



# PANTHER PRESS



## Spring Issue 2021

### Our News Team

### Table of Contents

6th Grade:

Joshua DeVivo

Daniel Gallagher

Marchelino

George

Marlee McGrath

Griffin Ryan

7th Grade:

Lucy Halicks

Cecilia Houck

8th Grade:

Bella Dickerson

Brianna Elliot

Page 2-3: Upcoming OVMS Events

Page 4-5: Today Middle School, Tomorrow High School, A Farewell to OVMS' Graduating Class of 2021

Page 6: 3% and 99% poems by Brianna Elliot

Page 7: The Story of Demeter and Persephone

Page 8: A Rabbit's Adventure to get ready for Easter

Page 9-10: Euthanasia and Overcrowding in Animal shelters

Page 11: Cycles a Short Story by Josh DeVivo

Page 12: A Page of Poems

Page 13: Honey and Glass

Page 14-16: Isolated Sky Isles

New members always needed, If you're interested in joining Newspaper Club please email Mrs. Walz at [kwalz@wtps.org](mailto:kwalz@wtps.org)

Photo taken by Bella Dickerson





Do you want to look forward to something this spring? You can look forward the spring musical at Orchard Valley Middle School. *Once Upon a Mattress* is about the Princess and the Pea. It has catchy songs, laughs, and loveable characters. *Once Upon a Mattress* is about Prince Dauntless trying to find a princess that will suit his mother. His mother, the queen, is choosing the right person, but it becomes difficult. The storyline will guide you through a magical adventure of the Princess and the Pea. Will he ever find a princess?

## In person Music Concerts

By Ceci Houck

## *Once Upon a Mattress* : By Lucy Halicks

Finally, there will be in person music concerts. I know we missed out on a lot this year, but things are starting to get back to normal. So far, the music concerts have been all virtual and done through Flipgrid. The music teachers have put all the tracks and videos together to make the performances happen. Even the drama club has done it this way. This was a lot of work for all the teachers having to combine all the different music tracks together. Around the beginning of February, we found out that we will be able to start in person rehearsals and performances. The in-person rehearsals are so cool. Most of this year we have just heard ourselves sing or play an instrument. So, it is so fun to hear other people sing or play in a group. In the rehearsals we are all six feet apart, but everyone is so talented you can hear everyone. It is so amazing to hear that beautiful sound again. It is just that awesome sound that people get chills from because that is how good it is. Even though we are not able to have an in-person audience you can watch it live over teams or the recorded video. The chorus concert will be on June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021. The orchestra and band concerts will also be around there. The OVMS chorus, band, and orchestra hope you get the chance to watch the concerts.

# Rise and Shine OVMS Fun Run or Walk

OVMS is holding a virtual 1 mile fun run/ 5k run between May 1st to 16th dedicated to the 8th grade graduating class of 2021. It's open to all grade levels at all three middle schools, not just OV students. Your fun run can be done anywhere, at anytime. When participating in the run, please wear your school's colors. Feel free to take photos of yourself doing the run and send them to Mrs. Johnson at [Asjohnson@wtps.org](mailto:Asjohnson@wtps.org) or Mrs. Kubik at [Mkubik@wtps.org](mailto:Mkubik@wtps.org). To sign up and purchase tickets, go to the following website: <https://ovms.booktix.com/>. Tickets cost 10 dollars. See Mrs. Johnson or Mrs. Kubik if you have any questions.

Photos Taken by Mrs. Walz



# *Today Middle School, Tomorrow High School*

## A Farewell to OVMS' Graduating Class of 2021

By Bella Dickerson

If you were to describe this school year in one word, how would you describe it? I personally would describe it as unfamiliar. Why would I describe it as unfamiliar? Well, this year's been nothing like the students, staff, and parents at our school have ever seen or experienced. For years, middle school students have been attending school five days a week for seven hours a day. This all changed during the 2019-2020 school year and continued into the 2020-2021 school year. The students at our school were doing full remote learning, or hybrid learning. Students who were full remote, attended school from their homes using their laptops five days a week. Students who were hybrid, attend school three days a week from their laptops and came into the school building the other two days of the week. For most of the school year things were like this until mid-April. Now students are either fully in person or fully remote. All students attend school for four hours a day regardless if they're learning from home or in school. This was and still is new and unfamiliar to students and staff. Students have known what to expect when coming to school. We've had a sense of what school's like, but when this school year and Covid started throwing curve ball shaped challenges at us, we weren't ready for them.

The only students at our school that've had a typical middle school year are our current eighth graders. Covid hit during their seventh-grade year, so they got to experience the previous year their sixth-grade year like a regular middle school year.

What do our eighth graders like and dislike about remote learning? One eighth grader, Jeanine Spect told me that "I like that we get done earlier, but I don't like that we don't get to talk to our classmates, and we don't get to have a real classroom experience" Another eighth grader, Addy Bidinger likes that she gets to be in her own home. She also likes that there's a lot less to stress out about, like getting ready in the morning and picking out something to wear. She dislikes however that she's missing out on hands-on activities and the aspects of school that she feels make school fun. What I personally like about remote learning is being able to have more free time and being able to attend school with my cat. What I don't like about remote learning is not being able to hands on art class five days a week, being home so much and having in person after school clubs.

In a few short months we're going to have to say a painful and tearful goodbye to our eighth graders who will be going off to high school in September. Some of them will be attending Washington Twp High School next year; other students will be attending GCIT (Gloucester County Institute of Technology) or private Catholic high schools such as ALMA (Our Lady of Mercy Academy)

# *Today Middle School, Tomorrow High School*

## A Farewell to OVMS' Graduating Class of 2021

By Bella Dickerson Continued

How does our eighth-grade class of 2021 feel about going into high school and what are they looking forward to? Owen Smith told me that he feels “excited and shell shocked” and to him “It’s kind of crazy to think about.” He’s looking forward to having more freedom and being able to do more things such as pick electives. Paige Kozinewski told me that “ I’m excited about entering high school but more nervous because the high school’s so big.” What she’s looking forward to is experiencing new classes. When it comes to entering high school, I’m excited but also nervous or a little intimidated. I’m intimidated by the older students because I don’t know them and they’re all going to be older than me. Starting high school is also a kind of splash of cold water in the face for me. When I was younger, high school felt so far away and now, it’s right around the corner. In high school, I’m hoping to find my own group of friends to hang out with and make memories. I’m looking forward to taking art classes in high school and history class next year. Many students I discussed this topic told me that they’re looking forward to taking part in after school clubs next year and meeting new people. No matter what high schools our eighth graders are going to, they all will have the opportunities to make new people: they won’t have to worry about being alone

What are some goals our eighth graders are setting for their freshmen year and their next four years of high school? Addy Bidinger wants to make it onto the girls swim team and just overall get through high school. Owen Smith wants to work hard and study so he can go into pharmacology when he’s older. My goals are mostly academic, but I want to grow as an artist, get to pre calculus by my senior year and become more fluent in French. I really hope that all our eighth graders achieve their goals during their time in high school.

It’s going to be hard to say goodbye to them in June as they embark on a whole new chapter in their lives. It’s especially going to be hard for their teachers who have come to know them during the past three years while they’ve been in middle school. I know there are certain aspects of middle school that they’ll miss such as their teachers, the time school starts, the feel of middle school and the workload. They’ve made memories at OV that’ll last a lifetime and they’ll never forget. Eighth grade class of 2021, you’ll be greatly missed at OV. Enjoy high school and maybe send us a post card or two. Look out high school, here comes Orchard Valley Middle School Class of 2021.

### 3% : A Poem by Brianna Elliot

ONLY THREE PERCENT OF WOMAN HAVENT BEEN SEXUALLY HARASSED  
THAT IS 97 PERCENT OF THOSE THAT HAD THEIR VOICES SILENCED  
AND I AM SORRY IF THAT MAKES YOU UNCOMFORTABLE BUT THE FACT  
OF THE MATTER IS THAT  
I WAS TAUGHT IN GRADE SIX THAT MY BODY DISRUPTS CLASS  
THERE WERE NO ASSEMBLIES OR LECTURES WHEN BOYS STORMED THE HALLS SLAPPING GIRLS' BUTTS ON THEIR LEGGINGS  
I AM TAUGHT THAT WHEN I AM IN A ROOM, I AM A WASTE OF SPACE  
WHEN I SPEAK UP, THEY SAY THAT THATS NOT A WOMANS PLACE  
BUT WHAT CAN I DO WHEN THERE IS NOT ENOUGH TO PREVENT?  
BEING CALLED A WOMAN WHEN I DIDNT REALLY KNOW WHAT THAT MEAN'T  
GETTING CAT CALLED SO REGURALLY WE GET IT DAILY  
IT IS THE REASON WE TEXT EACHOTHER WHEN WE GET HOME SAFELY  
FROM THE STORY OF KITTY GENOVESE, WE ALL KNOW HOW THAT WENT  
SO, WHAT WILL YOU DO TO PROTECT THE 3 PERCENT?

### 99% : By Brianna Elliot

99% of men and woman have been sexually harassed that is 1% of people that still have their voice.

I was taught in 5<sup>th</sup> grade to stand up for what I believe in

But those men and woman have had their voices muted when all they wanted was to be heard.

To be acknowledged

But then the blame gets put on the victim

But they deserved it.

It is his fault.

She was asking for it.

No, they were not.

As the silence gets louder, the call for change deadens.

But the 1% will never know the inside of how it is in the 99%

Introduction written by Mrs. Cancila , OVMS  
Principal



In honor of Women's History Month (March) above is the voice of a brilliant young woman from Orchard Valley Middle School who eloquently expresses her thoughts, feelings, and concerns, about issues that continue to challenge women of today. Below is the voice of 8th-grade OVMS student, Brianna Elliott.





# The Story of Demeter and Persephone

By Marlee McGrath



As you know it is turning into spring! Did you know that the Greeks had a story on how the happened? Let's dive in.

The story goes that a beautiful young girl was spotted by Hades, god of the underworld. He was so fascinated by her that he set off to bring her back to the underworld to be his bride. So, one day when Persephone was in her mother's garden, Hades arose and took her back to the underworld. Persephone's mother, Demeter, goddess of seasons, and weather realized her daughter was gone, she started to panic. She got so worried she asked Zeus to send out a search party. After a few days of searching, they returned with the news that she was trapped in the underworld. As soon as Demeter got the news, Zeus and she rushed to the underworld where Zeus threatened Hades to let Persephone go. Hades told them that she had eaten three pomegranate seeds and that she would have to stay there for eternity. Zeus was so angry he sent thunder bolts down shaking the earth. Hades told Zeus that he would let Persephone go home for six months every year. Zeus and Demeter agreed to the terms. So now every year when spring starts to arrive, you will know Persephone is returning home to her mother for six months and that is why it gets so much nicer out.

# A Rabbit's Adventure to Prepare for Easter

By Ceci Houck

Today I was walking around in my backyard doing some yard work for when my family comes over for Easter on Sunday. It was supposedly going to be nice on Easter, so I figured we could stay outside that way we could be a little safer with covid-19. Then I fell in a rabbit's hole with a flash of green and blue. After I fell in the rabbit's hole, I was overwhelmed by tons of rabbits that each had wheelbarrow of eggs. The eggs were in all the different colors of the rainbow. The eggs also had interesting designs on them like zig – zags, polka dots, stripes, some even were just plain but they still looked super cool. I was surprised that none of them said anything or even acknowledge me. Like it was normal to have a human in their rabbit hole. After most of the rabbits walked into another part of the town, I turned around looking for a way out. I did not see any way out, so I turned around and started walking past a bunch of rabbit houses. The houses were so big for small rabbits though. I looked in one of the houses and saw chocolate being made. Which made me realize they were factories. As I moved from window to window there was more and more chocolate. They were stirring the ingredients to make the chocolate, molding, cooling, and wrapping the chocolate in all the bright colors. All the chocolate was moving on conveyor belts. Then in the next factory they made all the hard candy. Like Jelly-beans, licorice, Jolly ranchers, skittles, and lots more. Then we got to the best factory of all. The one where they put the candy in the eggs. There were the most rabbits in this factory because it was all by hand, unlike the other ones.

It was amazing how many eggs they made. The next factory was weird because there was no one in there. The factory looked like storage for all the candy, but it was so dark I could not tell. I could not imagine why they would not just store all the candy in the other factories. Then I saw a sign that said QUARNTINE and that explained everything. I did not realize the rabbits were affected by Covid – 19 too. I was starting to wonder if there was anything else but factories in the rabbit's hole. Then I saw a big palace, that looked like a castle. It was so beautiful and had tons of detail. So, I went in this stained-glass door that had a rabbit hiding eggs. There was suddenly that same flash of green and blue light and I was laying on the ground of my back yard where the rabbit's hole was. But the hole was gone. It was so weird, but I had the best time even if it



# Euthanasia and Overcrowding in Animal Shelters

By Bella Dickerson

According to an article written by the ASPCA or American Society for Prevention of Cruelty of Animals, 1.5 million animals brought into animal shelters are euthanized each year. 860,000 of those animals euthanized are cats and 670,000 of those animals are dogs. When you euthanize an animal, it means that you're putting the animal to sleep permanently or killing it. Animals are euthanized for many different reasons such as old age, or they're in extremely poor health. One of the main reasons that animals are euthanized is because of overcrowding in animal shelters. Animal shelters usually euthanize inhumanely. Animal shelters shouldn't euthanize innocent healthy animals just because the shelter is overcrowded.

First of all, animal shelters often euthanize with methods that are inhumane. For example, shelters may use gas chambers for euthanasia. Once inside a gas chamber, it takes several minutes for the animal to lose consciousness. Shelters put the animal inside a small, cramped box that oftentimes smells like other animals. Animals are already stressed out enough because they have sense of what's going on around them; adding the smells from other animals or being with other animals, causes their stress levels to rise even more than they already have. In certain situations, the animal may still be aware of what's going on around them when their vital organs begin giving out. According to an article written by the Humane Society of the United States, "Not only can gas chambers cause physical pain for ill, injured, old and young animals (the majority of animals facing euthanasia in shelters), -they cause stress in 100 percent of animals forced into a chamber." This is why gas chambers are inhumane.

Animals endure countless amounts of fear and suffering that they shouldn't have to endure if shelters were no kill shelters and didn't euthanize due to overcrowded conditions.

Second of all, animals are just like humans. They have the right to life and not being treated unkindly. Animals have situational awareness. They also feel emotions like humans do such as fear, anger, and sorrow. Tom Regan, a Professor of Philosophy at North Carolina State University, feels as though, "*Animals have a basic moral right to respectful treatment*" [Emphasis added]. Animals aren't receiving respectful treatment if they are being forced to be euthanized in inhumane ways, such as gas chambers. Animals shouldn't be forced to be euthanized if the animal is healthy and could be placed for adoption.

Third of all, there are alternative ways to deal with and prevent the overcrowding of shelters. . One way to prevent the overcrowding of animal shelters is by having cats and dogs spayed or neutered. This prevents the animal from having offspring and manages the cat and dog population. As a result of this, less animals are going to need homes. Cats and dogs become able to be spayed or neutered around the age of 6 months old. In addition, a person could also adopt a pet from an animal shelter rather than from a breeder. Finally, if a person finds a stray animal, instead of taking it to a shelter, -they could try tracking down the owner themselves. If the owner can't be found, then the person, can adopt the pet.

Many Animal Shelters are doing things to prevent and deal with the problem of overcrowding of shelters as well. One way that shelters deal and prevent the overcrowding problem is by placing animals in foster homes. By using foster homes, it makes more room in animal shelters while in the process socializing the animal with people, children and other animals. This way, the animal is more likely to be adopted.

# Euthanasia and Overcrowding in Animal Shelters

By Bella Dickerson Continued

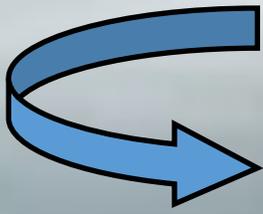
An animal shelter in Vineland New Jersey called the South Jersey Regional Animal Shelter works extremely hard to reduce the overcrowding of shelters and the number of animals it has to euthanize. They do this by “ using all reasonably available means to promote adoptions, maintaining a foster care program, providing ill and injured animals, which are otherwise adoptable, with veterinary care to the extent our resources allow; directly addressing the root of the problem , the overpopulation of unwanted pets, by providing low-cost spay/neuter services and micro-chipping, and by making available humane education classes to any local schools or social groups” (from an article written by the SJRAS) Shelters are and can use these methods if they aren't already to lower the number of animals they euthanize each year. Some animal shelters and animal control services perform “TNR” or Trap-Neuter-Return.” As the name indicates, they trap feral cats, neuter or spay them and then return them back into the wild.

Sometimes animals do have to be euthanized. If an animal must be euthanized, it should be done by a painless injection of sodium pentobarbital so that the animal won't have to suffer. The animal loses consciousness within seconds to a minute after receiving the injection. Animals may be put to sleep because they're extremely sick, injured or of old age. Pet owners will do this because the animal may have already received all the medical help they can get and so they don't have to endure anymore pain.

Animals may be put to sleep because they're extremely sick, injured or of old age. Pet owners will do this because the animal may have already received all the medical help they can get and so they don't have to endure anymore pain. Overcrowded shelters, however, should only use the injection method if it's an absolute must. Euthanasia because of age or health shouldn't be done inhumanely.

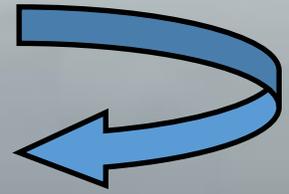
Overcrowded shelters, however, should only use the injection method if it's an absolute must. Euthanasia because of age or health shouldn't be done inhumanely. In New Jersey along with many other states, it's illegal to euthanize inhumanely. In the state of New Jersey, there's a law that makes inhumane euthanasia illegal. The law outlines that the only humane methods of euthanasia are the ones done by a veterinary office. Inhumane euthanasia done by lethal gas is illegal and any method where the animal doesn't lose consciousness and pass quickly is also considered illegal. If the law is violated, the offender must pay a fine of \$25 for the first occurrence and \$50 for any occurrence afterword. (Monmouth County Society for the Prevention of Cruelty of Animals) Therefore if euthanasian must be done, then it should be done humanely. Euthanasian should be a last resort for an animal not a go to for crowded shelters.

In conclusion, animal shelters shouldn't euthanize animals because they're overcrowded. Oftentimes, the way animal shelters euthanize are inhumane. Animals deserve the right to life, because they have rights just like humans. Lastly, a New Jersey law says that inhumane euthanasian is illegal. People can help prevent inhumane euthanasia in shelters by adopting their next pet from an animal shelter instead of a breeder or by taking in a stray. By working to prevent the overcrowding of shelters, a person will see how amazing it is to adopt an animal or to make its life better. It's rewarding when a person helps someone else but when they help an animal, it's even more rewarding. It's even more rewarding because in return the animal gives them it's trust and unconditional love. “Saving just one pet won't change the world, but surely the world will change for that one pet.” quote from Animal Lifeline Inc a non profit animal rescue organization out of Marlton New Jersey. Hopefully people will work and continue to work to lower that number of animals euthanized each year and receive the unconventional love that animals can give.



# Cycles: A Short Story

By Joshua DeVivo



Cycles. Everything has to repeat.

You wake up. It's a new day. You go to brush your teeth like normal, get a shower like normal, and get dressed like normal. It's a nice Saturday morning, so you make some breakfast for yourself, maybe watch some TV later. It's the same all the time.

It's time to do something. Take a walk, read a book, play games, its all the same every day. Sometimes it might seem better to do nothing, but nothing has been repeated multiple times.

Eat dinner, relax before going to bed. Tomorrow is another day, but what is there to look forward to? Its like a game you've already beat.

What's the point? Everything is always the same.

You wake up the next day. For some reason, you feel like today will be different for once. Outside, it's raining. It might seem like a good idea to stay inside, but why don't you do something different for once? Go outside while it's raining and drive somewhere, like the park, or the beach. These are things that don't repeat. These only happen once or twice, they aren't constant.

Tomorrow is a new year, a new cycle around the sun, the cycle of seasons, the cycle of life repeats again next year.

The End



## The Life-giving Message

By Marchelino George

Whose life is that? I think I know.  
Its owner is quite sad though.  
Full of sorrow like the gloomy rain,  
His life is sad, short, and deep,  
He has gone along with it,  
He thinks that his life would come  
to an end.  
One day, he rises from his soft  
bed,  
And starts a new day,  
His life starts to get better from  
time to time.  
He now has a fantastic life.

Perhaps it is only a dream.

Perhaps it is all useless.

Perhaps it isn't real.

Perhaps it won't matter.

However, we move on anyway.

We sit up tall with eyes that gleam.

We believe that nothing is hopeless.

We have an appeal.

We don't truly matter.

However, there is no need to waste your life,  
even though it won't matter.

You can move people and make them dream.

You can be selfless.

You can heal.

And make people believe they matter Per-  
haps it won't matter to the future, but it  
matters to the people you love.

## Remembrance

A poem by Daniel Gallagher

I'm Done

A Haiku written by Bella Dickerson

*I'm finally done*

*I have a rough draft finished*

*Time for me to Edit*



# Honey and Glass:



A Poem written by Brianna Elliot

*Do you know those types of girls that look like they are  
made of honey and glass?*

*Like sticky sweet ash and you cannot get the taste out of  
your mouth*

*Burn sugar and a little bit of rum.*

*And she dances in the rain with her clothes  
on drenched to the bone and never knows when she  
is all gone.*

*But she is the life of the party never feeling hearty, and I  
wonder what it is like to be one of those girls.*

*To sit, in the sun and look at the world and nev-  
er think.*

*Wow.*

*Am I Enough?*

*Cause life is easy when you are the main character.*

*This is not fair.*

*But her smile makes it hard to be mad it is not her fault  
I am so sad that I will stay in bed day to day.*

*So, I will sit here and look at these girls in the sun,  
dancing in the rain, having their fun.*

*And today I can forget the past though it is not my last  
and be one of the girls of Honey and Glass.*

# Part 1 of Isolated Sky Isles by Daniel Gallagher

Matt awakened in a pool of his own sweat, not in his bed, nor in his room. He couldn't quite see where he was, though, he knew it wasn't home. It was a blur of bright light, and once he could handle the light, he was face to face with white clouds and the blue sky. Who knew how high up he was?

Matt had now sat up, trying to wipe the sweat off his face, trying to calm himself. He took a good look around him, seeing an ancient Greek looking temple with grey stone and gold on the borders of the structure. Matt was truly confused, with thoughts racing through his head, however, amidst the blur of panic in his head, he heard a voice.

"Thou hast fought valiantly in one's life, hence forth he be rewarded with the Sky Isle's Trials." Matt looked all around him, looking for where this voice could've been coming from. There was no speaker, and no person around him. "Please, do continue." Matt now got a sickening feeling. What would happen if he wouldn't continue and go into that building? What would this voice do? He'd get up, and hesitantly walk towards the structure.

He'd arrive inside, and inside that structure was a long hallway with a beautiful red carpet, polished white stone on the walls, flags flowing, mounted on the walls. Matt walked now, and at the end there would be a door. He'd open the door, and was met with a room, nearly the same as the last one he was in, however, there would be crystals of different colors covered with thick glass. There would be a button in front of them. There were five in total. Matt pressed the one closest to him on his right, and the voice returned.

"The water rises from the sea and the fire is put out." Matt thought for a moment and moved to the other button.

"The earth rises from the sea and creates new lands." The voice said now.

He again moved to the next button. Behind this button there was a red crystal. He pressed the button, and once again the voice spoke.

"Fire covers the lands, destroying all the life."

He now went over to the green crystal. It said,

"Life comes from the land that rises from the sea."

Now there was the final button. He went over to this button and looked at the shiny cyan crystal. He pressed the button.

"Lightning strikes and starts the fires." The voice now said. Matt now walked to the center of the room, it's symmetry amazing, with the Greek like columns and the red banners hanging

from then, flowing in the wind in what seemed to be unison. Matt now realized something else. At the top of the room there was a giant crystal which had no glow at all. It was completely black, as if the power that were once in it were now gone. Matt thought for a moment. What could this possibly mean?

## Part 2 of Isolated Sky Isles by Daniel Gallagher

He now figured out the riddle, or what he must do in the riddle. He had to put those sentences in the correct order, so they made sense. He now got up, thinking about the words.

The water rises from the sea and the fire is put out. The earth rises from the sea and creates new lands. Fire covered the lands, destroying all the life. And then the last one, Life comes from the land the rises from the sea. Lightning strikes and starts the fires.

Matt had figured it out now. The correct order was

“The earth rises from the sea and creates new lands. Life come from the land that rises from the sea. Lightning strikes and starts the fires. Fire covers the lands, destroying all the life. The water rises from the sea and the fire is now put out.”

Matt had now understood. He had to press the buttons in order, and so, he did that. There was now a rumbling, a giant and unexpected one. Matt had been brought down. Matt turned to the button in the center of his view, and behind it and the crystal the wall seemed to be slowly falling upwards. It was a door that Matt hadn't even realized was there. Matt hesitantly and slowly got up and looked to the door for a moment. He now walked over and entered the corridor that had been behind the door.

It was another long walk through a hall, it seemed like it was taking forever for Matt to get to the end. To him it felt like it had been 10 minutes of just walking down this hall. Could the hall really be that long? No, a better question would be could the building be this big.

Matt now looked at his phone. It was 10:24 in the morning, and if he weren't back home for breakfast, his mom would be worried to death. It felt like another eternity of him walking, and then he stopped once again to check his phone. A minute had passed on his phone while it felt like he'd been walking for at least 20 minutes. Matt was beginning to give up now. He was tired of walking and his feet hurt. He just didn't feel like going anymore. He now sat down, leaning against the wall, just sitting there. He was too tired to even think about continuing. He now heard a voice.

“Thou hast uncovered a mere riddle. There is only true hell ahead of you now. The second trial of the Sky Isles. The infinity walks. A trial of will.”

Matt now understood. He now really wished he weren't here anymore, for he would have to walk for a very, very long time now. He took a 10-minute break, or according to his phone, a one minute break. Matt now stood up and walked once more. He would make it home and prove to this dumb voice that he had enough will to walk down a simple corridor.

It was now 10:28 according to his phone. What felt like walking for two hours was only him walking for four minutes. Another “two minutes” had passed, and he was once more tired. He sat down again, taking another break. He now walked, and after the same amount of time he took a break. This pattern happened at least 10 times. Matt still was not at the end. It felt like it had been a day, and Matt was starving, however, to his phone it was only 11:04, meaning only 40 minutes had passed. Though, there was light, and Matt could see it. He now ran, running as fast as he could to the light. It was so close, so, so close, however, his walk was taking so, so long, too long. It felt like 10 minutes pass. And then 20 minutes. And then 30 minutes. He was only a foot away from the door, and to get to that door he had to run for what felt like another 5 minutes. He was finally there and dropped onto the floor of the next room as the light slowly began to fade away.

## Part 3 of Isolated Sky Isles by Daniel Gallagher

It felt like it had been a day, and Matt was starving, however, to his phone it was only 11:04, meaning only 40 minutes had passed. Though, there was light, and Matt could see it. He now ran, running as fast as he could to the light. It was so close, so, so close, however, his walk was taking so, so long, too long. It felt like 10 minutes pass. And then 20 minutes. And then 30 minutes. He was only a foot away from the door, and to get to that door he had to run for what felt like another 5 minutes. He was finally there and dropped onto the floor of the next room as the light slowly began to fade away.

Matt now opened his eyes, and what he saw was another room just like the last one he was in, though, it didn't have the crystals and buttons. There were two doors, and two black figures guarding each one of them. Matt obviously didn't really want to get up and walk to him, but at this point it was his only choice. Matt got up, and the voice spoke once more.

"These are the guards that guard both the door to the real world and the door to endless hell. One lies, and one tells the truth. The one that lies guards hell, and the one that speaks the truth guards the home you love so."

Matt now thought. If he wanted to get home, he would have to figure out who the one who told the truth is, which would be difficult. He now thought, each idea flashing by for he knew that it wouldn't work.

"Ask them if they guard heaven? No, that wouldn't work. What about asking them if the other one guards heaven? No, that wouldn't work either..." he thought. At this point it seems impossible for him to find out the answer. Matt now had an idea pop into his head. He now walked up to the figure on the left.

"Do you guard this door?" Matt asked, confidently.

"No," the figure lied. Matt had now gotten his answer. Matt walked over to the other guard, and asked, "May I enter?"

"You may enter." The other figure said as it moved aside, allowing Matt to pass through that door. Matt opened the door and was met with a blinding light. He had to shield his eyes for a moment to get used to the light. He stared at it, dumbfounded.

"How could such a beautiful and bright light even exist?" he wondered. One of the figures now pushed him in, and he was sent flying down into the glowing white abyss.

Matt now awakened in a shower of his own sweat. Had it all been a dream? Matt sat up, looking around the room he was in. He was in his bedroom. He checked his phone and saw that it was 11:03.

"Matt!" Matt's mother yelled from downstairs.

"Coming, sorry for sleeping so long!" Matt yelled in response. Matt had guessed it was a dream, though, it sure was an interesting one. He figured out that it wasn't just a dream, however, in the morning.

When Matt was washing his hands in the downstairs bathroom, the water seemed... weird...

It seemed to react to Matt's touch more than usual, and it got even weirder when he figured out, he could move the water on his own will. It wasn't a dream. Matt had no idea what was happening, nor where he went, however, since he managed to finish the Isolate Sky Trials, he was now free, and had the power to control water

He exited the bathroom and ate breakfast. He decided that perhaps it wouldn't be best to show his powers to his mother, or to anyone, so, even after breakfast, he decided to conceal this power. It would never be seen again and would only be remembered in Matt's deepest imagination. .