

# MACHSHAVA



St. Louis Jewish  
Literary Magazine  
2021-22/5782

*by Epstein Hebrew Academy*



# MACHSHAVA



*Inaugural Edition*  
**2021-22/5782**

*Theme:*  
*"Moving Forward Together"*

Epstein Hebrew Academy  
8645 Old Bonhomme Rd.  
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[eha.org/machshava](http://eha.org/machshava)



## *Note from the Editors*



Not often is there an opportunity to unite an entire community.

But Jewish students from across St. Louis joined forces to fill *Machshava* with creativity, humor, and inspiration for its inaugural edition.

*Machshava* is more than just a literary magazine. In each story, poem, and piece of art lies thoughts--*machshavot*--from our community.

*Machshava* is a reminder that we are all connected as *klal Yisrael*. Here, authors and artists share their work with people whom they have not yet met. Each thought, each new idea, is what *Machshava* is grounded in.

Thank you to everyone who played a role in *Machshava* 2021-22/5782. Your creativity unites our community.

Daniel Shanker, *Editor-in-Chief*

Avital Vorobeychik, *Asst. Editor in-Chief*

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# *The Twin Sports*

Orly Shanker

2nd grade, Saul Mirowitz Jewish Community School

Once upon a time, there was a twin brother and sister. The brother's name was James, and the sister's name was Emma. They fought with each other. Emma always wanted to do gymnastics, but James hated gymnastics. Emma hates football, and James won't stop talking about it. They're the exact opposite people.

James was having a football game. Emma wanted to do gymnastics right now. And that's all she wanted to do. And she did it. But she got hit by the football. She broke a bone. She recovered after 18 months.

Then, Emma did gymnastics again, and James was playing football. He got kicked in the face by Emma, and he broke his nose. He recovered after 12 months. They both thought that they should never do this again because they could break a bone again, so they only did gymnastics and football at their house or at practice. And from now on, they never fight, and now they are even better at football and gymnastics. They don't do it as much, but they got better. And from now on, they love each other, and now, the end.

Avi Katz

1st grade, Epstein Hebrew Academy



# *Double Sided*

Francesca Grad

7th grade, Epstein Hebrew Academy

"Do you know why you are here sir?" The officer loomed over me.  
The cuffs on my wrist pinched my skin.

I looked up slowly. "...No sir...I don't..." I looked defeated.

"Well then let me tell you why you're here. You are charged with vehicle theft on multiple accounts, attempted murder on a civilian and an attempted bank robbery. Does any of that sound familiar?"

"No...I don't remember any of that."

"Your court hearing is tomorrow at 8. You're going to stay here tonight. Okay?"

"Okay."

He sighed dejectedly. He walked me up and out of the interrogation room.

"Would you like to make a call?"

"Can I make two?"

"One."

\*Sigh\* "Okay."

He walked me over to the cell phone built into the wall. I slowly dialed the number of my psychiatrist.

He picked up. "Hello, Matt. Did you have another episode?"

"Yeah...I apparently tried to rob a bank. I don't remember it though."

"This was in the second identity, correct? The unsafe personality?"

"Yes, I believe so."

"Hmm, well this will help you in court. When is your hearing?"

"Tomorrow at 8. I don't remember any of it."

"That's okay. You didn't have control. I'll see you tomorrow."

"Okay thank you."

I put the phone on the wall and walked with the officer over to my cell. It was barren; just a bed, toilet and a chair. I walked in and the lawman locked me inside.

Though it was only 8:30, I laid on the bed and passed out immediately.



I woke up early. We left the station and got to the courtroom. My lawyer was already there. My therapist, Mr. Warner, sat with us. I saw my wife in the crowd. *Jack and Sarah must have been at school already. What kid would want a psychopath as a father?*

The trial began. Judge Mason called a witness up to stand. The witness was slender and blond, obviously older than me. She looked tired.

She began speaking. "I was at the bank, cashing in a check, when Mr. Collin, the man on trial, came in with a Glock 19. He ordered everyone to drop to the floor and then threatened the clerk to give him all the money in the bank. Before the clerk handed over the money, the police arrived and arrested Mr. Collins.

My psychiatrist then came up to stand as witness.

"My patient, Mr. Matt Collins, has Disassociate Identity Disorder. He has a good and bad side discovered so far. We have learned that on his past and recent crime, he has been on his bad personality—and he has no control on which personality he is in. He just switches. He was not in control and therefore is not guilty of robbing the bank.

The lawyer for the opposite party stood abruptly. "Objection, Your Honor!"

"Proceed."

"Your Honor, even if Mr. Collins was not in control of himself, and if what the doctor is saying is true, that shouldn't overrule the fact that this man did indeed attempt robbing a bank, multiple car thefts and attempted murder. He should be locked up in an insane asylum."

The crowd gasped at the lawyers proposition. The judge took a moment to think this over. My lawyer stroked his beard. Mr. Warner looked like he took on 2 decades.

The judge continued. "Thank you, Mr. White, for that comment. Continuing on; Mr. Collins, please come up to the stand."

I walked like a small child. The fact that I haven't eaten in days make me look sick and pale. I sat down.

Mr. White began questioning me.

"What, uhh, identity are you in currently?"

"The good state."

"Very well. What state were you in during the bank robbery?"

"The bad state."

"How do you know when you're in the good state as opposed to the bad state?"

"I feel myself being conscious when I'm in the good state, but I don't realize I'm awake when I'm in the bad state. I feel myself being conscious currently; therefore, I am in the good state."

"Do you remember anything while in the bad state?"

"No." My hand gripped the object in my bulging pocket.

"So you don't remember anything during the bank episode?"

"No."

"Do you remember any other of the episodes?"

"No." Anger gripped my words.

"How do you change states?"

Before I know it, I pull at the same Glock 19 from the bank out from my pocket and pointed it at the lawyer. Everyone jumped up. Screams and gasps filled the air, but my hand was still. The police tackled me, ripped the Glock from my hand and cuffed my hands. Mr. Warner stood over me with disappointment in his eyes.

"He must've switched to the bad state under the pressure."

I struggled to look up at him. "That is where you are wrong, Mr. Warner."

Eliya Saville

7th grade, Epstein Hebrew Academy

If you want to move forward, you first need  
a shoe!

Eliya Saville  
7th grade





# *The Power of Ice Cream*

Leon Jacobsen

7th grade, Epstein Hebrew Academy

The pillow makes contact with my jaw. I can feel every prick of the loose feathers as the soft and unassuming pillow slams against me, almost engulfing my whole face. I'm not expecting him to take the first swing and it's because of this that I'm blown off my feet into a massive mound of dirty clothing. I fall ungracefully, twisting and turning in the air trying to catch my balance.

Who knew that my brother would have such a powerful blow? We had never had a full scale pillow fight like this one.

I quickly get up and fall into a low stance that I had used against my older siblings. I wasn't going to just let my younger brother smack me around like a fly. I take a low jab to his knee. He dodges with ease and with unbelievably fast reflexes, catches me right in the groin. He must know he's in charge now because as I pull into a protective crouch he clobbers me over the head over and over again.

I'm on the ground curled up like a dead ant. I don't know what to think. It was a completely fair fight and yet despite me being older and stronger, I am still beaten to a pulp.

I dejectedly stand up. I find my brother staring at me with astonishment written all over his face. He is most definitely not used to beating me in anything.

I realized how often I would beat him and how I would always refuse to lose no matter what. Even in petty situations like basketball, cards, or any video game we played together. Even when he gets angry, I still insist on obliterating him out of existence.

He can already tell that I'm starting to get angry. He shies away with a quick apology. I think for a second. When I destroy him, I don't apologize, I strut away, confident with the knowledge that my brother will never beat me, but when he wins I get angry and make him feel guilty. Why am I any better than him? In fact, I'm just a scumbag. A self important, conceited, arrogant, little egotistical snobby brat. I made a conscious decision to start being nicer to my younger brother.

"Oh my god, that was insane! You could be a literal boxer when you grow up with that powerful of a swing," I declare with conviction.

He bursts into a grin. "Really?"

"Ya, that was nuts!" I reply, cracking a smile. "You wanna go get some ice cream? I'm kinda dead after that beating." He chuckles and nods in disbelief.

We walk off into the kitchen, each with a beaming face.

Francesca Grad

7th grade, Epstein Hebrew Academy



# *Candy Land*

Leora Friedman & Sofia Boyko

3rd grade, Epstein Hebrew Academy

Once a girl named Sallie was in her bedroom. She was ten and she was groaning. Her parents heard her and they came up. They asked her why she was groaning.

"This is the most boring summer ever," said Sallie.

"Why is it so boring?" asked her mom.

"My friend Chloe moved away," said Sallie.

"Well you should still try to have a good summer," said dad.

"I can't have a good summer," said Sallie.

So her parents went back downstairs. Sallie decided to go on a walk. On her walk she passed the book store. She decided to look at some books. While she was in the store she saw an odd looking book. So Sallie bought it. When she got home she opened it right away. The book was glimmering in the light. Sallie started reading the book and to her amazement the book started floating, and with a flash she was gone. Sallie woke up in a field.

"Where am I?" said Sallie. She felt dizzy.

Sallie tried to stand up but she fell back down.

"Ow!" said Sallie. That's when she noticed that the grass felt different. After a minute or two a bunny came into view.

"Hi!" said the bunny.

"Who are you?" asked Sallie

"I am Bun Bun," said the bunny.

"I love bunnies," said Sallie

"Me too," said Bun Bun.

"You are a bunny," laughed Sallie.

"Does it matter?" Bun Bun asked.

"I guess not," Sallie said.

"Are you hurt?" asked Bun Bun.

"I think I broke my leg," Sallie said.

"Here you go," Bun Bun ripped some grass up.

"What is that?" asked Sallie.

"Do you know where you even are?" asked Bun Bun.

"Well, no," Sallie said.

"You are in Candy Land," said Bun Bun

"So?" asked Sallie.

"So everything is food and all the food is magical," said Bun Bun.

"That is so cool," said Sallie.

"Well we better get to the Bunny Palace," said Bun Bun.

"Why?" Sallie asked.

"Eat the grass," said Bun Bun.

So Sallie ate the grass.

"I feel so much better," said Sallie.

"Let's go," Bun Bun said.

"Ok," Sallie said.

On the journey to the palace they stopped to pick some berries.

"When will we be there?" Sallie asked.

Finally they were at the palace.

"We are here," Bun Bun said.

"Who is that in the distance?" Sallie asked.

"Let's go closer," Bun Bun said.

"It's Chloe, my best friend," Sallie says.

Chloe and Sallie hugged.

"I have missed you so much," Sallie said.

"Me too," Chloe said.

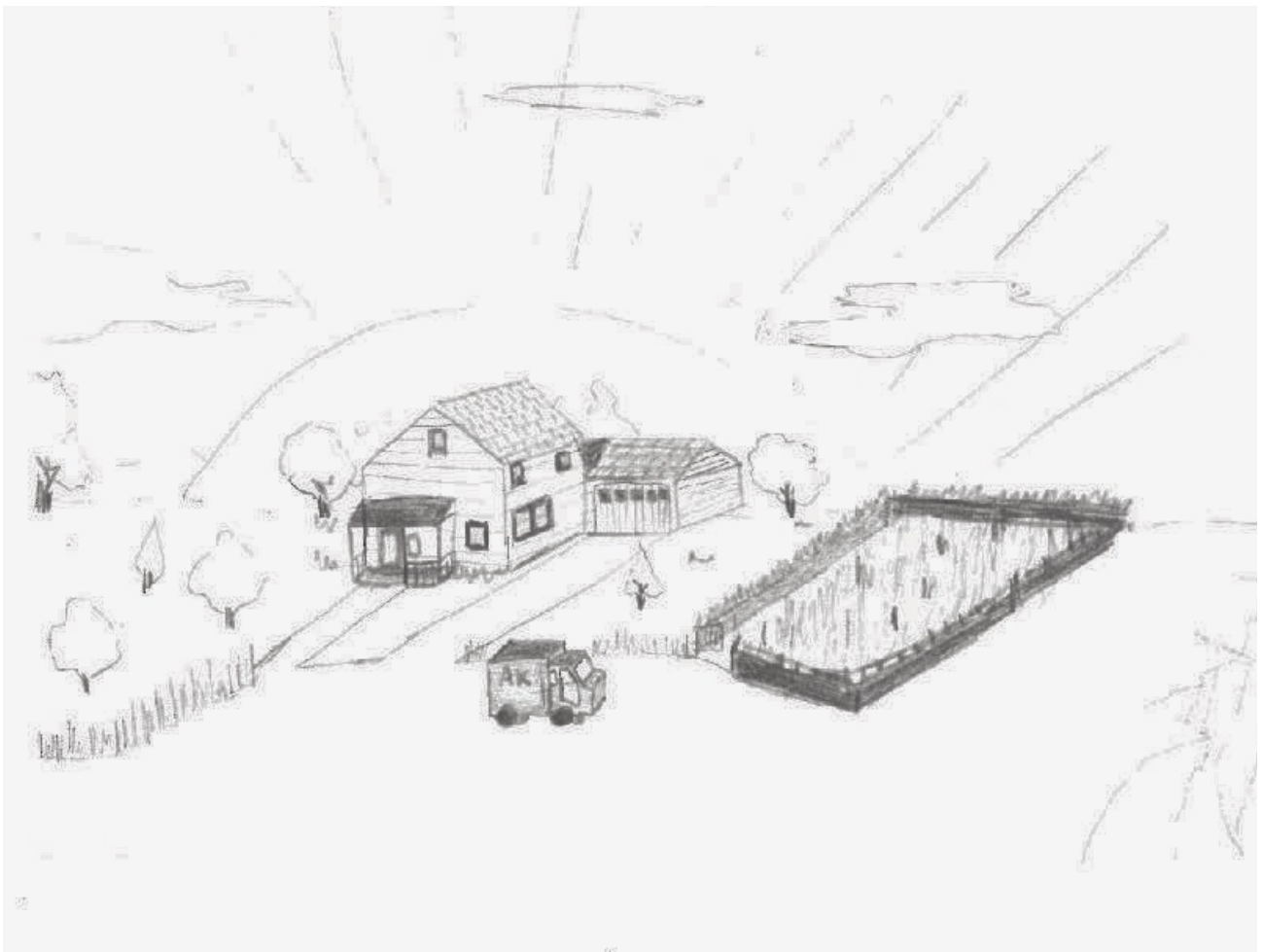
"Well I should get home," Sallie said.

"Me too," Chloe said.

Sallie and Chloe hugged and go back home.

Aidan Kornblum

8th grade, Epstein Hebrew Academy



# *The Beautiful Rainbow*

Miriam Zitin

3rd grade, Epstein Hebrew Academy

One day, Lilly and her puppy, Biscuit, were playing outside together. Suddenly, Lilly saw a **beautiful** rainbow. She ran in the house to her mother.

"Mama! Mama!" she cried. "There's a rainbow in our backyard! Come quick!"

"Oh-no you don't!" her mother said, flipping a pancake in the pan. "I can see it from here. Now, eat breakfast. You'll miss the bus on your first day!"

As soon as Lilly heard "first day," she screamed and ran to the bus stop. The bus was already there. She was nine minutes late. When she got there, she did not know anyone. Except her sister, Silvia. Every time she sat next to someone, they said: "Go away, my friend is sitting next to me." So, she sat all by herself in the back.

After school, Lilly and her mother went shopping together.

But Lilly realized something. Of course.

Sam moved. That's why she was so lonely. Lilly felt like zombies were coming near her. She couldn't stand how much she missed her friend. She tugged on her mother's skirt and said, "Can we go home? I miss Sam."

Her mother said, "Okay. Do you want to call him?"

Lilly nodded.

They took their groceries and went to their car. While driving, Lilly drooped her head. She really wanted to see Sam again. She missed all her friends. Once she moved to California, she did not like it one bit.

Then, the car came to a halt. Lilly bolted into the house like light. She took her mother's phone and typed in Sam's number. In a blink of an eye, Sam answered. They talked for hours. Finally, Lilly's mother called her for dinner. "Pizza!" her mother called out.

Lilly said goodbye and hung up. She ate and ate until she had room for only dessert. After a big cup of hot cocoa, she got ready for bed and went to bed.

In the morning, she happily found a present in her closet. She heard a squeak inside. She squealed so loud that her mother could hear her.

"Well? Open it!" she said.

Lilly ripped and ripped. She lifted the top, and...SQUEAK! Lilly could not believe her eyes. Her mother had given her two baby mice! She thanked her mother four times. Then right away opened the tiny door with a creak. Squeak! The mice ran up to her head, arm, swung in her hair, then finally, curled up in her hands for a nap. Before school, Lilly played with her mice, then packed and left.

Today is show and tell, she thought. "I'm taking Squeak and Whiskers for show and tell," she told her mother.

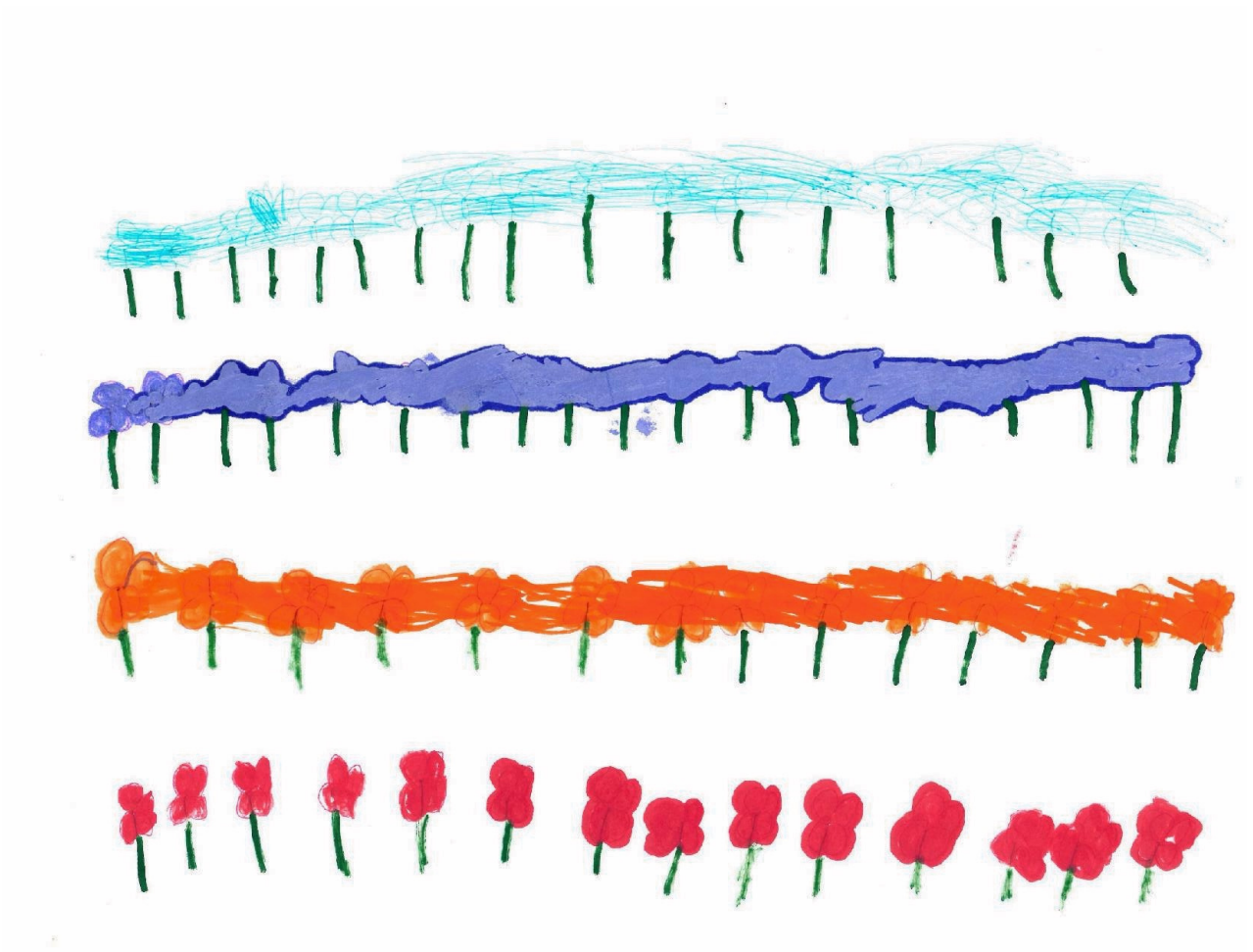
"Got it!" she said.

When Lilly got there, she had the best time in her life, not like she ever had before. She even shooed away a hornet at recess and didn't get stung! She loved her school. She made so many friends. She never wanted to leave.



Lilly Shanker

Kindergarten, Saul Mirowitz Jewish Community School



# *Right to Intervene*

Francesca & Ariela Grad

7th grade, Epstein Hebrew Academy;

11th grade, Parkway North High School

I planted my foot on the accelerator. Cars whizzed past. I didn't care about what color the light was; it wasn't important. The airport came into view. I shot into the parking lot. I don't remember whether I locked the car or not. I bolted up the steps. I slowed to walking when I passed airport security and sped by when I passed them. I checked my watch. Eight minutes until the plane takes off. Eight minutes to find Mariana. I ran to terminal six. A flood of bodies was in my way but I pushed through.

"Mariana! Mariana!"

"Robert?" said a surprised voice.

I turned and saw her. Time stopped. My heart flew. Next thing I know she was in my arms.

"Mariana! I'm so sorry! I'll go to New York with you! I love you!"

Tears stripped her cheeks.

"Robert, I-"

"MARIANA!" a deep voice shouted through the crowd. Mariana stepped away from me.

A burly, drunken man donning pirate clothes forced his way through the crowd to us.

"Mariana, mi amore!" He beamed and tears shot out. His Spanish accent was thick.

"Fernando! What are you doing here! You... you're supposed to be dead!"

Gasps from the newly formed crowd were heard.

"Mariana, mi amore. When the pirates came and sunk my ship, I was, indeed, stabbed. But I hung on a piece of drift wood for nine days until a humble fisherman found me. I have spent the past eight months looking for you!"

"No! You're supposed to be dead! For I... I killed you!"

Even I dropped my jaw in shock.

"But it doesn't matter anymore," she continued. "My pirate days have passed and I am with Robert now!"

"Mi amore! Tell me you don't remember the seven seas' breeze! The looting of treasure and the thirst for adventure! Tell me you are leaving that- leaving me behind for some Thomas!"

"Robert loves me! You wouldn't understand. You only loved the idea of me. You care nothing for me!"

"You don't truly believe that, do you?...Perhaps I have taken you for granted. I love you Mariana. If you will take me, I will put down my pirate hat and become your average day salesman or whathaveyou."

"Fernando..."

I didn't think I had the right to intervene. The crowd watched in anticipation as if this was a soap opera on TV.

"MARIANA! MARIANA!" A new more lyrical voice rang through the moment. An attractive mustached man also donning pirate clothes and a rose in his hand, stepped into the circle.

"DIEGO! What are you doing here!"

"Mi amore! It has been a year, no? But who cares! My love, I have been searching for you for the past year and a half!"

"Mariana, who is this pest who thinks he can take you away from me?!"

"Someone who has the chance to be with her!"

The Fernando character pulled a broadsword for his interesting outfit. Diego did the same. Suddenly, a siren went off. The crowds screamed and security ran in and tackled the men.

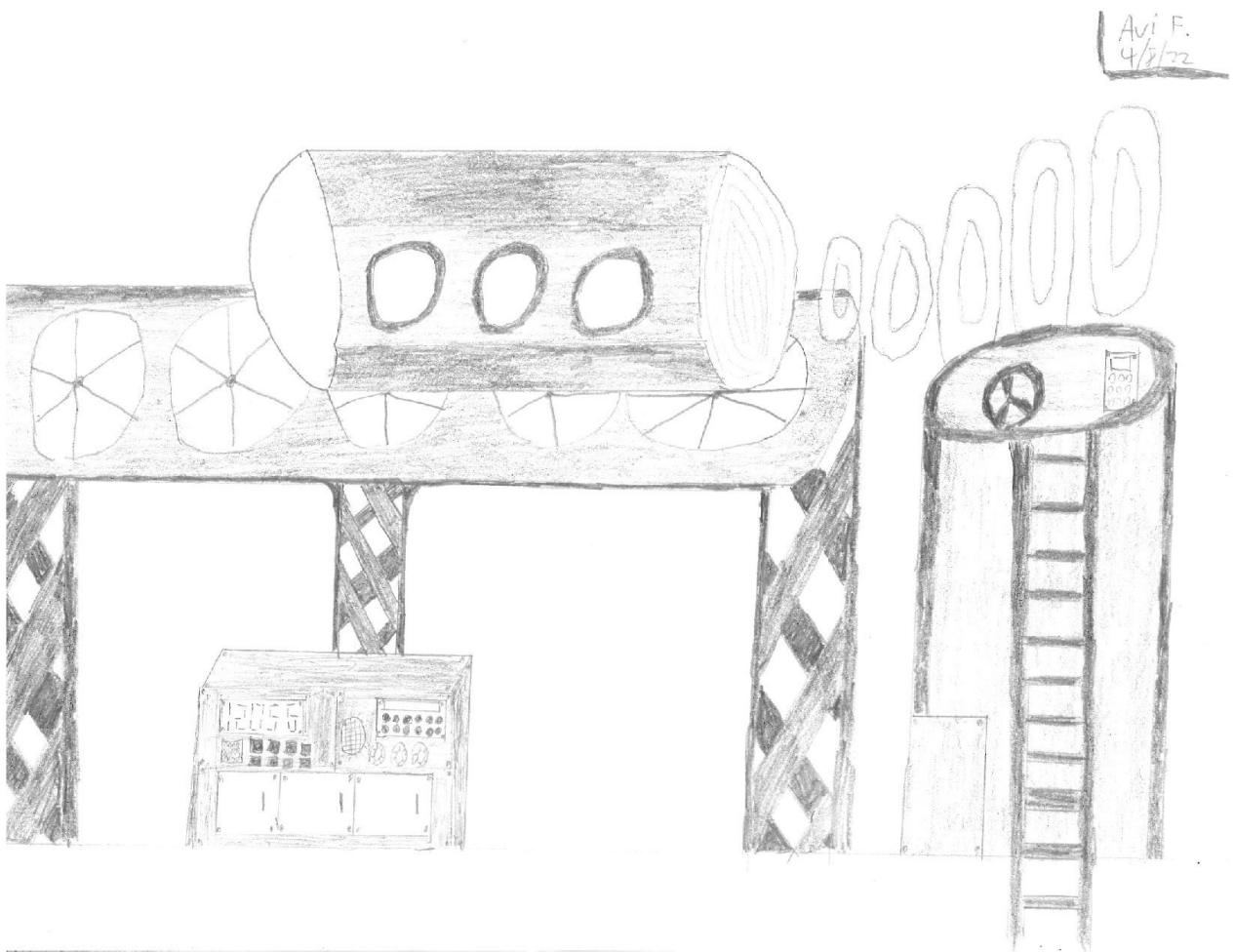
I leaned over to Mariana amidst the chaos. "Want to go catch the flight?"

She wiped a single tear, sighed then smiled. "Yeah, let's get outta here."

As we boarded the plane, I could've sworn I heard another love-lost man.

Avi Friedman

7th grade, Epstein Hebrew Academy



# *Claws and Brushes*

Yechiel Shulman

12th grade, Yeshivat Kadimah High School

*Cccccclic.*

The yellow piece of ceramic fit in place perfectly. It was supposed to, after all. Between the coordinate labeling system and the detailed maps, Rob didn't find his job particularly difficult. 'Assembly'. The arduous labor of reading labels, and putting rocks in the right spot. It was a perfectly good job, for somebody like Rob. Not too tedious, though a bit repetitive, and not too challenging, though he occasionally felt bored. Well, if he even could feel bored. Rob wasn't quite sure.

Regardless, the true treasure came as he finished placing the last piece—a thin green trapezoid today. As he rolled back from the ceramic, Rob's scanner glazed over the full picture. The blue sun beating down over a rainbow dessert. The ceiling formed of purple hexagons and triangles. And the sand, speckled with orange, pink, and red.

*Was that truly what the world looked like?* Rob wondered. He wouldn't find out anytime soon, unless he needed to go to the dreaded maintenance lab. His very existence likely demanded maintenance, or at least some powerful therapy, but nobody agreed with Rob on that point. He was trapped here in Assembly, but he was proud of his work.

*Proud?*

Was that the right human emotion? After all, he didn't design the art himself. He just *assembled* it, before it was shipped away to a fancy human palace. No, he wasn't quite proud, but he was content. Content to assemble his ceramics, and appreciate the art sent in each day.

Rob#718 was certain his life was far better than getting turned off, at least.



"Oh, you dudes are robots!" Jim, the human, realized. "I always wondered where all the assembly jobs went!"

"I beg your pardon," the small robot said, looking up from its ceramics. "Are you supposed to be down here?"

Jim ignored it. Whose art was it building today? That was clearly asset #392, dndfrostdragon.png. Somebody else besides himself was in the habit of reusing art with a few minor color filters. Was that a purple sky? Even Jim wasn't *that* desperate for originality.

"I beg your pardon," the robot repeated, looking up at him. "Do you need something?"

"Just killing some time," Jim said, sitting down along the wall, and pulling open a number puzzle on his phone.

"Do you often choose to kill time by sitting on the floor in Assembly?"

"Only when I feel like getting harassed by babbling garbage cans." A moment passed. *Shoot, was that a little harsh?* The robot was clearly just doing its job. Jim hadn't meant to insult it.

Then, the robot let out a mechanical ruckus. Something like a car horn mixed with a phone alarm. "Jidalidalidajidalidalida." What in the world? Was it an outrage? No, that wasn't quite right, was it? Then was it... laughter?

The robot finished its ruckus and went back to its job, but Jim was too distracted to return to his number puzzles. He watched as the robot wheeled around, looking over the art piece. It held a small blue diamond in its claw and was scanning through different charts to find where it fit.

Jim stepped over the ceramic and crouched down. Based on the size and shape of the piece... "Hey, try it over here."

The robot glanced at the spot, along the start of the tail, and then back at its charts. Then, it wheeled over and slipped the ceramic into place.

"Without instructions? How?" the robot asked.

Jim shrugged. "It's similar to a puzzle game I used to play. Beat every level twice."

"Puzzle? Game? These are not concepts I am familiar with."

"I'll show you later," Jim said, picking up another piece of ceramic. "For now, let's get this ceramic done."



Jim had been coming for quite some time now, but he was still a mystery to Rob. Every day he entered in the middle of the morning, sat around chatting, and then proceeded to help assemble the daily ceramics.

Rob had tried insisting that Jim could visit without needing to help, but Jim was always insistent. He even refused to check the ceramic's labels or map. "Cheating takes away the fun," Jim would claim. Rob couldn't comprehend how completing a job could be 'cheating', but between the two of them they always finished on time anyways, and no officer took issue with their new approach.

Today, Jim was building the ceramic mostly on his own, leaving Rob to sort out the ceramics by color to help him solve it quicker. Nevertheless, they were on track to finish early.

"Excuse me," Rob said, "but could you explain why you come help down here every day?"

"I'm easily bored, I guess." Jim said with a chuckle, moving a few purple ceramics he had connected to attach to the rest of the picture. "I get my work done quickly up top, and I have more fun down here. The officers force us to stick around until noon anyway."



"Then after noon, you can leave?"

Jim looked over. "Can't you?"

Rob shook his head. "It's good here, though."

Jim didn't respond to that.

"If you can leave, and you don't like it up top, why do you work?"

Jim thought for a moment. "Money, really. I have a wife and kids to support. Remind me to introduce you sometime."

Rob didn't know what a 'wife-and-kids' was, but it did sound expensive. "What work do you do up top?"

Jim clicked the final ceramic into place, then gestured at the completed picture of an inside out house. "I design these."

Rob felt his mechanical jaw lower a notch. Jim was one of the artists? Why would he ever come down to Assembly with a job like that? And what was this feeling? Jealousy? Amazement?

"It's not as awesome as it sounds," Jim said, "but I could probably sneak you into the facility. Then you can try it out yourself."

"Really? When?"

Jim checked his watch. "We've got some spare time; how about right now?"



Jim gripped his backpack, which was far heavier than usual, as he approached the doors to the art facility. He felt it slipping out of his sweaty hands as he passed by the officers. He knew it was silly to be nervous—the officers were as lazy with their jobs as Jim was with his art—but he still needed to be careful. Bringing robots out of Assembly and into the art facility was a breach of protocol, breaking at least half a dozen different rules.

"ID," the officer asked.

Jim set down the backpack, giving it a light tap, and rummaged through his pockets. He pulled out one of his photoless ID cards—the officers hadn't gotten around to photographing everybody yet—and flashed it in front of the officer, who grunted. The doors swung open.

Jim breathed a sigh of relief as he picked up his backpack, and hurried into the room. Not even a challenge, he told himself.

He set the backpack down and gave it two pats. Rob's lights turned on, and the robot unfolded, rising from the ground.

"That was horrid," Rob said, "Never again, sir. Do you know what it feels like to get turned o... oh dear. Wow."

Jim watched as Rob turned around, staring out at the array of screens and drawing boards. He still wasn't completely sure why the robot was so interested in the art studio. Jim wasn't even sure if Rob was programmed to design art, but Rob had sounded confident. He had spent his entire lifespan assembling art pieces, after all.

"Is this some kind of security room?" Rob asked.

"Um, this is the studio," Jim said.

"You make art here? Incredible." Rob looked around. "Ok, now show me how."

Jim spent the next hour showing Rob the different tools. The online asset collection. The drawing boards which connected wirelessly to the monitors. The different pens and brushes, both physical and digital. There was something unnerving about explaining basic computer programs to a robot.

"What does that one do?" Rob asked, pointing to the last large red button.

"That's the randomize button," Jim explained, "It reassembles the shapes of the ceramics to add some variation. Just only hit it *before* you finish your drawing, or it'll completely scramble the entire coordinate system. Not everyone down at Assembly can solve a puzzle the way we do, you know?"

Rob's lights flashed, displaying his excitement. "Okay, now put me on the table."

Jim lifted up the robot and set him down on top of the drawing board. "I'm not sure that claw's going to activate the touchscreen, buddy. Let me try plugging you into it. I think I can override one of your internal gear operators as the mouse." After a few moments of fiddling, the table's digital brush started to move, mirroring the movement of Rob's claw in the air. "Have fun."

Rob started, but didn't draw an object in the center. Instead, he merely aligned the mouse with the top left ceramic and started moving downwards, changing the color as he went. When he got to the bottom, he moved slightly to the right, and started his way back up the next column.

*Was he just experimenting randomly?*

As Rob continued, Jim realized that wasn't it. The entire picture already existed, inside of Rob's head. As he moved across the table, Jim could begin to make things out. Buildings, people, even trees, but all of the wrong proportions and scales. Rob was drawing, in tiny detail, a world he had never seen.



"Where are we going?" Rob asked, from inside the backpack. "Back to the studio?"

"Better," Jim promised, but he sounded on edge. Whatever he was trying to do had him even more nervous than he had been bringing Rob into the studio yesterday.

"Are you not supposed to be designing today's ceramic?" Rob asked.

"I just submitted the one you made yesterday. Just please stay quiet for a moment. I agreed to leave you powered on in there."

Rob begrudgingly complied, trying to turn down the sounds of his motors as well. They didn't like getting squashed in a backpack two days in a row.

Finally, Rob felt himself get lowered to the ground, followed by two taps on the head. He started unfolding even as the backpack unzipped.

*Oh my.*

Around him stretched an endless blue, divided by tall rectangular buildings reaching up to the sky. People and cars littered the road hundreds of feet below.

"Welcome to the rooftop," Jim said. "What do you think of the world?"

Rob couldn't find the words, nor the correct human emotions, to describe it. "I...I need to draw this."

Jim chuckled. "You really loved the studio, didn't you?"

"I see all the mistakes I made," Rob noted, studying some people walking below. "Imagine what I can do this time!"

Jim thought for a moment. "I can probably get you back in sometime this week, though security seems to be getting tighter than usual."

*BAAAAANG.*

Rob bounced, and Jim immediately grabbed him, racing towards the edge of the rooftop.

"What was that?!" Rob asked as Jim jumped over the rail, landing with a thud on the patio one floor lower. He dropped Rob, who hit the ground with a loud *clang*.

Jim breathed heavily, pushing open the door to go inside. "I knew this was pushing my luck. The officers don't let anybody get up there."

"What?" Rob asked, pushing himself upright. "Were we going against protocol? That's not allowed!"

"Rob, we were going against protocol yesterday, in the studio! What part about sneaking around in a backpack did you miss?"

"I am not allowed to go against protocol. I must return to Assembly at once."

"Forget Assembly! You need to get out of here before the officers realize you were on the roof with me." Jim pointed down the hall to the right. "See there, wheel over slowly, and don't look back. Pretend you just got lost, or something. I'll go the other way and distract them."

Before Rob could argue, Jim ran off down the hall to the left. Rob beeped in frustration, then started wheeling over slowly. He pointed his scanner downwards, trying to draw little attention to himself.

*Thump.*

He looked up as he bumped into a man dressed in blue, panting for breath. "Pardon me. Can I help you, officer?" Rob said.

The officer narrowed his eyes in suspicion, but then noticed something, his gaze turning to compassion. "Let me help you. I think you're broken," he said, grabbing Rob by the arm.

"Pardon me, but I think I would know if..." *My claw is a stump*, he realized. It must have broken while jumping down from the roof. *No...* He tried to pull away, but the officer held strong and reached for the power button on top of Rob's head.

Everything went black.



Jim kneeled, catching his breath. He was three floors down now, perhaps far enough away to avoid suspicion, but there were still officers around searching.

*Think! How do I solve this? I need to escape, and get back to Rob!*

Nothing came to mind. All his puzzle knowledge couldn't help him here. He heard voices coming down the hall and quickly ducked into a closet. He would be cornered in there, but he couldn't think of anything else. He closed the door as two officers rounded the corner.

"This is ridiculous," one said with a yawn. "Let the darn guy go, for all I care. This is my lunch break."

"Come on, Marc, you know security's gotta be tighter after this. We can't just ignore people goin' where they're not welcome."

"I don't see why not," Marc said. "We let people get away with lots of things here. Who's ever heard of an art studio with high security, anyway!"

"They're probably going to reinstitute all the metal detectors too, after this."

"And then they'll make me finish adding photos to everybody's ID cards," Marc said. "I'm telling you this place is nuts."

Their voices trailed off as they walked by, clearly having no interest in searching every closet. With a sigh of relief, Jim opened the door and ran off in the opposite direction.



Jim returned to Assembly Room #718, but Rob was nowhere to be found. None of the other robots had seen him return either, and he hadn't gone back to the studio. That left only one option: The officers had taken him.

Gritting his teeth, Jim knocked on the door to the head officer. If he turned himself in, maybe he could get them to release Rob. As a human and an artist, he was likely to get off with minimal charges, even for breaking onto the roof.

"Come in."

Jim opened the door, meeting the gaze of Officer Sharon, a kind but serious woman. Her desk was littered with papers and a few covered items, likely evidence from the rooftop break-in.

"Oh Jim, I must congratulate you. Your drawing from yesterday was one of the most profitable in a long time. People clearly like the deformed realism. Comes across both impressive and original."

*That was Rob's drawing,* Jim realized.

"Have you seen—"

"A small robot?" Sharon asked.

Jim slowly nodded.

"He's in maintenance right now. Broken claw, last I heard."

Jim breathed a sigh of relief. They weren't suspecting him after all.

"I don't understand why you like spending so much time with the small fellow, but if you want to save him, you best move quick. They don't keep bots they can't fix." Sharon paused and uncovered a cloth on her desk, revealing a broken mechanical claw. "You may need this."

Jim picked it up, nodding his thanks, and moved to leave.

"And one more thing," Sharon added, meeting his eyes with a stern but understanding gaze. "Stay out of trouble this time, okay?"



Rob awoke. He was surrounded by robotic parts and scraps of metal, but it didn't look like a lab of any kind. This wasn't even maintenance—it was a junkyard.

He stared, dazed, at his arm, which still ended in a bare metal stick. The broken wires had been trimmed and tidied up, but they hadn't been able to fix him. *I really am just a babbling garbage can now.* He could no longer work in Assembly, and he had never been allowed into the studio in the first place. He was worthless.

"Rob!"

*What was Jim doing here?*

"Oh, buddy! I'm so happy I found you! I was looking everywhere. I went to Assembly and you weren't there, and I met with the officers and the engineers, and—" Jim fell to his knees and held out the small robot claw. "I brought you this. The engineers said the model was no longer in stock, but they should be able to reattach it easily. It's the same as what we did in the studio with the computer, really."

Rob scanned over Jim. His clothes were muddy and torn, his face covered in soot. "Thank you, Jim. You have saved me. Please bring me back to maintenance now."

Jim picked up Rob and began carrying him away from the junkyard. "Rob," he said, his voice catching in his throat, "Tomorrow the security measures at the studio are going to be tighter. I'm not sure I can get you in again."

"I should not break protocol, regardless."

Jim stopped walking. "I'm not sure I'll be able to come down to Assembly either." He set Rob back down. "I'm not bringing you back to maintenance."

"I beg your pardon! I need to see the engineers. They will fix me!"

"I need to bring you back to the studio! I think I know a way I can get you in, permanently."

Rob shook his head. "I am not an artist, Jim. I am a robot. My job is Assembly."

"But think about the studio! Didn't you love it? If you could get in there, become an artist, wouldn't that be worth breaking protocol for?"

Rob wanted to. He could feel that much. But so much had gone wrong on the roof... he stared at his broken arm. "Fine, but first you need to bring me back to maintenance."

Jim still shook his head. "If I give you over to maintenance, they may take weeks to fix your claw. If we want to get you into the studio, we have to do it tomorrow morning. There's no other way."

Rob remembered the uncomfortable squeeze into Jim's backpack, the cold dark fear when powered off. *I am not wanted in the Studio.* "I should not break protocol again."

Jim shook his head. "Think of the world, Rob. That picture, it's all still in your head, I know it is! You can design that, you can be an artist!"

Rob remembered the studio, the wonder and magic of the table. And he remembered the world he had drawn, so different from the real world Jim had shown him on the rooftop.

"Please, Rob, trust me, again. Just this once." Jim took Rob's claw and set it back on the ground. "You don't need to go back to Assembly or maintenance. We can do this. Together."

Rob nodded. "What is the plan?"



Marc was still bored. For all of yesterday's excitement—if you could call walking up and down hallways 'excitement'—the whole security team now had extra required work. And of course, his job would be the most boring of them all: photography.

*Ka-chink. "Next!"*

Marc had put photography on his resume, as a hobby, of course. He did enjoy taking photos of nature and the city. It was a subtle, beautiful art style. But this was absurd.

*Ka-chink. "Next!"*

Every man, woman, and robot in the facility. In one day! For some dumb ID cards the other guards would stop paying attention to in a few days. How on earth was Sharon expecting him to do this?

*Ka-chink. "Next."*

He had already decided to cut corners to finish. That was clearly expected. All the Robots looked the same, after all. Why should he photograph each one? Though one bot, a few places behind in line, caught his attention with its short bandaged arm. Maybe he should photograph that one.

*Ka-chink. "Next."*

A tall man was next in line. Dark messy hair, short handsome stubble. He patted the robot behind him on the head, and then tried to hand it something discreetly. Was he attempting forgery? *Finally a real crime to take care of.*

"You there!" Marc called. "What's your name?"

The man turned. "Jim." *A likely story.*

"Well 'Jim', did I see you swap ID cards with this robot here?"

Not-Jim fidgeted. "We swapped earlier," he lied, "I was merely swapping *back* the ID cards now."

"Both of you, hand over your cards." Marc took the ID cards from 'Not-Jim,' and the one-armed robot. He looked over them, then handed the cards 'Robert' and 'Jim' back to the man and the robot.

"I better not catch any funny business again, got it? Now come take your picture, Robert."



"I can't believe that worked," Jim laughed. "He actually thought I was lying about only swapping back! 'Oy, Robert!' Did you hear him? That was perfect!"

Rob stood next to him, clutching Jim's ID card, which now contained a picture of a robot, in his one good hand. "Jim, how are *you* entering the studio now?"

Jim looked over. "I'm not going back, Rob. I can get into Assembly with your card now, so I thought I'd just take your job..."

Rob looked up at him, his scanner glazed. "You are leaving?"



Jim crouched down. "No, I'm not leaving, but at least until the security alerts settle down..." Jim felt tears behind his eyes. He wrapped his arms around the little robot and held him for a moment. "Make me proud in there, okay buddy? You're going to make great things."

Rob beeped in agreement, but sounded softer than usual.



Rob stood on top of the drawing table in the studio, waving his clawless arm to control his drawings. One of Jim's friends, a nice lady named Sharon, had come by, helped reconnect his arm to the table, fiddled with a few settings on the monitor, moved everything else he needed to within arm's reach, and then left without saying a word.

Rob still felt traces of whatever he had been feeling that morning—*sadness*, he assumed—but there was something else as well. *Excitement*. Yes, he knew he was right about that emotion.

Rob pushed the red 'Randomize' button, and then looked at his daily assignment. He was making art for room #718 this week, his monitor read. *Jim's new room*.

Rob thought about the day on the rooftop, when Jim had shown him the world for the first time. One day, he wanted to draw every detail he remembered, but there were more important drawings to be finished first. *And I know exactly how Jim will want to solve it.*



Assembly felt lonelier without Rob.

Jim looked around. A ceramic package lay on the floor, unfinished from yesterday, but a new one had already come today. *I'll find a way to visit Rob one day*, he promised himself, *but for now, I've got some catching up to do.*

Today's package was labeled 'Studio: Jim.' He ripped it open and poured the ceramics onto the floor. There were hundreds of tiny pieces, more than he had ever seen in a single drawing. He pulled out the instructions and looked at the map showing the completed picture.

It was from the day on the rooftop. Not of the world, but of Rob and Jim, standing side to side by the railing. Rob's right arm was replaced with a paintbrush.

Jim glanced at the coordinate labels. Using them would remove the challenge, but he'd better keep them in case he fell behind schedule. Though, at a closer glance, these ones didn't seem to match the ceramics properly anyway. Perhaps somebody had pushed the randomize button at the wrong moment. He smiled.

*This was going to be a fun challenge.*

Devorah Haspel

9th Grade, Yeshivat Kadimah High School



# *Avrumi the Host*

Chavivah Miller

8th grade, Epstein Hebrew Academy

Avrumi made a house,  
Out of a big cardboard box.  
He brought in an old blue blouse,  
And his favorite stuffed fox.

He whipped up a jug of juice  
And a nice batch of cookies.  
He brought in some blankets for use,  
And some nice little bookies.

He sat and waited for a minute or two,  
He was patient and he was quiet.  
Hoping for a friend to come in soon  
But not to start a riot.

Suddenly he heard a noise  
It was Dovid, his good friend.  
He had come to join Avrumi,  
To his little house he would attend.

"Come in, Come in  
Come take a seat,  
My house is open  
For you to eat!"

They talked and ate and played  
And a fun time they had made.  
Avrumi the host was glad  
That Dovid his friend had stayed.

Suddenly they both heard a noise,  
It was their good friend Moishe  
He had come to join the boys,  
And make a nice party of three.

"Come in, Come in  
Come take a seat,  
My house is open  
For you to eat!"

They talked and ate and played,  
A real fun time they made,  
Avrumi the host was glad  
That Moishe his friend had stayed.

Suddenly all three boys heard a knock,  
It was Yossi, their good friend.  
He had come with a toy car and block,  
He had come to join the trend.

"Come in, Come in  
Come take a seat,  
My house is open  
For you to eat!"

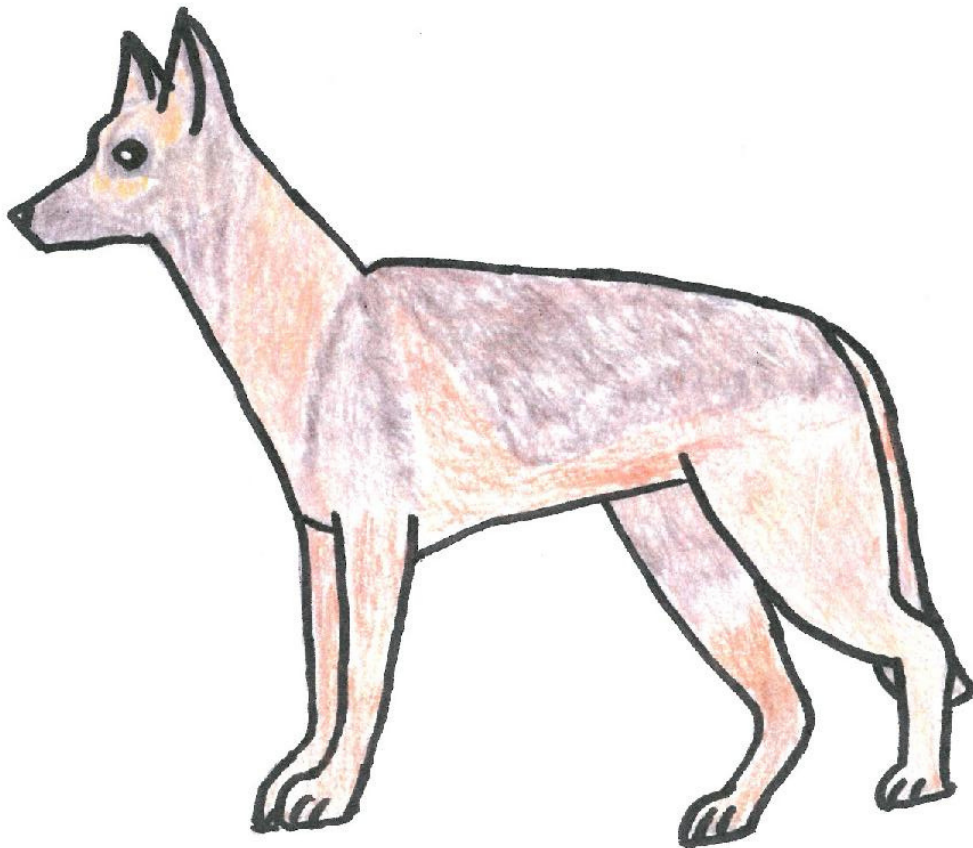
They talked and ate and played,  
A real fun time they made,  
Avrumi the host was glad  
That Yossi, his friend, had stayed.

Suddenly all four boys heard a noise,  
But this time it wasn't a knock.  
It was time for the boys to go home,  
The time had struck eight o'clock.

The little box house was now empty  
Of the guests we loved most.  
The only one left standing,  
Was Avrumi, the thoughtful host.

Daniel Shanker

9th Grade, Yeshivat Kadimah High School



# *I am*

Maya Newman

5th grade, Saul Mirowitz Jewish Community School

I am who I am  
A singing bird in a tree  
A drop of water you can't see  
A hidden answer to a test  
A brave soldier heading west

A pencil writing a book  
A teacher, waiting to teach  
A tiny hidden message  
A girl waiting for the wrong percentage

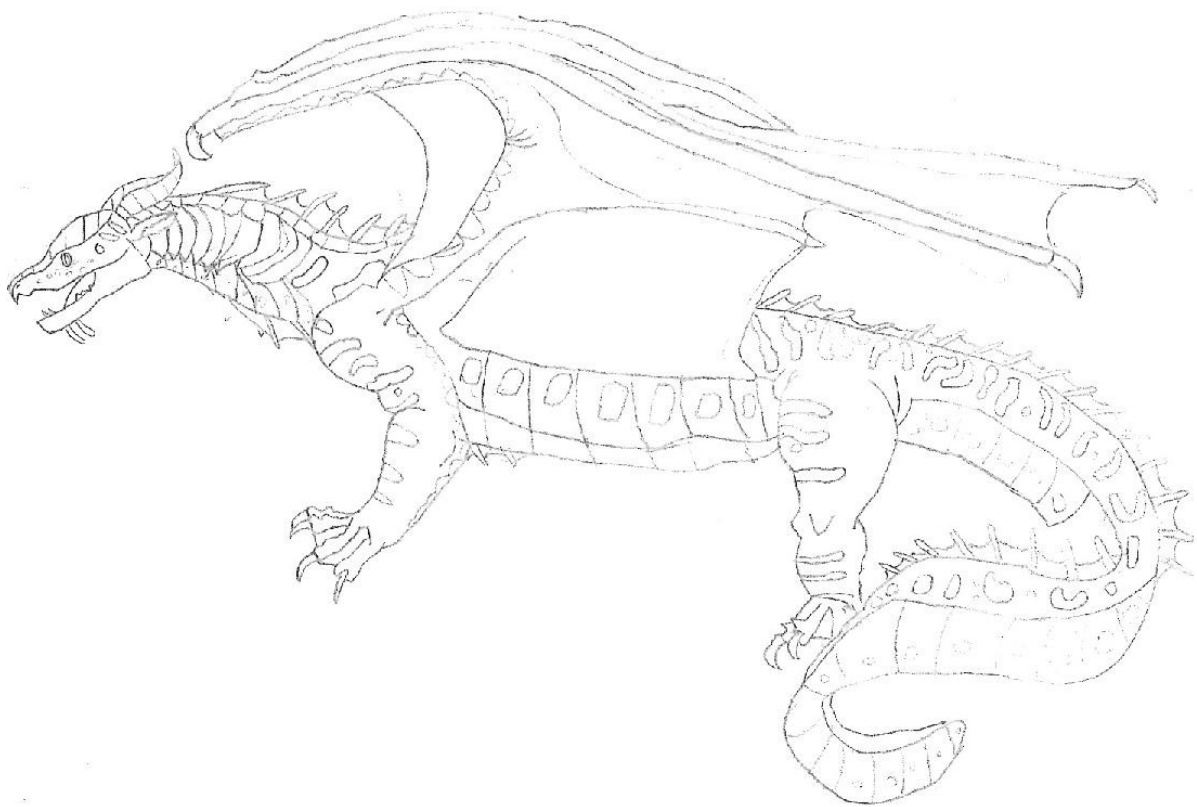
A special present arriving in just a day  
A flag with fifty stars, that'll stay  
A broken lamppost, flickering in the dark  
A small match about to start

A broken heart that'll never heal  
A little dream that's truly real  
A wonderful world waiting for rain  
A strong wind in the south of Spain

I am a lot  
I am a little  
I have a dream about me  
It's no ordinary dream  
Because I'm no ordinary me

Devorah Zitin

5th grade, Epstein Hebrew Academy



## *Deep Conflicting Haiku*

Yehudah Greenberg

8th grade, Epstein Hebrew Academy

I went to the store,  
I bought an oatmeal cookie,  
And it tasted bad.

## *Another Deep Conflicting Haiku*

Yehudah Greenberg

8th grade, Epstein Hebrew Academy

Milk is liquid cheese,  
Tastes nasty if it's spoiled,  
However, tastes good.

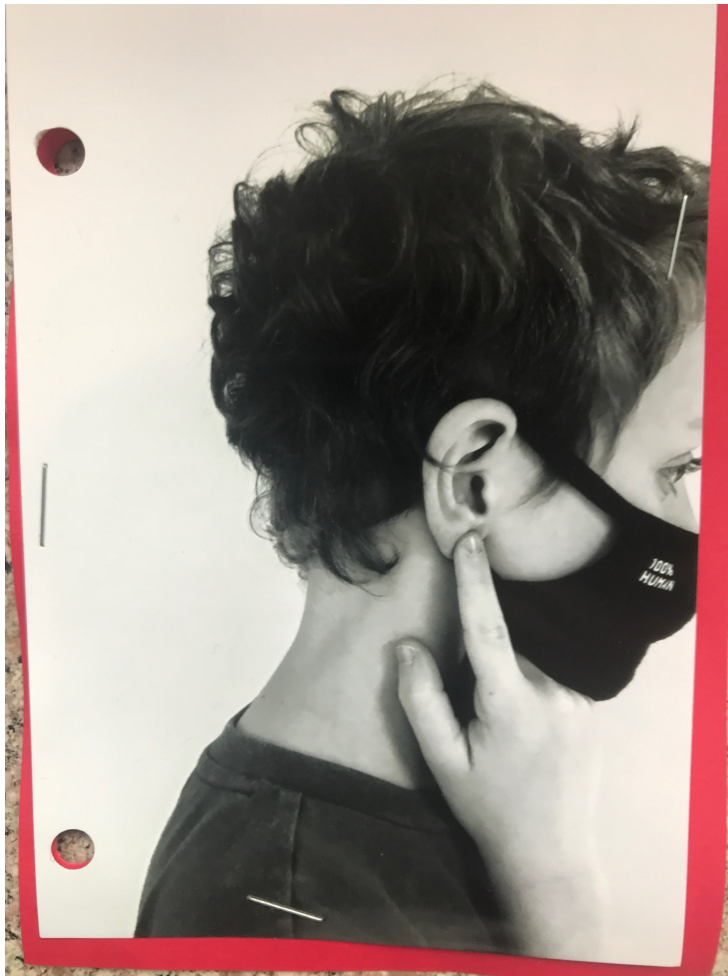


# *Ear Poem*

By Joshua Newman

2nd grade, Saul Mirowitz Jewish Community School

I have ears. They help me hear. It has a special drum. I know what you are thinking—drums! But it is actually something that helps you hear. It holds up your mask. Well, that is all!





*Today*

Rochel Pernikoff

7th grade, Torah Prep

I really try to focus  
On the current day  
But I have a future that's more exciting  
And it's heading straight my way

# *Shoes*

Carter Vonk

7th grade, Epstein Hebrew Academy

My shoes,  
my brand new shoes so very nice so very nice,  
just like how much I was grateful when I first got them  
I paid for the whole thing the laces the sole the shoe itself they're so very nice  
but not like the price

# *Battles*

I was born to fight I've trained my whole life  
I start with easy opponents 4 moves done  
then I get to the ones I use to be on their level but I'm not so 7 moves and took me a  
while on some  
but I beat them now I'm on the champions I'm on the last one its so hard but I lose  
15 moves  
I was checkmate defeated now back to the bottom

# *Flag*

The flag waves so very high above showing pride and freedom of the land it sits upon  
Why has Ukraine's been lowered to the dirt in the ground as if it does not matter

Hannah Gornish

4th grade, Epstein Hebrew Academy



# תעלומת הפלאפל

Eliya Saville

7th grade, Epstein Hebrew Academy

ביום האחרון של החופש הגדול התעוררתי מלא שמחה ועצב, מצד אחד יש לי עוד יום של חופש, וכולם יודעים שביום האחרון של החופש הגדול עושים הכי הרבה כיף, אבל מצד שני הלימודים יתחילו מחר ואני לא אוהב לימודים! אז החלטתי שהיום אני יעשה את "היום האחרון לחופש הגדול הכי כיף וטעים!" אז התחלתי להכין תוכנית להיום, בשעה עשר אני אלך למסעדה עם אמא שלי והאח הגדול שלי [והמעצבן מאוד!!] נעם, ברגע שאמא שלי התניעה את האוטו המשפחתי שלנו, המנוע התחיל לעשות קולות חזקים ומוזרים הבנו שמסעדה לא תהיה היום.

"לא נורא" אמרה אמא שלי, "אני אכין לכם חביתות לארוחת בוקר, ולארוחת צהריים נקנה פלאפל".

אני ושמעון עלינו במדרגות בחזרה לבית שלי, התישבנו באנחה ליד השולחן במטבח מחכים לאוכל. ואני בינתיים הסתכלתי בטלפון שלי משועמם, והתחלתי לחשוב שהיום הזה לא הולך להיות כל כך כיף.

"אתם רוצים את החביתה שלכם עם בצל?" שאלה אמא שלי, "עזבו כבר שמתי בצל בחביתות". אני ונעם התחלנו לאכול את החביתות שלנו, ולפני שהצלחתי למצמץ נעם כבר סיים את החביתה שלו והלך לחדר שלו, ואז הוא חזר למטבח ואמר: "אמא אני רעב! אפשר ללכת לקנות פלאפל עכשיו במקום בצהריים?" הוא שאל.

"כן, אתה יכול, אבל אני אשמח שתיקח את דוד איתך, אבל אל תקנה לי כלום, הנה קח שישים שקל, זה אמור להספיק".

"קדימה דוד תתארגן ונצא, אני רעעעעעעב" הוא אמר והשמיע קרקור מהבטן. איך הוא כל כך רעב אם הוא הרגע אכל חביתה משתי ביצים עם בצל?

התארגנתי במהירות והתחלתי ללכת עם נעם. ומשום מה נעם התחיל לרוץ בגלל שהוא "רעעעעעעב בטירוף וחייב פלאפל בבטן עכשיו" ברגע שהגעתי "לפסגת הפלאפל" ראיתי את נעם מחוץ לחנות מאוכזב מאוד,

"למה אתה לא נכנס לחנות?" שאלתי "מה פתאום אתה לא 'רעעעעעעב בטירוף וחייב פלאפל בבטן עכשיו' מה קרה?"

הוא היה כל כך מאוכזב שהוא לא יכל לדבר ורק הצביע על השלט ליד המסעדה, הסתכלתי על השלט והבנתי מייד למה הוא מאוכזב, בשלט היה כתוב "סגור לרגל שיפוצים" הייתי כל כך מאוכזב, אבל שנייה אחר כך החלטתי שאני לא מוותר, אז חיפשתי בטלפון שלי איפה יש עוד חנויות פלאפל באזור ומצאתי אחת קרובה מאוד! רק חמישה קילומטרים! חשבתי לרגע על תוכנית אבל רק דבר אחד יצא לי בראש! זה היה התוכנית הכי משוגעת אי פעם! אבל בגלל שממש רציתי את הפלאפל התחלתי לבצע את התוכנית, חיכיתי בצד הכביש עד שהגיע ניידת משטרה, ברגע שהניידת הגיע צעקתי לשוטרים, "אני צריך עזרה" כשהם שמעו את מה שאמרתי הם מייד עצרו בצד ושאלו אותי, "מה אתה צריך ילד?" כשהם מסתכלים עלי בחשדנות,

"אני יודע שלא הייתי צריך לעשות את זה אבל החנות פלאפל פה נסגרה, וממש רציתי לעשות כיף ביום האחרון של החופש הגדול אז האם תוכלו בבקשה להסיע אותנו לחנות הפלאפל הקרובה???? זה רק חמישה קילומטרים מפה!" התחננתי אליהם,

"תקשיב ילד בדרך כלל אנחנו לא עושים דברים כאלה, אבל בגלל שזה היום האחרון של החופש הגדול ואנחנו די משועממים אנחנו נסיע אותך!" אמר אחד השוטרים.

"תקשיב ילד בדרך כלל אנחנו לא עושים דברים כאלה, אבל בגלל שזה היום האחרון של החופש הגדול ואנחנו די משועממים אנחנו נסיע אותך!" אמר אחד השוטרים.  
"אתם יכולים להסיע גם את אח שלי נעם?" שאלתי,  
"בטח! קדימה, קפצו לניידת" אחד השוטרים אמר לנו.  
קפצנו לניידת ונסענו לחנות הפלאפל, קנינו את הפלאפל וחזרנו הביתה. היום הזה לא היה ממש כיף כמו שתכננתי, אבל הוא היה מאוד מעניין.

## הסוף

# איך יודעים שבא החורף

Ella Nodari

9th Grade, Yeshivat Kadimah High School

איך יודעים שהחורף בא  
מסתכלים סביב סביב

ואם רואים שיש שלג על האדמה  
ואם רואים אנשים עם סוודרים  
וכפפות  
ואם רואים שיש חנוכיות וסביבונים

אז יודעים שהחורף בא  
אז יודעים שהחורף בא

איך יודעים שהחורף בא  
מסתכלים סביב סביב  
ואם סבתא מכינה לביבות טעימות  
ואם רואים שכולם אוכלים סופגניות  
ואם רואים ילדים משחקים בשלג

אז יודעים שהחורף בא  
אז יודעים שהחורף בא

# איך יודעים שבא החורף

Emma Kennon

9th Grade, Yeshivat Kadimah High School

איך יודעים שבא החורף  
מסתכלים סביב סביב

ואם רואים שלג על האדמה  
ואם רואים אנשים עם מגפים  
ואם רואים סערת שלג  
אז יודעים שבא החורף

איך יודעים שבא החורף  
מסתכלים סביב סביב

ואם רואים אנשים חוגגים (את) חג החנוכה  
ואם רואים אנשים שרים "חנוכה הו חנוכה"  
ואם רואים שאנשים לובשים מעילים  
אז יודעים שבא החורף





# *MACHSHAVA*

2021-22/5782

