

ZOMBIES!

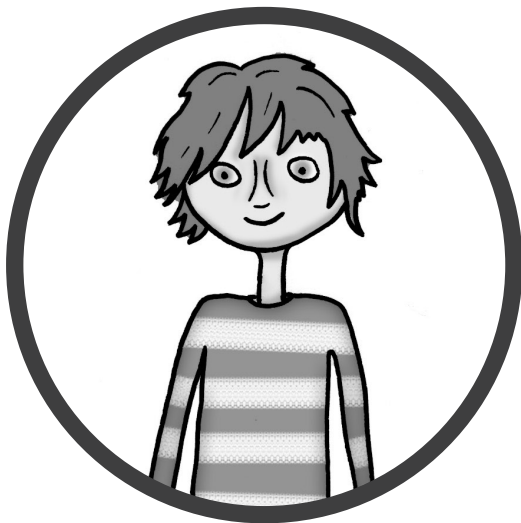


Evan Jacobs





MEET THE



LEO the LIAR

Age: 10

Most Crazy Lie: that his brother is from Mars

First Halloween Costume: Pinocchio

Favorite Ice Cream: raspberry ripple—
it looks like blood

Best Quality: wants to be a good person

CHARACTERS



LAMEBRAIN *the* ZOMBIE

Age: 103

Current Goal: to keep the rest of his tongue

Best Friend: the maggot that lives in his pinky toe

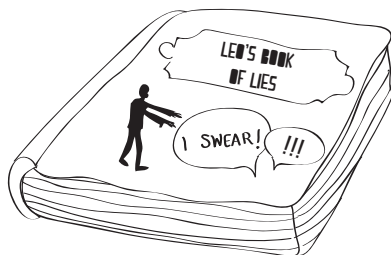
Favorite Food: food, what's that?

Best Quality: doesn't need any sleep

LEO THE LIAR

“Then,” Leo Jennings said. “I saw zombies walk down the street. I had to hide behind a big car.” He smiled. “I didn’t want to be seen.”

Leo was telling a story. Like always. He was known all over school for telling stories. Recess was almost over. Soon, all the kids would go back to class.



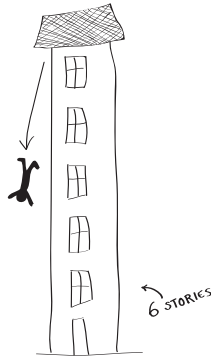
Two students sat in front of Leo. They were brothers. They were new in school. They didn't know Leo. That he loved scary movies. That he loved to tell stories. That he was known as "Leo the Liar."

LEO the LIAR!!

Leo didn't mind that name. He always had stories to tell. He didn't think they were lies. He thought they were cool. Like the time he saved a family from a fire. Or when he fell from a six-story building. And lived.

None of it ever happened. But Leo didn't care. He just made up more.





Leo was about to tell the new kids how he saved the town. He tried to stop himself. It was hard. He had so many stories to tell. He had seen many scary movies. Leo had a lot in his head. A story came into his mind. He had to tell it.

This story was scary. Leo was out late. He saw something. His town was filled with zombies. A loud voice broke into his head.

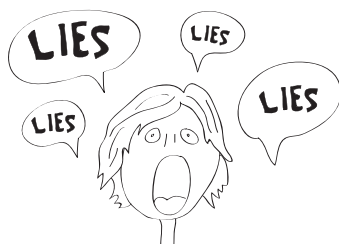
“Leo the Liar. You telling lies again?” Adam Ortiz. He didn’t like Leo.

Leo saw Adam. He was standing with Manuel Mendez. And Angelo Setari.

“No.” Leo swallowed hard. He knew Adam would not believe him. “I was just telling ...”

Leo turned. He saw the two brothers. They had walked away. As soon as they could. He was sad. At first. But Leo knew he did that to people.

“Another big lie,” Adam said.



Adam moved closer to Leo. Manuel and Angelo moved in.

“The bell is about to ring,” Leo said. He eyed his watch. “Why not wait till lunch? You’ll have a whole forty minutes to get me.”

“Forty minutes!” Adam laughed.

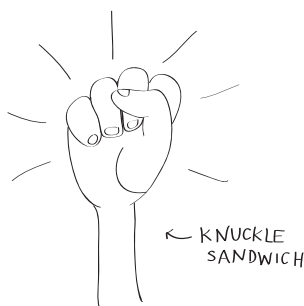


Manuel and Angelo smiled.

“I’m just gonna need four seconds. I told you to stop your lies. You didn’t. Now you’re gonna pay.”

Adam grabbed Leo by the shirt. He held up his fist. Leo closed his eyes.

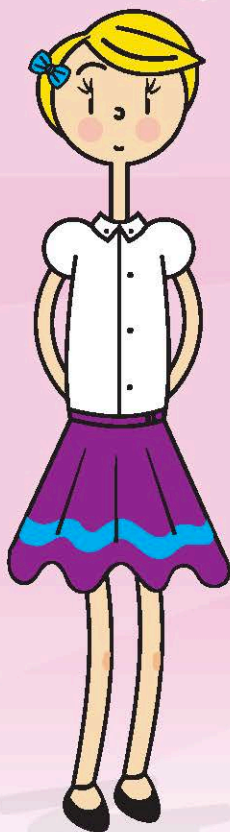
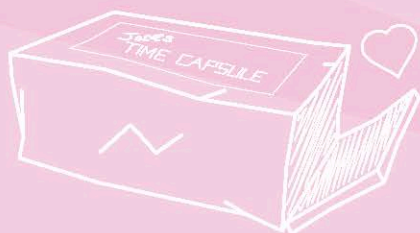
He was going to get pounded. And he didn’t want to see it.

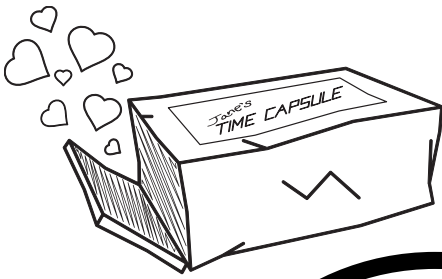


“Your mouth! It will get you in trouble one day.” That’s what his parents always said. And now look.

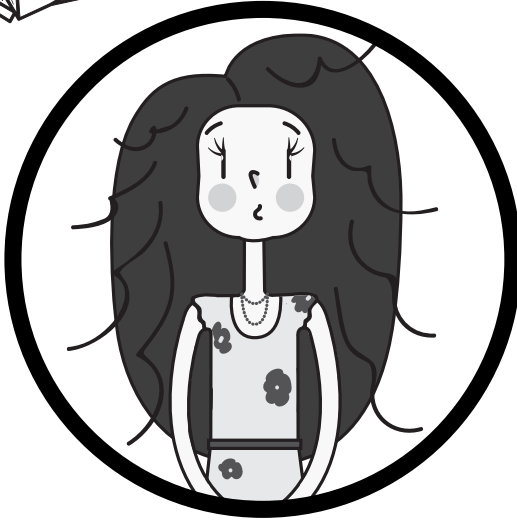


JEFF GOTTESFELD





MEET THE



Maddie

Age: 12

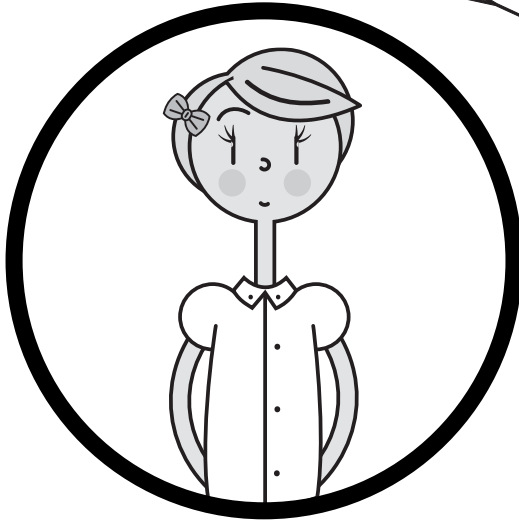
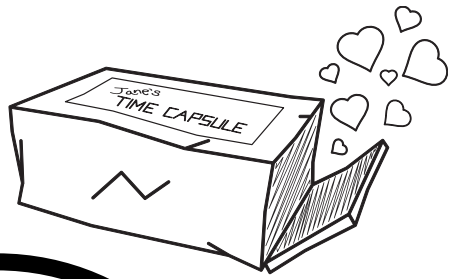
Favorite Color: pink, or sometimes very, very light red

Favorite School Subject: science

Dislikes: brushing her hair before bed

Best Quality: adventurous

CHARACTERS



Lori

Age: 11

Family: two parents, two sisters, two cats, and one great-grandmother

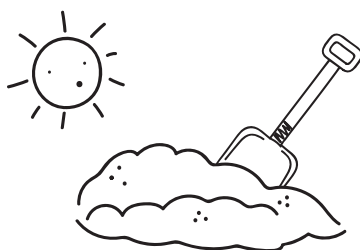
Unique Habit: only writes with green ink

Career Goal: to work at an advertising agency

Best Quality: logical

1

CLANG!



Maddie dug the spade into the earth. Her dark hair stuck to her neck. Her pale skin was dirty. She and her bud Lori were behind Lori's house.

They had a sixth-grade service project. They chose to grow food for the poor. To do it they needed a good place for a garden. Lori's parents said it was okay to plant one out back.

Making a garden was hard work. It was very hot for May. Maddie had sweat running down her face. So did Lori.



Lori was breaking up the soil with a pick. Maddie turned the soil over. It would be a great garden when they were done. But they had a long way to go.

“It’s a good thing Trevor can’t see me now,” Maddie told Lori. “I’m a mess.” She brushed dirt from her face. Then she fixed her ponytail. She normally wore her hair down. It was long and curly. But right now she was just trying to keep it frizz free.

Trevor was the boy Maddie liked. There



was a school dance in a week. She hoped Trevor would ask her. He hadn't yet.

"Same thing with Nick and me," Lori agreed. She had short blonde hair. Today it looked like it was glued to her head.

Lori liked Nick a lot. But Nick had not asked Lori either. There was still a little time left for the guys to ask. But not much.



The dance would be outside. Under the stars. The girls had great dresses. Maddie hoped it would not be as hot as it was today. That would be a bummer.

"Want to get a cold drink?" Lori asked. "I need a break."



“Five more minutes,” Maddie told her. She knew how to make a garden. Lori didn’t. The work would not do itself. The garden would be small. All the plants had to grow well. So the ground had to be soft. Plants liked soft dirt. “Give me the pick.”



Lori gave Maddie the pick. Maddie swung it. Hard dirt split into clumps. She swung it five more times. It was tough work, but the earth softened. Then she swung once more.

Clang!

Huh? It sounded like the pick hit a big

rock. Maddie moved a little to the right. She swung again.

Clang!

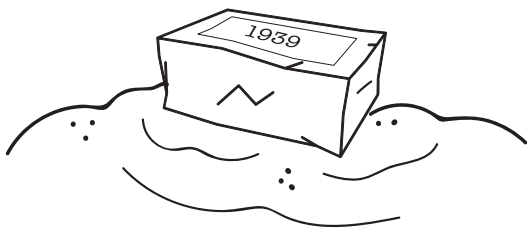
Strange. Something big was down there.

“That sounds like metal,” Maddie told Lori.

“I bet it’s an old water pipe,” Lori said.

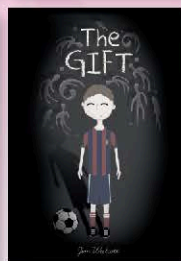
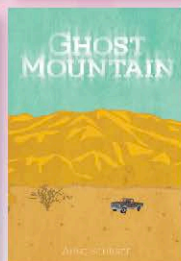
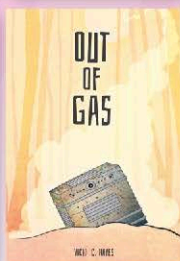
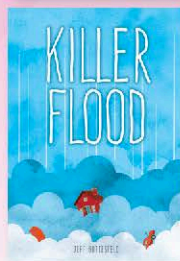
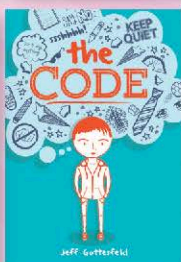
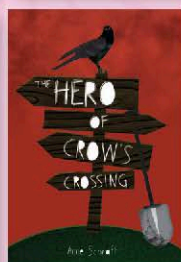
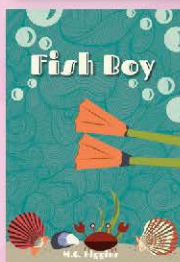
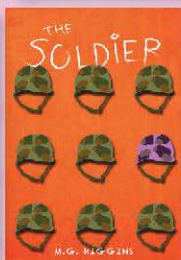
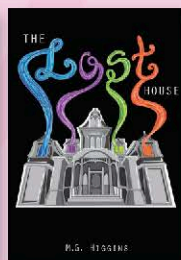
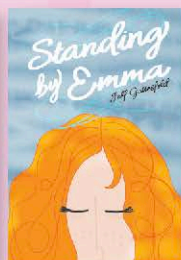
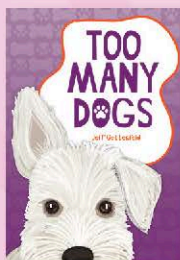
“Let’s see.”

The girls dug into the ground. It wasn’t a pipe. Instead, they dug out a big metal box. It was the size of a desktop computer. There was a tiny lock on the front.



The girls stared. Someone buried this box. Now it was theirs.

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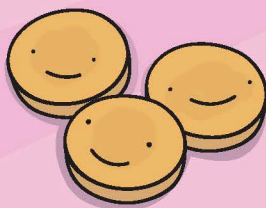




THE Love

MINTS

Izzy and I are done.
It's over! I ♥ Maddie.
Ever since I ate
that mint ...



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