



THE WESTMINSTER SCHOOL



"Get it down. Take chances. It may be bad, but it's the only way you can do anything really good."

— William Faulkner —

# TWS Writers' Society

*"Extraordinary Tales in an Ordinary World"*

Third Edition 2021





# Welcome to TWS Writers' Society!

The "TWS Writers' Society" is a magazine founded at The Westminster School, Dubai. It is an initiative run by the students across the school which aims to help ignite the vision of many students who are passionate about writing and connect them with their skills, community as well as allow them to explore their passion for journalism and writing, by taking their experiences into account and by giving them opportunities to have insightful interviews which bring their visions to life. TWS Writers' Society is devoted to helping writers develop their craft and improve their skills as well as encourage students to get creative and it will present a mix of cultural, modern, traditional as well as classical pieces in each of its monthly issues.

Every issue is packed with often overlooked features such as book reviews, summaries as well as personal views by students, and many more; this boldly illustrated magazine glistens with insight and brings out the hidden talents of TWS. TWS Writers' Society also features tips and exercises on essay writing, short stories, poetry as well as articles, and inspiring prompts, and monthly writing competitions. This magazine will feature some of the best-written pieces every month and it will definitely stand by its motto "Extraordinary Tales in an Ordinary World"

—ZAHRA ALI JAFFER —

مجلة "مجتمع الكاتب TWS" تأسست في مدرسة وستمنستر دبي. إنها مبادرة يديرها الطلاب في جميع أنحاء المدرسة وتهدف إلى المساعدة في تحفيز رؤية العديد من الطلاب المتحمسين للكتابة وربطهم بمهاراتهم ومجتمعهم وكذلك السماح لهم باستكشاف شغفهم بالصحافة والكتابة من خلال أخذ تجاربهم بعين الاعتبار ومن خلال منحهم الفرص لإجراء مقابلات ثاقبة تجعل رؤاهم تنبض بالحياة. يكرس "مجتمع لمساعدة الكاتب على تطوير حرفتهم وتحسين مهاراتهم بالإضافة إلى "TWS الكاتب تشجيع الطلاب على الإبداع وسيقدم مزيجًا من القطع الثقافية والحديثة والتقليدية وكذلك الكلاسيكية في كل إصدار شهري كل عدد مليء بالميزات التي غالبًا ما يتم تجاهلها مثل مراجعات الكتب والملخصات بالإضافة إلى وجهات النظر الشخصية للطلاب وغير ذلك الكثير ؛ تتلأأ هذه المجلة وتبرز المواهب الخفية لـ TWS. يقدم "مجتمع الكاتب TWS" أيضًا نصائح وتمارين حول كتابة المقالات، القصص القصيرة، الشعر والمطالبات الملهمة ومسابقات الكتابة الشهرية. ستعرض هذه المجلة بعضًا من أفضل الكتابات كل شهر ، وستتمسك بالتأكيد بشعارها "حكايات غير عادية في عالم عادي"

—FARAH ALRAWWE —





# MEET THE *editorial team*



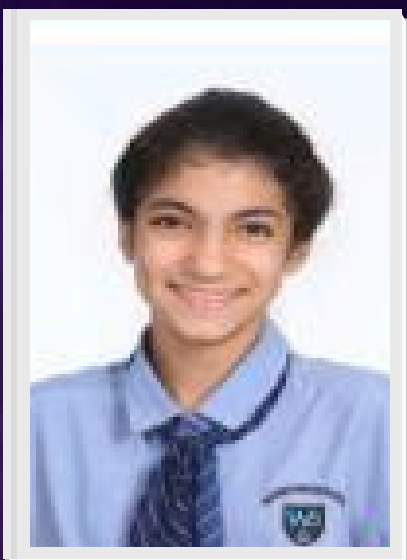
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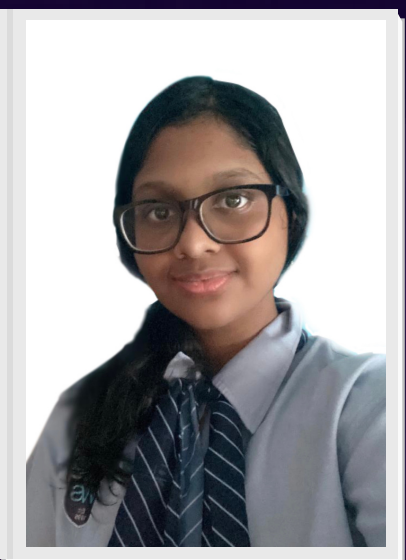
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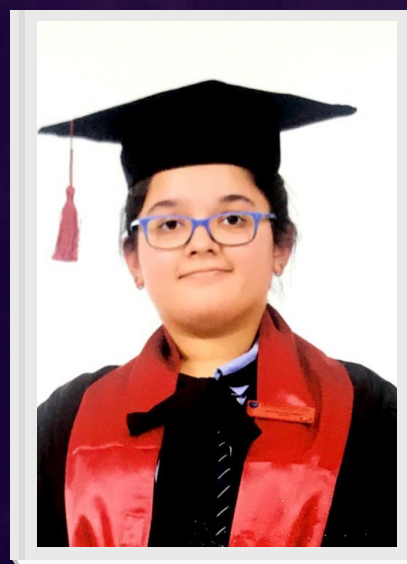
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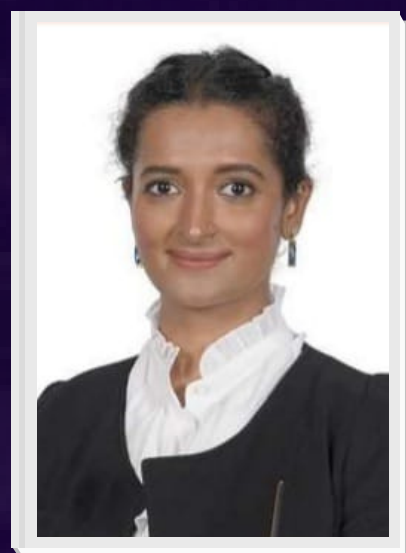
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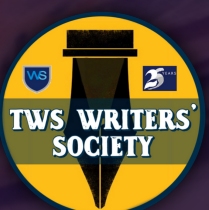
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TWS WRITERS' SOCIETY ISSUE  
NO. 3





A young girl with a braid is seen from behind, holding an open book. The background is a soft, hazy sunset sky with a trail of light or smoke arching across it. The text is overlaid on the upper half of the image.

# FEATURED ENTRIES OF THE MONTH

*“I believe myself that a good writer doesn’t really need to be told anything except to keep at it.”*

*— Chinua Achebe*



## A STAR HE MISSED

She left behind trails of stardust wherever she walked,  
her hands did magic like the stars,  
and her eyes carried constellations oh so beautiful that one could get lured into it.  
Her eyes held the stars captive,  
and her smile blinded even the sun that hid at night.  
How could you expect him to forget all the dreams they had,  
and all the love they shared?

—VEDIKA PATEL 8G4—

## *Short Story*

### MOTHER NATURE'S SPELL

The gold-tinted aquamarine of the sky at sundown is said to be the most vibrant, entrancing shade of blue there ever was, but Dalia couldn't help but notice that it was merely a dull navy compared to the spectrum of lapis and emeralds of the sea – the contrast made even more obvious as both elements lay side by side in the distance.

There was never a more hurried change in scenery. Nearly a hundred people must have been by the beach when it happened, some taking in the light of the receding sun, and some swimming far out into the ocean, laughing and preparing to get out for the day, completely oblivious of the fact that it would be their last. Within that moment, whilst everything was frozen in a state of absolute bliss and perfection, Dalia watched from her balcony as the calm waters began to transform rapidly, molding to take the form of a monstrous beast, rising more than 20 meters tall.

The pillar of water slowly made its way forward and surged up the coast, devouring divers, tourists and children alike; leaving nothing in its wake. A truly marvelous spectacle to behold, the opportunity to observe such a sight given only to a lucky few.

Surprisingly, the shrieks and echoed screams were not what brought Dalia back to the present. She could have stood by the balcony for hours and hours, studying the unnaturally colossal wave that had just drowned dozens before her, if it were not for someone seizing her arm and leading her down a set of steps and out of the house, onto the road. The street was more crowded than it had ever been before, with people running faster than they had ever ran before, all with one common goal in mind: to survive. Once she found her footing, Dalia realized the scope of the disaster that had just struck. The shock was more internal than external, and her instincts kicked in before she completely understood what was going on. She found that her feet had started moving of their own accord, taking her in the same direction that everyone else was headed in, with her mother's hand still tightly gripping her arm.

From there it was a game of chase, who could outrun who? Would it be sheer human willpower that succeeded in the end, or would the raw force of water catch up to them? The victor of the race was the latter, having the upper hand as it sailed over their heads, creating a shaded area, and transforming pure golden light into a darker teal one as it passed through the water's translucent surface, consuming them all.

The hope did not disappear from Dalia's eyes even as the wave collapsed onto the pavement and engulfed everyone in its embrace. The fight did not leave her body even as she swam and swam, thrashing against the current, trying desperately to stay afloat. The light did not leave her soul even as her lifeless body rose to the tranquil surface minutes later, where she was to lie for countless days ahead.

—MAIRA ALEEM, 11G1—



# POETRIES

*“Poetry lifts the veil from the hidden beauty of the world, and  
makes familiar objects be as if they were not familiar.”  
— Percy Bysshe Shelley*



# FIREFLIES

Illuminating light,  
Fireflies,  
Just like hope they come and go,  
Never letting you grab them,  
Hope too works in such a manner,  
For you can never be in the light,  
But morning glories continue to bloom,  
and fireflies continue to hatch,  
So hope will continue to come your way,  
Even if things never seem right.

— MARYAM ASLAM 8G4—

# THE LIES THAT MAKE UP YOU

The lies that make up you,  
the lies of the grades that control you,  
the lies that hold up your life as if you were a balloon,  
the lies that try to kill you,  
the lies that you believe,  
the lies you wish weren't real and are not,  
and the lies that call themselves "True"  
The lies that make up you.

—ALISHBA FAISAL KHAN—

# DANDELIONS

I am in love with a dandelion,  
Unrequited love,  
For you are a dandelion,  
As I watch you fade away in the morning hues

—MARYAM ASLAM 8G4—



# DEMONS

They are everywhere,  
Illuminated by the light I follow,  
Just like moths,  
I can't get rid of them,  
They follow me,  
I am not close with anyone,  
As I sink lower,  
I can't get rid of them..  
For they know how to swim,  
But for tonight, I will remove your veil,  
And make you feel beautiful once again.

—MARYAM ASLAM 8G4—





# SHORT STORIES



*My short stories are like soft shadows I have set out in the world, faint footprints I have left. I remember exactly where I set down each and every one of them, and how I felt when I did. Short stories are like guideposts to my heart...*

*~Haruki Murakami*





# TRUTH OR DARE

Eerie woes and screams from long ago echoed along the once thought to be safe haven. Damien, shell-shocked, contemplated his past decisions after accepting that dare, but after—  
all isn't this just a harmless game?

Damien with all his might, inched further and further, wary of his steps, however his mind was far from eased. Thoughts of the asylum's sinister past led him to feel awfully worried. Trying to comfort himself, he yelled, "Hello, anyone there?!" and within a moment of his voice resonating across the lengthy hallways, followed spooky silence which made him feel more scared than ever. But it wasn't the silence that creeped him out, instead, it was the sudden shift in atmosphere when he spoke. Something certainly felt different, no clarity was to be found. However, it felt as though a presence loomed over him. Although Damien wasn't a keen believer of the supernatural sort, this whole occurrence changed his mentality. He wanted to bolt out of there, as fast as humanly possible but it was as though he was stuck, frozen in the clutches of terror.

Knowing that he couldn't possibly get out of this trap, he waited patiently for what awaited.

Damien kept on trying to fill his head with all the non-life-threatening situations this could possibly be: a prank from one of his friends (although not a likely case), he tried to reach for that glimmer of hope that was very much so engulfed by this horrendous reality. Creak. Creak. Creak. Creak. The noise grew louder with every second. Damien, holding back his fearful tears, stood as still as possible, hoping that it would simply pass by. Creak. Creak, Creak. Creak. The pace was quickening, growing shriller and shriller, Damien knew his end was near. The time had come, darkness had emerged. Damien spoke his last few words before falling victim to this very asylum...

"I hate truth or—"

—RABEEA AHMED, 10G5—

# BLACK AND WHITE

It was the last week of sophomore year. All the students were hyper, and none of the teachers could keep them in place, a kid was even caught trying to sneak in some fireworks. The corridor was ablaze with decorations and summer school activity posters, none of the lessons were going on and the teachers had already given up on restraining their pupils, "what's the point?" they thought, "It's the end of the school year anyway."

Only one person wasn't joining in the wild celebrations. Nancy sat in the empty music room on the second floor, reading a book. She didn't feel like partying, what was there to celebrate? After this, they were to move on to their junior year and do their SAT'S, which just meant more studying and pressure.

The summer? That wasn't a big thing either, especially since Nancy knew she was going to spend the entire 3 months looking after her one-year-old niece while her sister worked overnight shifts. This has been going on ever since she was old enough to stay home alone, Nancy's family couldn't afford anything more than to pay her school fees, feed and give her shelter. She had never been on vacation, gone to a theme park or hung out with friends (not that she had any). Her whole life just felt like a loop. Every year was exactly the same, except for the calendar changing.

Nancy was a droll kid, smart but boring and bad-tempered. She had few interests and lots of dislikes, that was the main reason no one wanted to stick around her. She couldn't stand people most of the time and they couldn't stand her. Had someone actually taken the time and initiative to crack her shell, there would still be a person in there. A person with actual feelings. But people chose to ignore her instead, and she liked it better that way.

If black and white was a person, it would definitely be Nancy.

—SALMA RAAIS, 8G4—



# STAR BOY

Every night she was there, at the same spot and at the same time— though a normal person might have gotten bored of this— the glee and twinkle in her eyes never faded away, even after seeing the same stars that she would see every day, she was fascinated to the stars and back by them.

Again, as her watch struck 8, she found herself back at the same place, in perfect silence she walked, careful enough to not wake the stars, afraid that they'll lose their shine if she did so. Situating herself on the soft grass, a smile eventually broke out as she looked up to the sky, her mood lifting by 100 seeing more stars than usual in the sky tonight.

Turning her gaze back down to her lap that held her precious artbook and flipping through the pages to find an empty one, one so empty she feared that even a little pigment would ruin its beauty. But nevertheless, she picked up her watercolors, looking back at the scenery hoping she could capture every detail of the stars into her artbook, the brightest stars to the ones that faded into the blue splashed sky that they would barely be visible— but she tried capturing them down anyway, tried capturing the preciseness of every star out there with her thin brush.

She always wished to be able to capture the ethereal beauty of the stars into her artbook one day, so she painted them everywhere she could, painted them so much that she now trailed stardust everywhere she walked, carried stars in her hands and constellations in her eyes.

Trying to perfect the calm blue that was splashed across the huge canvas; the sky— she lightly stroked around that page, leaving light and dark blue marks as she let her paintbrush move around freely, her grip on it so less that it could almost float on its own, but that little detail made her book represent the sky.

Groaning a little as she waited for it to partially dry— she painted the sky every day, painted the glorious moon and the dancing stars, the shooting comets, and the bluey canvas this all laid on. She wanted to add something more, she wanted to represent the sky in just a tiny detail, she wanted to show a story in just something small but she couldn't pin it down.

she sighed, about to start painting the stars since she was done with the reflecting water body and star-filled sky. That was when her eyes caught something. More precisely, that one tiny detail she was searching for which could explain a story

It was the boy who seemed to live amongst stars

—VEDIKA PATEL 8G4—

# THE GLEAMING SKIES

The mild shanty houses were surrounded by the perpetual skies of a languorous shade. Dainty flowers fully blown gleaming profoundly like crystals. Butterflies blazing in the bright haze, some clung to the rosy petals as some flew across. Slathers of heart-shaped leaves of spring flowers drummed off the shell pink roofs and some hung across the walls while its pleasing aroma twirled in the crisp air. I gazed with awe; my eyes were blessed by its beauty.

Thousands of scarlet flowers sprawled in the swinging trees. The dulcet melody of birds chirping and mummering dimmed as a strong wave of chilly breeze touched my cheeks. The cold air whistled like a bird as the smoky color overtook the pristine lands. Soon the sun to be faded down coming to the gray of days end. I glanced up at the sky, as it went dark and darker. The soothing whisper like the low wind's sighs as the sky stood still and graceful like its own fairytale.

—SILUNI SAHANSA, 10G3—





# ESSAYS

*"Words are a lens to focus one's mind."  
-Ayn Rand*



## عاقبة الفضول

كنت امر من نفس الشارع المزدهم كل يوم و مع ذلك لم اعرف سر وجود هذا البيت الكبير الذي له اسوار مرتفعة جدا و شبابيك متهاكة كأنها لم تفتح منذ قرنين ، ففي الحقيقة لم يكن المنزل دائما موجودا، ففي بعض الأحيان كان يختفي و يصبح رمادا، فلم يخبرني احد عن ذلك السر من قبل و كان فضولي يقتلني، يا ترى من يدخل هنا؟ و لماذا لا يعودون؟ بدأت تلك الهواجس تملئ عقلي و لكنني أكملت طريقي الى المدرسة مرغما، و طوال اليوم لم يستطع ذهني إلا ان يزور ذلك البيت القديم، فكلما حاولت ان ادخل شعرت برياح قوية تعيدني الى ادراجي.

و بعد بضع اشهر طفح الكيل لم استطع الانتظار اكثر من ذلك، كنت اشعر بالاختناق كلما مررت من جانب ذلك المنزل العبوس، فجمعت كل عزيمتي و همتي، و اتجهت الى ذلك البيت الغامض، اخبرت كل من كان في طريقي عن وجهتي ، لم استطع ان اخفي حماسي، و اخيرا سينتهي الفضول القاتل الذي يسكن في جسدي، حذرتي الجميع من الذهاب، لكنني لست غيبا، فربما كانوا يخفون كهفا مليئا بالذهب مثل ذلك الذي في قصة علي بابا، او ربما كانت مائدة كلها طعام من ما لذ و طاب، او حلي و الماس، قبضت يدي على يد الباب و كأني اصافح صديقا قديما لم اره منذ اعوام، لم يعد بيني و بين معرفة ذلك السر الغامض الى بضع خطوات.

فاغمضت عيناى من شدة الحماس، و فتحت ذلك الباب و هرعت راكضا الى الداخل، فإذا بالارض تختفي من تحت اقدامي، وشعرت و كأني اطيرو، لا لا هذا ليس صحيحا" يا الهي انني أسقط من الاعلى!"، كان البيت فخا فليس هنا سوى مصيدة لمن يلازمهم الفضول مثلي



A stylized illustration of a person with long hair, wearing a white robe, sitting on a tatami mat and reading a book. The room is filled with tall bookshelves on both sides, packed with books. In the foreground, there is a low table with a stack of books, a small globe, and some other objects. A large window in the background shows a night view of a city with a pagoda and other buildings. The overall color palette is dark with purple and blue tones.

# BOOK REVIEWS

*“Books are a uniquely portable magic.”*  
— *Stephen King*



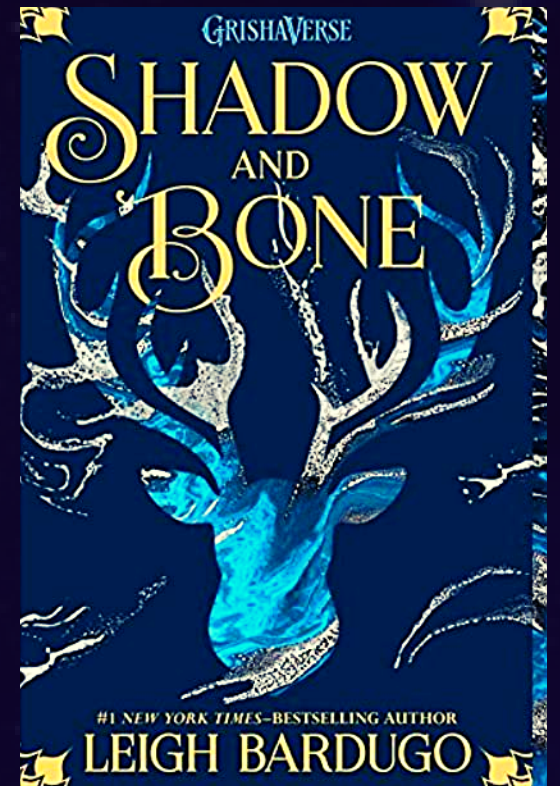
# SHADOW AND BONE

## By Leigh Bardugo

For all our fellow readers who love fantasy or want to get started with reading fantasy books, this is the perfect place to start! Shadow and Bone is the first book in a thrilling fantasy-adventure trilogy.

Surrounded by enemies, the once-great nation of Ravka has been torn in two by the Shadow Fold; a swath of near impenetrable darkness crawling with monsters who feast on human flesh. Now its fate may rest on the shoulders of one lonely refugee. Alina Starkov has never been good at anything. But when her regiment is attacked on the Fold and her best friend is brutally injured, Alina reveals a dormant power that saves his life—a power that could be the key to setting her war-ravaged country free. Wrenched from everything she knows, Alina is whisked away to the royal court to be trained as a member of the Grisha, the magical elite led by the mysterious Darkling.

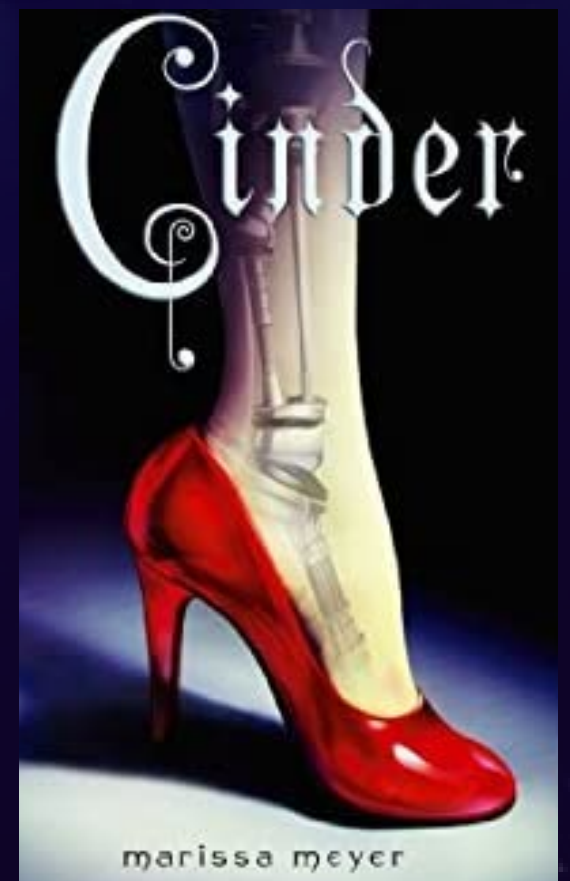
Yet nothing in this lavish world is what it seems. With darkness looming and an entire kingdom depending on her untamed power, Alina will have to confront the secrets of the Grisha...and the secrets of her heart. This book is the perfect introductory fantasy novel and will definitely whisk you away to the magical world of the Grisha. Highly Recommend!



# CINDER

## By Marissa Meyer

For the fans of fairytale retellings, we bring another book recommendation in this month's issue! Cinder is the debut young adult, science fiction novel by the American author Marissa Meyer. It is the first book in The Lunar Chronicles and is followed by Scarlet. The story is loosely based on the classic fairytale Cinderella. It is the tale of a teenage cyborg who must fight for Earth's survival against villains from outer space. Cinder, a gifted mechanic, is a cyborg. She's a second-class citizen with a mysterious past, reviled by her stepmother and blamed for her stepsister's illness. But when her life becomes intertwined with the handsome Prince Kai's, she suddenly finds herself at the center of an intergalactic struggle, and a forbidden attraction. Caught between duty and freedom, loyalty and betrayal, she must uncover secrets about her past in order to protect her world's future. With high-stakes action and a smart, resourceful heroine, Cinder is a Cinderella retelling that is at once classic and strikingly original.



—BOOK REVIEWS BY SHARIQUA, 12B—



# LEISURE ACTIVITIES

## Creative Writing prompts for those who love to write!

### In The Sky:

Write a scene or story in which a character sees a city in the sky.

### Through the Looking Glass:

You look into the mirror and find a world almost exactly like your own. Aside from the reverse reflection, one thing is very different from your world. What is it?

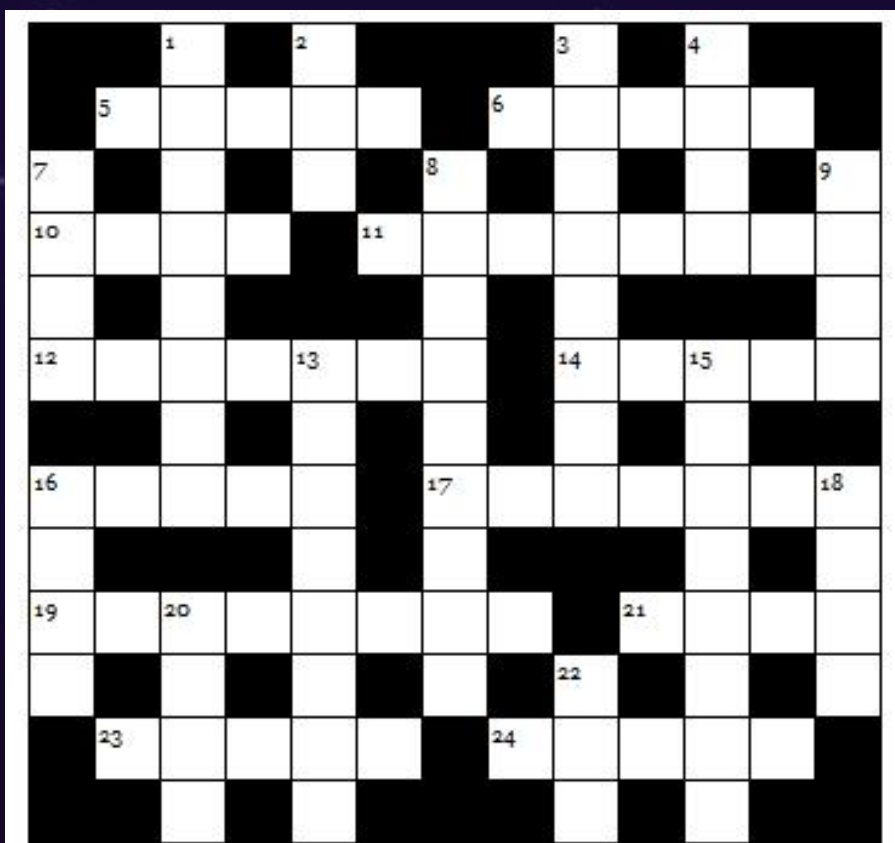
### The Map Quest:

Write a scene or story that includes a character looking at a map.

### I Spy:

Every writer needs a little inspiration once and a while. For today's prompt, someone is watching your narrator ... but there's a twist.

## Crossword Puzzle



#### Across

- 5,6 One who travels by obtaining free lifts (5,5)  
10 Nymph who fell in love with Narcissus (4)  
11 1940 Animated film featuring Mickey Mouse (8)  
12 A member of a Protestant group formed in 16th century England, characterised by emphasis upon greater strictness in religious discipline (7)  
14 Jewish religious leader, scholar and teacher (5)  
16 The prominent ethnic group in Cambodia (5)  
17 Comic strip created by Charles M. Schulz (7)  
19 A weather condition in which visibility and contrast are greatly diminished by snow (8)  
21 The first murder victim (4)  
23,24 A ritualistic formula for the manipulation of aspects of reality by supernatural means or occult laws (5,5)

#### Down

- 1 Clear spirit, often used as a base in cocktails (5,3)  
2 A hole in one in golf (3)  
3 The longest reigning British monarch to date (8)  
4 New York American Football team (4)  
7 Beatles song, album and film (4)  
8 Letter-writer and capital of Minnesota (5,4)  
9 Land-locked north west African country (4)  
13 Herbaceous perennial plant of the ginger family native to south Asia (8)  
15 A heritage railway line in Sussex or a spring-flowering plant (8)  
16 Flightless bird which produces the largest egg relative to body size (4)  
18 Helmsman on the USS Enterprise played by George Takei (4)  
20 Muslim leader (4)  
22 Resort town with medicinal springs in Belgium, or any mineral spring (3)

*If you want us to review your book suggestions, email your favourite books to us at [twswritersmagazine@outlook.com](mailto:twswritersmagazine@outlook.com) and we'll read them and give you a shoutout in the next month's issue!*