

Stuffy-Nosed Adventures

Oz Osborn

alinaosbornsf@gmail.com

Exploring Creative Writing

December 1, 2020

My God

List Of Questions



If I could wake up with a superpower, I would want to meet God, but in a way I already have. Everyone has a different image and concept of what and who God is. Some people view him as the traditional God, a white man with a beard, almost Santa-like. Some view God as a woman or a black man, but God just seems to manifest himself to me as a Mallard duck. This duck appears at odd times to annoy me and give unsolicited advice.

I don't go on many dates, never had a boyfriend and hate people touching me. Today I have a date, the second one of my life, with a boy I have liked for a while. I think he is cool, mysterious, and I respect him for the amount of lesbian friends he has. I sit in the tree-lined Panhandle waiting for him, reading Helen Hanff's *Letter From New York*, trying to calm my nerves.

God waddles up to me: *"Are you reading this to look intellectual or are you actually reading this book because you're interested in these stories?"* God squawks. I shoot the duck a menacing glare.

My date comes walking over to me, wearing a beanie and carrying his skateboard. He stuffs his hand into the pocket of his navy blue Dickies and pulls out a pack of Newport shorts.

"Hah. Smoking in a park." God stabs. *"Oz, what are you, a freshman in high school? This dude is such a cliché."*



We talk. I pull a piece of grass into tiny pieces while he spins a wheel on his skateboard. He seems like a nice guy. He's cute and likes nature. I want to skip the talking and do something more fun. We agree to walk around and end up going to his car to go for a drive and listen to music. God hops into the backseat. *"Messy,"* God whispers, flapping his wings. The car itself isn't too cluttered, but there are many crumbs, and a plastic-wrapped brownie sits on the center console. He offers it to me. I laugh and tell him no thank you. *"This is boring. I'm bored. How long is he going to be on aux. Who keeps texting him. Why is he telling you about his car?"* God chirps from behind me, pecking at the window. I ignore God and ask my date about his major and some mutual friends. He shows me that he can drive with just his knees. God and I straighten and clench our legs. I think my date is really cool. After a few hours of aimless driving he takes me toward home. *"This is it,"* God says, *"tell him that you like him, you think he's cute, and then kiss him."*

I tell him he can drop me off wherever because I like walking. He pulls the car over a block away and I sit there looking at him. *"Tell him, tell him,"* God is smiling at me from the back seat. My date hugs me and I get out of his car. I tell him goodbye and slowly walk away.

"What was that?" God says as my date drives off.

"Dude, I don't know. I'm pissed at myself, too, you know. Maybe if you weren't there, I would have been smoother. Isn't this your fault anyway? You made me like this," I respond.

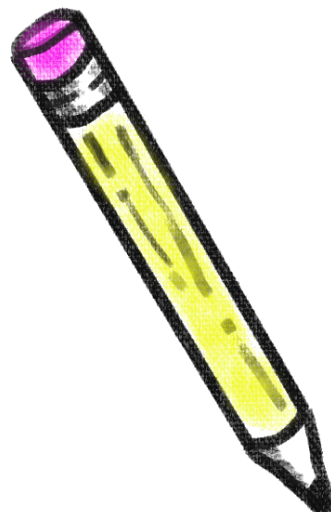
"Your mind made me like this." God responds, looking up at me with his beady black eyes.



Things that communicate big messages silently

List Poem

- Frown lines
- The lack of or the presence of eye contact
- Posture
- Tears
- Dreams
- Cleanliness
- Attention or the absence of it
- A book
- Light
- Sign Language
- A hug
- A kiss
- A smile
- Paintings
- Typefaces
- Colors
- A dress
- A glare
- An open door
- Leaving
- Writing
- Lists
- The contents of a refrigerator
- A home
- Death
- A casket
- Open arms
- Man spreading
- A bill
- A wallet
- Compassion lines
- A fidget
- A window
- Presence
- A treaty
- Numbers
- A photo
- A stare
- Taste
- A blinker
- The internet
- Sweat
- Gut feelings



Riddle One

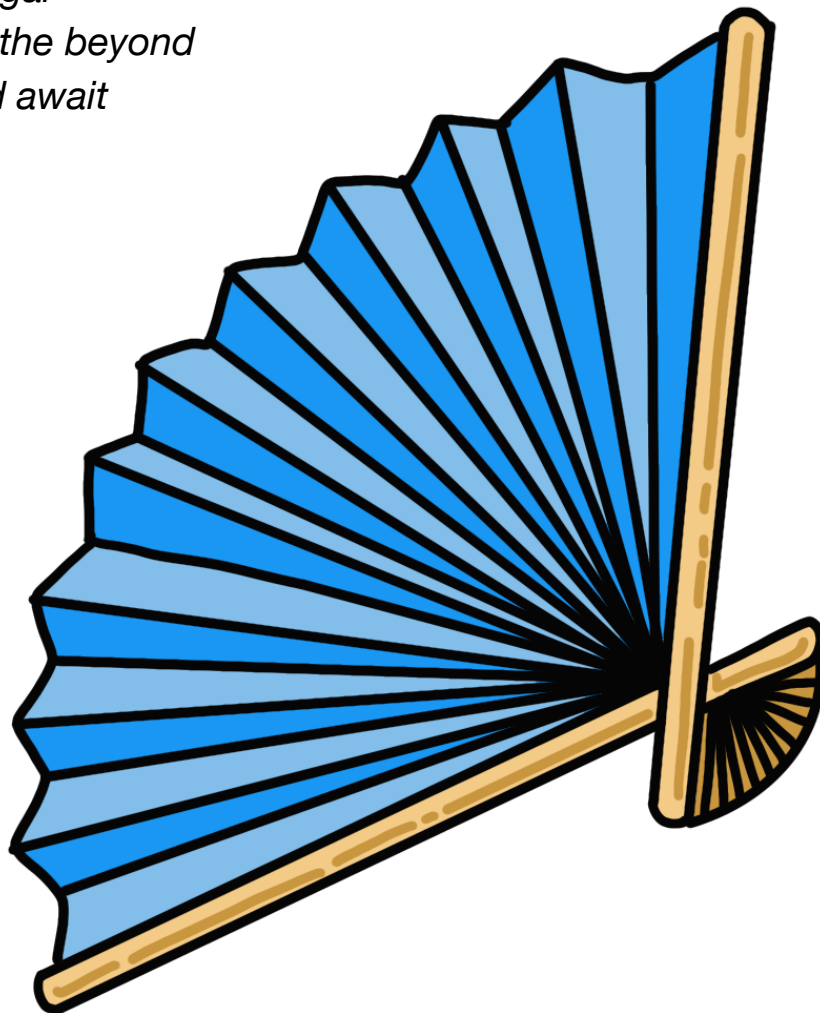
*It speaks into my mind
Projecting rhythms of all kind
It starts when I'm ready
A white spaghetti
Attached to a block
Dictating the cadence of my walk*

Answer On Page 16



Riddle Two

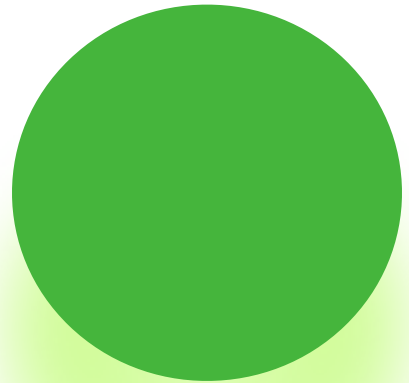
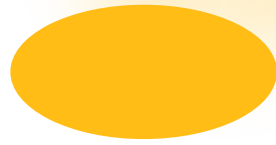
*Luxury attire sits flat in a box
A fan in a hand, or pile on a table
A blank stare rises above them
A net over an ocean
Trying to find its other half
Wait until your legal
But be aware of the beyond
Misfortune could await*



Answer On Page 16

Riddle Three

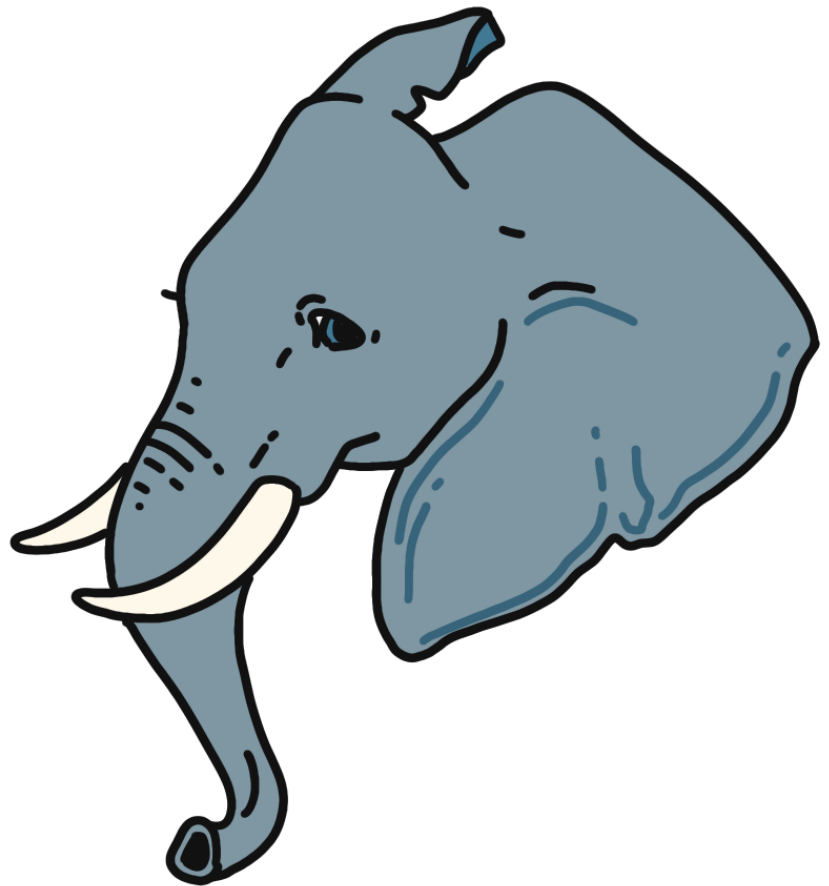
*Almonds and ovals
Communicative and social
At the end of a stick
Helping a person pick
Varnished or bare
And stronger with care
Relaxed
By your side
They are there*



Answer On Page 16

Riddle Four

*The leaking nose of an elephant
Who aids health benefits
Blazing it waits
Among the plates
It poses and sings
With its one wing
Pockets of air dance
It is ready to enhance*



Answer On Page 16

Skittering Around My Neighborhood

Observations

October 10th

It is foggy

The bench at Tompkins has a lone bagel

The squirrels aren't eating the bagel but coming up to me

The squirrels don't seem to like the bagel when I tore it up, they only one ate a piece

The man in the red cardigan, half a bench-length down from me, looks confused as to what I am doing with the lone bagel

There is a cute couple passing, the girl has loose jeans on. I am too scared to take a good look at their faces

October 11th

It is foggy

The buzz cut kid in the blue puffer vest is spacing out while standing looking at people passing by, shifting his weight from side to side

A person with an orange short sleeve shirt makes aggressive finger quotes while talking with her friends

There is a yacht called the royal prince

Across the water is the factory I used to run past my freshman year of college

Two people sitting across from each other and one has his heels off the ground and the other has his heels on the ground

A man going into the restroom has a cat in a see-through backpack

October 12

It is raining

Little Poland is closed

The woman at Veselka has brown hair and prominent cheekbones

The tables are still out even though they are soaking wet

The food cans are oddly arranged across from the alcohol in the grocery store

Two women are standing close together at Veniero's in front of the window while I am trying to get a good look at the cookies on display, the shortbread ones with the red jelly in the middle

Oct 13

There is a man with a white hoodie with a black and white cartoon smiley face on the back of the hood

He is walking in front of me but I feel like the eyes on the back of the hood are still looking at me. He has a clear water bottle from the gym and looks like he came from there

There is a woman in blue leggings running to catch a bus maybe. She looks very out of shape, good thing she is wearing running shoes

black car hits the front wheel of a bike that a delivery man is riding (the delivery man is running the red)

The delivery man is fine, they each go their separate ways, this is on 24th and 3rd at 2:02pm

Oct 14

1:00 pm

There's a woman half bench-length apart with grey hair, a rolling shopping cart, arm half extended with one finger out talking to an asian pregnant woman who is wearing leggings and a puff coat

There is a woman with a salad bowl, her ginger hair is pulled back into a low ponytail She is dressed in all black and is wearing boots, her legs are crossed and she's looking at her phone with a paper bag next to her

I am in Union Square there are some leaves on the ground but not as much as there should be for this time of year. Fall seems to be coming late

A man and a woman took the pregnant woman's place they sit next to each other with the bench divider in the middle of them. They are eating tacos out of a white to go container the woman is wearing a pink gap zip up sweatshirt, the man is wearing a black shirt, back hat and blue jeans

There are three friends sitting next to me. Two boys and one girl, the girl is on the close side to me, she has a large Dunkin' Donuts coffee and something in the white Dunkin'

Donuts bag. The boy in the middle is talking to her and the one on the end is engaged in his phone. The one on the end points out there's a bug on her and she shakes her legs

3 friends - one stares at his phone a lot, the second is very outspoken, the third is very afraid of bugs

The man next to me has a man bun and is eating a burrito bowl from chipotle

It's so crowded at the park, once someone stands up another person sits down in that place

There is a man in a blue shirt and sunglasses with a bluetooth speaker walking back and forth and dancing. He stops at some people while passing by, I tuck my neck in like a turtle

A guy yells fuck you at the air

A bird pee-shits on my white Marc Jacobs Panam bag

A girl passes saying some people fall in love with so many people so fast

Parties are Scary and Hilarious

Magic Realism

I'm sitting on a bed at a not-so-close friend's house during her party. The room seems to rock back and forth as I drunkenly compliment strangers' shoes and hair. My small friend AK sits on a couch across the bedroom with a tall blonde girl. Her thick eyeliner, beanie, heavy concealer and braids give me the impression that, if we were to talk, it would be a complete waste of time. The bedroom is full of purses and backpacks, and the bedsheets have been messed up by those sitting on them.



I had made a mistake coordinating my plus-ones. I invited two boys who I wanted to get with to the same party with the idea that, if two options were there, I would have a better chance at landing one of them. I'm not really sure what I was thinking because I don't really like either of them. I think they are currently talking downstairs next to the beer-pong table and throwing balled-up tin foil around the room. I look back up at AK. He and the tall stoner seem to be getting along just fine. I'm talking to a girl about sewing tube tops and her Instagram business. Her words seem to jumble, and I sit there saying "that's cool" in different ways throughout the conversation.

The blonde and AK are now sitting closer to each other. I'm honestly impressed with AK. He's so short. I would be too nervous. I shift my weight toward them and listen in. AK tells the blonde that he thinks she's cute. The blonde asks him why. I notice that she's a fake blonde. AK tells her it's because she "looks like a ladder." She stares down at him. She doesn't know AK and that must be an odd thing to hear come out of his mouth. AK has this obsession with tall girls. He thinks they have superpowers, and when he works at Jimmy Johns, he admires how the tall girls can reach the high shelves. I don't want to hear anymore of this endearing conversation or continue to talk about small businesses in an intoxicated state. I give the girl my Instagram and leave.

I walk out to the party thinking that the next door leads to the stairs. Shocked, I find that I'm now in a white room, and across from me stand the two boys.

"We know you brought one of us here as a backup choice," they say in sync.

I know I shouldn't say sorry but at the same time, I do feel a bit guilty. What are they, best friends now? Did they spill their backstories to each other while I fled the scene? Why don't they just get together at this point?

"I don't know why you guys brought me here, but AK just told a girl that she's cute because she looks like a ladder," I say.

My Rules

List of Questions

I have three main pet peeves, things you cannot do if you are my friend.

1. **Chew loudly**
2. Breath loudly
3. Be touchy

Growing up my mom and dad made sure of it that I chewed with my mouth closed, I believe the way they taught me this led to my disgust of the repetitive sounds that mouths make when they consume anything. I still remember the day I started to be annoyed with this.

It was a sunny day, I went for a playdate with my friend Shelby. I was in middle school at the time. Shelby's mom made us Mac & Cheese, it was creamy and cooked very well, I was hungry. I sat down and started to eat from my colorful plate when I noticed the sounds Shelby was emitting. I didn't understand why I felt so tense, the macaroni noodles created high pitched squeaky air bubbles that popped at every chew. Why should a quiet and peaceful activity need to sound so loud? I began eating very loudly, if I couldn't hear her over my chewing then I wouldn't feel angry, or maybe she would notice how disgusting I sounded and quiet down. This didn't end up having much of an effect and, defeated, I brought my half eaten plate of delicious looking mac and cheese to the sink.

Please do not breath loudly around me. Again, breathing is something we do all the time, if there are no medical reasons, and you're sitting in a resting position, there is no need to pant. A good friend of mine once put in his headphones during an in class assignment. Because of his headphones I assume he couldn't tell that he was mouth breathing with his throat half closed. The throat creates this grinding yet flappy noise. It's easy to breath correctly.

I don't think there is a need to show me physical affection. I remember a boy cuddling me during an episode of South Park. He asked me why I was "so interested in the show," when he was the one who had put the show on. I had to push him off me to eliminate the distractions. I don't even really like South Park but I definitely like cuddling way less.

This might seem demanding but I find it to be simple, if it isn't something easy to understand then this relationship will not work out.

Plane Story

Story from Observation

Parker, backpack in one hand, Diet Pepsi in the other (the Cokes were sold-out), shuffles her way to seat 12A. She wouldn't have it any other way. It was a window seat or bust. She'd rather deplane than try to sleep without the neck support of the fuselage wall.

Settling into her dark grey seat, she leaned back, put on her sunglasses and earphones, and closed her eyes, awaiting takeoff. A boy about her age sat next to her in the middle seat. She opened her shaded eyes to see who it was, not that she really cared. Planes have this smell to them. A hint of mildew. To her, it's like sticking your nose into an old carpet.

Parker calmly drifts towards sleep. She exhales and relaxes her shoulders. The boy next to her reaches under the seat in front of him and pulls something out of his skull-and-bones-branded backpack. Parker hears a slight whirring coming from her right side, then she feels movement from the back of her chair. She opens her eyes to see the boy holding one of those stress-relieving fidget spinners in between the pointer finger and thumb of his right hand. He is moving his left hand in a karate-chop-like motion, spinning the toy faster and faster. His motions make both seats quiver. Parker smiles and closes her eyes. It's been a while since she's seen one of those. So 2017.

Parker can't seem to fall asleep now, but is sitting there with her eyes closed feeling the slight shutters of her uninvited seatmate. She shifts her angle more toward the window.

The sound becomes sickening to Parker, but this boy has such an infatuation with the toy, there is no end in sight. His name is Oliver and, as he later explains, this is the fourth fidget spinner he's owned. Sitting still for any period longer than four minutes sickens Oliver. Four minutes is an eternity. Four minutes at 60 seconds apiece. The math gives him a headache. He says he's tried slime, drawing, watching TV to fight boredom, but his hands are never really satisfied when it comes to doing anything else.

Time is slowing down for Parker. She opens the map on the seat-back screen and eyes as the 'until destination' countdown.

Oliver keeps on spinning.

Riddle Answers

- 1 Headphones
- 2 A deck of cards
- 3 Fingernails
- 4 Teapot