is your birthday. Goodbye!"

He put his invisible parachute on his invisibility clothing and the plane door opened. The wind blasted so hard that he was blinded by the wind. He jumped down to the sky and screamed.

After a few minutes of falling, He landed on the headquarters of USFG. The headquarters is radioactive. There were guards with blasters and laser rocket launchers. This will be easy, Bob thought, they all look like they want to sleep and some of them are sleeping already.

He aimed at a random person, and I pulled the trigger. His target jerked forward and fell unconscious. One by one, he shot the guards with the sedation gun, until they were all unconscious. 'That was easy!' he thought.

He saw a door was ajar and opened it. Inside, there was a rusty safe. He knew it was the safe that held the blueprint. He lifted it up and walked outside.

The alarm rang and it was so loud that he thought he would be deaf. Hundreds of soldiers appeared out of nowhere and quickly surrounded Bob with blasters. The safe stretched out its wings and flew away immediately.

"Look, we got another person who is trying to steal the safe. Show yourself," one of soldiers said.

Bob removed his invisibility clothing, and every soldier gasped and gaped at him.

"Hey, I think that's John Johnson's son," a soldier said.

"Wow, that's Johnson's son," another muttered.

Everyone started to mutter to each other, but one of them said something to him that made him want to kill them.

"Can you guess who killed your mommy and daddy?" a soldier taunted.

Everyone laughed except Bob. Bob did not answer them. He wanted to know the answer.

"It is me. Zhenya Lada Melnik. The killer of your mommy and your daddy!"

"SHUT UP, YOU MURDERER!" Bob shouted. There was redness and pinkness on his face. He took out the blaster and blasted her. She was dead before she fell on the

ground. She had a mixture of shock and anger on her face. Bob put on his invisibility clothing on and ran away. The guards shouted in a mixture of Spanish and English, but they could not do anything, as they could not see Bob. He ran away as far as possible away from the headquarters.

Twenty years later, the earth was finally not contaminated with nuclear waste, and everything was going back to normal. USFG was destroyed by the CIA and there was no more gang violence in San Francisco. Sadly, Barun was killed by one of the USFG members, and his wife, Emma with their children. Johnny and Lily came to the remnant headquarter of USFG, but now it was a playground where children play and have fun.

"Why are we coming here?" Johnny asked. He looked like his father.

"Yeah, why?" asked Lily. She looked like her mother.

"I want to hear it too, dear!" said Emma, as she started to play with Bob's hair.

"Fine, if you want to hear a story," said Bob, "In the 23rd century, the earth was radiated with nuclear waste that had been launched by different countries and the earth's ecosystem was changed by nuclear waste. Different plants, animals, and biomes are changing their genetics to weird or dangerous animals, plants, and biomes..."

# Dreaming in Space

By Emily Zhang, age 11

On the lone spaceship, there would be a cramped community, a mini civilization. This was the remainder of humanity, of what was left of earth. I would sit on the same steel chair everyday, thinking, staring out into the starry black void of stars outside of the spaceship. I would think, until my brain was about to burst. About my parents, my family, my friends, and earth itself, which had been destroyed to pieces.

A few years before the earth was destroyed, and was in a critical condition, the government picked who would be on their grand, great spaceship and serve as their pawn. I was picked, since I had potential. My parents and friends however, did not. I remember that day as clear as crystal, my eyes filled with tears, I wept, I cried for hours on end, hugging my friends and family.

On this lone spaceship, we had no concept of time, nor did we care. It's been years, even decades, since we have been traveling through this void of nothingness.

I would often wonder, what would have been my future on earth? Would I get a job as an artist, maybe a scientist, or even a doctor. Those dreams were hopeless now, like a faint childhood memory. I was bound to be a soldier for the leaders, to clear dangerous obstacles, and even lose my life for them on the battlefield, the battlefield on dangerous, unknown planets. Where often mutated creatures attack us with fierce hostility, and an army is dispatched to clear the monsters, often resulting in dozens of casualties. In a few years, I would be like this. On the battlefield, fighting for my life against these monsters, and coming back injured, or

not coming back at all. I wondered, 'What was life like on the battlefield? What do these monsters look li-'

"Kara Fellowes?" A voice interrupted, disturbing my thoughts. I looked up, to see a woman with light chocolate-coloured hair, wearing the army uniform. She was staring at me blankly.

"Ah, sorry, I was zoning out." I replied, still a bit annoyed about someone interrupting me.

"The squad leader wants to talk to you." The girl said, still expressionless. I guess I couldn't blame her, working in the army ought to make someone feel emotionless and depressed. But I was a bit shocked, and much more confused.

"The squad leader? I'm not 18 yet."

The girl looked a bit more annoyed and replied, " I don't know, those were his orders, and you better see to them."

"Alright, alright," I grumbled, then sat up and proceeded to head to the back of the ship.

The walls were high tech, with wires connected to the main room. There were computers everywhere, and coffin-like objects, used to preserve a live human body from growing old when traveling to long distance planets. I mindlessly walked to the back of the ship, to be met with a metal door, the sign on it: 'CAPTAIN'S OFFICE.'

I knocked on the door thrice. Silence. A little bit later, a deep and booming voice said, "Come in."

I slowly opened the cold, metal door, and entered the room. In front of me sat a man behind his desk, burly and intimidating, a cup of coffee steaming hot beside him on his wooden desk.

"Hello there, Ms. Fellowes." The squad leader said with a nonchalant tone, still sorting out papers.

"Greetings, squad leader." I replied, still wondering what he wanted.

"You must be wondering why I called you, considering you're not in the army. You aren't even going to be in my squad - oh, I just leaked the info. Anyways, with careful consideration from the leaders, and looking at your training grade, we have decided..." He hesitated, like he was about to break some bad news. I broke into a slight cold sweat - was my training grade that bad? Every year, we would receive a test measuring four different sections. Research, combat, strategy, and blacksmith. I never did exceptionally in any sections, but more so passed off as average. Are they going to throw me off the ship, or maybe use me as a test subject? Oh n-

"We have decided to make you an explorer." The captain's voice cut in.

"Wait- What?" I asked, in shock and confusion. Exploring wasn't a job in the spaceship.

"An explorer is someone who's an all-rounder at all subjects, they are dispatched to explore planets after the army clears the monsters, and finds new materials." The captain explained, almost like he was reading my mind. Still in a state of shock, I just stood there, processing what happened.

Suddenly, I smelled a strangely sweet aroma, my eyes getting heavier and heavier, like weights were on them. Slowly, I descended into darkness. I woke up to an alarm ringing, I immediately sat up, not even feeling tired anymore. I glanced at my surroundings, this wasn't my room, it had boring gray walls, and there was a bed in the corner. There wasn't much, like every room there is. But what was different about this one was there were no pictures of my family and friends that I put on my desk. Did I get kidnapped? Wait- no, I'm still on the ship, I think. I then recalled my past memories, and realized that I've been transferred to another room after I got knocked out. My eyes were filled with tears, and a few of them dropped down my cheek, like precious diamonds. I just sat there, crying. Something I haven't done in years, I was too young for this, I didn't want to do this. I was just a 15 year old girl, counting her days until she became a pawn for the government. Why couldn't I just live the rest of my 3 years? What made me so special? I sat there, just silent. I felt empty, like nothing was in my heart anymore. Like everything inside me has poured out, like a lighter unable to spark a fire.

A pawn for the government, just an early bloomer that didn't get to enjoy my precious 3 years of life. At that moment, I realized the meaning of life - you'll always

be a puppet for something or someone, but you can decide on how to deal with it. I crawled out of my miserable bed, and decided to make the most of being an explorer. That day would be the last day I complained about being a puppet. That day would be the day I enjoyed life to the fullest, until I couldn't. I started my new life as an explorer, and ended my other life as a 15 year old empty puppet. I would keep dreaming, I would keep dreaming in space. No matter what puppet I am, puppets could always dream.





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