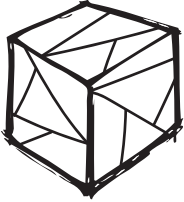


# SPIN FOR YOUR LIFE



*Evan Jacobs*



*MEET THE*



**Carson**

**Age:** 11

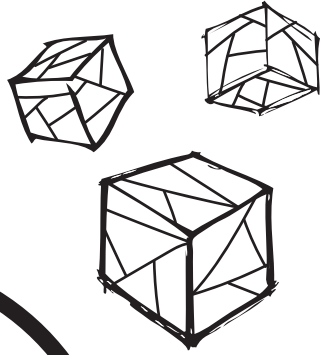
**Hobby:** making unboxing videos

**Favorite Food:** pepperoni tacos

**Dream Job:** KidVid star

**Best Quality:** great at everything

# CHARACTERS



Eli

**Age:** 11

**Best Subject:** science

**Favorite Sport:** BMX racing

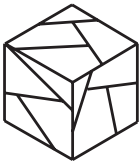
**Pet Peeve:** being ignored

**Best Quality:** is a loyal friend

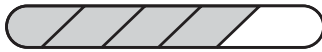
# 1

## CARSON THE GREAT

Carson Schwartz checked his phone. “Yes!” he said. “It’s almost here!”

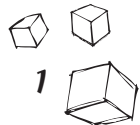


Cube Spinner Tracker



The shelves in Carson’s room were filled with gadgets. He couldn’t wait to add this new one. It was a Cube Spinner. Most kids at school had one. They were small puzzle cubes. You spun parts of the cube to make different shapes.

*Nobody has one like this, Carson thought.*



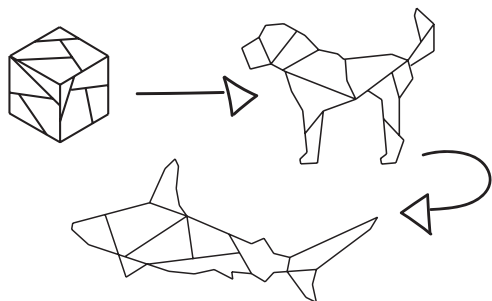
He stared at the picture of it on his phone.

*It's special.*

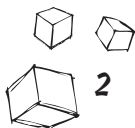
Carson loved watching videos of kids playing with Cube Spinners. The videos were posted on KidVid. This was a popular website. Carson and all his friends posted videos on the site too.

He pulled up a new one. A kid from Bearing Middle School had posted it. That was Carson's school.

The kid spun his cube. In three spins, he made a dog. He spun it more. His fingers flew. Now it was a shark.



Pfft. I can do better than that.

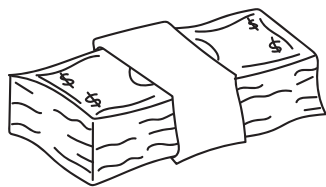


*This guy is good*, Carson thought. *But not as good as I am*. Carson always had to be the best. No one was allowed to beat him at anything.

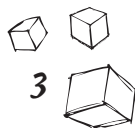
He was in sixth grade, and his school had a gaming club. They always played *Clan Castles*. It was Carson's favorite video game. Currently, he had the highest score. So his friends called him "Carson the Great."

Soon he checked his phone again. Carson had ordered the Cube Spinner from Geek Spot. The site sold all kinds of gadgets. Some were new. Others were used.

This spinner was rare. It was used. But it looked brand-new. The shiny silver cube was expensive too. It cost \$40. Carson had saved up his allowance for weeks.



That's a lot of money!



Looking at the spinner's picture made his thoughts race. *I bet this thing makes so many shapes.* He got even more excited.

*Knock, knock.*

“Hey, bud.” Carson’s dad poked his head around the door. “Are you playing that new *Monster Crush* game?”

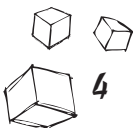


“Nah,” Carson said. “I beat it already.”

His dad smiled. “Of course you did. Don’t stay up too late, okay? I know you like to be the best. But even the best need rest.”

Carson rolled his eyes. “Sure, Dad. Good night.”

Mr. Schwartz winked at his son. Then he shut the door behind him.



Finally, Carson put his phone down. It was time to go to bed. The sooner he slept, the sooner his spinner would arrive.

School the next day was a blur. All Carson could think about was his spinner. The last bell finally rang. Carson raced home. His best friend Eli Holmes was with him. Eli had dark skin and curly hair. He was tall like Carson.

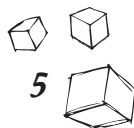
A box was on Carson's doorstep.

"Is it heavy?" Eli asked. He sat on his BMX bike. Eli loved to ride. He had tons of trophies from races he'd won.

Eli=great  
BMX rider

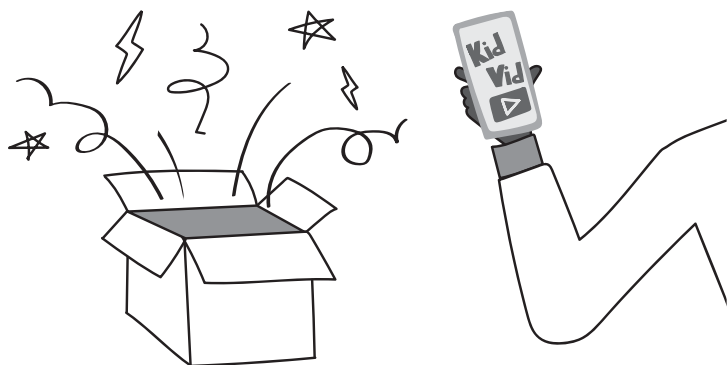


Carson=best  
spinner





“Yeah.” Carson beamed. He held the box carefully. “Let’s go make an unboxing video!”



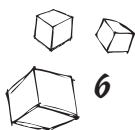
The boys went up to Carson’s room. Eli took out his phone. He started recording.

“It’s huge,” Carson said as he opened the box. “Bigger than any spinner I’ve ever seen.” He took the spinner out. Then he held it up to the camera. “Heavier too.”

“Are you going to spin it?” Eli asked.

Carson rolled his eyes. “Yeah, duh!”

He held the cube with both hands. Then he started to spin it.



“Wow,” Carson said. “This turns really smoothly. It’s almost like it’s spinning itself.” His fingers worked fast. He twisted a piece one way. Another part was spun a different way.

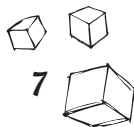
Finally, a shape snapped into place. It was a spider.



Carson gasped. “Wow!”

“Ladies and gentlemen,” Eli said. “This Cube Spinner is fresh out of the box. And Carson Schwartz has already made a spider!”

Carson smiled. Spiders were complex shapes. Only expert spinners could make them.

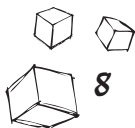


Eli kept filming. Carson spun the cube some more. He pulled off shape after shape. His focus was set on the cube. It almost felt like he was in a trance.



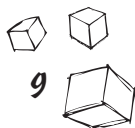
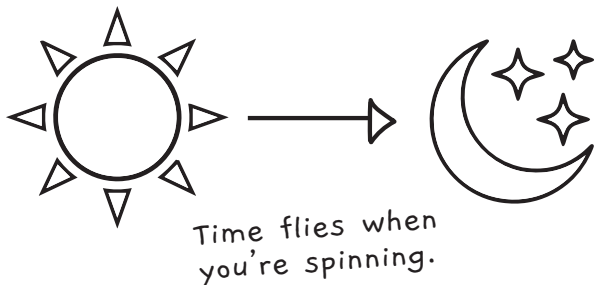
After a while, Eli put the phone down. “Okay. I think that’s good. I need some fresh air. Let’s go for a ride.”

Carson kept spinning. Different shapes formed. “Nah,” he said. “I want to practice. Alex Phan thinks he’s the best spinner in school. I have to prove him wrong.”



“Oh.” Eli frowned. “Okay. I guess I’ll see you tomorrow.”

“Later.” Carson did not look up. He just kept spinning.



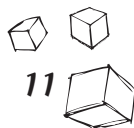
## 2

### ***SPIN-OFF***

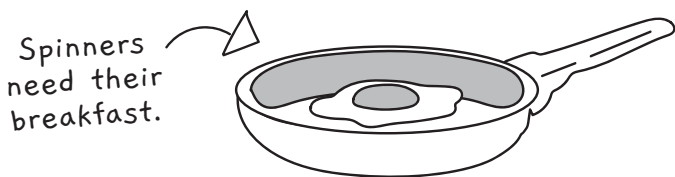
The next day, Carson's alarm woke him up. He was really tired. *I must have stayed up too late*, he thought. *That spinner is so cool.*



Carson got dressed. He grabbed the spinner and his backpack. Then he went downstairs.



His dad was at the stove, making eggs. He chatted on his phone as he cooked. Carson's mom sat at the table. She was tapping on her tablet.



Mrs. Schwartz managed the website for Spun. That was the name of their town. Spun was small. But Carson didn't mind. *A great spinner should live in a place called Spun.* He grinned at the thought.

"Oh, Mom," his dad said into the phone. "Sorry to hear that. I'll come by later." He sounded worried.

Carson looked at his mom.

"Your grandma fell last night," his mom whispered. "She saw a spider and slipped."

“Is she okay?” he asked.

“Yes. She bruised her leg pretty badly though. It’s hard for her to walk.”

“That’s a bummer,” Carson said. He loved his grandma. She was nearly 80. But she was always interested in his new gadgets.

Carson spun the Cube Spinner a few times. He made it into a bird. Spinning made him feel better.

“You totally faked your video!” Alex Phan shouted. He was tall with short black hair. It blended in with his black hoodie.

Carson shook his head. He had just gotten to school. Then Alex started yelling at him.



Alex and Carson were rivals. Each thought of himself as the best. They always tried to outdo one another.

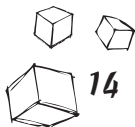
Now the boys stood across from each other. Classmates surrounded them. A few pulled out their phones. Carson hoped they were filming.



This is definitely going viral!

“My video wasn’t fake!” Carson said. He took out his Cube Spinner. “I’m just better than you. And you can’t handle it.”

“Better than *me*?” Alex laughed. “Please. Spin-off at lunch!”





“Ooh,” a few kids in the crowd said. Everyone knew that Carson had to be the best. Alex was trying to get in his head.

“Deal!” Carson smirked. “Prepare to lose.”

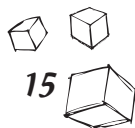
At lunch, the blacktop was packed. Some kids shot hoops. Others were on their phones. Carson and Alex met in the middle. People stopped playing and texting. Everyone gathered around.

“Okay,” Carson said. “Let’s see what you got!” He handed Alex the Cube Spinner.

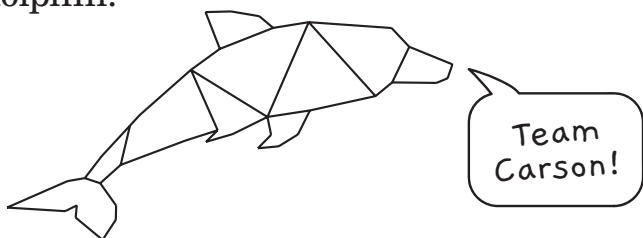
Alex took it and started spinning. He only got a few spins in. Then the cube fell out of his hands.

Everyone laughed.

Alex’s face turned red. “You made it do that!” he barked.



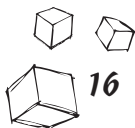
Carson picked up the spinner. “I didn’t even touch it.” He started spinning. His fingers flew around the cube. In a flash, he made a palm tree. Then he spun it into a dolphin.



“Go, Carson!” Eli called. He was livestreaming the spin-off. It went straight to KidVid.

The spinner changed again. This time it became a lion. Carson felt like he was controlling it with his mind. He didn’t even need to touch the cube. It seemed to glow in his hands.

Suddenly, the bell rang. Lunch was over. Carson folded the spinner back up.



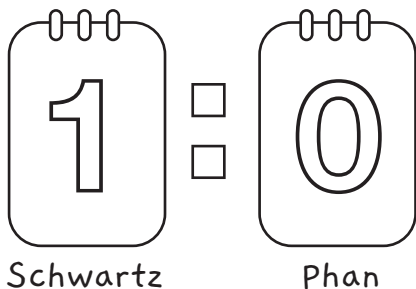
All the students cheered. A few slapped him on the back.

Alex stormed off. He hated losing.

Eli smiled. “That was awesome, Carson!” He put his phone away. “You’re still the champ!”

Carson smirked. “Of course.”

They headed to class. But Carson’s legs felt heavy. He was suddenly very tired. His head hurt too. *Oh well*, he thought. *At least I’m still number one.*



# SPIN FOR YOUR LIFE

This Cube Spinner is the best, just like me! But...why is it glowing?



  
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