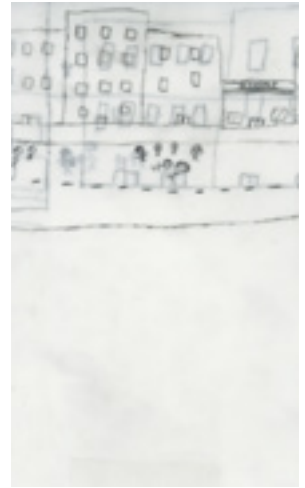


Yummy: How It Should Have Ended



Ms. Saginor's 1st period
10th grade class of Franklin
Delano Roosevelt High School

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Behind the Book's mission is to develop engaged readers and writers in underserved NYC public schools by designing and delivering programs that are multi-disciplinary, culturally responsive, and promote deeper connections to books and their authors.

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Behind the Book

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In the interest of honoring student voice, Behind the Book presents students' work as received from the teacher.

This book was made possible by a generous grant from The Korein Foundation.

We dedicate this book to the kids of southside Chicago who may feel hopeless and lost like Yummy. We want you to know that an alternate ending is possible. We also dedicate this book to FDR High School and Behind the Book, without whom Yummy would not have had a second chance.



About the Program



Can a person be both a criminal and a victim? Could anything have changed the tragic life of Yummy, the main character in the graphic novel by Greg Neri? These difficult questions were explored by Ms. Saginor's 10th grade class after reading the book based on the real-life events of 11-year-old Robert "Yummy" Sandifer.

During his visit to the class, Greg told the true story of Yummy and why he became the subject of the novel. The young boy, who loved sweets and carried a teddy bear, was led into the violent Chicago gang life after a childhood filled with neglect and abuse. Ordered to execute a rival by the gang leader of the Black Disciples, Yummy accidentally killed a young bystander and was ultimately murdered by members of his own gang.

The class then debated the influences in Yummy's life and what might have changed its direction. With Karen Butler, the Behind the Book drama consultant, students used theater exercises to analyze Yummy's tragic life and how differently he was perceived by himself and by others. The class acted out scenes from the novel and changed specific ways his life could have taken a different path. They wrestled with the idea that one change might have spared his life.

The students then had the opportunity to learn more about the criminal justice system by visiting the New York County Supreme Court. They met with court staff and were able to sit in on a hearing.

Back in the classroom, Behind the Book teaching artist Candice Humphries helped the students create illustrated versions of Yummy's life. Using Yummy's troubled history as a starting point, students depicted their ideas about justice and fairness.

In this book, we are sharing our thoughts and ideas about these complicated issues. We hope you find our work as compelling as we did and that it helps to make us more understanding about the many factors that influence our lives.



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Yummy: Salvation

Yummy saw a Black Disciples rival in Shavon's neighborhood. As he pulled out his gun, he felt his heart pulse faster and faster. He couldn't do it. He looked at the people on the block. He saw kids playing, adults moving about but most of all he saw the Black Disciples frowning at him. They all looked at Yummy. They walked up to him slowly, grabbed him, and walked him back to monster.

Monster looked at Yummy. He said, "Why are you such a coward? Why didn't you take him out?" Yummy looked at the ground without answering him. Monster told one of the thugs around him to step forward and he whispered in his ear. Before Yummy knew it, he was locked up in a room in an abandoned house.

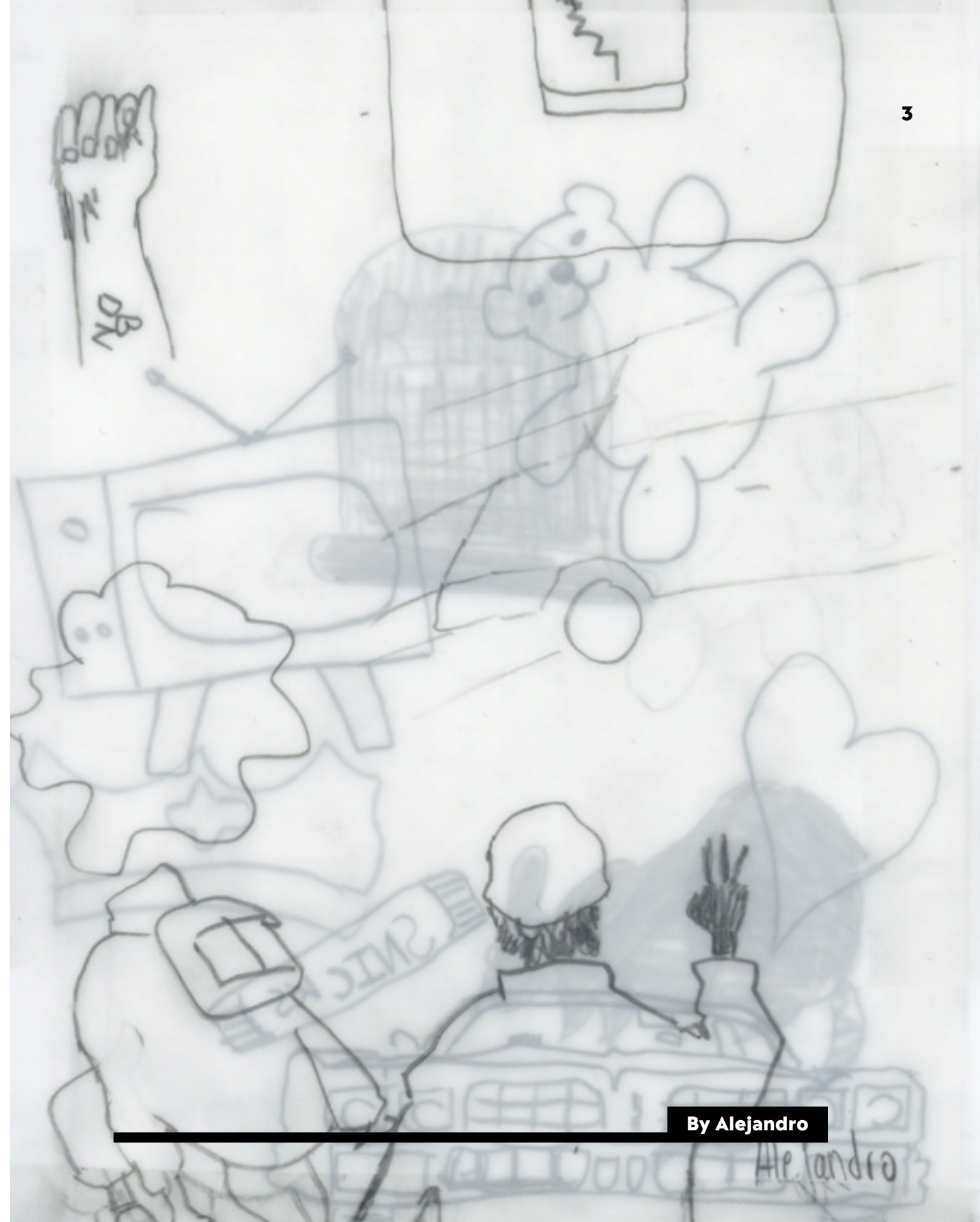
Yummy was scared of nothing except for his gun. The Black Disciples had beaten him so badly that they broke one of his legs. He moaned in his room trying to get someone's attention. He got someone's attention after five days of being locked up in that room. It was Roger who found him. When Roger found him he said, "What are you doing here?" Yummy once again was silent. He pulled out his gun and gave it to Roger. Roger didn't understand what was going on. He asked Yummy, "What's going on?" Yummy replied, "Go find my Grandma. Tell her to come find me here and help bring me home." When Grandma found Yummy she took him to the hospital right away.

Yummy was fine. The doctor said he would only be in a cast for a couple of months. The Black Disciples, however, were not fine. When they found out that Yummy escaped it only made them more angry. Monster declared Yummy to be a rival of the gang. This didn't affect Yummy since he wasn't able to walk about anymore. But the problem was about six months later when Yummy started to walk again. The Black Disciples were barring him from going anywhere: the park, the library, the supermarket, anywhere, and everywhere.

At this point in time Yummy had enough. He was tired of running. It was almost as if he was under house arrest. Yummy said to himself, "I have to do something about these fools." Two days later a very conflicted Yummy walked up to the police station ever so slowly. He had a note in his hand. The note was for his grandma. It read: "Grandma. I'm sorry but I have to do this alone."

Yummy had a note in his hand with the location of the Black Disciples and everyone's names. As he walked up the stairs a Black Disciples thug came and shot Yummy in the head. The thug ran away but Yummy's note was still in his hand. When the police came to investigate they saw the note.

Three days later they arrested all the Black Disciples, even Monster. They were all sent to a prison two states away. The entire neighborhood mourned Yummy's death. They built a memorial in his honor. They had a huge funeral. Yummy was forever remembered as a hero.



By Alejandro

Blossom



“My grandma’s coming,” said Yummy.

“Forget her Yummy. We got your back. We’re gonna get you outta town till all this cool downs. Just come with me,” said the gang member.

“Imma just turn myself in.”

“Yummy don’t do that.”

One of the gang members pulled out a gun targeting Yummy. Before he shot Yummy, Gary shot the gang member.

“Yummy, make this worth it and fix yourself.”

Gary began to run. Cop sirens ring deep down the block.

Yummy begins to walk to the precinct. His mind is going bizzare with what can happen when he enters. Will he get shot? Will he be tortured without going to jail?

“Yo, I hope they not gon hate me. I mean all this was an accident. I ain’t mean to kill someone who I knew like a sister. I’m tired of all this bad stuff, I’m just tryna come clean, get a wife, kids, and live peacefully with an awesome job.”

Yummy enters the precinct.

His heart drops to his stomach, with fear. He puts his hands up and turns himself in.

“I’m unarmed, I’m just looking to turn myself in.”

“Yummy you’re under arrest for the death of Shavon,” says Officer Jack.

“Anything you say or do will be used against you in a court of law.”

A few days later...

“Yummy, great news, we’re offering you a program to help you change for the better. You’re just a young kid and most of us know that you’re very bright. You just haven’t had the support as you were growing up. So we are here to take care of you,” says Officer Jack.

“Alright, I’d like to accept the program.”

“Great, you’ll start after your court date. I’ll let you know. This is good Yummy. You’re going to have a career and whatever you like in the future. We’ll most definitely do the best we can but you must be up for it.” replied Officer Jack.

“Will do Officer Jack,” responded Yummy.

A few months pass by while Yummy participates in the program.

“Yummy we’ve seen a huge change. You changed from being such a violent young man to someone who is mature. Yummy, it’s time to now help you look for a job and this is it man. Live your life. You fully understood the wrongness in your life and you said you were going to change it. Guess what? You really did. We are all proud of you, Yummy,” said Officer Jack.

“Thank you Officer Jack and everyone that has helped me. I really love the support and help you guys gave me. I really understand what I did wrong and I’m definitely glad that this program helped change who I was back then and who I am now,” replied Yummy.

“I really hope you share your story with other troubled kids and support them the way we supported you. It’d be best to see everyone being great in the world without any harm being involved.”

“I appreciate it all. Thank you guys, I’M SO HAPPY.”

“Haha, great Yummy. WE LOVE IT.”

Changing for the Better

In September 1994, there was a massive manhunt for me. All of this happened because of my gang members. I was ordered by my gang members to kill a rival member and I accidentally killed a girl I knew from my neighborhood. Her name was Shavon, age 14 and we used to talk. I regretted it as soon as I pulled the trigger.

I looked down at the lifeless body that was in front of me. People were coming towards us and I knew I had to get away. So I ran away. I ran away as fast as I could. Sirens were sounding, but I didn't dare look behind me for fear of them following me.

I thought to myself, "What if I get caught? Will I go to jail? What if I don't see my grandma anymore? I will regret this so bad."

Yummy talking aloud, "To be honest...I'm scared. I don't know what to do...It's already the second day."

Eventually, a week passed. I ran to different places in search of hiding spots, searching for food and shelter. By this time, the police would have already checked in at my grandma's house. I decided to go to her house for shelter. After all, her place is the only safe place that I can go to. I started to walk, going through the bushes and keeping my head low in fear of people recognizing me. After what seemed like hours of walking, I arrived.

I thought to myself, "Will grandma hate me for doing this? Will she tell me to go to jail? What if she ignores me and hands me over to the police?"

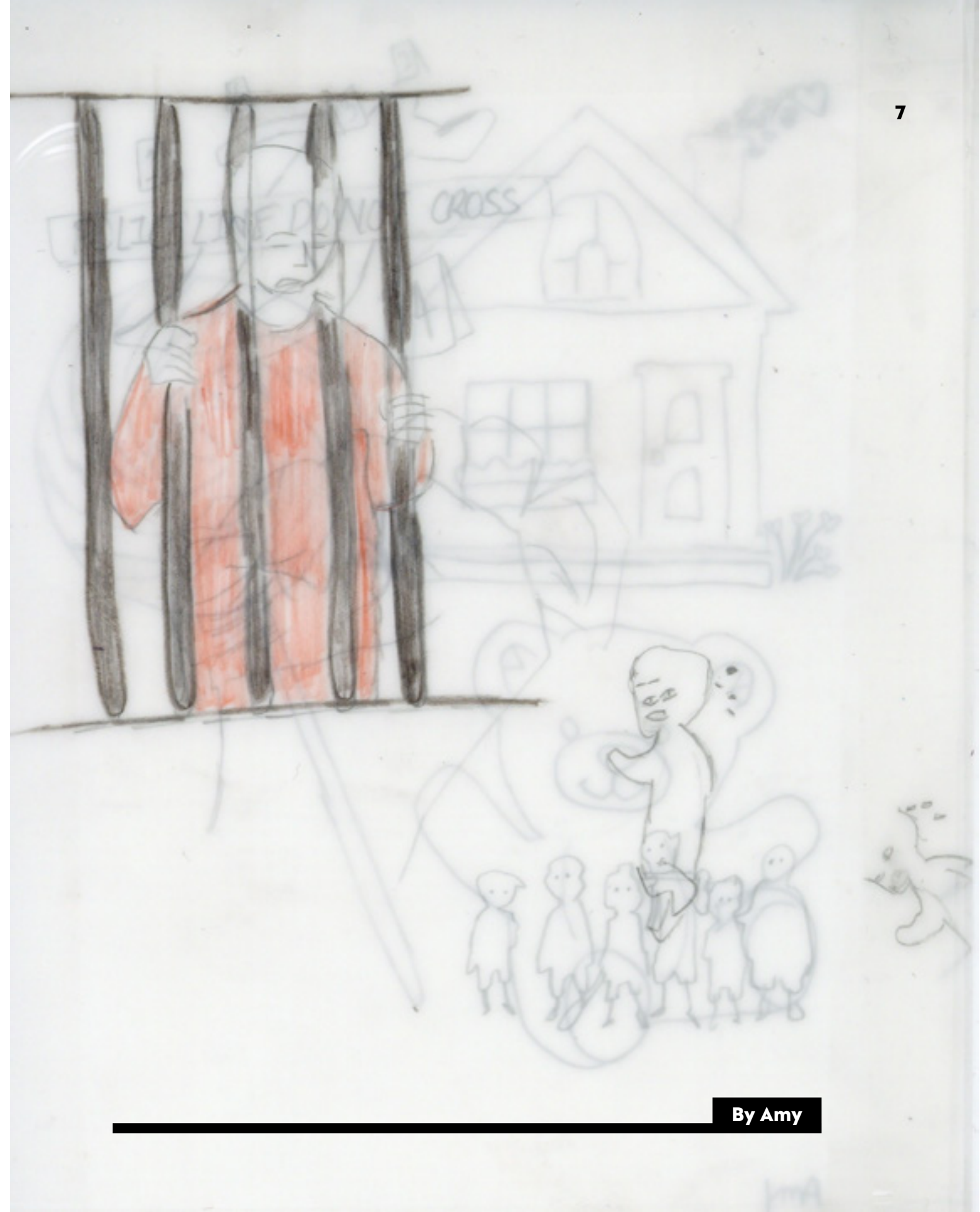
So many thoughts and questions crossed my mind as I stood by the door. I rang the bell and could hear footsteps approaching. I could see how surprised and shocked my grandma was when she saw me. She embraced me and said, "I have been waiting for you for days. Why did you only come now? I've been worried to death because of you!"

I said, "I have been running everywhere in hiding so the police wouldn't find me...I'm sorry grandma."

My grandma said, "Honey, listen to me for a while. I have something to tell you. You know...I'm getting old. Who knows how long I'm going to be here. My last wish is for you to live a proper life and you can start by paying for your crimes. And yes, I know you're going to say that it was your gang members that told you to do it, but you still shot an innocent girl. I want you to hand yourself over to the police, serve some prison time, reflect on yourself, and come out as a new person. Then, we can start a new life. And plus, if you turn yourself in, your sentence might be less."

I was shocked. But somehow I was preparing for this moment. My grandma had always been a just person. In fact, I had come back because I regretted my actions and I want to fix my mistakes. I knew that if this continues, I would eventually get caught and go to prison anyway. I pondered this for some time and thought this was for the best. I took a deep breath and made my decision.

I said, "I think what you said is correct. I must face the consequence for what I did. Let's go to the station right now. I will face my punishment and come back as a better person. I promise."



Yummy: How it Should Have Ended

But his granny and the cops weren't the only ones looking for Yummy. The Black Disciples were on the move too. Derick was one of Monster's deputies in training. A car pulls up to the house and Yummy hides. Derick exits the car.

"Hey girl," said Derick.

"Hey Derick," the girl replied.

"What are you doing here Mike?" Derick asked.

"Derick?" the girl continued.

"Ah...well...I found Yummy earlier," replied Mike as he signaled Yummy to stay hidden.

"Yummy?" said Derick "We've been looking for him. We been looking all over for him. We're trying to get Yummy outta town. Where is Yummy?"

"Well...last I saw him was a few minutes ago two streets from her," replied Mike as he pointed in a direction.

"Alright then. I'll be going then," said Derick as he got back in the car and drove away.

"Why didn't you tell Derick that Yummy was here?" the girl asked.

"It doesn't seem right," replied Mike "Why would they decide to find Yummy now when it's already this late? Yummy, you should stay hidden until your granny comes to pick you up."

"Alright" replied Yummy. He was deep in thought.

A few minutes pass and a car drives up and stops at the front of the house. Yummy's granny exits the car. When Yummy see his granny, he dashed out.

"Granny," cried Yummy as he hugged her.

"My little angel, I was so worried about you" said Yummy's granny. "Let's head home now." Yummy heads home with his granny and when they got home his granny put him to sleep. His granny stayed with Yummy until he fell asleep. When Yummy finally fell asleep his granny felt relaxed and left the room. When the sound of the door closed, Yummy opened his eyes and stared at the door for a while. He then looked toward the window and climbed through it. Yummy ran to a certain place from his memory. When he got there, he climbed over the fence and sneaked in. Yummy walked around the house toward a room and found a gun. He took it with him. When he finally got back to the room, he knocked on the door.

"Who is it?" shouted someone from behind the door.

"It's me, Derick," replied Yummy.

"Oh it's you. Did you find that trouble maker Yummy and kill him yet?" said the person in the room.

"Yes," Yummy answered.

"Great. You can leave now" the person said happily.

"I have something to show you though" said Yummy.

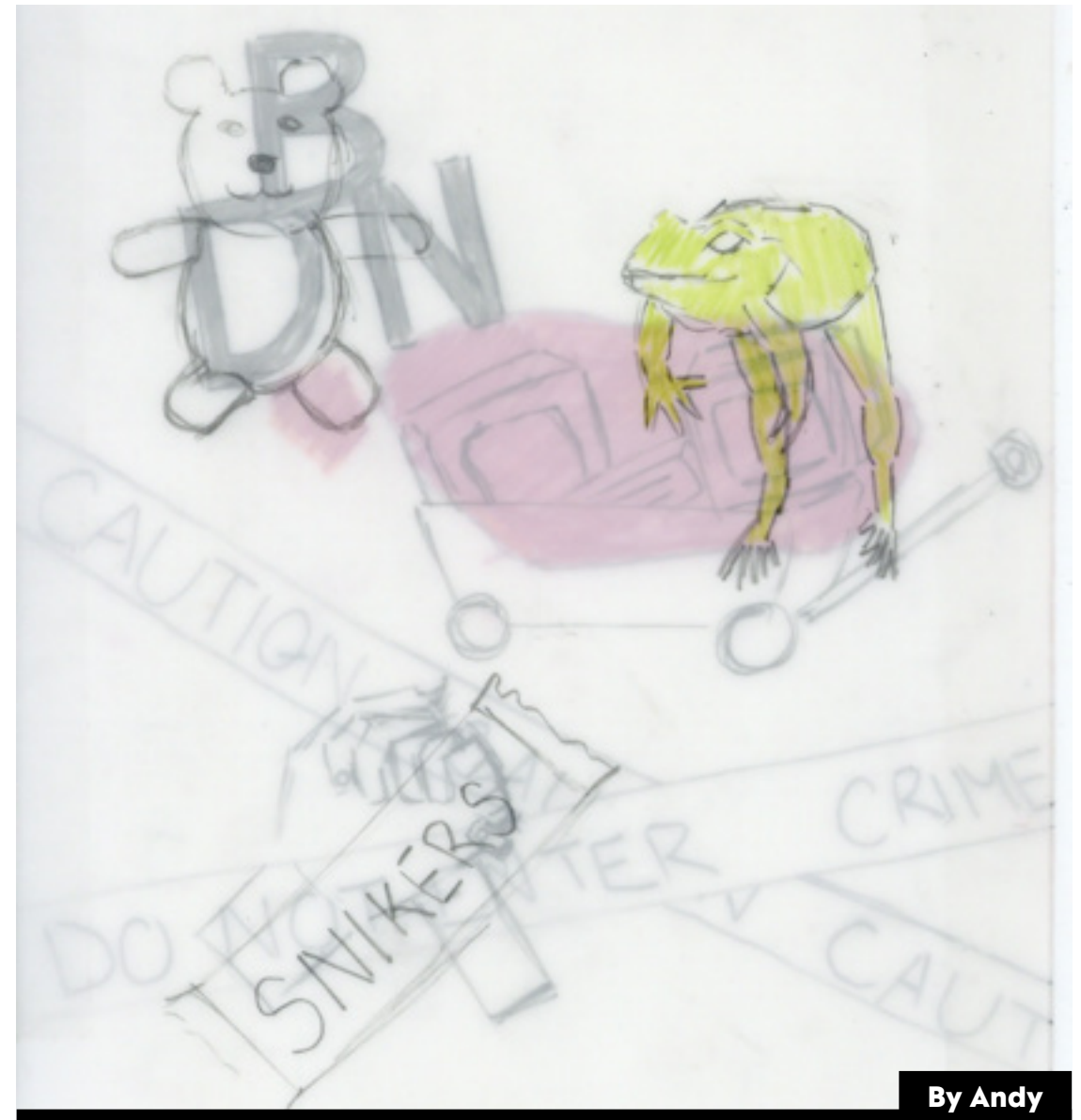
"Oh really now?" said the person. "Well then, come in."

Yummy opened the door and pointed the gun at him.

"Wait a minute you...you're not Derick!" he screamed. "You're Yum--"

Yummy shot the gun and the man dropped dead on the ground. Yummy looked at the dead body and sighed.

"It's all over..." mumbled Yummy as he left the house and headed back to his granny's house. Later that week, it was all over the news that the leader of the Black Disciples Nation gang, Monster, was found dead.



The Big Mistake

I was hangin' with the Black Disciplines but I didn't quite feel like I belonged. I felt like I needed some way to prove myself to them of how good I can be, basically useful, you know? So I asked Jerry, "In what way can I prove that im useful?"

Jerry told me, "If you want to advance yourself, you have to prove that you are capable of one of the most important things ever." He told me I needed to kill one of their rivals without getting caught. So I went out to do that action. While walking there, I kept thinking, "Maybe this is a horrible idea. But I want to prove to myself that I'm worth it and that I belong, to be apart of a family that can protect me in all ways possible."

I was nervous. I had a gun in my pants on the right side. My heart was pounding. On the bright side, I thought happy thoughts of how it's going to be after I get the job done, after i prove that I'm worth being in the family.

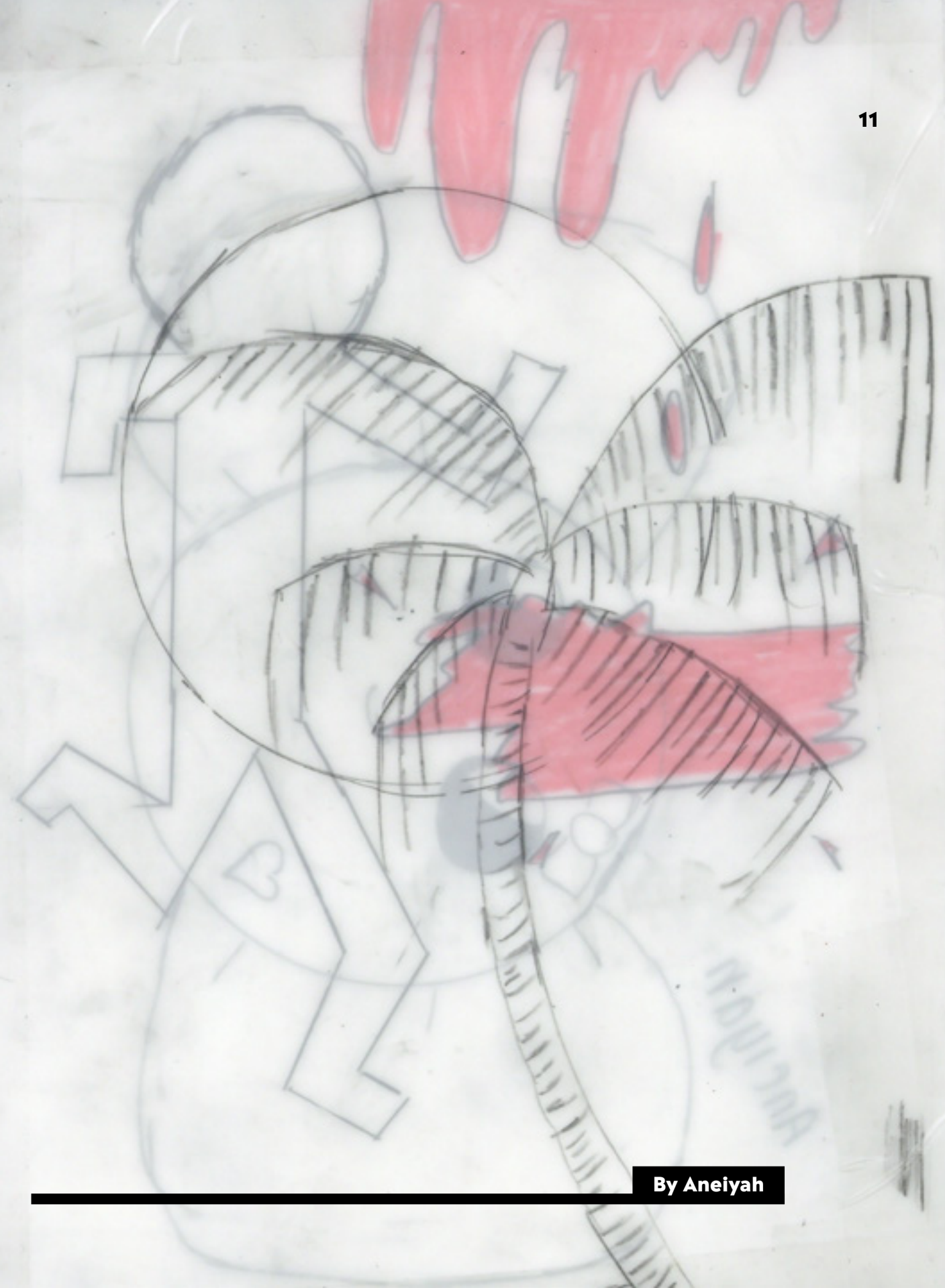
I walked up there and it was a lot of people. I pointed my gun at the rival and said, "They're going to make me regent for this." I was a little nervous. I pulled back the trigger and shot. *Bang, bang, bang.* I shot him. No I didn't. I shot another person and him. I ran away.

Later on that night in the news, they had pronounced Reggie (the rival) and Gary (the fellow gang member) dead. I told my grandmother that I was responsible. She was in shock. I told her everything, about the gang, about me feeling like I didn't belong, everything.

The gang was after me. I had to get away.

The deaths were on the news for three days. Nobody knew it was me except for the gang. During those three days, I had found a friend, his name was Tyrone. I told Tyrone what I did and Tyrone gave me an opportunity to get away, as in leave the town and go to California.

Tyrone took a few days to respond but when he finally did he decided to move and take his family with him. I moved away too and decided to get a better life, start over. Instead of doing bad things, I started helping around the house. I also started doing way better in school. The environment changed me. The Black Disciplines never found me and I lived.



Tears Lead to Change



Yummy was about to take the shot and finally pressed the trigger against the rival gang member. He barely missed the 15-year-old. The rival gang member was bleeding and pronounced dead at the scene. It was a close one, if he had missed, he would have shot someone innocent and would've gone to jail for quite a long time. It gave him something to chew on, some sort of thinking gum. He thought about who he was and what he had been doing for the gang. Was gang respect the only way he could achieve status in the community? He went to his school and wanted to find new ways to achieve respect.

The gang leader, Monster and some members grabbed Yummy before he entered the school and put him in a van. They drove for quite a long time until there was a clear stop. They put a blindfold on him and led him to some sort of building. They removed his blindfold and he saw Monster and two guards armed by the teeth.

Monster began speaking, "You've tried to leave our gang. We can't let that pass."

Yummy responded, "I only want out. I won't bother nobody. I did everything you asked."

Monster replies, "Not everything I've asked. You had a blood oath to never betray us, and you did exactly that."

Yummy quickly and loudly replied, "I'm sorry! I will stay and try to repent! Please don't kill me!".

Monster exclaimed, "I am sorry."

Monster pulled out a gun and pointed it at Yummy. Yummy began crying waterfalls of tears for few moments. Then there was a loud bang and after that complete silence.

Monster never had to kill a kid before, not even in his young gangster days. Monster laid on his couch for many hours, just thinking of his past and how it was so similar to Yummy's. The only difference was that he stayed a monster and that Yummy tried to change. Monster had a sort of realization and called for a group meeting at his base.

He began to speak, "Using kids has been our motto for many years. Of course, many other gangs use kids, but not as much as we do. Things need to change. We shouldn't be putting kids that didn't even have their first kiss on the front line, ready to die for anything"

Monster's second in command replied, "We've been using kids for many years now. You know how devastating it is for our community if we didn't use kids. This would call for a whole civil war."

Monster exclaims, "No matter who we pledge our loyalty to, we are still humans with beating hearts. We are better than this, and it's time to change."

With much hesitation, almost all the group agreed. It took time, but the practice of using kids was almost completely abolished in many gangs as a result of Yummy's death.

A detective was reading the files of Yummy in the police station. Detective Tim says to himself, "It's unfortunate how the kid had to go. But at the very least, his death changed many other kids lives from eternal doom and hate. Many kids are just forgotten and slip through the cracks. Luckily, Yummy is the exception and saved a whole generation. You did good kid." He replied with, "Case closed," as he closed the files and went home to his wife and kids.

Second Chances

Yummy got caught after killing Shavon and is waiting in the jail for the judge. Yummy went to the questioning room.

YUMMY

Why this room so cold?

The room was cold and small with a metal chair and table fit for two people. The detectives come in.

DETECTIVE

You are an infamous killer, Yummy. I saw you in the news.

YUMMY

Really?

DETECTIVE

To cut to the point, you have two options since you are young. I can help decrease your sentence if you sell out your gang members. If you don't you will get a harsh sentence.

YUMMY

Why would I rat them out?

DETECTIVE

The gang life isn't for you. When you go to jail your gang members wouldn't be there. It's gonna be a slippery slope.

YUMMY

So what?

DETECTIVE

You have a future don't waste it. If you rat them out we put you in witness protection and you move to a new place and life.

Yummy is thinking. In his mind, he is conflicted between the two arguments. Rat them out or not.

YUMMY

Can have a few days to think about it?

DETECTIVE

Sure

Yummy exit the question room and goes to his cell.

YUMMY

What should I do?

Yummy started thinking of his loved ones and how it would affect them if he kept going down this path and what it means to have a gang.

YUMMY

This is driving me crazy

After a few days of constant argument in his mind. He could not sleep for days. Yummy finally made a decision. He went to the questioning room.

YUMMY

I made up my mind. I'm going to help you out.

DETECTIVE

Are you sure about your decision?

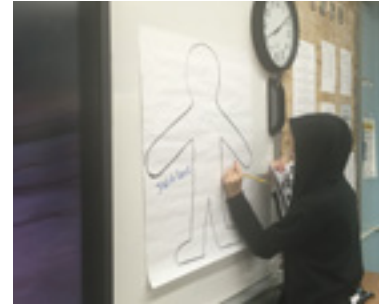
YUMMY

That's my final option.

At the end of the court, Yummy was put into juvenile and with the help of the Detective, Yummy got a shorter sentence and was put under witness protection. Yummy got a new family and he prospered.



By Benny



Yummy's Chance

As Yummy is being picked up by his gang, Yummy asked, "Where are we going?" The gang member answered with, "We are going to see Monster. He has a plan that he wants you to know about."

Yummy sat there wondering what Monster wanted to tell him, as his fellow gang members drive them to where Monster is at. After about an hour of driving, Yummy was wondering why it was taking so long for them to get there, knowing that Monster was somewhere in the city.

Yummy asks, "Why are we taking so long to get to Monster's place?"

One of the members said, "We are driving around the city because there are a few cops around where we need to be. And we need to be careful if we don't want to get caught."

Yummy answers with, "Okay."

After twenty more minutes, they finally got out of the car and walked into the hideout. The gang members greeted them as they walked in. Then Yummy's group walks to the back of the hideout to Monster's room. After Yummy enters the room and closes the door, Monster said, "Yummy you're finally here. I want to tell you the plan that we had to get you out of the country and somewhere safe."

Yummy answers with, "Monster, why are you guys doing all this for me?"

Monster responds, "Because you are one of us. And we are leaving right now to get you out of here."

Yummy says, "okay," and follows Monster out through the back door of the hideout. All the gang members followed behind them. After about four hours of driving towards the border, the cops all show up out of nowhere and surround them, leaving no escape. Somehow the cops found out about their plans. At that time Yummy asks Monster, "Monster what are we going to do now?"

Monster answers with, "We will fight to get you across the border."

Yummy said, "Wait..."

But Monster had already jumped out of the car to fight the cops with the other gang members before Yummy could finish what he was saying. Outside Monster yells, "Members, hold them off as long as you guys can and shoot if you need to. Don't hold back."

But the shooting causes Yummy, who was hiding, to jump out of the car when a group of gang members came and asked Yummy to follow them to safety. But Yummy was caught between the crossfire and his left leg, right arm got shot off. At that moment, Yummy screams "Ahhhh!"

Monster saw this and ran over to pick Yummy up. Monster screams, "Retreat to the border!"

When they finally manage to escape, they had lost ten gang members and five others were wounded.

A year later Yummy had recovered from his injury but now he is missing an arm and a leg. Also he has to live his life in a wheelchair forever.



The Saving of Yummy

This story would take place right before Yummy was supposed to die. It shows that Gary is the protagonist of the story. He's a very underrated character and one that is sort of complex, just like most of the characters. This story (oddly) takes place in Yummy's grandmother's backyard. The backyard is full of vegetables and fruits. Yummy's grandmother spent a lot of time gardening. Gary will try to talk some wisdom into him since he's been in the Black Disciples longer than Yummy has lived, and he went through the same thing. Gary will warn him that the Black Disciples aren't here to help him.

Once Gary saw him, he went up and started off looking startled since he didn't expect him to be so easy to find.

"Yummy!" He exclaimed and stuttered out barely. Yummy's eyes were set on the floor stubbornly. "Gary?" His voice was soft and quiet, he was tired, he wanted to be left alone and you could tell through his tone.

Gary glared at him, "Listen, I know we don't really talk all that much...but you need to know something. The Disciples are talking about what to do to you. They think you're too much trouble. If I were you I would..."

Yummy interrupted him with a scoff, "You'd what? Go to the police? Please, why should I believe you anyways?" Yummy raised his voice a bit at the end.

Gary stood there silently at first. Then he began again "...I'm trying to help you right now, Yummy." As he was pacing around, he stopped in his tracks, his gaze drilling a hole into the floor almost.

"You're trying to help me now? We barely even seen each other up until today." A disturbing silence filled the air, right before it got interrupted by a burst of sirens.

Yummy's gaze quickly went to catch Gary's as they both had panic in their eyes. Gary was kind of scared because if he were seen, he would be arrested for being an accomplice. A cold shiver ran down the both of them. Yummy felt as if this was the end, his eleven years of life flashing before his eyes. Gary interrupted his thoughts with a half whisper.

"Quick in the house!"

"Wouldn't the house be the first place they would look in?"

"Shoot, just hide behind a bush or something. I mean, I'm keeping it real with you, they wouldn't think you'd be dumb enough to be hiding here."

After half an hour passed, which felt like an eternity for both Yummy and Gary, the sirens died down and Yummy retrieved slowly.

"Yummy... you're not safe here..."

"You don't know what I am... leave me alone," Yummy said in a weak tone.

"Come with me, you're only eleven, don't screw up your life completely like how I have already. I'll help you get away."

"If it'll shut you up then fine."

"Come on, I'll pick up some food."

As they walked through the streets, which were seemingly forever, they talked, and Yummy felt safe for the first time since this whole commotion had started.

Yummy in my Eyes

DERICK

Yummy, yummy where have you been?

AJ

Your all over the news for killing that girl.

YUMMY

Ya ,like I don't know that already.

DERICK

Well we are looking for you because Fisheye wants to talk to you about what happened.

YUMMY

I can't. If I come out people will see me. Then my life will really be over.

DERICK

Trust us, nothing will happen to you as long as you stay with us.

AJ

You just gotta lay low. Once we get into the city, after that its all country, with no one around for the next twenty miles.

YUMMY

You guys promise?

BOTH

We promise.

AJ

Aight, kiddo hop in.

DERICK

So what have you been doing these past couple of days out here on your own?

YUMMY

Nothing really, just been thinking about what happened. You know it didn't really hit me until a couple of hours afterwards.

AJ

Its okay, Yummy we are gonna try to fix this.

DERICK

Watch out there's a police checkpoint up ahead. Duck down and put the blanket over your head.

POLICE OFFICER

Good evening, gentlemen where are y'all coming from?

AJ

Ahhhh...our grandmother's house.

POLICE OFFICER

You sure about that?

AJ

Yes she lives on the other block house... ahhh 4786.

POLICE OFFICER

Ok gentlemen, have a good day.

DERICK

He had no idea. We just shoulda had a better story to tell him.

DERICK

Okay Yummy you can come out.

[Ring ring ring]

AJ

Who's calling?

DERICK

You already know who, Fish eye.

AJ:

Pick up.

FISHEYE

What's up boys?

DERICK

Whats up.

FISHEYE

Y'all found him yet?

DERICK

Yeah just a couple hours ago behind the abandoned movie theater.

AJ

Yummy say what's up.

YUMMY

Ah ah what's up.

FISHEYE

Okay call me back when it's done.

[Beep beep beep]

DERICK

Yummy I gotta tell you something, Fisheye sent us to find you and take you to the sewer and kill you.

AJ

What are you doing? I'm about to kill you! Why did you tell him the plan?

YUMMY

Well are you going to listen to him?

DERICK

Well we were, but it got us thinking.

You're too young to be caught up in this. I don't want to see the same things happen to you that happened to me.

AJ

You have got to be kidding me! Young buck did not just throw up in my car.

Get out the car Yummy, please get out of the car.

YUMMY

Please, I'm sorry.

DERICK

Chill he's nervous. He will clean it up. Right, Yummy?

YUMMY

Yeah.

DERICK

Up here to the left.

YUMMY

Who's house is this?

DERICK

It was my grandparents house before they died.

AJ

Make yourself at home. You aren't leaving for a while.

[Zzzz zzzzz zzzzz]

DERICK

Okay, I think it's time to go set up the scene.

AJ

Okay let's go.

Right here, behind the sewer.

DERICK

Get the body from the trunk and put it in the car.

AJ

Okay you pour the gasoline.

DERICK

Okay.

DERICK

Now, all we gotta do is toss the match.

[KA BOOM]

AJ

Send a pic to Fisheye.

DERICK

Already done.

FISHEYE

Good job boys. You guys got a nice payload waiting for you back at the house.

AJ

If only he knew the truth.

DERICK

Let's check on Yummy on the way home.

AJ

Okay.

AJ

You know we can't really keep coming back here this might be the last chance to see him.

DERICK

Yeah I know.

DERICK

Yummy YUMMY.

AJ

Where is he?

DERICK

I dont know, but he is going to get us caught if he does anything stupid.

Five years later

NEWS34

Now some of you probably remember this one. Yummy, the young boy who shot and killed that girl by accident is now a free man. He has spent all of his time when he would have been in jail, evading police and is now not wanted anymore.

YUMMY

I'M BACK.

DELI WORKER

Holy cow is that you ...?

YUMMY

I'm back and better than ever.

DELI WORKER

That's what's up. I got you with a sandwich on the house.

YUMMY

Thanks.

DELI WORKER

I'm going to use the restroom. You can watch the store while you eat?

YUMMY

Yeah I got you.

YUMMY

Help, help!

DELI WORKER

Yummy, I got you a soda for watching over...Yummy. OH NO, what happened?

SHOPPER

I walked in and he was choking, I tried to give him CPR but it was too late.

RANDOM PERSON

You know, they say what goes around comes around.

Scared Straight

POLICE

If you attend this program for one year, you won't be serving jail time. Also, follow me, I have somebody special you should meet.

POLICE

Meet your dad, Roger and your mom, Jessica.

PARENTS

Look at you Yummy, you've gotten soo tall. You are a grown young man and should make the right choices. If you don't you will end up like us in jail. Trust me, the environment here is horrible. You have to sleep with people you don't know, the food here is bland, and you have to share the same bathroom with everyone in the same cell as you.

POLICE

Yummy was sent here for gang affiliation and killing an innocent young girl.

PARENTS

Yummy, being in a gang could get you killed. I'm sorry I let you down, I should've been there for you but I'm telling you to stay bright and out of trouble. The society and the environment outside is amazing. In jail, there is no fresh air. I wanna be discharged and go home and see you have a big family and an amazing job.

YUMMY

[crying]

Yes mom and dad, I promise you I'll be a better person and stay outta trouble.

During the program*

MENTOR

Yummy you are an amazing kid and there is soo much ahead of you. You can grow up and achieve anything you want.

YUMMY

Imma go back to school and graduate and get to a good middle school, high

school, and college. When I grow up I wanna be a mentor as well.

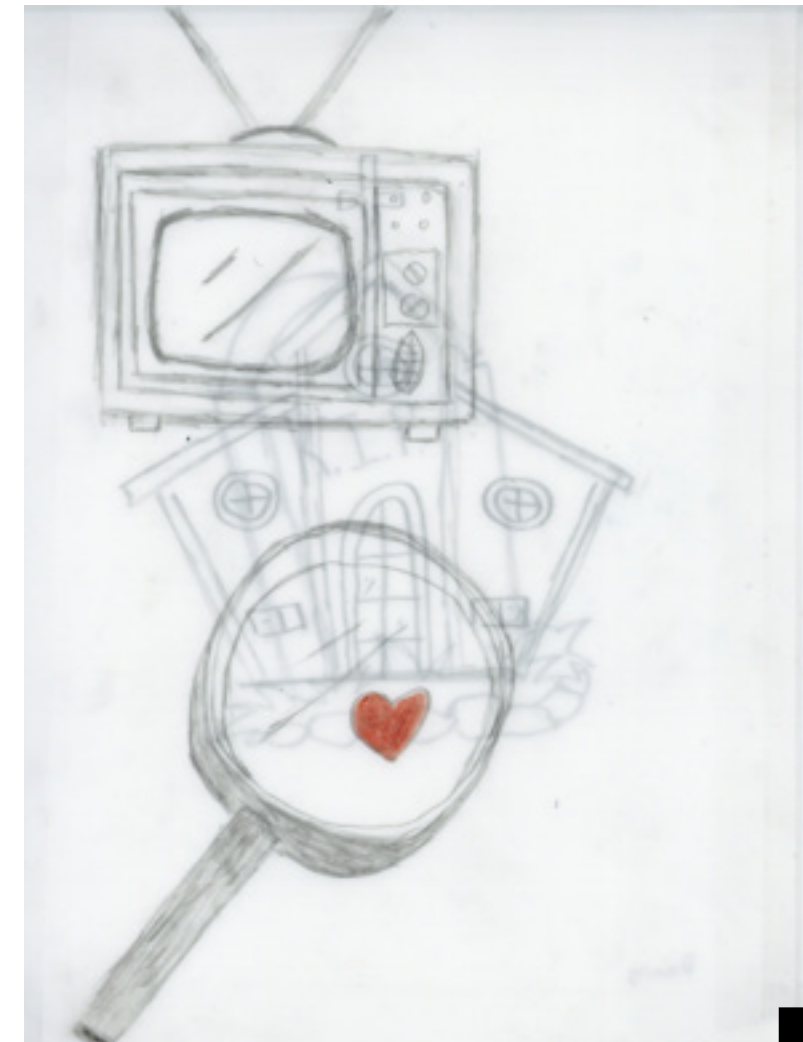
MENTOR

Why is that?

YUMMY

I want to teach kids how to be a better person. I like this job. I think it will suit me because I experienced it already and I think I can be an example.

*10 years later Yummy had graduated from college and pursued his dream job of being a mentor. He then found the love of his life and decided to marry her and have an amazing family, like he promised to his parents.



By Danny

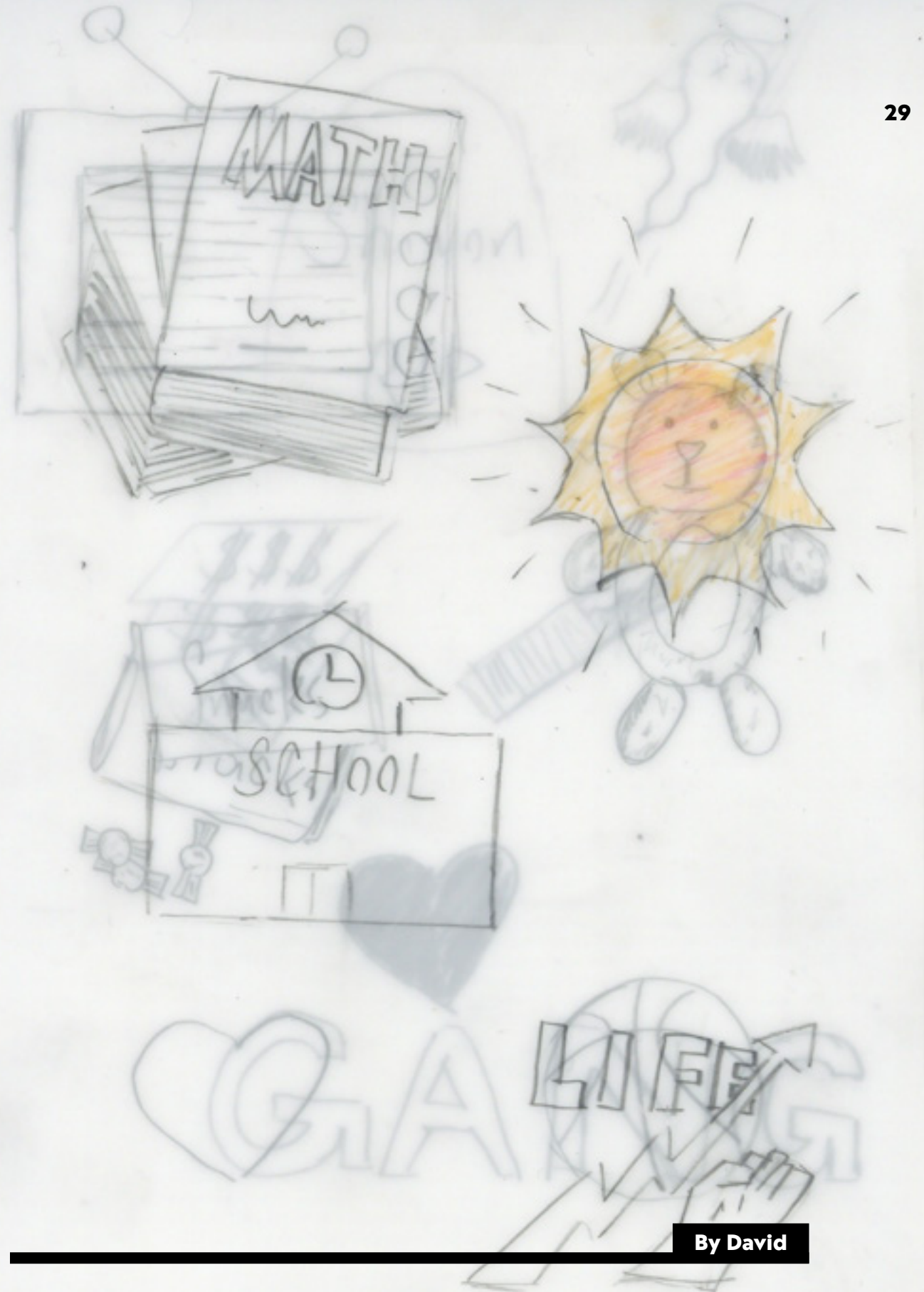
The Bright Future

It is a sunny day. Yummy woke up from his bed at seven am with his teddy bear beside him. All of his cousins were still sleeping. It's his grandma's house. He had been living with his brother in her grandma's house ever since he was taken away from his mother for neglecting him. Ever since he moved to live with his grandma, things had been a lot better.

Ever since he moved here, things had been going on the right track. His grandma had been very nice to him, providing the care and love that he was missing from his mother. He went to a good school in a neighborhood where everyone was nice and normal. Yummy appreciated what he had now compared to what he had in the old neighborhood before. Everything is just better. But he still can't forget the days that he had to commit crime for a living. He is afraid that if people found out what he did before, they would bully him for it. It's like a nightmare that always haunts him.

Later that day, when Yummy returned from the school, he heard the news on the radio. A girl named Shavon was shot and killed by a boy his age with a pistol. At first, Yummy did not care much about the news. But then he realized that the murder happened in his old neighborhood, the same street he had been living before he come to live with his grandma. Yummy started thinking about the miserable event. He questioned whether it would have been him who joined the gang and committed the crime if he was still living there.

This question haunted Yummy for days and he couldn't find the answer. So he went to ask his grandma. She answered him with a wise answer. She said, "I don't know if you would be the boy who committed the crime if you lived there. But what I do know is that you won't be now. You should focus on your bright future rather than the past." Her answer reminded Yummy that what happened in the past, in that neighborhood, is not going to affect him anymore. He is free from his past, he can do whatever he wants. He knows he no longer has to commit crimes for a living. It also reminded Yummy that there are still a lot of people suffering from poverty and are forced to join gangs for survival. Yummy wants to change that. He wants to improve everyone's life. Yummy decided to work harder and to embrace the future without his past haunting him.



The Chicago Town Hero

YUMMY

Shavon... I didn't mean to--

Yummy runs off. Random bystanders call the cops.

YUMMY'S INNER THOUGHTS

I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm so sorry, I just wanted to be a part of the gang.

Yummy runs back to where the Black disciples stay. He's frightened.

YUMMY

M-monster. I shot someone.

MONSTER

Who? In broad daylight? Are you an idiot?

RANDOM GANG MEMBER

What should we do with him? He killed somebody outside and everybody saw. Most people know that he is with us now. The cops might start looking for us now.

MONSTER

He gotta go, I knew it was going to end up like this. I just didn't expect it to be this early.

YUMMY

W-what do you mean?

RANDOM GANG MEMBER

He means you outta the gang, lil bro.

Yummy leaves the hideout after being kicked out. He runs to his grandmother's house, but gets stopped on the way.

POLICE OFFICER:

HEY BOY, COME HERE.

YUMMY

[Screams]

Police Officer grabs Yummy and puts him in his car.

YUMMY

It wasn't me I SWEAR. T-they made me do it. GRANDMA HELP ME.

POLICE OFFICER

Who made you do it? You coming with me to the precinct boy.

The police Officer takes Yummy to the nearest precinct for questioning

POLICE OFFICER

Who made you shoot that girl?

YUMMY

The Black Disciples.

POLICE OFFICER

What is that and where are they now?

YUMMY

It's a gang that everybody knows. They be staying about four blocks from where my grandma lives.

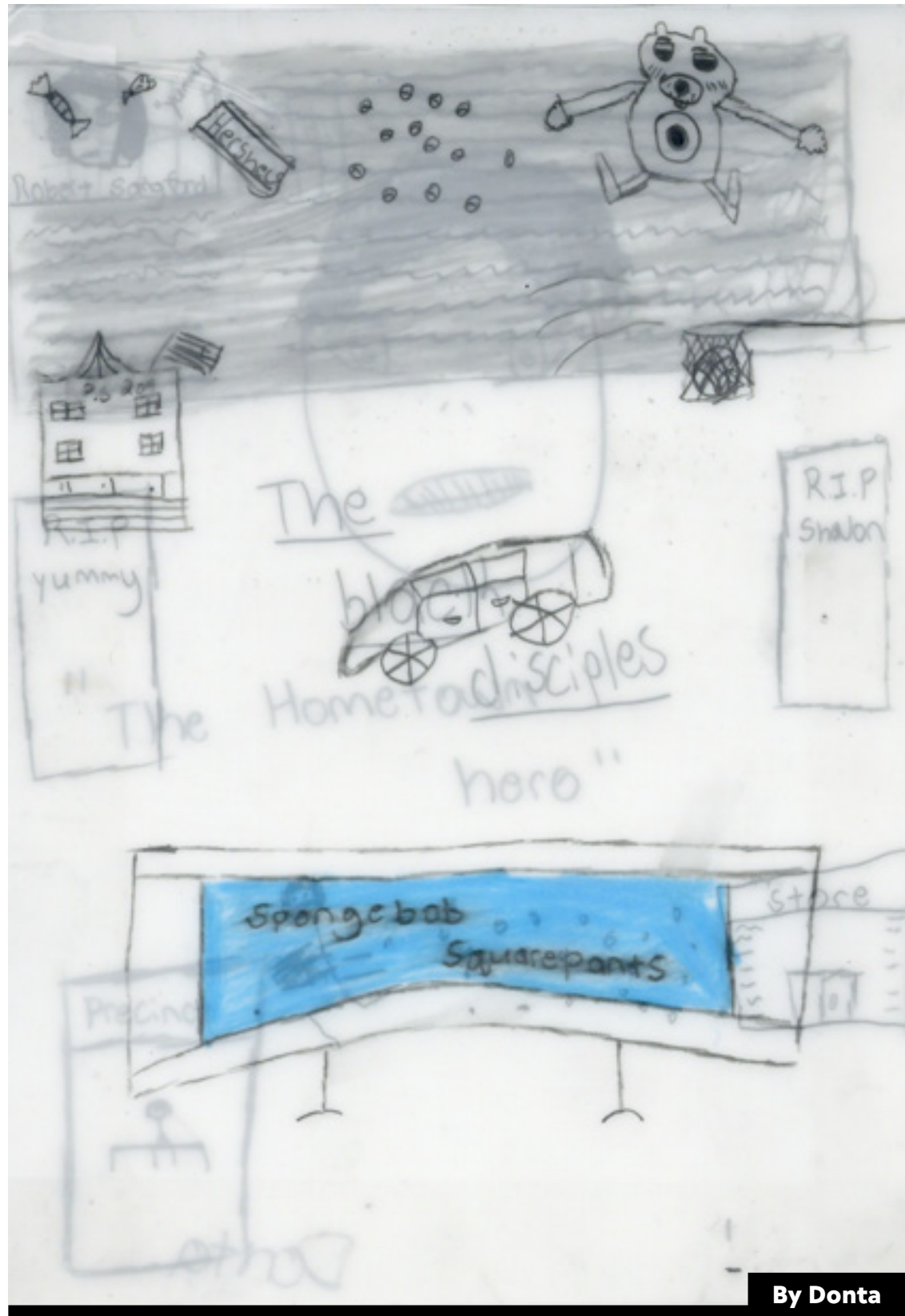
POLICE OFFICER

That's where we picked you up, correct?

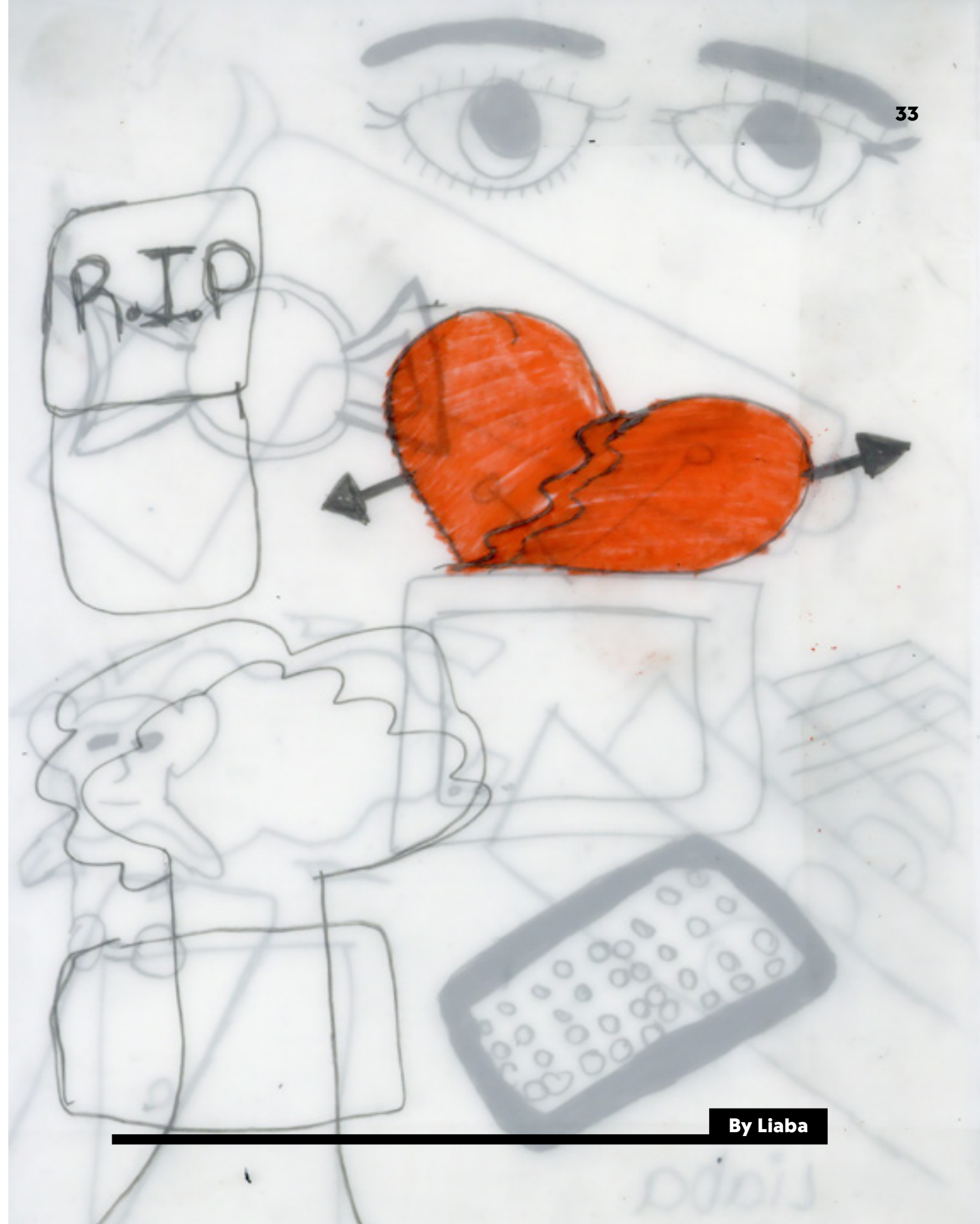
YUMMY

Yes.

The police found the Black Disciples and arrested every single last one of them. Many would assume that Yummy would be hated after snitching on a gang. But it was actually the opposite. Everyone loved him and the neighborhood became a better place now that there was less gang activity. In the news they called him the Chicago Town Hero.



By Donta



By Liaba

Yummy's Miracle

Yummy was initiating into the gang with Monster.

"I pledge my heart and soul to love BDN," says Monster. Yummy replies, "and in death."

"Now you're one of us forever," says Monster. This is the first move Yummy made that messed his life up. Yummy's actions aren't so intelligent, but sometimes he can't control that. Yummy has a disorder called ADHD, "ADHD stands for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder." It is a medical condition. "A person with ADHD will have differences in brain development and brain activity that affect attention, the ability to sit still, and self-control. ADHD can affect a child at school, at home, and in friendship."

Yummy is not able to control his own decisions and reacts instantly without thinking. In most cases this means he makes bad decisions. Yummy does stuff like "running in the streets, looking for trouble or things to steal." He started off by shoplifting in stores and later on he got into robbing houses. He also carried a fake gun, which made him act like a tough shorty. Yummy's idea of joining the gang was such a bad idea that he was tasked with killing someone and one of his rivals.

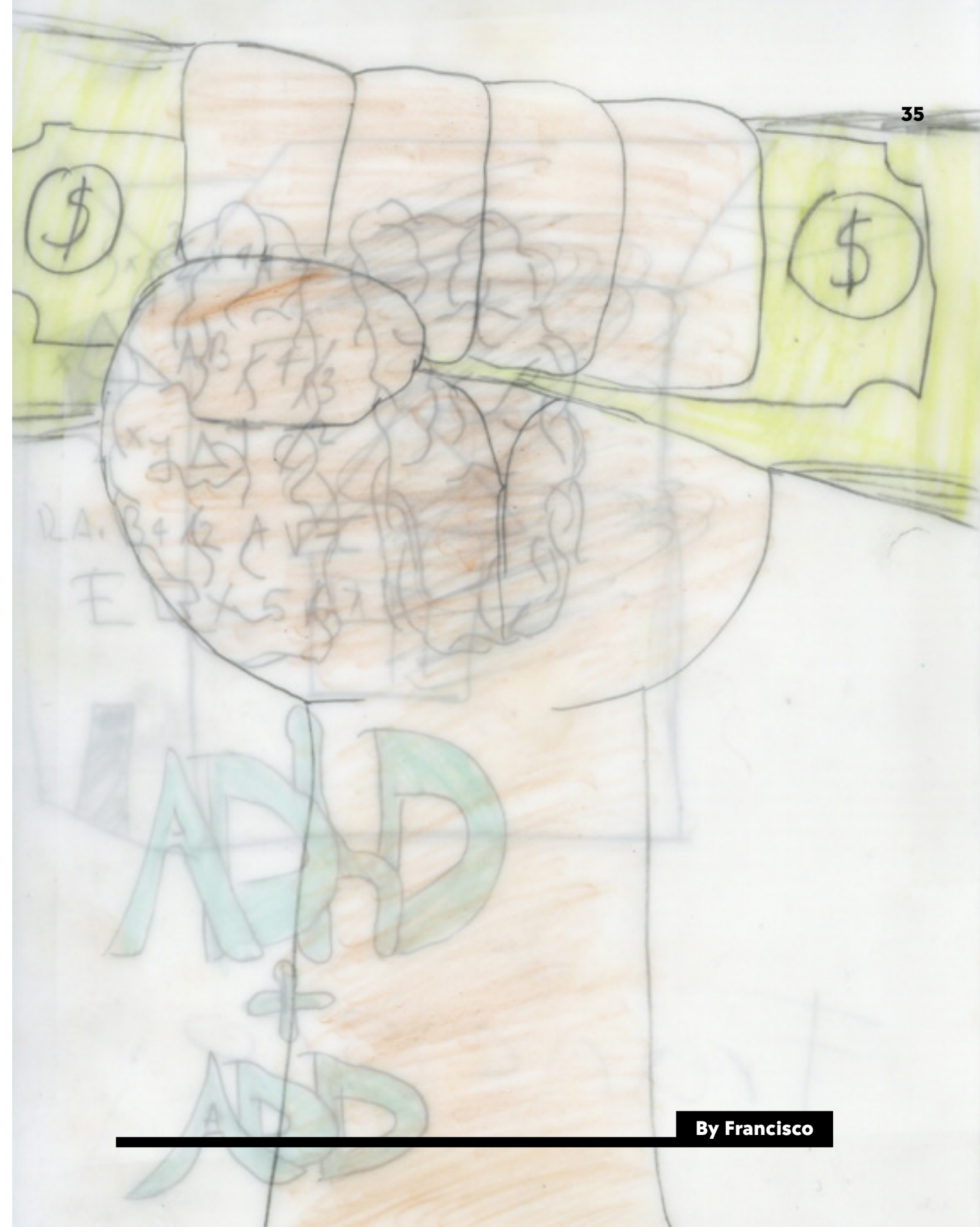
Yummy eventually gets the balls to do his task and "BOOM!" "Ahh dang it," Yummy says, shooting the wrong person. The police took him and send him into a special place for kids like him. Kids, who also deal with ADHD and have committed crimes because of it.

Twelve months later Yummy was released into the real world and "is learning to become a better person day by day," says Yummy's family and the people who have helped him. "The big problem," says Yummy, "is I was in danger of being eliminated by a group of gangs.....cause of the shooting."

What saved Yummy was him having ADHD which led to him being sent to some type of program for kids like him. Yummy had only one person who would stick with him, his grandmother. After Yummy was out of the program, his grandmother had already saved up enough money for them to move out to a safer spot, somewhere the people don't recognize him as "Yummy."

His grandma states, "Ever since Yummy got out of that program he has been a good kid, staying outta trouble and stuff."

"Man I wish I never came across any of them BDN people," says Yummy. "I'm just relieved my grandma moved me out and that program saved me out of the situation I was in. It's like a miracle."



Tragedy after Tragedy

One night a boy named Yummy was walking home and he was scared, so he called his grandma through a phone booth. It was very dark and the streets were empty with just the street lights lighting up the sidewalk and road.

He dialed and his grandma didn't pick up so he tried with his last quarter but she didn't pick up again. Yummy just walked away wandering! He was feeling guilty because of all the things he had done, which is why he didn't bother trying to go to grandma's house. So Yummy wandered around and after a while he sat at the local park and fell asleep. But then instead of crickets chirping, he heard running and a lot of commotion. He put his head up and sees that Derrick and his brother Cragg were running from six guys and he assumed that they were about to get jumped, so he ran off as well.

He was able to recognize that one of them were from the gang BDN. Yummy was young but he was pretty smart as well. He assumed that BDN were after those who were bringing too much attention to the gang. And Yummy brought a lot of attention to BDN so it was a good idea that he ran. He didn't really know! He just knew Derrick and Cragg were trouble makers and brought too much attention to BDN.

Yummy wandered off far and ended up in a different hood He noticed it when he started to see NTG written around the area. He still wandered around but was stopped by four black teenage males. They asked Yummy, "You're Yummy aren't you?" Yummy said, "Yeah I'm him."

They responded, "Well we are going to have a talk about BDN. And we will tell you who we are and what we have to offer."

Yummy declined but then one of them grabbed him by his arm and pulled him and Yummy didn't resist because it was still dark and no one was around. They went into this sketchy apartment and there was vandalism everywhere. It smelled like a lot of marijuana. Yummy was walked to the first apartment door on the second floor and then they walked him into a room. Yummy was intimidated by all the guys in the room looking at him and how the room was full of bags of marijuana. He knew he was in a trap and he waited a good five minutes not knowing what was going on until a big man came in and brought Yummy with him to the kitchen.

"You want something to eat yummy?"

"I'll be fine, I just want to go home!"

"I can't let you leave, you have to help me with something first and then I'll help you!"

"How can you help me?"

"...do you smoke?"

"I only tried twice!"

"Ahhh...come with me."

They went downstairs to the front yard and sat on a wooden bench. The sun was already rising.

"You can call me Trace, Look, me and Monster were cool and we stayed off each other's hood. We made deals and things were passive between NTG and BDN, but the tables turned as soon as BDN shot Jamal's uncle during a store robbery! His unc-"

"Wait, I'm lost! Who's Jamal?"

"He's one of the boys that brought you here. Well his uncle was trying to run out the store but BDN shot his uncle while he was making a run for the door."

"Ahh that's why NTG was off the radar for a bit."

"Yeah we tried to look for them but we don't know where the rest was at. And more news is that they are after you."

"Yeah, I assumed they already got two guys who brought out too much attention."

"Okay kid, you tell me where they rest is at and I'll make sure they won't touch you."

"But I don't know where they rest is at. They always move from place to place! Either a cheap motel or abandoned houses or apartments."

"Alright well now I know how to move. Yummy I'm capable of trusting you, you aren't from my side but if you're willing to do me a favor, I'll make sure to keep you safe. But make sure my word is safe with you."

"Why do you trust me if I have nothing to lose? I'm a--"

"I don't, that's why you're going by yourself and if you don't do me the favor, so be it. But if you warn them then you'll just make more enemies."

"Alright...I'll do it!"

"Alright, we will drop you off by where we found you and then you gotta do your job."

"Okay!"

"Here, take this just in case you get yourself in trouble."

"You really trust me with a gun?"

"I'm trying to show you, you can have connection over here instead of being rivals with us both."

"Alright, well then I'm ready!"

Trace called down for his guys and they walked Yummy back to where they found him. Jamal told him, "Good luck!"

Yummy just walked away and put his hoodie over his head. He avoided the places where BDN would be at but would be in the distance to spot them if anything. He was walking around and saw some of his old gang members and he followed them but they just went to the local park. Yummy waited a while but just moved on and kept walking around trying to figure out where BDN was resting at. He was ready to go to his grandma's house to sleep for the night and keep looking the next day, but then he came across more BDN members.

He saw that Monster was there and he had his back faced to Yummy. Yummy was full of anger over the fact that Monster wanted Yummy out the radar. Yummy had a clean shot at Monster so he decided to take it. Yummy set himself into position and as he was pulling the trigger, someone pushed Monster out the way and when Yummy already pulled the trigger,

Monster was on the ground but in front of Monster was Yummy's grandma. She took the bullet! Yummy shot another two bullets toward Monster but missed. And then they went to take cover and as Yummy ran to his Grandma, she was already pale and bleeding out.

His gun dropped as he dropped onto his grandma's chest breaking down. Then out of nowhere a loud bang sounded! Monster shot Yummy! After that BDN ran from the scene and there was a crowd around the two, Yummy and his Grandma.

People saying things like:

"He deserved it."

"He was just a kid."

Everyone just watched in shock as Yummy bled out. Yummy was no more.



By Joshua

Lost Child with a Happy Ending

"Do what you're told," said Monster. Yummy was given an order to commit a murder. He was eleven years old at the time and in order to not feel abandoned and alone, he must do what he is told. Sharon Dean was a young girl, age fifteen. She was shot right in the chest. Police sirens were ringing and an ambulance was coming rapidly. Yummy had to run as quickly as possible away from Chicago to New York to find his grandma.

YUMMY

[Knocking harder and harder.]

GRANDMA

I'm coming, I'm coming, who is it?

[She opens the door.] Yummy? What are you doing here in New York? How did you get here? Come in, come in.

YUMMY

Grandma there is no time to talk, please forgive me. I just killed a girl. I was told to do so or else I would be abandoned from the only family I have in Chicago.

GRANDMA

Oh my god! How can you do such a thing? I have told you once you step into Chicago, do not join a gang group. You refuse to listen to me. Now I have a murderer living under my roof.

YUMMY

Please grandma. I took the train for hours, then took the bus just to come to you for help. Please don't leave me. You are the only person that will understand.

GRANDMA:

[Crying]. In the name of Jesus, may you please forgive my grandson.

YUMMY:

Please!

By Karen

GRANDMA:

Alright, but you must not step foot out of this house. I do not want others to see you.

YUMMY:

Thank you, thank you, thank you.

Six months have passed. So far there has been no news going on. Dereck, a member of the gang Yummy was part of broke some news. "Monster got murdered and the police are coming after all of us. You must leave New York as soon as possible or else we'll both end up in jail. I'll try to get the money by this week and move to Las Vegas where my mom is. We'll be safe there. No one would know who we are and we can both start a new life."

Yummy was turning twelve and all he could think about was not getting arrested and ending up in jail. So he quickly packed up all his things and left the house with a note for his grandma.

The note said: "Grandma, I am so sorry but you gotta forgive me, I gotta leave. I'm causing you too much trouble by staying here and hiding. This is not a life. I'll call you when I get somewhere safe. I love you."

DERECK:

[Knocking on the door.]

ALICE (DERECK'S MOTHER):

[Hugging Dereck.] Dereck, oh my god baby, I missed you so much. How did you get here? And who is this young child?

DERECK:

Mom this is Yummy. Can we come inside to talk? This is the only place I can stay. We traveled from New York to Las Vegas. It took us three days to get here through trains and buses. Please let us stay here.

ALICE:

Alright but let's get you something to eat and god both of you guys smell like filthy human beings. I am glad you came back for my help.

YUMMY AND DERECK:

Thank you.

Three years passed by. Dereck and Yummy both found a new job living happily together. This was a new start and beginning for both of them. Yummy is now fifteen years old and Dereck just turned seventeen years old a few months ago. Alice decided to let Yummy stay in her house and become a part of the family. Both treated each other like real brothers and Alice couldn't be more proud of both of them.



Yummy's Second Chance

Yummy was an eleven year old kid who did not have anyone to guide him. He had a grandmother, but she was old, she could barely take care of herself. Yummy wanted to have a title and become something, so he decided to join a gang and do the dirty work for the gang. Since he had joined the gang, he was getting successful and had earned a rank too. People were scared of him. In the town they used to call him the "shooter."

Within six months he achieved a lot but after completing all the tasks there was this one task he messed up. It changed his whole entire life. The task was that he had to kill a rich guy named Charles. Charles owed a lot of money to the gang which he was not paying back so the gang decided to kill him. This task was assigned to Yummy.

When Yummy reached his destination to kill Charles he accidentally missed his shot and killed an innocent twelve year old girl. This girl was Yummy's neighbor. After killing the girl things got really heated. The police were searching for him but he went underground for a couple of days. Even his gang was looking for him. After a few days, his gang finds out where he is so they go get him. When they reached Yummy they persuaded him that they'll get him out of town and that the big boss wants to meet him. Yummy got excited that his rank is gonna go up so he went with them.

On the way, he felt weird because they were not going the right way. They were going somewhere else. They took him to a place where there was no one. When they reached, they said to Yummy, "You caused so much heat here. We are unsafe because of you, so you got to die."

There were two partners. One grabs Yummy and the second one aims to shoot him but he missed his shot and kills his team member instead. Yummy had the opportunity to run away. From there Yummy ran so fast for his life and he luckily escaped. After that he realized his own people wanted to kill him and he can't trust anyone except for his grandmother, so he decided to turn himself in.

The court decided to put him in juvenile for four years. After that he was done by age 21. Yummy became very successful. He took care of his grandmother and he started his own business. He also supported the mother who lost her child and asked for forgiveness from her everyday. She forgave him from that day. After some time Yummy's grandmother passed away, so he decided to move out of the town and start a new life. He decided to stay away from gang activity and teach other kids that this life is not good.

By Hasan

A Better Future

There was a woman, Yummy's neighbor, her name was Luisa. She wasn't able to have kids of her own. She lived alone and her only wish was to be able to have kids of her own. She would always say to her self, "Things happen for a reason. And maybe I wasn't able to have kids of my own for a reason."

Luisa worked at a candy shop that Yummy would usually go to to get his candy. Yummy would always go to her to get his favorite cookies. Luisa knew what candy he liked and what cookies were his favorite. She knew almost everything about him. She would wonder why Yummy's parents had kids if they would not even take care of them. Yummy's grandma would take care of them, but Yummy wouldn't stay there. He would mostly be on the streets all day and almost everyday. Luisa felt like he didn't receive the love and attention that he needed, and that he had gone through so much for his age.

"If only you were my son, I would do anything to keep you out of trouble," said Luisa while she saw Yummy enter the candy shop.

"Hey Ms. Luisa were you talking to yourself?"

"No, I wasn't..." said Luisa.

"Ms. Luisa, I came for the cookies that you promised to give me," said Yummy.

"Oh yeah, I will be right back. The cookies are in the kitchen. They were waiting for you to come pick them up."

Two minutes pass by and Luisa came back and gave Yummy the cookies.

"Thank you Ms. Luisa," said Yummy.

"Be careful and get home safe," said Luisa. Yummy in his head knew he wasn't going home. Instead he was going to go to the park and eat his cookies.

"Yeah, I'll be careful".

While Yummy ate his cookies at the park he then remembered that in order for him to enter the Black Disciple he had to kill someone from the other gang. One afternoon Yummy saw some of his rivals playing football near the Black Disciples territory. And a girl named Shavon lived on that street. Seconds later Yummy shot someone. He thought it was one of his rivals. But he then saw that it was Shavon who he shot. She was laying down on the floor.

"What have I done?" said Yummy. Luisa had just come out of the candy shop. She heard the shot. On her way home she saw Yummy and yelled his name out, but he didn't hear her and so he kept running. "Is he in trouble," Luisa asked herself. She ran after him. Yummy stopped running and so did Luisa.

By Lady

He saw her and ran to her. He was scared and was crying. "What happened? Are you okay?" Yummy told her what he had done. She hugged him and told him that everything was going to be alright. "You don't have to be scared. I'm here and I wouldn't let anything bad happen to you," said Luisa. She took him into her house so they could get some rest. She was able to sleep and told herself, "I can't believe an eleven year old boy killed a fifteen year old girl by shooting at her." She was thinking all night of what she was going to do. A few minutes later she had come up with an idea. "We're leaving tomorrow to New York." Luisa had some suitcases in her closet. She took them out and started to pack her stuff.

The next day when Yummy woke up he saw her suitcase. Luisa then told him that they were going to go to New York. "Isn't that far Ms. Luisa? Do we have to go all the way to New York?"

"Yes we have to go all the way to New York. It's far but my godmother lives over there and she'll be able to help us. I just want the best for you," said Luisa.

"I don't know what I would do without you. Thank you Ms. Luisa. You've been so nice to me. If you ever have a kid, they'll be so lucky to have you as their mother. I wish you were my mom," said Yummy. Luisa wanted to cry from the things that he told her but she didn't. She changed the topic and told him that they needed to go.

"Ms. Luisa I'm scared, I don't want to go to jail," said Yummy.

"Don't worry I won't let anything bad happen to you. I will protect you."

Luisa had the money and was going to buy the tickets for the flight at the airport. But before getting there, she had to go to Yummy's grandma's house to get his passport. When they got to his grandma's house, Yummy knocked on the door and no one answered. He then knocked again, but harder. He heard someone coming down the stairs but no one opened the door.

"Get in the car and wait for me there." Luisa then knocked on the door and Yummy's grandma opened. "Hey can you give me Yummy's passport please and all his documents?" asked Luisa.

"Why do you need them?" asked Yummy's grandma.

"I want to take him to New York. He's not safe here. The Black Disciples can kill him if they find him. Do want them to kill Yummy or do you want Yummy to stay alive and be somewhere safe?" asked Luisa. Yummy's grandma didn't say anything. She went up stairs, got his passports and documents, and gave them to Luisa. "Thank you," said Yummy's grandma. She then closed the door.

When they got on the plane Yummy seemed so surprised. "I've never been on a plane before," said Yummy.

When they arrived in New York, Luisa called her godmother and told her that they were on their way. When Yummy and Luisa got there it was late at night. Luisa's godmother had a room with beds and that's where they slept. Weeks passed by and Luisa was looking for a school for Yummy so he could have a career. She was able to put him in a middle school. Yummy didn't want to go to school but it was a way to show that he was thankful for the things that Luisa had done for him. Years passed and he graduated from high school. He wanted to be a therapist so he could help others, but college was expensive. Luisa helped him and he was accepted to a good college.

Yummy wanted to changed his last name and he did. He changed it to Luisa's last name. He got adoption papers so Luisa could adopt him. He gave the papers to Luisa on her birthday. "Happy birthday mom," said Yummy. Luisa was crying when he gave her the papers and then hugged him. "Thank you Yummy, I love you," said Luisa. "I love you too mom."



The Lost Child

Yummy pulled the trigger but he shot the wrong person.

EXTRA

Someone call 911!

Yummy dropped his gun and took off but some say he was caught right around the corner from the shooting. Shavon was pronounced dead at the hospital.

DETECTIVE

Why'd you do it?

YUMMY

She got in the way. It wasn't my fault.

DETECTIVE

Was she not your friend?

YUMMY

I don't care and I'm not answering you no more.

DETECTIVE

Look bud we can be here all day.

YUMMY

So be it.

Yummy was left alone for an hour, just sitting there.

DETECTIVE

[Slams the table.]

YUMMY

What you getting' so mad for?

DETECTIVE

[Leaves the room.]

A new detective walks in.

DETECTIVE #2

Hey buddy my name is Detective Burkhart but you can call me Nelson.

YUMMY:

Whatever...

DETECTIVE BURKHART

Okay look, you're going to have to work with me so that I can help you.

YUMMY

HELP ME? WHAT DO I NEED HELP WITH? I AIN'T DO NOTHING!

DETECTIVE BURKHART

Screaming is not going to make anything better.

YUMMY

Yeah, yeah, yeah, okay.

DETECTIVE BURKHART

Now tell me why did you shoot Shavon?

YUMMY

It was not my fault. I was shooting someone else- uh I mean my gun went off by accident.

DETECTIVE BURKHART

Who were you shooting at?

YUMMY

I TOLD YOU! My gun went off by accident.

DETECTIVE BURKHART

Where'd you get the gun from?

Yummy did not answer.

YUMMY

Hey who's that person with a suit that is supposed to sit next to me like in those TV shows?

DETECTIVE BURKHART

A lawyer?

YUMMY

Yeah, yeah that, can I get one?"

With that Yummy was left alone in the interrogation room.

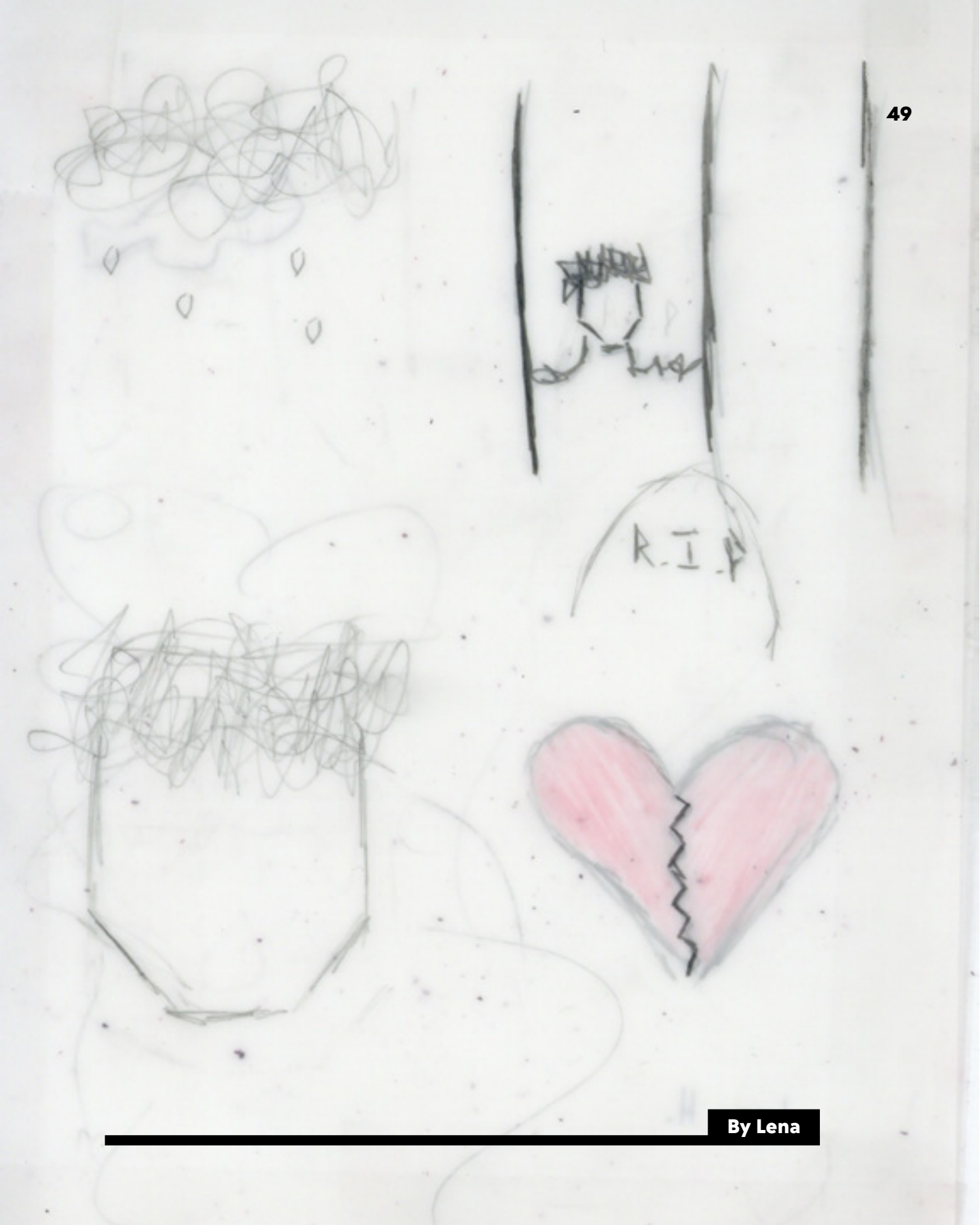
About a week later, Yummy was brought to court. He wore a suit that only made him look smaller.

JUDGE:

[Mumbles.] "So young, what a shame."

Yummy was found guilty for the attempt of murder in the first degree for the death of Shavon Dean and for an illegal possession of a firearm.

Robert Sandifer (Yummy) was given 10 years in juvie until the next court trial.



Yummy the Writer

Yummy was still on the run. He was moving from place to place, finding which abandoned house to go to next. He had enough of it, he just wanted all of this to stop. Why does everybody care about him all of a sudden? He never got this much attention in his life before. I guess killing an innocent girl puts a lot on your name, more than you realize. Yummy went to the nearest payphone and dialed his grandma. “Granny? Can you come pick me up? I don’t wanna run no more...” Yummy begged his grandmother, who is already telling him where he should meet her.

After calling his grandmother, Yummy sat there, on a random porch crying to go back home. He wished he would just sleep this whole thing off, hoping that when he wakes up he finds out it was all just one big, bad dream. That’s when his thoughts were interrupted by another shorty, Mike.

“Yummy? What are ya doing out here? You’re gonna get yourself caught.”

“I don’t care about getting caught anymore, I just wanna go home,” he said, tears rolling down his face.

Mike sighed feeling pity for the boy, “Well you still can’t be out here in the open like this. Come on, I know a girl who lives around the corner. You can go there,” Mike said dragging Yummy’s arm, not even waiting for an answer.

“But what about granny?” Yummy asked tripping over his feet as Mike pulled him.

“Don’t worry, she’ll find us.”

They arrived at the house. Yummy was of course immediately recognized and was met with puzzled faces. One was the girl Mike told him about. She looked furious to even be looking at Yummy. Let alone for him being in her house. The other face he presumed to be her mother. Her face was more worried and confused as to why Yummy was here.

“Yummy, what’re you doing here,” the mother asked.

“My granny’s gonna pick me up. Mike said I’d be safer with y’all,” he was barely audible.

“Yeah right as long as you are here, nobody’s safe!” the girl screamed, red in her eyes.

Yummy looked down, she was right he thought.

“Natasha that’s no way to treat people, especially this boy who don’t know any better,” the older women scolded at the girl.

“It’s true mama, he shot Shavon! She’s dead because of him!” Natasha yelled throwing daggers at Yummy. He looked down, avoiding her eyes but he agreed with everything she said.

“You think I don’t know what he did ‘tasha? You think I don’t hear what everybody in the whole damn country is saying?” the older woman looked down at her daughter who turned silent. “Right then, Yummy you can stay here while you wait for your granny,” the mother looked down at the boy who just stared at the ground quietly.

“Would it be alright to say a little prayer while we wait?” Yummy asked finally looking up to see the mother’s eyes.

“Alright baby, come on y’all let’s get on our knees and pray,” she smiled sweetly at him as they all sat down.

“You can start Yummy, just say whatever comes to heart.” Yummy stood silent for a second thinking, before saying; “Dear Lord, I’m sorry for everything I’ve ever done. I didn’t mean to hurt Shavon. I know you might not forgive me but could you do me a favor and tell Shavon in heaven that I’m sorry. Tell her mama and daddy I’m sorry for making her leave so soon. I didn’t mean to make a mistake. I’m sorry for that too.” Everybody was silent but they all knew that he was saying the truth. Everyone’s thoughts were interrupted when a loud honking alerted them.

“Its granny!” Yummy cried running towards her car.

“Yummy? Oh Yummy baby!” Granny cried getting out of the car running to him. Yummy embraced his grandmother, both of them crying in their reunion. “Granny can we go home now? I really miss my bed.”

Yummy slept in his bed that night but in the morning there was a knock on the door. The police came and took Yummy even though his grandma protested against it. But Yummy was calm about it, as if he had already accepted this. Yummy went to juvenile for five year and was watched in a much more secure place. Sure it was scary when he first got there, but his grandma would often visit. And with all the spare time Yummy got into the habit of reading and writing. There were books provided that intrigued him and gave him a much lighter tone on life. He thought that if books were just a small portion life had to offer, he wondered what else the world could offer. Yummy mostly wrote everyday about what he’d done that day to help clear his head space. But soon he’d start to experiment and with the knowledge and imagination he got from books he started to write his own stories. To be honest his writing wasn’t that bad. It was actually really good. He’d often share his writing to a few of his cell mates and they’d enjoy it and constantly ask what he was going to write next.

But before he knew it he was able to go back home and rejoin society. He started school as soon as he could since he had a lot of catching up to do. It was hard work because everybody thought less of him because of what he’d done. They all thought he’d go back and join a gang and some even tried to convince him. But that didn’t stop him. He was determined to be better. He needed to better, for Shavon. But soon some of his teachers started to notice his love for writing. They put him in honor classes and he excelled at those too. He even got a full scholarship to go to a university because of his writing.

After Yummy graduated, he wrote a book. It was about a boy who has a hard life and committed gang violence but finds reason that his life could be so much more. He called it “SHORTY.” Yummy continued to write stories of troubled youths. His mission was to give hope to kids like him. He hoped that maybe his books could help someone like books helped him.

Second Chances

“Yeah we don’t want no trouble here.” Just as Yummy was heading to go with Cragg and Derrick Yummy’s grandma showed up.

“Yummy come with me, you ain’t done nothing wrong you don’t need them.”

“Okay granny, thank Derrick for everything but I’m gonna go with granny.” You could see how frustrated Derrick was but before he could say anything Yummy was already with his grandma and leaving.

After thinking long and hard Yummy decided to say, “Granny I wanna turn myself in.”

The look on Yummy’s grandma’s face was indescribable. “Yummy you ain’t done nothing wrong. Why turn yourself in?”

“I know but I killed someone and the cops won’t stop looking for me so I wanna turn myself in.” Although Yummy’s grandma hated the idea and her stomach turned with just the thought of Yummy with the cops, she knew in the end Yummy was right and he would never give up. It was better for him to turn himself in than get caught by the cops, that way they could see just how sorry Yummy truly was.

A few hours later that’s exactly what happened. Yummy walked into the precinct and everyone was shocked. You could hear whispers between cops.

“Isn’t that the young boy?”

“Why would he turn himself in?”

“Oh wow, he is so young, he must be no older than twelve or thirteen.”

Yummy turned red from everyone looking at him and his thoughts went wild. “Did I make the wrong decision? Why are they looking at me, do I have something on my face or in my teeth?” Yummy was a nervous wreck. He was sweaty, cold, and shaking. Then suddenly this tall brunette lady cop came up to him and asked him, “Hey are you okay? Do you wanna talk to someone?”

“M-m-m-my name is Robert ‘Yummy’ Sandifer and I’m here to turn myself in.” The lady cop told a new cop who took him to a private room and started asking questions with his grandma in the room. When Yummy told the cop how everything happened, the cop realized he was just a boy who deserves help and a second chance.

After a couple of days Yummy went to trial and it seemed like an eternity before the jury made a decision. When the jury came back they had made a compromise. “Robert, given that you are very young, we have decided that you will be going to a program meant for young delinquents in Texas. You will be there for three years and will be attending a nearby middle school.” The sense of relief and calmness swept over the room and Yummy exhaled from relief. You could hear Yummy’s grandma crying because he wasn’t going to jail.

After a week of packing anything Yummy had a bus picked him up and brought to Texas. The bus brought Yummy to Bullard, Texas where Yummy attended Bullard Middle School. Just like

any kid who is introduced to new things, Yummy struggled but he soon got the hang of school and became a great student. Yummy had amazing teachers who helped him and saw potential in him.

While he was there, he got to call his grandma everyday and their conversations sounded like this.

“Granny it is amazing here and the people are so nice and my teachers say I have potential. Oh and I got my first 100 on my English spelling test and it was one of the hard ones! I even made some friends named Noah, Liam, Sebastian, and Elijah. Me and Elijah...oh wait sorry Elijah and I are here for the same reasons except it was his parents who were the bad people.”

“That’s great Yummy. I’m so happy you’re having a good time and maybe I’ll get to see you soon and maybe I’ll move to Texas so you could finish school there.”

“Granny that’s amazing, and I forgot to mention I met this pretty girl named Olivia and shes like my best friend and always has my back in arguments and also helps me in school.”

“That’s great dear. Well I gotta go. I love you Yummy and see you soon.”

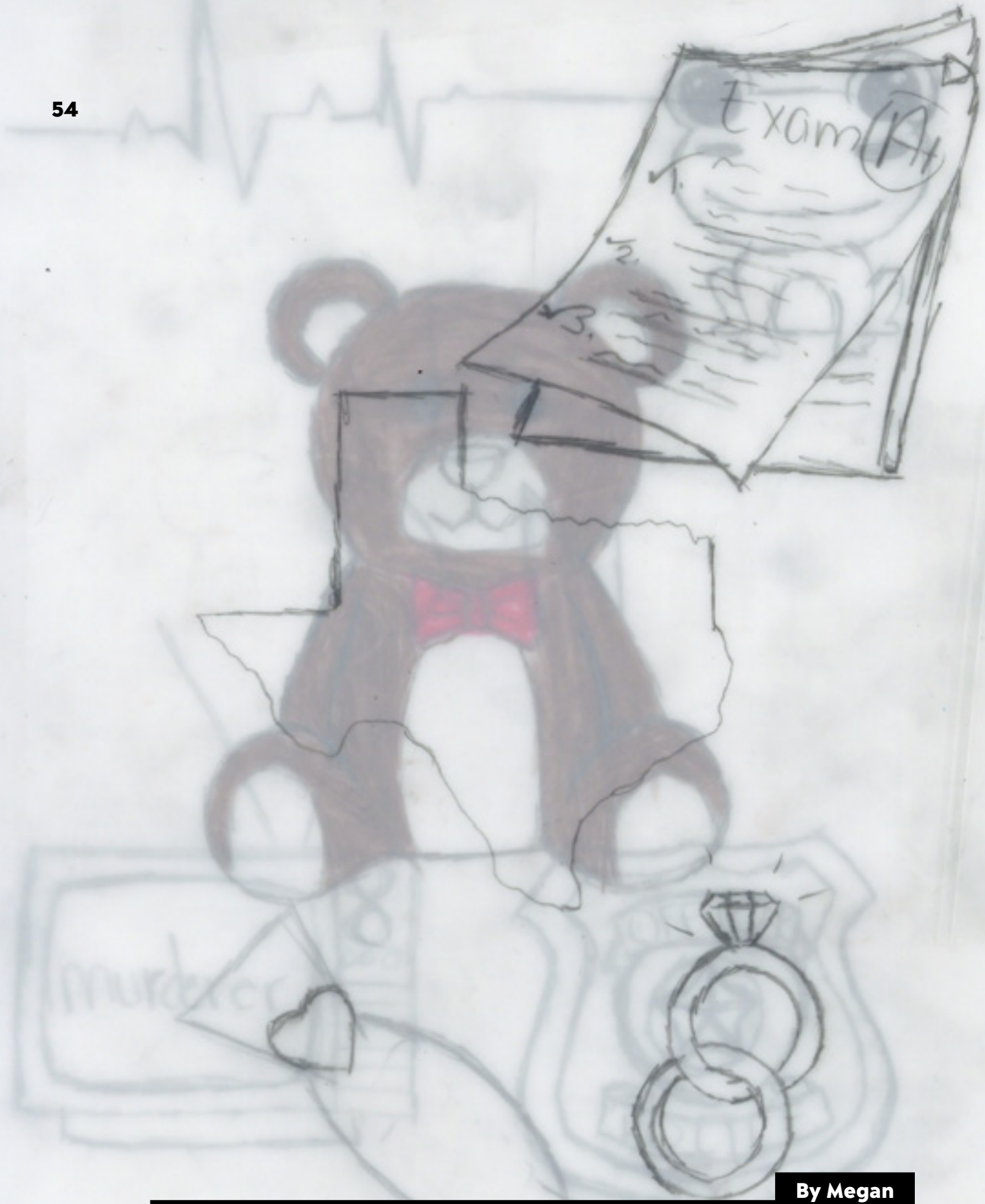
“I love you too granny.”

After a couple days Yummy was so comfortable and was getting great grades. Although he struggled in math he still passed with an 85. Yummy had found his love for writing and he got into an honors class for English. His years in middle school flew by so quickly and the next thing Yummy knew, he was walking across the stage during graduation with the biggest smile on his face. His grandma was crying happy tears with her biggest smile. She was really proud of Yummy and the person he was becoming.

Even though Yummy loved writing during biology class he found out all the bad things that could happen to a person like cancer and sickness and decided he wanted to help. He managed to get into DeBakey High School for Health Professions and there he knew this was what he wanted to truly do. Olivia, Yummy’s best friend, also got into DeBakey but she wanted to be a pediatrician and help kids. Yummy and Olivia were inseparable and started dating their senior year in high school. High school was one of the best four years of life and he managed to make a lot of good friends that he would have forever. Granny did move to Texas and she loved it and she especially loved that she was close to Yummy.

Yummy got into Wagner College and Olivia got into Molloy College. They saw each other whenever they could and never lost hope that they would be together through all the stress. It was almost like they were meant for each other, like it was their destiny to be together. College was so stressful but in the end they graduated on time, went to grad school, medical school, and worked harder than before. After everything, all the stress, all the doubts, and worries Yummy became the best surgeon he could be and Olivia became an amazing pediatrician and made kids have fun at the hospital.

They got married shortly after they were able to make money and had an amazing wedding. Their wedding was surely a night to remember. Around a year later Olivia got pregnant with a boy named who they named Gregg and around four years later they had a little girl named Shavon. Although Yummy’s life wasn’t perfect and Yummy started off without hope and being called all these horrible names, he worked harder than anyone else did and made sure in the end he got what he wanted. He made his dreams come true and now he will get to make his kids’ dreams come true and make sure they live their best lives.



By Megan

The Saving of Yummy

For a while, Yummy was involved in a gang and left for good. Yummy leaving the gang was the right thing to do. He gets advice from his guidance counselor, Jenny to talk about how Yummy can be a better person. Jenny gives guidance to Yummy to help him become a better person.

One fine morning, Yummy goes to school and sees his fellow gang members. After one glimpse at them, he keeps walking and enters school. Yummy was walking up the stairs to class and his guidance counselor, Jenny sees him in the staircase.

“Yummy, I need you to come to my office. We need to have a talk about what is happening to you,” said Jenny.

Yummy walked with Jenny to the guidance counselor’s office. Once they arrived at Jenny’s office, Yummy sat down on one of the chairs. Jenny began talking to Yummy about what has been happening.

“I’ve heard other students talk about how they think you’re a monster. Is that true?” Jenny asked Yummy.

“That’s kind of true, however, some of my friends say things like how I am nice to them,” Yummy responded to Jenny.

“Ah, I see, I see.” Jenny said.

“Well people have different opinions about certain things. Like in this case, some people think of me as a monster and some people think of me as a nice friend.” Yummy told Jenny.

“Okay, I’ll have a talk with your grandmother later today. Thank you for talking with me today.” Jenny said.

“You’re welcome, Jenny.” Yummy said.

Later in the school day, Jenny called Yummy’s grandmother about what she told Yummy. Jenny dialed Yummy’s grandmother’s phone number on her phone. Yummy’s grandmother picked up the phone.

“Hi, is this Yummy’s grandmother?” Jenny asked.

“Yes it is, what did you call me for?” Yummy’s grandmother asked.

“I was just talking to Yummy today about what people think of him. Some people think of him as a monster and some people think of him as a good friend,” Jenny explained.

“I have been made aware that Yummy was involved in a gang. While he was a part of his gang, he didn’t act like himself and he didn’t really have manners towards his peers. Now, his actions seemed to have changed after he left his fellow gang members for good. He started acting like a better person and treating people around him with respect,” Yummy’s grandmother explained.

By Melanie

“Alright, I’ll see how I can help Yummy with that tomorrow,” Jenny replied and ended the conversation with Yummy’s grandmother.

The next day was another regular school day. Yummy goes directly to Jenny’s office to speak with Jenny.

“Hi Yummy! Come have a seat.” Jenny greeted. Yummy took a seat in Jenny’s office.

“So Yummy, I’ve talked to your grandmother about you being involved in a gang for a while and then you left the gang for good,” Jenny explained to Yummy.

“About that, I left the gang for good. I know that I need to do the right thing, which to me, the right thing to do was to leave the gang for good,” Yummy explained to Jenny.

“I’m glad to hear that Yummy. I’m happy you have changed from bad to good. I’m sure your grandmother will be pleased too. Having you to do the right thing is what I’m proud of you doing,” Jenny said.

Jenny goes on the phone with Yummy’s grandmother and tells her the good news about Yummy.

“Hi Yummy’s grandmother. This is Jenny, Yummy’s guidance counselor,” Jenny greeted Yummy’s Grandmother.

“Hello Jenny, are you here to speak to me about Yummy?” Yummy’s Grandmother asked.

“Yes I am. Yummy seemed to have changed over the past few days and I’m impressed by the fact that after he left his gang, his actions have become better,” Jenny explained to Yummy’s grandmother.

“Wow, I’m very proud of Yummy for doing the right thing,” Yummy’s grandmother said in a very happy tone.

“I want you to take extra care of Yummy to make sure he is safe.” Jenny mentioned.

“Absolutely Jenny!” Yummy’s grandmother responded.

After school, Yummy came home and saw his grandmother. Yummy’s grandmother saw Yummy walk into the house and then asked him how school was.

“Hi Yummy, how was school today?” Yummy’s grandmother asked Yummy.

“School was okay. I heard you’re proud of me for doing the right thing,” Yummy replied to his grandmother.

“Yes, Yummy. I’m very proud of you for doing the right thing,” Yummy’s grandmother said in a very pleased tone.

Yummy has learned a very valuable lesson. He learned that there’s something more important than doing or getting what you want, like doing the right thing. Yummy decided to leave the gang and it was the right thing for him to do. In the end, Yummy’s grandmother took extra care and protection of him to keep him safe.



The Missing Piece

Cragg and Derick took Yummy for a ride but they knew what they had to do.

“Where we going?” Yummy asked.

“We gotta go see Monster. He has something he needs to tell you,” Cragg said.

As they drove to the tracks there was a feeling in Cragg’s stomach, a voice in his head to just turn around and book it. Cragg knew that he was doing the wrong thing, but if he betrayed Monster, Monster would go after him too.

“I can’t do this anymore!” Cragg finally said.

“What did you say Cragg?” screamed Derick as he drew his gun.

“I have to save Yummy,” Cragg said, then drew his gun and shot his own brother, Derick three times in the chest. Then he threw him out of the car with no remorse, went towards the nearest highway, and drove out of the city.

“Listen Yummy, Monster sent us to kill you,” said Cragg.

“But why did you kill Derick? You broke the code,” said Yummy.

“He would have snitched on us and got us all killed,” said Cragg. Yummy started to break down in tears. “Don’t cry it’s going to be okay,” Cragg said.

Cragg and Yummy had just made it out of the city. “I know this place that we can stay at, it’s small but it can do the job,” Cragg said. Cragg and Yummy got out of the car and headed to a big Barn.

“This place looks really old,” Yummy said.

“It’s because no one has lived here for ten years,” said Cragg. “My grandma used to live here but when she passed, they just left it here. I used to visit my grandma every weekend after school with Derick,” Cragg continued. “Come over here Yummy. My Grandma’s house is up the hill,” Cragg said.

They went into the huge house and turned on the lights. “This place really smells bad,” said Yummy.

“Turn on the TV to channel one,” said Cragg. Yummy turned on the TV to Channel 1 News.

The reporter on TV said, “This is Channel 1 news, earlier today Juvenile Derick Niles was shot in the chest and found in critical condition. Police believe this could have something to do with the case of Yummy earlier this week.”

“Man I can’t believe this, Yummy. If my brother is alive he’s going to come here,” Cragg said.

“We have to get out of here then,” Yummy said.

“No, if we leave they’re going to find us faster,” said Cragg. “We have no choice like you said. Your brother is going to come find us here,” said Yummy.

“Alright fine, let’s go get in the car,” said Cragg. They both got their things and went to the car.

“Where are we going now?” Yummy asked.

“I don’t know, Yummy. I don’t know!” Cragg screamed.

“Calm down, Cragg we are going to figure this out,” Yummy said.

Cragg and Yummy started driving back to Chicago. “Why are we going back?” asked Yummy.

“I need to bring you back to your grandmother’s house where you will be safe,” said Cragg. Cragg began to drive to Yummy’s grandmother’s house and turned on the radio.

“Breaking News: Derick Niles is alive and recovering from the shooting yesterday. He will not be charged and will be released once in stable condition,” said the radio reporter.

“Damn it, Yummy we have to get to your grandmother’s house now!” screamed Cragg.

“Once he tells Monster what we did, he’s going to come after us,” Cragg said.

They finished driving and arrived at Yummy’s grandmother’s house.

“Alright, hurry up and knock on the door. Tell her to come outside,” said Cragg.

Yummy got out of the car and walked up to the front door. He rang the doorbell and waited patiently. His grandma opened the door and gave him a big hug. “Where have you been Yummy? I got worried looking at the news and hearing about what happened,” said Yummy’s grandmother.

“It’s okay. I’m fine. Cragg was looking out for me.”

Then they stopped and turned around as they heard a speeding car driving 80 miles per hour down the road.

“Bang! Bang!” They heard sounds of gunshots.

“Cragg!” screamed Yummy. They ran to the car to see Cragg. “Cragg! Are you okay?” said Yummy. Cragg moved his hand from his chest and showed blood pouring from his chest.

“They hit me Yummy. They got me good,” said Cragg.

“Grandma, call 911. We need help,” said Yummy.

Yummy’s grandmother went off running back into the house and dialed 911.

“You know when they come, they’re gonna take you in,” said Cragg.

“I don’t care anymore I’m done hiding,” said Yummy.

Fifteen minutes later, four cop cars and an ambulance arrived at the scene. They were told what happened and they took down all the information they needed.

“Thanks for the help but I’m going to have to take you in as well Yummy. You know what you have done and I can’t let that go,” said the officer.

“I understand,” said Yummy.

The police took Yummy in. But when Yummy arrived at court, he got a shorter sentence since he helped out the cops and turned himself in.

After Yummy was freed he completely changed his life around. He became an A student and left the gang life in the past. He later got a scholarship to one of the top colleges in Chicago. People praised him for how he changed his life and many people wanted advice from him. Yummy enjoyed his life and found the missing piece that he needed. Someone that cared for him and inspired him was Cragg.

Ten Minutes after the shot...

Yummy is a case that seems common in my field of work. His situation is not new but what stands out is his age. I arrived on the scene while he was being loaded into the ambulance.

Poor kid.

Just one less to deal with.

He looks so young.

He is. He just got caught up in things. You know how it goes.

He was wanted for killing a little girl but I still felt bad for him. No one this young should have to go through life like this and they especially shouldn't have their life taken like this. Shot by his own people, people he trusted.

Mr. Lennon.

Yes sir, What do you need?

I want you to work on the case.

You mean this one?

Yes, find the other suspects, everything we know so far will be left on your desk.

Never thought I would work on a case of one of America's most wanted. Now I have to find out who shot this kid and that doesn't seem so hard.



By Paul

Hello, Goodbye

“What about Derrick?” Yummy said.

“Don’t worry about him. Monster’s waiting,” said Cragg.

Yummy enters the tunnel with Cragg. Silence was in the air as Derrick waited for Cragg in the car. Suddenly, there was a “Pop! Pop!” Derrick puts the car into drive waiting for Cragg to come out in order to leave as soon as possible. Seconds pass and Derrick is still waiting for Cragg. Derrick finally saw a shadow approaching...

But he was surprised to see that it was Yummy! Derrick freaks out and tried to drive away but he froze. He was shocked to see Yummy aiming the gun toward him. “Pop!” All the birds in the distance went flying. That was Yummy’s fourth “pop” and he now knew that his life has changed permanently. Yummy doze off like a kid running in the park.

A day passed, and Monster was frustrated by the news.

“That little fake shorty! Killing our own members!” Monster shouted. “Bring me Yummy! But don’t kill him right away because I want to finish the job.”

Every single Black Disciple got into a car and started looking for Yummy. No one was able to find Yummy. Not even the cops. Hours and hours passed without finding Yummy, but there was this smart Black Disciple member. He thought since Yummy was a little boy, he could hide in the smallest of all places. There was this spot Yummy always used to hide in when he played hide and go seek when he was younger. It was an air vent near his house. No one except kids and small people could fit in there. Yummy was sleeping in the vent and out of nowhere he heard the air vent door being ripped off viciously. He had been caught. Two BDN members grabbed his arm and put a bag over his head. They threw him into a car and took him to Monster. An hour later, the bag was removed from Yummy’s head. In his face was Monster, looking at him with death in his eyes. Yummy was scared.

“You little fake shorty. You traitor. You’ve betrayed the Black Disciples Nation and you’re gonna pay for it!”

Yummy was sweating and panting hard. He was very nervous. He didn’t know what to do. Suddenly he came up with an idea. An idea that might be the worst idea, but it was the only idea he had. Slowly, he guided his hand toward his pocket. His movement was so slow and precise that no one was able to notice. Monster takes out his gun and loads it. He points the gun at Yummy’s head with the tip of the gun touching his skull.

“Any last words shorty?” asked Monster.

Yummy was so nervous, you could hear his heart beating in the whole room.

“I hate you!” yelled Yummy.

Yummy quickly took out the gun he used to kill Cragg and Derrick and aimed it straight at Monster. Without hesitation, “Pop!” Yummy had shot Monster in the head.

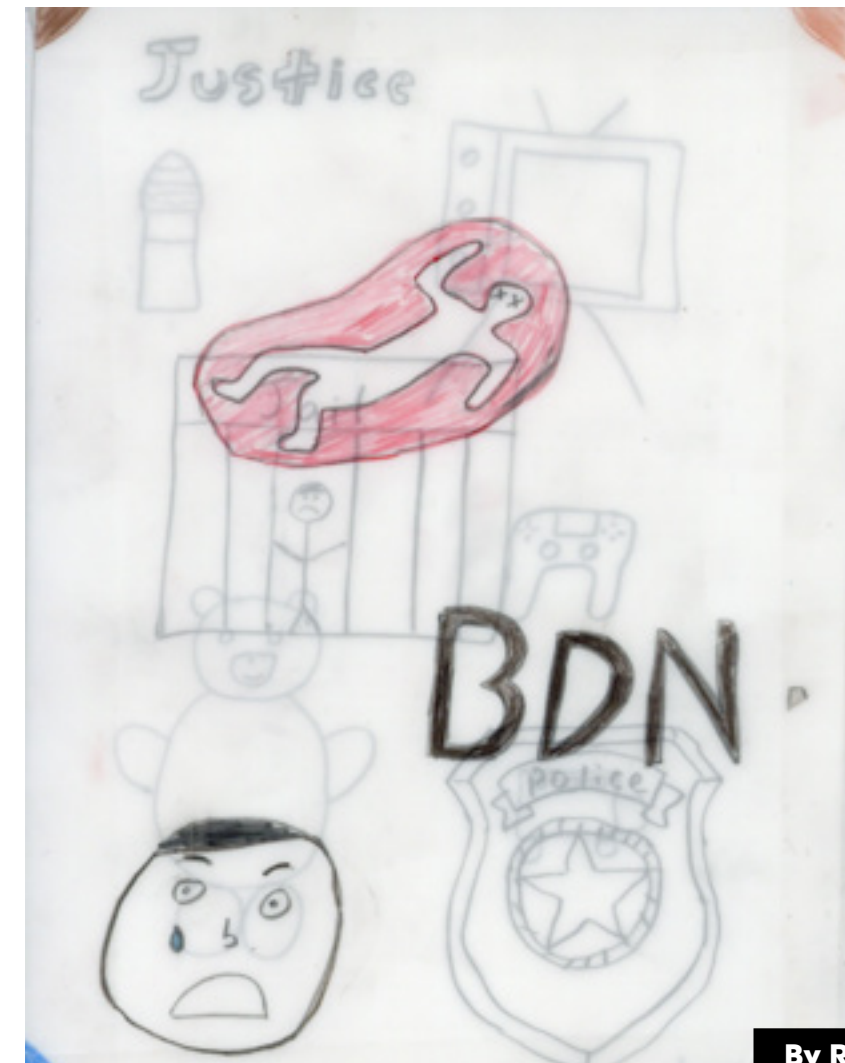
Yummy was shocked. Every Black Disciple gang member was shocked. Wanting revenge for Monster, they all took out their guns and aimed them at Yummy. Yummy closed his eyes as a tear dropped down from his eyes. He knew it was over for him.

“Pop!”

Silence was in the room as the blood spread along the floor.

Twenty seconds later...

“Rest in peace Yummy and Monster,” said the Black Disciples. “You guys will never be forgotten.”



By Raymond

A Solo on the Streets

At the age of eleven, Yummy, a boy from the streets of Chicago, Illinois, took the life of a young girl. This led to him being sent to juvenile for ten years until he was sent to jail for forty more years. His heart sank when the judge sentenced him to life imprisonment. Did it really? Yummy had lost everything: his gang, his family, and his humanity. Where could Yummy go? No one had time for him. His only salvation was to be taken care of by society.

Cling clang shouting little punk

The criminals in jail were thirsty for his blood. Lots of murderers, crooks, gang members of all types. If Yummy wasn't so popular, would he be so known? It was the only attention he had, but he didn't want it. Yummy was thrown in jail. It was filthy, confined and lonely. Was it any different from the streets? The filthiness, the loneliness... "At least the streets weren't confined. I had all the space I needed. I had lots of freedom, but I couldn't take the chance to live a normal life," said Yummy. Yummy would sit in the corner, all day thinking about whether it was worth it to take a life. Was there a choice? Yummy wouldn't eat for the whole day. The prison guards had to "motivate" him to eat.

Meanwhile, the Black Disciples were creating a plan to assassinate the boy. They saw him as a traitor to give himself in. They thought that murdering him would prevent any more information from being spilled. King David, the leader of the Black Disciples made the choice that would not risk the whole gang. David was grown to Yummy, but had to cut his bond for the sake of the clan. The plan was to try and get two members of the gang (Cragg and Derrick Hardaway), two young brothers, to commit a crime that would get them in jail. The brothers would then have to murder Yummy within his cell. David chose to send two young brothers to do this job because they were his ponds. They didn't have much value since they were young kids with barely any experience. Another reason was because they were young. Who would shoot a kid?

On January 15th, the young brothers went to the nearest corner store to steal money. This crime was common and simple and would get them sent to jail.

"Give us the money before I blast your brains out," Craigg said. As Derrick throws his bat and starts trashing the place, Craigg shoots the ceiling three times to frighten the man behind the register.

The frightened man refused to hand the money over so Craigg took his P18-C and smacked him on the head, beating the poor man until he was bleeding. Someone across the street witnessed the man being beaten and called the cops. Craigg and Derrick were waiting for the cops to come as soon as possible.

Three cop cars pulled over. Derrick said, "Don't shoot. We didn't kill anyone!" One of the cops came over to see two "men" on the floor with their hands behind their back. They put them both in the back seat of the cop car with their arms tightly handcuffed.

Later on, after their trial, Derrick and Craigg were known to be young boys and were sent to

Juvenile. On the way to their cells Craig's and Yummy's eyes met for a second. Craig's eyes were so sharp and fierce, the eyes of a cold blooded killer. Yummy had a weird feeling in his stomach. He had a bad instinct about the boy he saw in the hallway.

When the prisoners were sent to the showers, Craigg had to fake an asthma attack and was sent to the emergency room. This bought Derrick some time. In Derrick's back pocket was a metal spoon he had found on the floor in the cafeteria. Derrick smashed the tiles to get a sharp piece of tile, shaped like a rigid triangle, pointy and sharp enough to pierce flesh.

In the showers, Derrick was near Yummy while they were washing up. The men around them were to busy washing themselves up. This was Derrick's only moment. It was as if time had slowed down. Derrick's adrenaline was skyrocketing. He knew it was the perfect chance to strike.

The face on Derrick's face was ugly and fierce. His legs were ready to pounce. He was like a lion in the jungle. He was the alpha in this situation, who was going to pounce on his prey, which happened to be Yummy. Derrick took his sharp edge and shanked Yummy in the stomach.

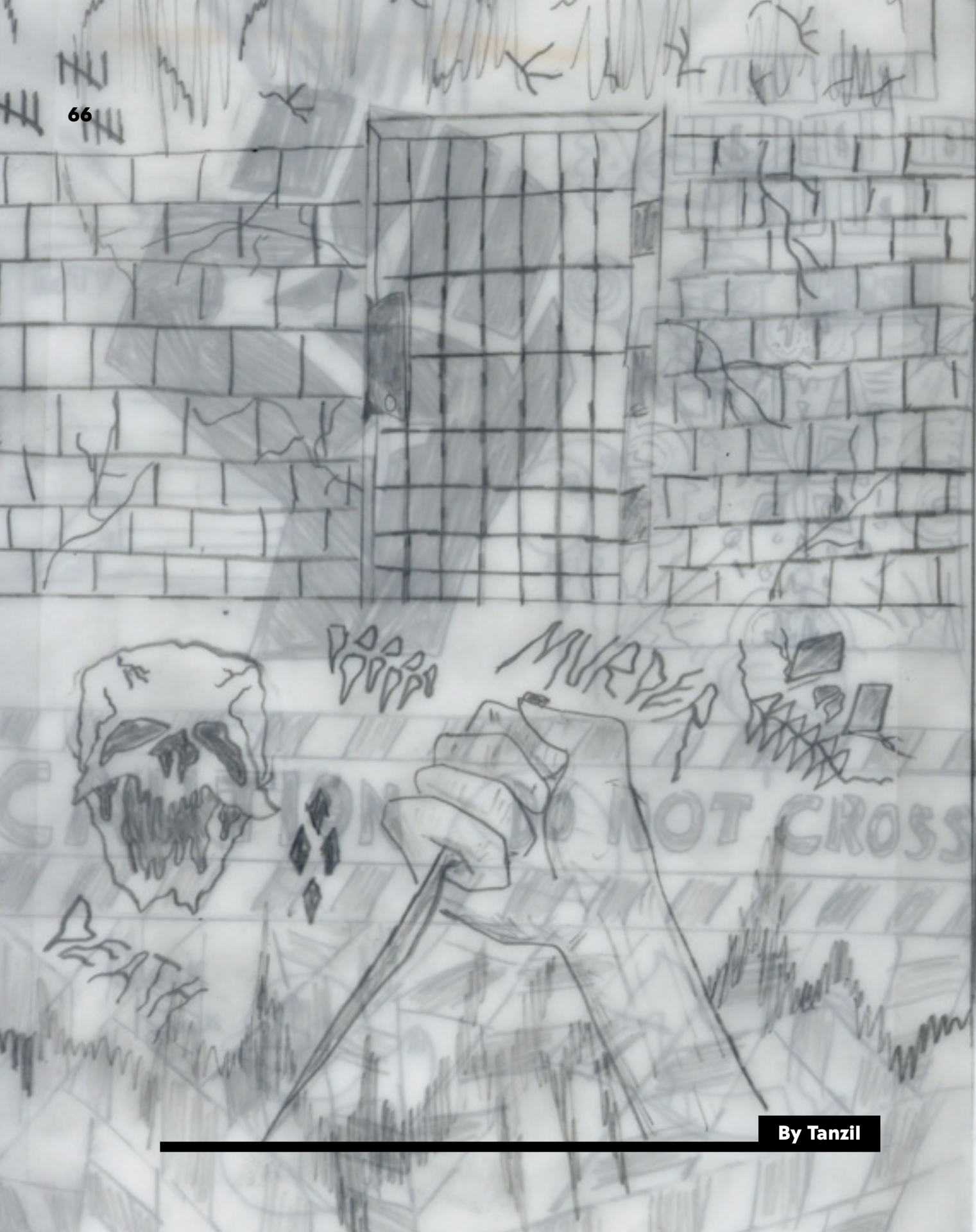
Yummy screamed, "I've been stabbed. Help!" He was losing his strength and began to fall loose on the floor. Yummy was on the floor, as stiff as if he was already dead. Yummy couldn't move. He couldn't feel the stabs piercing into him. His body was numb and he began to accept the fact that he was dying. His mind was cracking up. He saw his parents carrying him, helping him one last time before he left.

Derrick kept stabbing him. "This was for betraying our gang. You chose this on yourself. You just had to get in this mess yourself!"

The prison guards heard all the noise coming from the showers. They barged in with their guns out. "What the hell is going on in here?" said the group of guards. The group of guards stared at the floor. All they could see was red coming from a child who had been stabbed multiple times. They were terrified. They saw another person on top of Yummy. In the heat of the moment they saw the strange persons tabbing the already dead child. They pointed the gun right at the head and fired.

Bang bang

As there were two, the shower room looked like a blood bath. This was the fall of two street kids who were in the wrong place at the wrong time. Maybe Yummy wasn't really a solo on the streets...



By Tanzil

Cost too Great?

After the accident, the news about Yummy spread like a wildfire. The Black Disciples got a lot of pressure from the police and community around them. Inside the Black Disciples, the gang leaders were discussing how to stop the attention. One of them came up with the idea to kill Yummy. He said, "If Yummy is dead then the police will stop bothering us."

There was a silence. Then Monster said, "No, he is one of us. We shouldn't abandon him." The other leaders gave their opinion and decided to continue to help Yummy. However as the days go by, more members of Black Disciples get arrested for helping Yummy. Many members changed their mind and decided to hold another meeting.

This time, the majority of them agreed that Yummy caused them too much trouble. One of the members said, "Yummy is not worth saving. He is loyal to the gang but he causes too many of his brothers to get arrested." Another one said, "I agree that he caused all of these problems and should be held responsible for his failure." The gang started to pressuring Monster. Inside Monster's mind, he also started giving in. He said, "Silence. Fine, I will send Gary, Derrick, and Cragg to end Yummy's suffering."

After the meeting, Monster sent them to kill Yummy. Inside Gary's mind he still wanted to save Yummy. He convinced the other two to hide Yummy in an abandoned house far away from the city and offered to take all the blame if his plan fails. When they found Yummy they told him Monster's plan and their plan.

Yummy said, "No you are you lying. Monster said I am one of you."

Cragg said, "Kid if you want to die, we won't stop you."

Gary said, "Yummy, if you want to confirm the truth then you probably will die. We won't stop you."

Yummy finally agreed to go with them. They brought Yummy to an abandoned house in the countryside. Every few days, one of them brought food and water for Yummy. For three weeks, Yummy stayed in the abandoned house. But one day when Derrick was on his way to re-supply Yummy with food and water, he got tracked by the police on a GPS attach on his car. He didn't notice it until he had already arrived at the abandoned house. A bunch of police came to that location. Derrick and Yummy tried to escape. Their attempts failed and they got arrested.

Yummy got sentenced to ten years in prison and Derrick got five years.

When Monster heard the news that Yummy and Derrick got arrested by the police, he said "Bring them to me!" to the rest of the gang members.

Gary was notified by one of his friends still in the gang. In order to save himself, he went to the police and explained the situation. He asked the police to imprison him but the police refused. So

By Zhi Feng

instead, he went to rob someone and told them to call the police. After twenty minutes, the police arrived and arrested him, like he wanted. One of the gang members saw this and notified Monster. This made him more frustrated.

On the other hand, Cragg was not that bright so he tried to hide in his house. He hid for a day until he ran out of food. He looked down from the window and thought to himself that he should be safe. Unfortunately, one of the gang members saw him and called the other members to plan an ambush. When Cragg returned to his home, he didn't realize that there was an ambush until he waled inside his yard. He tried to escape but one of the gang members knocked him down. Then they took Cragg to Monster.

When Monster saw him, the first thing he did was he grabbed him and started beating him. At the same time yelling, "Traitor, traitor, traitor." The other gang members just watched Monster beat Cragg, except for one person. This is the same person who informed Gary about Monster's plan. He secretly contacted the police and told the police their location. Meanwhile, Monster is continuing to beat Cragg until Cragg passed out. He was full of blood and had a wound on his body. Gary's friend and a few other gang members left as well as the rest of the gang. Gragg was the only one left.

When the police arrived, they only saw Gary and so they sent him to the hospital to try to save him. Sadly, he didn't make it. Gragg died from brain damage due to the lack of oxygen from when he was passed out. A few days later, Gary was released and the gang stopped chasing him, but he got kicked out of the gang. Two day later, during Gragg's funeral, Gary and his friends that helped him came.

His friend said, "We lost a friend." Gary remained silent.

Then the friend said, "A life for a life, but was it worth it?"

Gary said, "Why does someone always have to pay the price?"

The friend said, "That's life," and then left.



Sweet Dreams

I was picked up by Derrick and Cragg, being convinced by them. Back then I felt like I could have just stayed and waited for my grandma. But at the same time I feel pretty good right now. After I was picked up by those two, they ratted me out and I was put on trial. I stayed in jail for two weeks and had my trial.

All odds were against me and I lost the trial. I got sentenced for eight and a half years in juvenile prison. When I got in, some inmates greeted me since I was on the news. After a little while, I became comfortable in juvie and made some friends. One of them taught me how to read and write and there was a library there too. As I spent my time here I thought to myself about what to do after I get out. I thought about it long and hard and decided to seek vengeance.

I got out of juvie and decided to visit my grandma really quick just so I can see her again and then never again. She was really excited to see me and brought me inside the house to have a quick lunch. She asked, "How have your days been in the big house?"

I replied, "Oh it was real nice. I made a few buddies there and learned how to read and write."

Grandma said, "You've really learnt a lot, haven't you? I hope you had a change of heart."

I just replied with a very unsure tone, "I sure did..."

She gave me a chocolate bar right before I left. I said my goodbyes and it was time for me to get down to business.

I went around the alleyways where the Black Disciples took over, asking people if they knew Derrick and Cragg. None of them really knew who they were. Until a member came over asking what I was doing here. He looked about sixteen years old and really naive, like I was back when I first joined the gang. I asked him where Derrick and Cragg were, but all he said was that he wasn't going to tell me about anything until I pay up. I gave him a ten and told him to speak or he gets it. He proceeded to tell me that Derrick and Cragg were already killed under the orders of Monster. As soon as I heard that, my objective was changed: kill Monster. I went ahead and quickly knocked him out and took my ten bucks back and his gun.

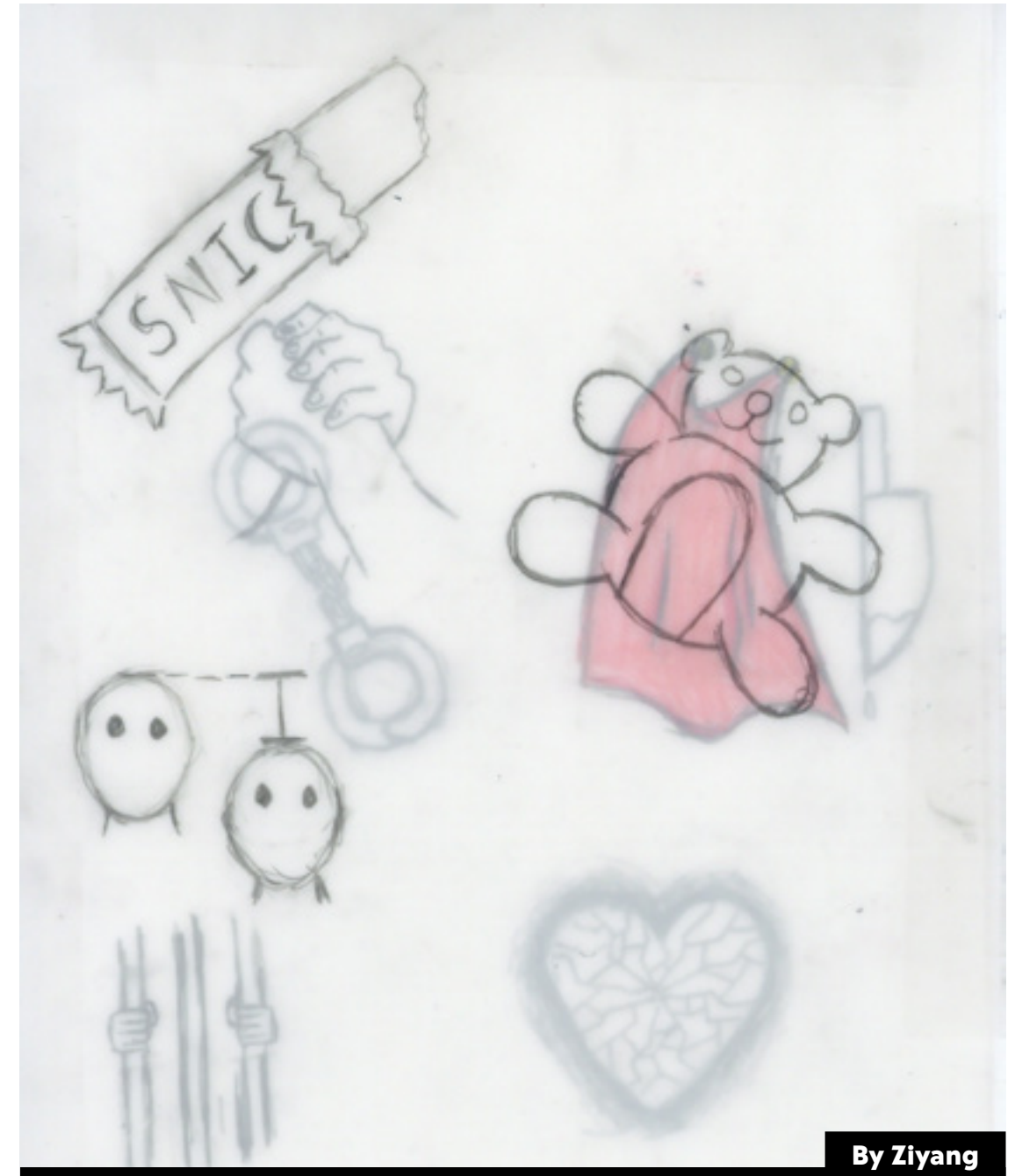
If I remember correctly, Monster should still be in the same place where I first met him. I bust the door down shooting any member I saw, except for Monster. I knocked him down and told him speak his last words.

"Yummy you don't know what you're getting into. You don't wanna go back to prison again now, do you?"

I just laughed it off and said, "That place was the only place I knew that I could call 'family.' Going back there would be a blessing." I quickly said to him, "Sweet dreams, Monster..."

I shot him right in the head and that was it. I ended the whole gang.

The streets of Chicago are much safer now. I stayed back in the place and ate the last chocolate bar I had that Grandma gave me. I waited for the cops to come over and arrest me. I got sent back to juvie, only staying there for two years and then got sent to real prison with adults. This was the sweet ending that I deserved.



By Ziyang

About the Visiting Author

G. Neri is the Coretta Scott King honor-winning author of *Yummy: the Last Days of a Southside Shorty* and the recipient of the Lee Bennett Hopkins Promising Poet Award for his free-verse novella, *Chess Rumble*. His books have been translated into multiple languages in over 25 countries. In 2017, he was awarded a National Science Foundation grant that sent him to Antarctica to research a new book.

Prior to becoming a writer, Neri was a filmmaker, an animator/illustrator, a digital media producer, and a founding member of The Truth anti-smoking campaign. Neri currently writes full-time and lives on the Gulf Coast of Florida with his wife and daughter. You can find him online at www.gneri.com.

About the Student Authors

We are early risers. We are a class of readers and writers. We are creative. We see writing as a form of expression and a way to get our voices heard. We believe in justice and in everyone being treated fairly. We felt that *Yummy's* ending was not fair. Although not all of our stories have happy endings, all of them make things right for *Yummy*.

About Behind the Book

Behind the Book brings authors and their books into classrooms to build literacy skills and create a community of lifelong readers and writers. Working with classes from Pre-K through 12th grade, our series of workshops is designed to bring books to life and inspire students to reach their full potential. Behind the Book is embedded in the class curriculum, nurtures critical thinking, creativity, and self-confidence in New York City public school students. All programs meet the Common Core Learning Standards.

Common Core Learning Standards Addressed

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.3

Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.3

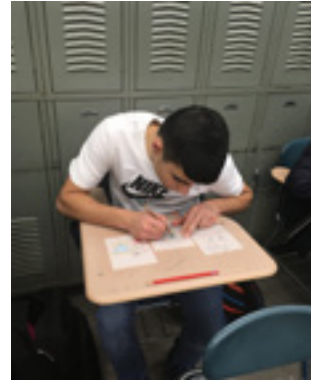
Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.4

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

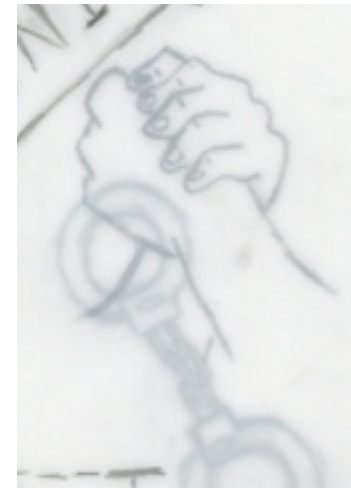
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.5

Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.



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