ANGELO M. IACOBONI LIBRARY PRESENTS

2026 Fall Short Story Zine



vol. 4, 2026

We've added a small selection of our 2026 bookmark contest entries into this year's zine that matched the spirit of fall!



Iliana M.
6th Grade



Kaylie A.
6th Grade



Penelope G.
5th Grade

This is the end

by Chloe G, 7th grade





I pull out my phone from the back pocket in my jeans.
I stare at it, mindlessly.
I look around, I'm alone. In the park. I scroll through my home page, until I find Google Photos. I look through the pictures, eager to see the ones I took last night.



As I am flipping through, I find the selfie I took in the mirror, which I had posted on my Instagram stories. In the picture, I'm flashing my pearly-white teeth and showing off my fabulous new haircut. I was so happy! But instead of feeling happy along with the selfie, I stare at it, blinking rapidly.

My behind is glued to the wooden bench, and my feet are planted on the floor.







My heart jumps out of my chest and my legs shake. My stomach tied in five hundred knots.



"Maybe it's a joke...Maybe I'm hallucinating..." I'm not hallucinating. This is real.



What I see behind me in the image is a murky black shadow. Its red eyes glare at me, and its body doesn't look right. Its arms look like they are legs and it has six ugly hands.



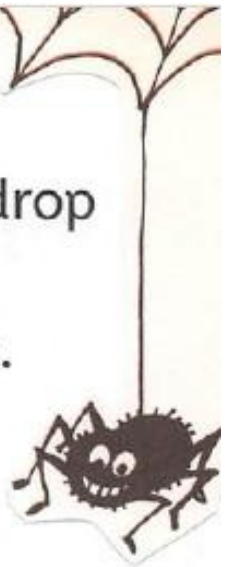
I gasp when I remember something. I had recorded a voice-over in the post. I was talking about my new hairstyle.

My spine shivers, as if my body knows that something is terribly wrong. I click on the start button.
I turn the volume up to the max. This is what I hear:









"This is today's update, make sure to drop a like down bel-" There is a sudden pause, and the sound of my voice dies. Then, I hear a laugh, a high-pitched laugh.

My voice is replaced by a distorted version of me. I sound like a monster, a hideous one.

"Never look back, I'm on your track. Run if you can— I know where you stand..." The voice sings it joyfully.

I can't help it. I can't follow its directions.

I slowly turn around. Like the shadow said, it's there. Right behind me.

It grins, flashing its needle-like teeth. The shadow flickers, until I can't see it.
I feel tightness around my shins. I groan at the pain.





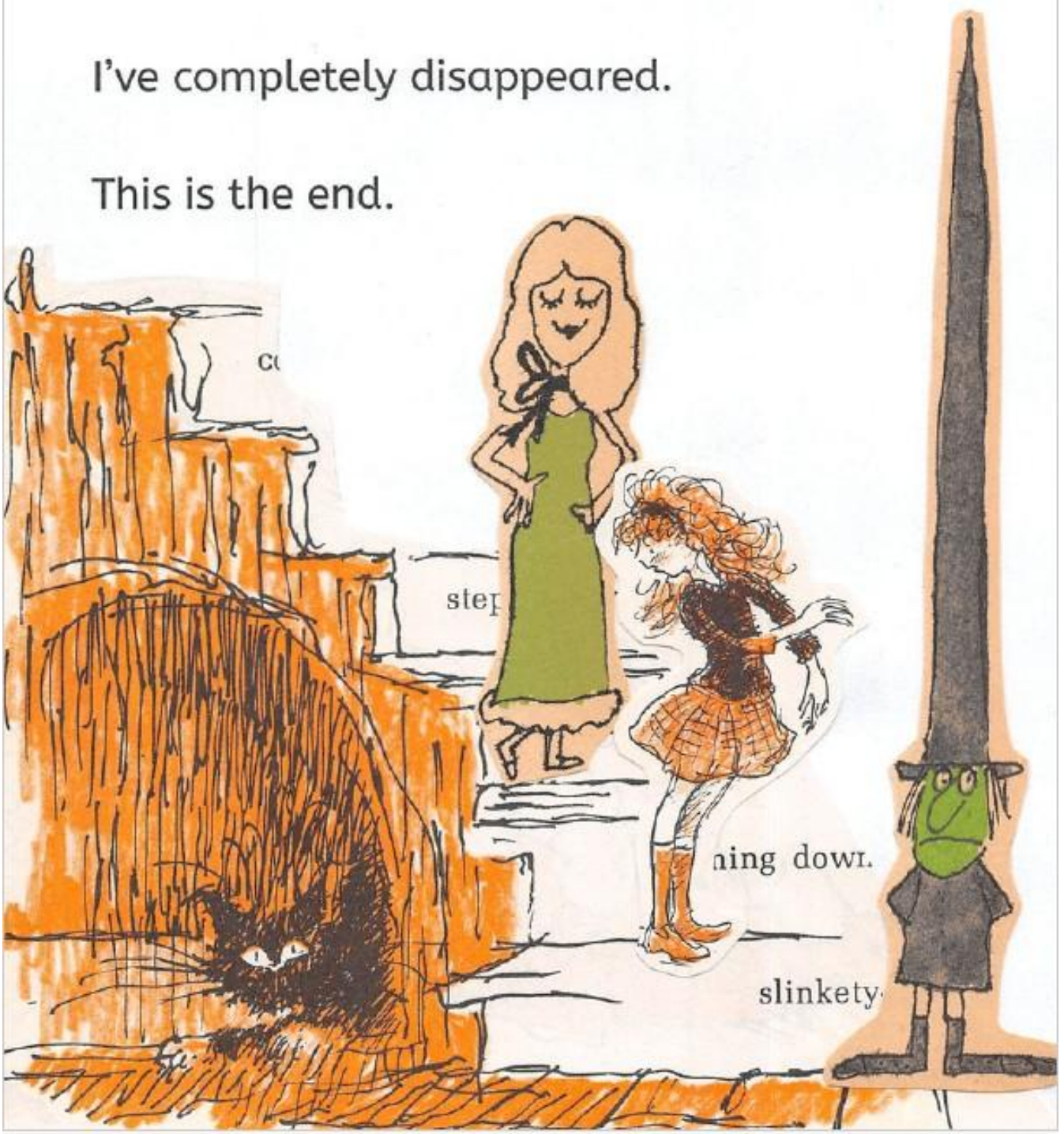


I look down and see the shadow wrapped around my legs. I glance at my hands, faded, my arms, gone.

Until...

I've completely disappeared.

This is the end.







Jazlynn Z
6th Grade



Sahnaye
6th Grade



Arabella D.
6th Grade





The Hollow Spine

By: Lola V, 8th Grade

I was walking down Hollow Crest Drive because I had just left Crossroad Diner. Heavy rain swallowed the sky, not a single star shining past the darkness. The night was quiet, too quiet. Then a pack of wolves nearby howled, which creeped me out, so I sprinted into the nearest store.

When I finally caught my breath, I was inside an old bookstore. The door clicked shut behind me and I was locked in. There was a hanging sign that read "Hollow Spine." Hollow Spine had bookshelves covered in cobwebs and the creaky wooden floors groaning with every step taken. The bookstore didn't just smell like old books; it also carried the scent of vanilla.

"Hello dear," a creepy voice said, "Are you looking for anything in particular?"

The mysterious voice came from a woman with a thin body, with a name tag that said Mrs. Grymm, with short, straight hair.

"Why did the door lock behind me?" I trembled.

"Well because sweetie, you're NOT leaving." Mrs. Grymm said. "You're staying here with me FOREVER!!! Unless, of course, you find the key, but no one's ever found it."

I immediately ran to the other end of the bookstore to try to get away from Mrs. Grymm. I've got to get out of her quickly, I thought to myself, I can't stay here forever, who's going to feed my dog? Wait, that's the least of my worries.

I need to find the key to get out of here. But then I had a feeling someone was watching me, but before I could turn around, I heard a "BEEP" right in my ear. I slowly turned around, scared to see what was behind me, and that's when I saw a camera, just staring back at me.

Mrs. Grymm's voice came from the camera, then she said, "I see that you're trying to find the key, but you'll never find it because it's hidden too well. Just give up."

"I won't give up until I find the key to get out of here.", I yelled back at the camera.

So, I walked around Hollow Spine pulling out books, opening them, and jumping up and down to see the books on the highest shelf. I had checked out almost every book, but that's when I noticed one last book I hadn't checked out hiding behind the front desk.





As I reached over the desk on my tippytoes, Mrs. Grymm grabbed my wrist tight and wouldn't let go.



"Let me go!", I screamed.

"NO! I won't let you get the key. You are going to stay here with me forever.", Mrs. Grymm hissed back.





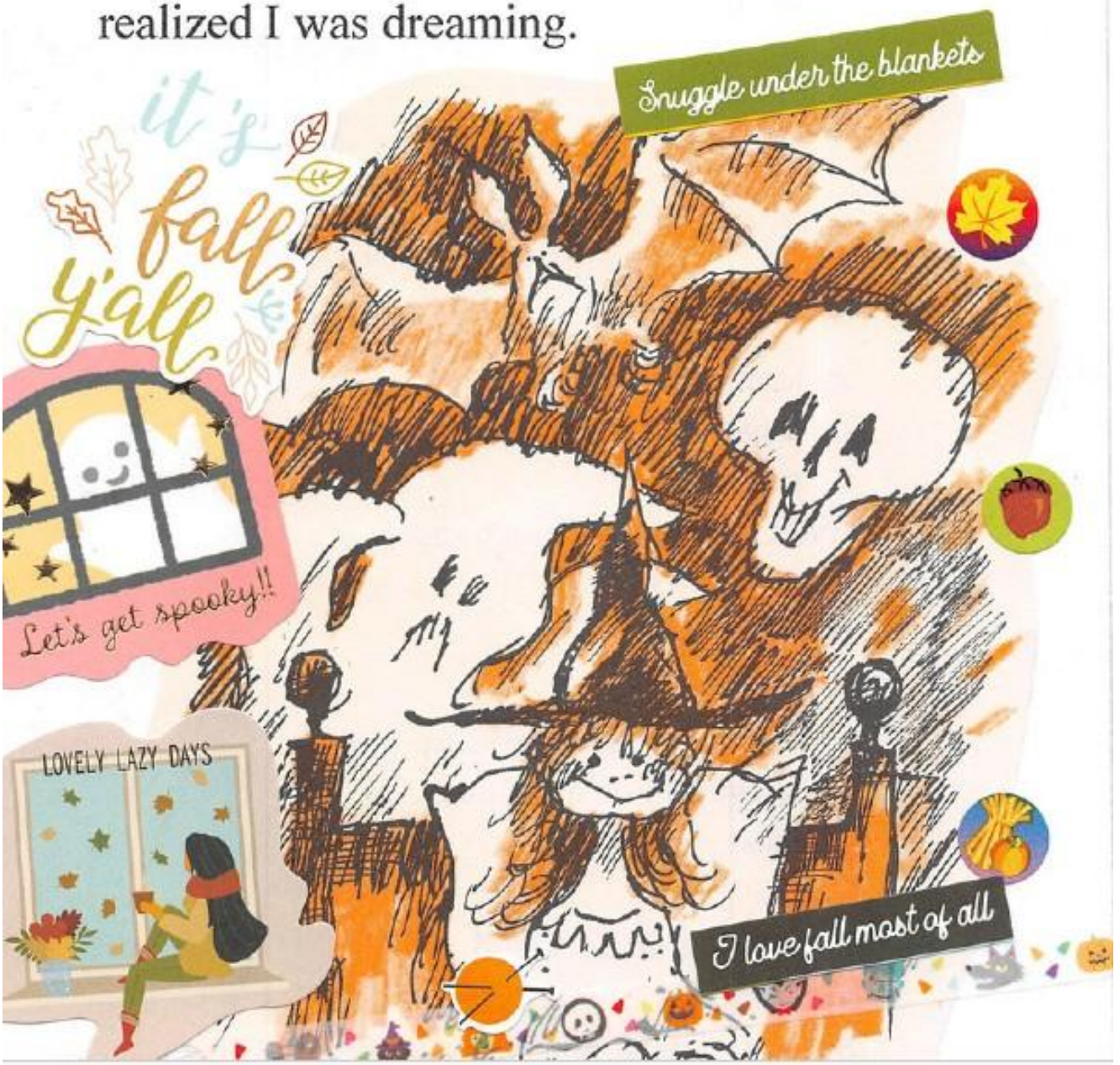






In a last-ditch effort, I grabbed her wrist with my other hand, turned around, and flipped her over my head. When she landed on her back, she turned to dust that flew up to the air vent and disappeared.

That's when I heard my mom joyfully singing, "Honey, get ready for school." and I realized I was dreaming.







Lucia M.
4th Grade



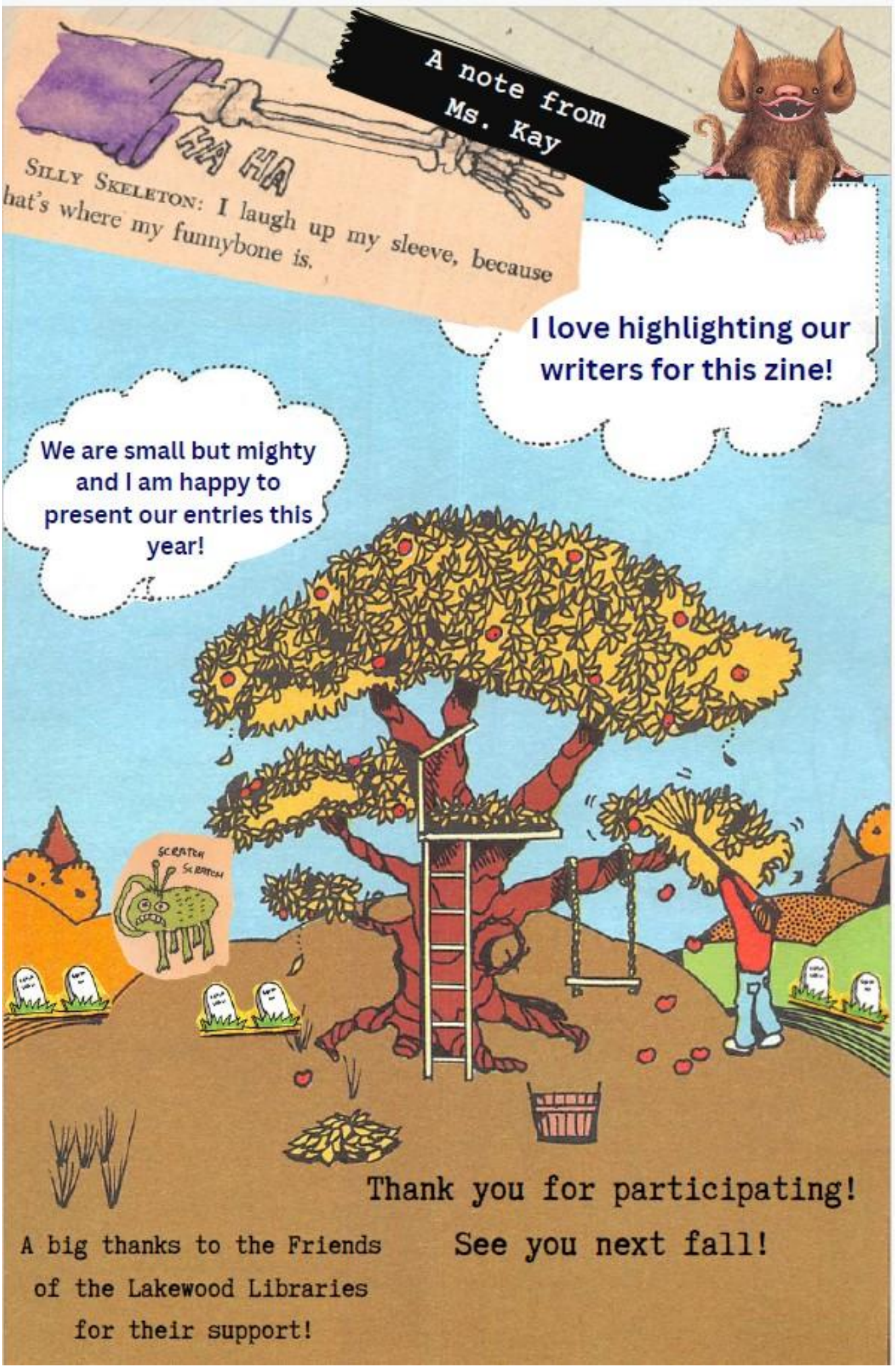
Annabelle G.
6th Grade



Desmond D.
6th Grade



A note from Ms. Kay

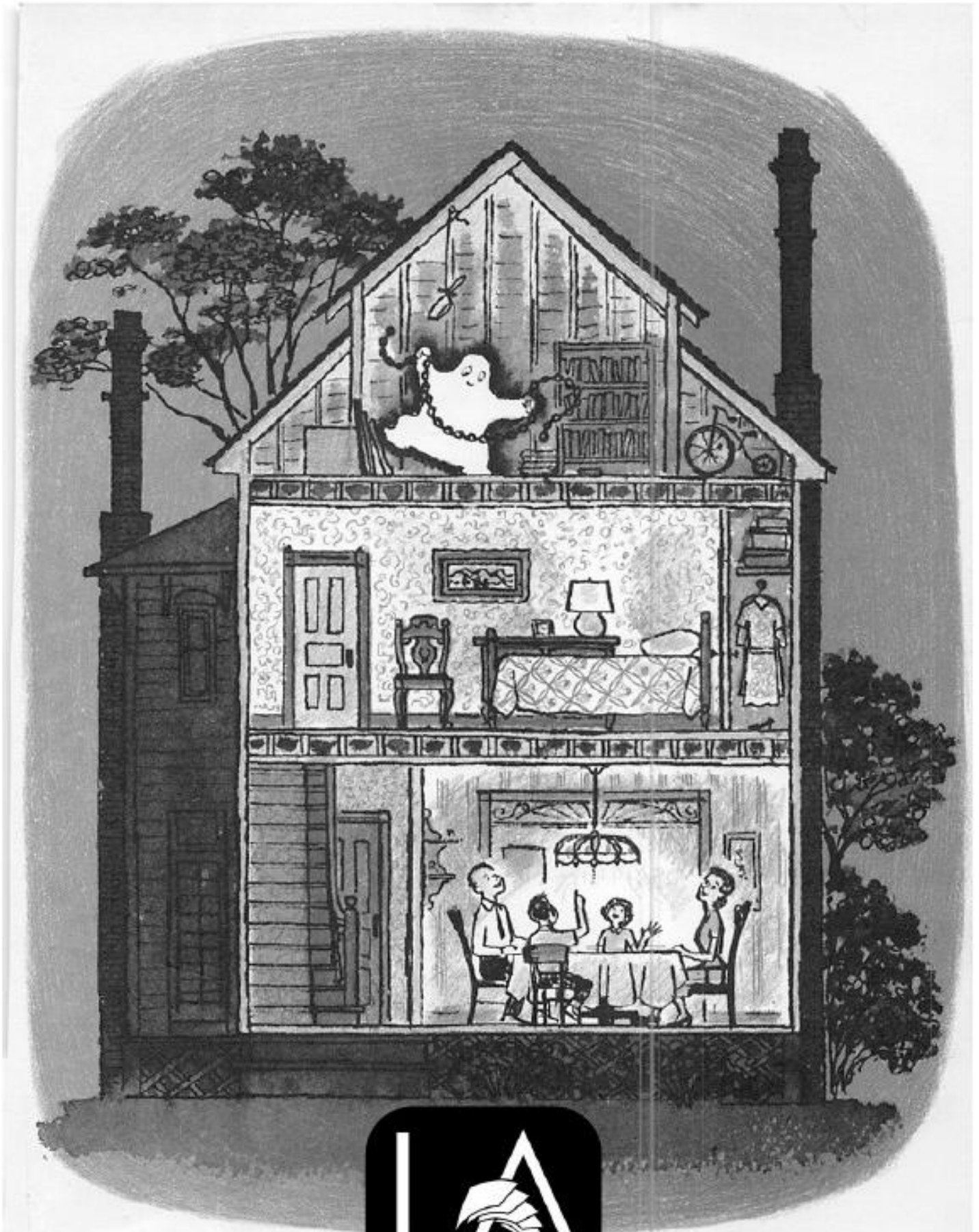




Greyson C.
3rd Grade



Georgina S.
3rd Grade



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