

THE DETAILS

The Blue Devil is in The Details



Making Mental Wellbeing from Home Easy

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“Figures”, a short story of friendship in the face of fear

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Carefirst Supports Vulnerable Seniors

Thenushaa Balasingam
Grade 11

In these times, our lifestyle has changed drastically. Our time with our friends and family is restricted and we are forced to find new activities and purposes for our daily life. There are new rules for going

outside such as having to go to stores only for your essential needs while staying 6 metres away from those around you and wearing a mask as a safety precaution.

This might make you wonder how life has changed for those in senior residences. Until the beginning of Covid-19 restric-

tions, I was a regular volunteer at a senior care program at Carefirst. I mainly volunteered with their adult day program, a program aimed at caring for seniors when their loved ones are at work and cannot be at home with them.

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Seniors' Safety is Top Priority

Even before the pandemic, their sanitary regulations were very strict. They wiped down every table, chair and board game. When it comes to dealing with meals they made sure to wear masks and gloves. The adult day program has been temporarily closed down due to Covid-19. We have now transitioned to an online based meeting platform which allows seniors to spend time together during the day while maintaining a safe lifestyle.

As a volunteer, now I help

out from home. Other volunteers and I were given the chance to make masks for the seniors in full-time care, such as HC/SHS/AL clients and FHT PACE program patients. These seniors can not physically go back home to self isolate, and require much of the technology that Carefirst provides. This makes life very difficult at the centre, as it requires a lot of attention to maintain a safe environment. Carefirst services have also started a distribution of more than 1100 handmade

masks. To prevent contagion, no visitors are allowed in the premises of the home and they are currently in full lockdown, only allowing pre-booked patients, visitors, and clients. Dealing with this new virus, Carefirst is fulfilling their obligation to keep their community safe.

If you want to help out during this pandemic you can contact Carefirst at volunteer@carefirstontario.ca or visit their website <http://carefirstontario.ca/>.

Six Summer Streaming Shows

With recent news that schools won't reopen until September, you may have come to realize that we have a lot of time on our hands. Here are a few binge-worthy shows to that might satisfy your boredom.

Avatar: The Last Airbender

Why not go back to a childhood favorite and rewatch the show for maybe the 27th time? This show has amazing art, great character development, and of course a perfect story. And for those who have not watched, you are missing out!

-Thenushaa Balasingam

Control Z

When a hacker begins releasing students' secrets to the entire high school, Sofia works to uncover the hacker's identity. This show covers a lot of topics while also focusing on finding the true villain. Grab

your popcorn, this will be an emotional ride.

-Thenushaa Balasingam

The Last Kingdom

This might be a new favourite if you love some historical drama, crazy authentic war scenes, and amazing characters to keep you on edge. This show follows Uhtred of Bebbanburg, an amazing warrior caught between sides in the struggles between Saxons and Danes in 9th-century England.

-Thenushaa Balasingam

Space Force

If you like to follow current events, you might like this hilarious comedy from Greg Daniels, writer of *The Office*. In *Space Force*, a general begrudgingly teams up with a scientist in a modern day space race.

-Caleb Arculus

Star Trek: The Next Generation

This cult classic has 178 non serial episodes, perfect to watch over the summer. While it's not the first Star Trek series, start here if you're not a fan of 60s Shatner but still want a good time family fun adventure in space that gives you lots to think about.

-Anjali Mookerjee

The L Word

June is Pride Month and the revival of this influential show is gaining popularity, so why not watch the original? While it's sometimes criticized for only depicting a certain type of queer women, it was television's first ensemble cast of lesbian characters. Aside from its historical significance, *The L Word* delivers in terms of thrilling relationship drama and compelling characters.

-Alexandra Kay

Tips for Success in a Pandemic

Alexandra Kay
Grade 11

As we transition from the school year (time at home) to summer (more time at home), it can be hard to know what to do. In March, most of us had projects and hobbies we were excited to finally be able to have the time to do at home. Now that the projects are finished, it's harder to decide what to do. There are countless lists and articles online giving advice, but here are the three things I've found the most helpful to remember.

1. Remember how your environment affects you. As a teenager, it comes naturally to me to spend all day in my room. A lot of advice for being productive and maintaining mental health from home recommend having different spaces for different activities and keeping those places separate: your desk is for working, your kitchen is for eating, your couch is for relaxing, and your bed is for sleeping. The act of changing locations allows your brain to change "modes" and do the new activity more efficiently. Normally, going to school signals that it's time to learn, going home signals that it's time to relax, and going to bed signals that it's time to sleep. At home, it's difficult to make that transition physically, but that doesn't mean you

can't do something to help your brain transition. Even if you have to stay in bed, try changing where you're sitting, what you're wearing, or what light is on to differentiate "working time" from "sleeping time".

If you're staying safe and healthy, then you're already doing enough.

2. Find something to look forward to. Normally, life is full of events to look forward to: holidays, going out with your friends, or even just the weekend. Psychologists say that looking forward to things is one of the easiest ways for us to cope when things aren't going our way because even if we have a bad day, we know that something better is coming. With nowhere to go and no real difference between the days of the week for most of us, we're losing things to look forward to. Try to find something that happens at specific times to follow. There are many different organizations making things free to stream at certain times if you like movies or theatre. You can also get in-

volved with Laurier over social media. Character Ed, the SAC, and other student groups have been organizing challenges and activities that have specific deadlines on their TikTok and Instagram accounts (@lauriercharactered and @lauriersac if you don't already follow them). It can also help to schedule virtual hangouts with your friends ahead of time so you have something to look forward to.

3. Maintain a good mindset. When you're at home with only your own problems, they seem much bigger than they really are because you have nothing to compare them to. Talking to other people can help you remember that you're not alone and that this is not the end of the world. A lot of people are feeling bored or frustrated right now and it's okay to feel that way as long as you don't take those feelings out on other people. It can help to remember why we're really at home: not to get work done or read the entire internet, but to stay safe and healthy. If you're doing that, then you're already doing enough. It's nice to be able to do other things such as learning new hobbies or binge-watching tv, but those things are a bonus on top of the most important part.

Not a Winckelmann of Sleep

Erica Lin
Grade 11



As it turns out, there are many ways to help others out in self isolation, and some of them require nothing more than some research skills and an internet connection. I signed up for Volunteer Toronto's COVID-19 Volunteer Response Team newsletter on a whim. I really didn't think I could be of any help as I was a minor, I couldn't drive, and I had no useful certificates or technical skills. All I had was time, which proved to be enough when I found the position of writer at the Canadian Multicultural Inventors Museum. They needed people to write biographies on diverse inventors and innovators which would be used for their school exhibits. I was immediately intrigued as they showcased themes such as Jewish, Hispanic, and LGBTQ+ inventors, who are almost never highlighted in the school curriculum or in popular culture. I remembered my own experience growing up as

a visible minority, and realized I could gain some knowledge and some research skills and it would be a win-win opportunity. It's vital for all young people, especially those in historically marginalized groups, to see themselves represented in all professions as successful, well-rounded people so they think "hey, I could do that too".

I chose to research Johann Joachim Winckelmann, an art historian and archaeologist who lived in the 1700s. He grew up poor, got really into Greek language and culture, and published lots of famous essays where he was the first to divide Greek art into periods and analyse how it related to society at the time. He never visited Greece though, and I'm not sure why. I was very drawn to the enthusiasm and energy in his writing and I can see why critics were too. He was also gay and very open about it. I mean look at this picture! There he is, in a red fur gown studying a nude Antinous, who was considered a major Greek hottie in classical art. Winckelmann thought his homosexuality made him a better interpreter of art, as he believed art always expresses feeling toward inner beauty. I made sure to emphasize this point in the biography, so the reader remembers that his queerness was an asset and not a hindrance to his work.

After I finished reading his Wikipedia article (which ends in Winckelmann getting murdered

for no reason??) I knew I was hooked. Over the next week or so, I couldn't stop thinking about this guy who lived over two centuries ago. Even with other actual school work to do, I stayed up until 4am opening tab after tab after tab. You are not supposed to do research this way. You are not supposed to do research this way! Three sources would have been more than enough to write a 500 word biography, but I just kept going. I found myself reading translated versions of this dude's gay love letters like I was being paid to do so, even though it was nothing more than a volunteer position. Finally, and 100 words over the word limit, I submitted my draft to CMIM.

What did I learn from my experience? I learned that hyperfixations are not the worst learning strategy ever, as long as you have some self-awareness. I managed to pick up some Greek, create a whole conspiracy theory over an archaeologist's death, and also do some homework on the side. Most importantly, I hope some kids' minds will open up once they see all the exhibits and realize the world is more diverse than their teachers and textbooks ever revealed. But if you'll excuse me now, I need to find a cool Jewish inventor to obsess over.

To get involved with projects like these, you can join the Volunteer Toronto COVID-19 Volunteer Response Team newsletter at <https://info.volunteertoronto.ca/covid19>.

Sickly Politicians Feel Love Too

Anjali Mookerjee

Grade 11

How much do you know about our school's namesake? What about his love life?

Wilfrid's first love was a woman named Zoé Lafontaine. The two met while he was studying law at McGill. They lived at the same boarding house in Vieux-Montréal, which belonged to Dr. Gauthier. Zoé taught piano to the doctor's children and is described as being shy, petite, and reserved. What a catch! According to accounts, lovestruck Wilfrid would sit in the living room and listen to Zoé play piano for hours on end. The two would also go for long walks together. They developed a "close friendship" from all the time they spent together.

Despite the fact that the two clearly liked each other, the relationship didn't progress. Wilfrid stayed in the courting stage for far longer than he needed to. The reason for his dragging feet: health issues. He was incredibly worried that he would get typhoid or consumption and die, leaving Zoé all alone. So I guess that's a valid reason. He moved out to the country in the 1860s to deal with these issues. Tfw when your boyfriend chooses his lungs over you.

While Wilfrid was away in the country, Zoé began seeing a new guy. He was a doctor, which may have been more appealing than a sickly political outcast. He was also ready to propose which was definitely an improvement. Dr. Gauthier, who by this time was a good friend of Wilfrid's, sent him an urgent letter demanding that

he come home at once. He made Wilfrid strip naked and informed him that there was absolutely nothing wrong with him. At worst he had a cough, but he was not in fact in danger of dying, allowing him to finally propose to Zoé!

Well at this point you might be thinking, "What's so interesting about any of that, he married a petite piano teacher, what's the big deal?" Well, there is more to the story. After Wilfrid and Zoé got married they moved to a small town in Quebec and made some friends. One of which was a young woman named Émilie Barthe. According to certain accounts she was so beautiful that all the women in town were afraid that their husbands would leave them for her. Little did they know she only had one husband in mind. A certain sickly political outcast had caught her eye but unfortunately he was already married. To get around this, she married Wilfrid's partner at his law firm and moved in down the street from him. This resulted in an interesting arrangement in which every day around tea time, Wilfrid would inform his law partner that he was going for a walk to visit his partner's wife. Every day. As far as historians know, his partner always said yes. What were the two doing during this time? Reportedly having passionate discussions of literature, if you know what I mean.

This arrangement lasted until Wilfrid left for Ottawa to serve as an MP. But not even that ended the affair. Wilfrid often wrote gushy, emotional love letters back to Quebec, where Émilie was liv-



ing (also his wife, but he did not write to her as often). These letters are not only interesting because they chronicle the affair but also because they provide an insight into a side of the politician that Canadians rarely got to see. In his politics Wilfrid is described as a person of moderation and compromise. In his letters he was a bit of an emotional mess. His letters to Émilie were the only time that he could really express himself.

Unfortunately, his affair did not remain so idyllic. The relationship grew more tempestuous when he became prime minister. Émilie apparently became too clingy, so he promoted her husband to a higher position in Montreal, so she would be forced to move away with him. Cold, I know. The moral of the story? Maybe avoid getting too close to a clingy mistress, especially if she's your law partner's wife. Though to be honest, if any of you are getting any relatable lessons from this article, it may be time to re-evaluate some of your romantic relationships.

Figures

A short story by
Fatima Mujahid
Grade 9

"Rolf!". Her scarlet skirt caught up between her calves, but she continued running.

Ever the Romeo, the young man caught her just as she tripped, not spilling a single drop of his fresh lemonade. "Careful, Ms. Davis!", he exclaimed in mock chivalry. Dinah rolled her eyes. "This is urgent!"

"Oh?"

Behind her, Rose Williams huffed into view with a prominent layer of sweat glazing her forehead. "Dinah, I told you. Not. To. Run!" How exactly Dinah had convinced her nemesis to tag along, he hadn't a clue- only that the situation must be extremely dire to form this unlikely alliance.

"It's Charlie. I saw him enter his dressing room just before everyone left and cannot hear a peep whenever I call! It has to be locked!" Dinah ranted on about how her (overprotective, in Rolf's opinion) superstar cousin was unresponsive and how she was certain he was still locked up in their workplace, Star Studios.

She immediately spun on her heels and darted back, Rolf trotting along behind her, calling for Rose to quicken her steps. The trio hustled to reach the grand entrance embroidered with gold italic letters.

Dinah removed the brick she had placed at the foot of the door to keep it ajar, beckoning everyone in. The deserted building was a maze of doors and hallways which would have been swollen with unsettling silence had Rose not started to blabber about the milkshake Dinah so urgently owed her. Ah, Rolf pondered. No wonder.

At last, the familiar golden star reading 'Charlie R. Jones' swam into view. Presumably hearing the herd of footsteps, a muffled voice addressed them.

"Hello?"

"Charlie!". Dinah pressed her ear against the thin crack carrying the sound. "I couldn't hear you earlier! I tried to call you when I returned from an errand to go home! Oh, are you alright?". There was a moment of faint shuffling before the silence returned. Dinah's brows creased into tension. "Charlie?"

Charlie sounded embarrassed as he tried to cover the fact that he had fallen asleep. Rolf sighed. He'd known this man for years. "Did you spend such an excessively long time in there just to admire that 'hero' looking back at you from the mirror that you drifted off?"

Charlie chuckled. "Aw, come on, of course not. Well..." He made a show of clearing his throat and steering the attention away from himself. "Soon, Rolf, somebody will beat you to the teenage fame game!" Rolf

rolled his eyes. This dude can really be a showoff on his worst days, let alone his best.

"Oh really? Who's gonna do that, huh? Some guitar player with a greasy, funky hairdo?", he demanded, unaware that in a few short years everyone he knew would be clamouring to get tickets to Elvis Presley's concerts.

"Oh, I bet this mysterious star-to-be is training can out-shine you any moment!"

"Enough!" Dinah was furious as she turned to Rolf. "Go fetch the boss' studio keys." They were hung right next to the main exit, assuming that nobody could enter the building after the day's work was done.

When Rolf returned, he found Dinah absent. "Where is she?"

Rose was filing her pink nails. "I don't know. She said something about you taking too long. Didn't hear properly." Rolf shot a glance at the nearest clock. Five O' Clock! Two hours after the day's filming had wrapped up! Hearing this response, Charlie started banging the door from the other side. "What?! Why did you let her go alone?!" Rolf tossed Rose the large hoop strung with numerous keys. "Find the right one while I come back."

"And cool it, big daddy. I'm going after her!" he shouted at the locked door. Oh, how he'd pay for that later. He could think of a suitable apology on

the way. Behind him, Charlie erupted in fury. "What did you just call me? Why, do you think I'm 80?!"

Rolf ran down the halls as the courses of "Oh no, you're not going after her mister, no way. Rose, Rose!" dimmed down.

The boy aimlessly wandered the vacant halls, often stumbling upon empty sets. After some time, he took a moment to rest in a forgotten, dilapidated corner of the studio. As Rolf leaned against the door, it swung open, throwing him into another room.

Lying against the cool stone floor, Rolf took a moment to observe the numerous cobwebs decorating the ceiling. Turning on his side, yet another hallway appeared ahead. How big was this place exactly? Twenty minutes later, he stumbled upon a short staircase. He proceeded with caution, maintaining the bravery he'd convinced everyone he harboured (though it was vanishing by the minute). At the final step, his foot fell onto something furry, which skittered away. Rolf stood glued to the spot as the horror of realization swelled in his stomach. A rodent- his one fear.

The boy ran for his life, hitting a rough wall and turning in the other direction. After about ten more bumps and a few new throbbing pains, he heard distant movement. "Who is it? I can fight!" He couldn't. He could plot against his ene-

mies in the most creative ways possible, but he couldn't fight. Nevertheless, tightened fists in front of his face, he embraced what he thought to be a lethal stance. He was ready to fall in war like a man, no matter how big the rat.

"Rolf." Dinah's voice lacked emotion as she switched a flashlight on. Her illuminated face confirmed her annoyance. Upon his questioning stare, she explained. "The dark helps me think."

"He was ready to fall in war like a man, no matter how big the rat."

Feeling foolish, Rolf returned to a neutral standing position. Then, it clicked in. "The dark helps you concentrate?! You could've gotten eaten!"

She giggled. "By what, a rat?" He gasped, shooting his hand straight to his heart (there was a reason he'd won the audition). Rolf was about to start arguing again when he spotted a large folded paper in her hands. Following his gaze, she understood his curiosity and continued explaining. "It's a map of the studio grounds. Very detailed. I just can't figure out how to open this door"- she directed the light to an

ancient-looking wooden plank -"it leads directly to Charlie's dressing room".

Rolf opened his mouth to comment when a large mass came crashing into the room, busting the door open. "I'm gonna get out of here!"

Charlie took a moment to adjust to the dark and register his new surroundings. Getting to his feet and scanning the room, his face paled to see what really lay behind his private elegant space. And then, after an eternity, he addressed his smart friend. "Ha! You really thought you were braver than my little cousin?"

Dinah's eyelids fluttered in disbelief at what had just happened. "Wow. I mean, you could have broken the other door and you were listening to that whole thing. Wow."

"That door is modern, kid. Much stronger. And yes, I'm always listening." Charlie led Dinah away from Rolf, who waited a few seconds to follow. A chill ran down his spine. Charlie Jones was one mysterious man.

When they returned to the light at last, Rose was still fumbling with the five dozen metal keys. She did a double-take at the sight of a smiling Charlie. "Hello, friend." Enraged, she threw them at his face, but he caught them with his left hand. "You can keep your milkshake to yourself. If you didn't need my help, why did you waste my precious time? The spa had a

Figures, contd.

discount on manicures today!”

“Wait!” Charlie coolly responded to her icy demeanor. “Milkshakes for everyone. On the house. Rose, thank you for trying to get me out.” Her shoulders relaxing, the girl allowed a faint smile to play on her lips.

The streaks of pink and purple painted the horizon; cool spring breezes brushing their hair into their faces. The jovial chatter rose into the evening as golden lights began to illuminate the sky. When they approached their destination, Charlie parked his car in a vacant spot and dismissed the engine. Inside, Dinah took a seat next to Rolf as Charlie and Rose finished placing their orders at the bustling cafe

counter. “You know... I don’t believe I’ve truly seen Rose this happy before.” Rolf took a long sip of his drink before turning his head to witness the scene of the laughing girl, joking with the barista.

“That is one genuine smile.” He turned back to Dinah. “Listen, just so you know, I’m not afraid of rats.”

She rolled her eyes. “Of course not.”

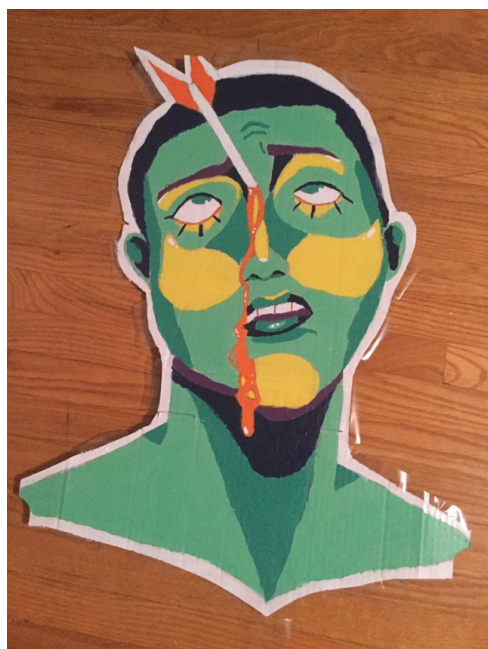
“Honest!” As he approached the table, Charlie’s glare told them to separate. Rose slid her glass to the other end of the table before getting up as Charlie took her old spot. “We are going to have a long talk, kid.”

“Oh, I know, Jones.” Charlie grabbed the scuff of Rolf’s leather jacket, sliding his own

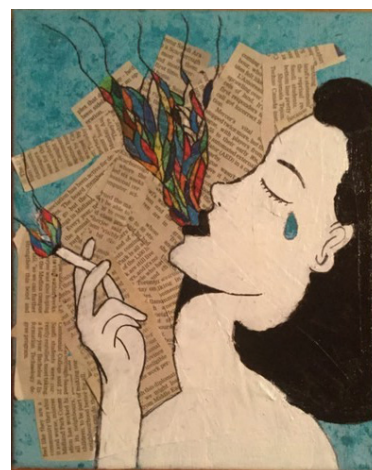
sunglasses up to see him better.

“You wanna say that again?” Rolf finally apologized as the older man released him. Charlie smirked. “Weak.” Rolf decided to cease his arguments for the day.

Everyone laughed at him and when they didn’t stop, he finally allowed himself to crack into some laughter too. The vain movie star concerning himself over others. The young ‘dreamboat’ being scared to death. The fearless intellect, adventuring to unusual and unlikely depths. And the mean girl feeling accepted for once. Tomorrow would be another day, but today, tonight, was one of a kind. Tomorrow, they’d be back. Figures.



Aaron Arculus
Grade 9



Just make art. Don’t be afraid to make “bad” art. You shouldn’t worry if your art is weird because art is whatever you make it and you only get better with time and one day you’ll make something you like, just have fun with it.