

THE ADVOCATE

William Aberhart High School
April 10, 2025



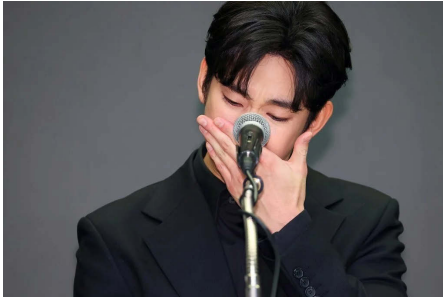
Cover by Alena D

"K-DIDDY" AND "KING OF TEARS": TOP KOREAN ACTOR FACES ALLEGATIONS OF DATING A MINOR

by: *Sophia Lee*

Earning the title of Korea's highest-paid actor, Kim Soohyun has long been regarded as one of the faces of the Korean entertainment industry. However, he has recently been embroiled in controversy surrounding the late actress Kim Saeron, raising broader questions about the Korean entertainment industry and the treatment of women in Korea at large.

The controversy began on Monday, March 10th, when the popular YouTube channel Garo Sero Institute uploaded a video with Kim Saeron's aunt. She claimed that Kim Soohyun, then 27 years old, had been in a romantic relationship with Kim Saeron who was just 15 years old at the time.



This followed news of Kim Saeron's suicide on February 16th, Kim Soohyun's birthday. Kim Saeron was considered a rising star on the film scene, making her acting debut at just 9 years old with the film *A Brand New Life* in 2009. Afterward, she appeared in numerous films and TV dramas until she was reported to be driving under the influence in May 2022.

The incident resulted in property damages which caused a power outage impacting 57 stores in the vicinity. Kim Saeron was fined 20 million won (\$19,000 CAD). The case soon blew up in the Korean media, leading to public backlash and criticism. Kim Saeron was dropped from many endorsements and projects, including the drama series *Trolley* and *Bloodhounds*.

At the time, she was being managed by Gold Medalist, an entertainment company established by Kim Soohyun. The company also manages Kim Soohyun as an actor. Her contract expired at the end of 2022, after which Gold Medalist sent an official notice for debt repayment

of 700 million won (\$700,000 CAD) to pay for legal settlement and project contract cancellations costs.

Kim Saeron's aunt criticized the agency for alleged financial misconduct and manipulation, claiming they had stated they would take responsibility for the issue as Kim Saeron's representative, only to demand compensation afterward. Her attorney stated that at the time Kim Saeron had insufficient assets to pay off the debt as her income had been used to support her parents' business.

When questioned by a news reporter, Gold Medalist claimed they only sent the notice of the fee following standard procedure. "We had no intention of receiving money from Kim Saeron," the company stated.

However, Kim Saeron was not informed of this. She was allegedly told that she would be sued if she did not pay this money back. She reached out to Kim Soohyun. Screenshots of the text are circulating online. "I really can't do anything," Kim Saeron stated in the message. "It's not that I won't [pay you back], it's that I can't. Do you really have to take it as far as a lawsuit?"

Kim Soohyun did not respond. In an attempt to get his attention, Kim Saeron uploaded a picture of them together on her Instagram before taking it down shortly afterward. This only served to fuel public criticism of her, as many claimed she was attention-seeking and delusional. Kim Soohyun denied having any relationship with Kim Saeron on that occasion.

It was after her suicide that the public began to consider claims of their relationship more seriously. Kim Saeron's aunt stated that the relationship lasted for six years and that there were even talks of marriage between the two. Kim Saeron allegedly joined Gold Medalist because of their relationship.

Gold Medalist responded by releasing

a statement refuting the claims. "These malicious claims directed at our company and actor Kim Soo Hyun are entirely false and cannot be tolerated under any circumstances. We are currently reviewing the strongest possible legal actions against [Garo Sero Institute] for spreading these falsehoods." The statement was as far as saying that "the dissemination of such false information by [Garo Sero Institute] mirrors the very behavior of so-called 'cyber wreckers' that caused the late actress so much pain during her lifetime."

Initially, fans appeared to be split on the issue, unsure of whether the issue was true or not. Kim Soohyun recently held a press conference on March 31, 2025, where he revealed that they were in a relationship for about a year, but only after Kim Saeron became an adult.

"This whole time, I've been focused on protecting what I have," he said. "Every time there was a clash between human Kim Soo Hyun and 'Star Kim Soo Hyun,' I ended up making the best decision for the Star Kim Soo Hyun. And it made me terrified every single day." He apologized, stating that he would accept any disapproval of his choice to hide their

THE ADVOCATE

THE ADVOCATE is the official newspaper of William Aberhart High School. THE ADVOCATE is meant as a forum for student expression and is published to inform and entertain the students and the entire school community.

Editor-in-Chief: Sophia Leev

Managing Editor: Ryan Li

Staff Sponsors: J. Colautti

Columnists: Laura Z, Temi K, Max C, Lauren S, Ruby T, Véronika H, Oliver K, Emily R

Layout: Ruby T, Zac T,

Editors: Lauren S, Misan A

Cover Art: Alena Davis



relationship.

However, he continued to deny the allegations that he had dated Kim Saeron as a minor.

“I did not date her when she was a minor,” he stated. “Apart from the fact that we were both actors, we were just an ordinary couple like anyone else. We had feelings for each other, and as time passed, we eventually parted ways. After that, we rarely kept in touch.”

He also denied any allegations of having any involvement in her suicide. “It is also not true that the deceased made a tragic choice because of my avoidance (of her), or because my agency pressured her about debt.”

Kim Soohyun refused to take any questions during the press conference. Afterward, public sentiment began to turn against him, viewing his tearful performance as insincere. Evidence of their relationship began to surface, including photos, text messages, and letters.

“Somebody give him an Oscar,” a TikTok user commented. “There’s a reason he’s the top-paid actor in K-dramas.” Internet users scanned the script Kim Soohyun was seen reading and reported it was approximately 93% AI-generated. Social media users have since dubbed Kim Soohyun “K-diddy,” a moniker from rap

artist P-diddy who underwent similar allegations. He has also been nicknamed “King of Tears,” a play on the title of one of his most recent projects, the drama series Queen of Tears.

Facing public pressure, brands such as Prada, Dinto, and Y.O.U. have begun to drop Kim Soohyun. However, he is currently filming a Disney+ Show, Knock Off. Disney+ has made no mention of removing the actor from the cast list, although they have frozen the show, with reports of it not being currently scheduled to release.

Fans demand that the show remove Kim Soohyun immediately. “Do you realize how crazy this is? If it were a woman, she would have been dropped and canceled without hesitation,” one user stated. “But because it’s a man, nothing’s done. I mean they still give roles to known abusers and rapists, so honestly, why are we even surprised?”

This issue brings up broader implications of how women are viewed in Korea, both in the entertainment industry and in everyday society. In fact, female celebrities tend to face harsher scrutiny, criticism, and condemnation, both from the public and the industry. Actor Lee Jung-jae was reported to have been in a DUI incident twice. However, in contrast to Kim Saeron, he recently filmed the second series of the hit drama series Squid Game 2 and is regarded as a talented and successful actor by the Korean public.

“It’s not that Kim Saeron didn’t do anything wrong. But if the entertainment industry is going to be so harsh on guilty celebrities, why are male celebrities with DUI and sex crime histories still active everywhere?” a social media user stated. Even after Kim Saeron attempted to work part-time jobs to pay off her debt, such as in cafes or restaurants, the Korean public continued to ridicule her, nicknaming her “drunk-driving Kim Saeron” and “shameless.”

Assistant Professor of Psychiatry at Yale University, Na Jong-ho, stated that this was the type of unhealthy pressure society must avoid. “A society that buries people without giving them a second chance after a mistake is not a healthy one.”

This also opens up conversations regarding the opportunities this kind of public pressure presents for systemic abuse and manipulation. Female celebrities are particularly vulnerable to being exploited, as they are forced to keep issues hidden in fear of generating a scandal and losing public support.

Kim Saeron’s family claims they approached multiple new outlets and reports regarding the story about Kim Soohyun, however, none were willing to take the story against Kim Soohyun. Insiders allege that the two actors’ relationship was an “open industry secret,” but that Kim Soohyun had too much money and influence for any action to be taken.

The controversy has led to a petition being submitted to the National Assembly on March 31. Over 40,000 people signed the petition, calling to amend statutory rape laws to include ages 13 to 19. Currently, the law only protects individuals aged 13 to 16, leaving no legal basis to convict Kim Soohyun. Petitioners have dubbed the law “the Kim Soohyun Prevention Act.”

In fact, the legal age for consent in Korea was only raised to 16 years old in 2020 -- before that, it had been just 13 years old. Many believe that this is insufficient protection for minors, leaving them vulnerable to being manipulated and groomed. There are also calls for the consent age to be raised to 19 years old.

This kind of systemic bias against women has long been prevalent in Korea, leading to the rise of the 4B movement -- a radical feminist movement based on four Korean words starting with the syllable "bi": bihon: no marriage; bichulsan: no childbirth; biyeonae: no dating and bisekseu: no sex.

The 4B movement, while allowing women to express their discontent against the patriarchal and conservative nature of Korea, has led to criticism for being too extreme. "Many young men and some women equat[e] all feminists with man-haters, which deepens societal divisions," stated Clemson University sociology lecturer, Minyoung Moon.

"You're treated like the devil," said Lee Jeongeun, a Korean citizen. The term "feminist" has begun to be considered an insult or a swear in Korean society. The gender divide carries real implications; former President Yoon Seok Yeol leveraged this gender divide in the 2022 election to win with the support of male voters. When he took office, he gutted the Ministry for Gender Equality and Family.

Similarly, with the re-election of Trump, the 4B movement has begun to gain popularity in America as well. "Good luck getting laid, especially in Florida! Because me and my girlies are participating in the 4B movement," an American content creator said in a video. Another asked,

"Why exactly are you going to keep becoming subservient to a nation that literally doesn't care about you?"

While the movement is gaining momentum, it is unlikely to have any lasting repercussions. There is a false notion in America that the 4B movement is particularly liberating or empowering. In reality, it simply reflects the circumstances that most South Korean women find themselves in. The low birth rates and a decreasing marriage rate are not an active choice -- they simply reflect women's desire to avoid dealing with Korea's patriarchal expectations for motherhood and marriage. This is also exacerbated by the extreme gender pay gap and the growing cost of living in the country.

"Both in Korea and in the U.S., there's a temptation to treat 4B as a substantive doctrine rather than a lifestyle choice," wrote Tammy Kim in an article about the 4B movement for the New Yorker. In America, it is treated as a rallying cry that distorts the reality that South Korean women face today. This version of the movement only lives comfortably on social media and poses the threat of completely erasing the context and environment that led to its creation. No tangible change can be created.



Many warn against going too far in dividing the two genders. "If you were to ask me whether gender consciousness has improved," Jung Choon-saeng, a member of the National Assembly stated, "I'd have to say that, because of the current backlash, it's, in fact, got worse." This makes it more difficult for men and women to work together to address current issues with the legislation, such as the statutory rape laws that keep Kim Soohyun innocent.

If the petition is signed by 50,000 people by the end of April, it will proceed to be reviewed by a committee which will then make the decision whether to submit it to lawmakers. Meanwhile, Gold Medalist has filed a 12 billion won (\$10,000,000 CAD) lawsuit against Kim Saeron's family and Garo Sero Institute. As the court investigates the charges, the case continues to develop.

ABE TEACHER MONTHLY: MS. CROWFOOT

by: Ruby Tovich

Tell us a little bit about yourself: hobbies, music, where you grew up, what sports you play, etc.

I was born and raised in Calgary; my mom's side of the family were some of the first non-indigenous settlers in Southern Alberta, so it's kind of funny that she married a Scot with the last name Crowfoot. However, I'm not indigenous, it's just an indigenous name in a place where it sounds related. I didn't know much about my family growing up, so I would do all my projects on Chief Crowfoot. My hobbies mostly include eating, reading, listening to music, and marking essays. I also teach the Foods class here and run the cafeteria so food is one of my bigger passions, alongside English.

How did you end up at Aberhart?



I've done many things before—I went to MRU for a year, SAIT for two years for cooking, U of C for five years for English and Ed, and then I got my first full contract at Nelson Mandela to teach commercial foods. I wasn't able to go back in the fall, but Mr. Sagriotis sent out info about the teachers who couldn't come back into the system, so I got an email from the previous Abe principal to come and work here for part of a semester. It was only a two-month position, but coincidentally in October Mr. Sagriotis started as the new principal here and that just spiraled into me staying because I'm starting the food program. I think it's because the staff here wanted lunch, and that's why I have my job.

I didn't know we had a Foods program at Abe?

It's not officially offered, so we can't put it on the option form. The kitchen in the cafeteria is a little small so even with the 15 enrolled students it's quite cramped. I think everyone should know how to cook; it's a big life skill not everyone has.

What are some things you like about teaching at Abe, compared to teaching at other schools?

The kids here are amazing! They're so eager to learn, and it's just easy. You don't have to worry about engagement as much. Similarly, it's spectacular to see through athletics and even clubs how engaged the student body is. There's such a nice culture here.

On your LinkedIn, it says you've been working for the Stampede for 11 years, what do you do there?

I haven't worked for them for a few years, mostly out of time constraints, but I used to work at the catering department year-round. That was one of my main cook-ing gigs before I started teaching. 0/10 would not recommend. To be fair, you don't get overtime now, but before if you were volunteering you'd just be working for two weeks nonstop. For me, I would sometimes have to work a month straight and I was looking at 12-14 hour days. My husband wasn't a fan of that, and currently, it's just not worth doing if you look at labour vs compensation. It still has a special place in my heart though.

Best live music performance you've been to?

Paul McCartney. I cried the whole time. It was so good, just incredible. I've seen so many concerts, I saw Weezer live at Pemberton 2013, and they played all their hits which was nice because they don't normally play only hits. Ooh, I've also seen My Chemical Romance. I saw them in junior high, and then I spent a disgusting amount of money to go see them again this summer in Toronto. Just an embarrassing amount of money for a band that hasn't been together in over a decade (more than our Paul McCartney ticket!).

What is a fun or little-known fact about you?

One thing I always say is I'm allergic to cats, but I have a cat. I love cats, but both my husband and I are allergic haha. 100%

worth it though.

If the Aberhart staff were in the Hunger Games, who would you want to make an alliance with/team up with? And why?

Okay. Mr. Colautti prepped me on this question. I have two answers: one is Mr. Colautti because I think I could use him as a distraction and annoy him so much that he starts yelling at me and then the others would hone in on his voice and I could sneak away (*Editor's note: the others would hear her first*). But a true answer would be Ms. Vryenhoek because I feel like she'd be super kick-butt and fierce and I think she'd be really awesome. I think if I got injured, there's a chance she'd leave me stranded, but she would be very knowledgeable and a fierce competitor.

What was the last book you read?

Years ago, I started a competition to read all the Agatha Christie novels in order, and then life got busy and I stopped, and it had been like five years since I had read one, but I restarted again this January. I just finished the Secret of Chimneys, and I'm almost done with the Murder of Roger Ackroyd. So that's like book five out of eighty-something, so I'm set for the next couple of years.

Is there a quote you like to live by? What's the significance to you?

I have a little letterboard, and the current quote is from Dazed and Confused, Matthew McConaughey, "You just gotta keep livin' man: L-I-V-I-N."

What was the funniest/most memorable interaction you've had working at the school cafeteria?

My favourite is when kids order stuff, and they're paying with cash so I put my hand out and they just dump a bunch of coins and they're just like, "Here's my money". And sometimes I'll just throw the coins into the register, because I assumed they've counted it and then out of nowhere they'll say "Oh I didn't count that", then I'm like what do you want me to do now? It's a shocking amount of kids that will just hand over uncounted money.

What is your favourite book/poem/story to teach in ELA?

I love most of the stuff we teach in 20-1. We just did V for Vendetta, MacBeth is one of my favourite Shakespeares, Great Gatsby is one of my favourite novels, and the list goes on. But one of my favourite

books of all time is Frankenstein. I've started reading that with my 30-1s, it's such a good one. I basically teach everything I like.

If you were stuck having to teach a different subject than the ones you teach right now, what would you want to teach?

I feel like Phys-Ed would be fun. I don't think I'd be any good at it, but it would be nice to be active and not sitting around all day, and not marking essays!

Any media (movies, shows, music, artists, etc) recommendations for Aberhart students?

That's a great question, I'm not sure. Maybe not a specific thing, but I think it's so, so important to consume literature. Whether that's novels, plays, stories, movies, or whatever, to consume things that have been created to make you think and experience the world outside of what you know. That's why I love reading; you get to experience situations, people, and places that are so unfamiliar and it helps build empathy for others and awareness of the world around us.

What is the most interesting place you've traveled?

I mean we did three weeks in Japan a couple summers ago, I don't know if that's interesting as much as it was just so awesome to me. A lot of fun—the culture, the food, all the museums, the nature—and I loved how organized everyone was. Everything was so efficient.

Do you have any closing remarks you'd like to share or any message you'd like to broadcast for April?

It's almost June!



Vote for the next teacher interview in May's issue!

WORLD AUTISM AWARENESS DAY: UNDERSTANDING AND INCLUSION

by: Temi Kayode

April 2nd marks the day that the world comes together to observe World Autism Awareness Day, a day dedicated to raising awareness about autism spectrum disorders and advocating for a greater understanding and acceptance. Established by the United Nations in 2007, this day aims to shine a spotlight on the challenges faced by those living with autism and to foster a society where neurodiversity is celebrated.

What is Autism?

Autism spectrum disorder, (ASD), is a developmental disorder that affects how a person interacts with the world, communicates, and processes information. While the severity and traits of autism vary greatly from one individual to another, common characteristics include challenges in social interactions, communication difficulties, and a preference for routine and repetitive behaviors. However, many individuals with autism also exhibit unique strengths, such as exceptional attention to detail and outstanding memory.

The diversity of autism means that no two people with ASD are the same. It is a spectrum, encompassing a wide range of abilities and challenges. World Autism Awareness Day serves as a platform to highlight this diversity and the importance of recognizing the individuality of each person on the spectrum.

Why World Autism Awareness Day Matters

Despite the growing numbers of autism, there is still a significant lack of understanding about the condition. In many societies, individuals with autism face stigma, misunderstanding, and exclusion, often due to a lack of awareness and education.

World Autism Awareness Day seeks to address these challenges by promoting global awareness and therefore fostering empathy. It encourages communities to educate themselves about autism, its signs, and the daily realities faced by those on the spectrum. This day also highlights the

need for improved access to resources, support services, and educational opportunities for individuals with autism.

In addition to raising awareness, World Autism Awareness Day emphasizes the importance of inclusion and effort to integrate individuals with autism into all aspects of society, from schools to workplaces and beyond. By promoting inclusivity, society can create a more equitable environment for people with autism so that they can reach their full potential.

The Importance of Supporting Autism Awareness

World Autism Awareness Day is a reminder that, while great progress has been made in terms of raising awareness, much work still remains to be done. Autism is often misunderstood, and those with the condition can face challenges in obtaining the support they need. By fostering awareness, we can begin to eliminate the stigma that surrounds autism and build a society

where individuals with autism are not just accepted but also valued.

Moreover, World Autism Awareness Day underscores the need for inclusive educational systems and workplaces. Ensuring that individuals with autism have access to appropriate resources and support systems can greatly improve their quality of life. From early diagnosis and intervention to job training and social support, access to these services is essential in helping individuals with autism lead fulfilling lives.

A Call for Empathy and Inclusion

Autism is not just a condition, it's a part of the diverse tapestry of human experience. On World Autism Awareness Day, we are reminded that understanding, acceptance, and empathy are critical in creating a more inclusive society.

Whether it's through educating oneself about the condition, supporting advocacy initiatives, or simply being more empathetic to the needs of those with autism, every effort counts in making the world a more inclusive place.

April 2nd, and every day, we celebrate neurodiversity, promote understanding, and work toward a world where everyone, regardless of their differences, can be accepted.



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OSTARA: EASTER'S PAGAN PAST

by: Lauren Schultz

The holiday of Easter is well-known across the globe. We associate this spring day with eggs, rabbits, and pastel colours, but where did these important elements linked to Easter really come from?

Ostara is rooted in the ancient seasonal celebrations and traditions of paganism. Being one of the eight Sabbaths of modern paganism, Ostara celebrates the spring equinox. The word "Ostara" comes from the Anglo-Saxon name of the goddess, Eostre. This Germanic goddess represents the spring season and new beginnings, and of course, the honoring of the divine feminine is an important part of this celebration.

Ostara, the spring equinox, lands on March 20th this year. This date not only recognizes the time of balance, when day and night are of equal length, but it also celebrates the return of the sun from the cold winter months. The Earth's fertility and colourful, fresh growth associated with spring recognizes the awakening of nature, its renewal, and rebirth. Through various rituals, feasts, and offerings, the Norse and Germanic peoples held this date very close to their hearts as

the spring equinox was symbolic of the brighter days ahead.

Hares were traditionally an important symbol of Ostara, which translates into the familiar symbol tied to Easter today. The hare is associated with fertility and abundance, along with the energy of the new season. Eggs were also significant, with Druids being said to dye eggs from pigmented plants and then bury them in the newly plowed fields in late winter to draw life force and energy into the land, encouraging fertility and abundance for their crops.

The mythological story of the goddess Eostre encloses the origins of Ostara's key symbols; "One day, as the goddess Eostre walked through a forest she came across an injured bird. Seeing the bird so near to death grieved the goddess' heart, so she decided to save the bird. Eostre transformed the injured bird into a healthy young rabbit. When the bird awoke she found herself healed and changed from her former state but not through a complete transformation. The former bird discovered that even as a rabbit she could lay eggs. Happy to have another chance at life, the rabbit decorated the eggs she laid and gave them to Eostre as an offering of thanks".

The Ancient pagan celebrations were passed down orally from generation to

generation. When Christianity dominated certain pagan lands, the oral traditions were slowly extinguished, as well as many of the ancient practices associated with them. To create ease with the forced conversion of the Germanic, Celtic, and Norse pagans into Christianity, they took these traditions and symbols and adopted them into modern-day Easter, which celebrates Christ's resurrection. The date of Ostara was closely translated to the date of Easter because the Council of Nicaea in 325 CE established that the holiday would be held on the Sunday after the first full moon occurring on or after the vernal equinox. This creates the grounds that the Christian holiday may have been influenced by and even built upon pre-existing pagan traditions to facilitate mass conversion (such as Yule for Christmas, Samhain for Halloween, and Mabon for Thanksgiving).

During this Modern age, pagans now celebrate Ostara by performing spring cleaning, planting seeds, decorating altars in honour of the spring goddess, and of course spending time in nature to re-energize and recharge their spirits. Now, with a deepened understanding of this ancient practice, make sure to take the time to honour nature and capture the joyful energy that the spring season brings us each year. Blessed Ostara to all!



*Join Debate Club
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days after school.
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come!*



WHY CHESS IS UNDENIABLY A SPORT

by: Véronika Huisson



In a world where physical prowess is often the cornerstone of competitive recognition, it is important to reflect on what defines a sport. While most associate sports with physical endurance and movement, a broader understanding recognizes that competition, skill, discipline, and structured rules are equally essential aspects. With this framework in mind, chess—though devoid of intense physical activity—clearly qualifies as a legitimate sport. It demands rigorous training, strategic mastery, and emotional resilience, all while adhering to a regulated system of international competition.

At its core, sport is an organized competitive activity that involves skill, training, and a codified set of rules. Chess meets all of these criteria. The game involves two opponents competing under strict regulations governed by the World Chess Federation (FIDE), which standardizes play formats, rankings, and tournament structures across the globe. Much like in traditional athletic contests, players face time constraints, compete in championship events, and are ranked based on performance. Chess competitions, particularly at the highest levels, demand rapid decision-making and intense focus—skills honed through years of study and practice.

One of the most compelling arguments for chess as a sport is the level of training and mental discipline it requires. Professional players dedicate countless hours to studying openings, mastering

endgames, analyzing historical matches, and preparing for specific opponents. The cognitive load during a single high-stakes match is enormous, with players needing to anticipate threats, formulate long-term strategies, and adapt to shifting positions in real-time. This mirrors the discipline of athletes who drill plays and train their bodies for peak performance. The key difference lies not in the absence of movement, but in the presence of sustained intellectual rigor.

Additionally, chess is a competitive arena that demands emotional resilience and psychological fortitude. Players are under constant pressure to perform, often for hours at a time, with small mistakes having monumental consequences. The intensity of a chess match can rival that of any physically demanding sport, as players experience adrenaline spikes, mental exhaustion, and the emotional swings of victory or defeat. Grandmasters like Magnus Carlsen and Judit Polgar have spoken openly about the psychological demands of professional play, emphasizing how emotional control is just as critical as technical skill.

Chess also holds global cultural recognition and influence akin to traditional sports. With millions of players worldwide and growing online platforms like Chess.com and Lichess, the game has seen a surge in viewership and participation. International championships attract media coverage and live audiences, while legendary players have achieved celebrity

status. Moreover, national investments in chess education—especially in countries like India, Russia, and Armenia—underscore its value as both a competitive and developmental tool. These efforts mirror how traditional sports foster national pride and cultural identity through social cohesion.

Those who argue against chess being a sport often cite its lack of physical exertion. However, this perspective overlooks the fact that not all sports rely on physical intensity to the same degree. Archery, shooting, and eSports, for example, are recognized as sports because of their demand for precise mental focus and competitive structure—qualities chess possesses in abundance. The essence of sport lies in its ability to challenge the human spirit, test one's limits, and offer a stage for excellence, regardless of whether those limits are physical or intellectual.

In light of these factors—its codified rules and governance, rigorous skill demands, emotional and psychological challenges, and global competitive framework—it becomes clear that chess is far more than a pastime. It is a true sport, one that champions the mind over muscle, yet embodies all the discipline, competition, and cultural significance of more physically oriented games. Recognizing chess as a sport not only broadens our definition of athletic excellence but also honors the intellectual achievements of those who dedicate their lives to mastering its complexity.

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SHORT STORY: ROOTS

by: *Laura Zitkova*

On a normal day, I should have been home earlier. No doubt my mother would be waiting for the milk while she kneaded the dough, afraid of the waste it would be for it to go stale in my absence. She'd fetched me a bill and a coat that morning and ushered me out the door frantically, while Maeve slept in her attic bedroom. It had been past eleven, but my sister had spent the night feverish enough to merit not presenting herself at breakfast.

My mother's keen hands had tied an apron around her waist as I slid on my rainboots by the door. "Barter down Tom for no less than five", were her last words to me before I had nodded my departure, and set off.

The pitcher of milk was cold against my palms as I trudged down the path. It was just past one, though I counted myself lucky. Our home lay just beyond the woods, a slight hour or so away from town. In this weather, it was a near miracle that I was almost home. On a day like today, it was possible to not even attain the pitcher from any merchant, regardless of their amicability. Everyone's tempers had been ruffled by the weather, their profits rendered poor by the avid downpour.

Mercifully, Tom had agreed to five in the end, however bitterly. He liked my sister, and once I let it slip of her illness he had caved, even slipping a chocolate piece into my hand.

"For Maeve," he'd said. "Tell her to get better soon, the sheep miss her."

I pulled the hood of my raincoat off, the trees above providing ample protection. Deep in the forest, it was quieter, the sound of water distant, as if the forest curling around me was another world altogether, separate and calming. It was darker, too. The afternoon was approaching, yet it could have been sundown and I would not have known, if not for the smell of that fresh midday air.

I felt for the chocolate in my pocket, playing with the edges of the wrapper in between my fingers while I weaved through the low-hanging branches in my way. Maeve would be so excited when I arrived, though my mother would have her wait until after dinner to have the piece, so as

to not ruin her appetite.

I was almost home when the toe cap of my shoe got caught in a stealthy root, and for a split second, I tried to save myself. The pitcher tumbled in my grasp, and I lurched forward. A crash echoed through the trees, and I followed after, my arms too slow to brace myself before my head crashed on a rock.

I don't know when I woke, but the rain had stopped. It must've been past midnight the way that nightly silence murmured throughout the air, strange and new. Porcelain scraps were scattered around where I was lying, and a stinging pain shot through my palms. They were slightly bloodied from the landing, bearing most of the impact my body had thankfully not taken.

Slowly, bones aching, I gathered up the pieces of the broken pitcher into my pockets and forced myself to stand, taking a cautious step over the conniving root. Home was not too far from the path now, and with each staggering step, I forced myself to hurry home. I thought of the warmth of my bed, of my mother's embrace. She would be worried sick, though she'd also be fuming. I could see her standing in the doorway now, pulling me close and inspecting my hands, before berating me for my foolishness.

I could barely make out the outline of my cottage when I arrived back home. I rushed to the door, pushing it open with all my might. My mother would be awake and waiting by the kitchen table, candle in a calloused hand.

There was no light when I entered. No flickering trace by the kitchen table. No sign of my mother. Everything was quiet, quieter than it had ever been in our bustling home, no matter the time of day. It was pitch black as I shuffled into the kitchen, feeling my way to the cupboards where my mother kept the good matches. A gentle tug on the handle had it splintering off into my hand. Had the wood been that old? It shouldn't have worn down so soon.

A few matches lay scattered, and I picked

them up hastily, reaching for a dusty lantern on the counter. It flickered a bit, but the light stayed.

The room around me was dirty. It looked as if it hadn't been lived in for years, dust coated the walls, and weeds were growing beneath the floorboards. I must've been lost. I had taken a wrong turn somewhere and ended up here. But the kitchen was in the same place, and the matches...

It all looked so familiar. The exact same, yet as if my family had never lived here. Or anyone, for that matter. Nobody had stepped foot into this place for years. It was no use leaving now. I would find a safe corner to wait out the night, and then go and find home in the morning.

The stairway reeked. It was a damp, putrid smell as if the wood had gone rotten from the inside out. I held up the lantern, lighting up the walls which were sprawled with ivy.

I made my way to the attic, towards a familiar little door, one only a small child might be able to walk through straight-backed. A half-rotted bed frame sat tucked neatly into the corner of the room, just below the small window, which appeared to be missing its glass. The desk near the other end of the room seemed to be in fairly good condition, eerily similar to a stone table I had bartered from Tom only two years ago when Maeve had started her schooling. Atop it sat a few loose twigs, a pink ribbon, and a picture frame.

I picked up the frame. A brook, some trees, and a stone cottage, smoke wafting high out of the chimney. A mother with strong arms and calloused but loving hands, and a daughter, beautiful and soft. Another daughter, almost as tall as the mother, held both of them.

Curiously, I ran my fingers over the image of the woman. As my fingers softly grazed their faces, I blinked. There were none. No traces of a smile, a wrinkle. The women blurred. Akin to living, yet they were not.

As if they never existed.

A REVIEW OF EUROPE

by: Emily Ren

The William Aberhart music program very recently visited Europe for its bi-annual music tour! The previous music tour, held two years ago, took place in Quebec and Ontario, while this one traveled from Germany to Austria and finally ended in the Czech Republic. This entire journey spanned the length of 11 days, from March 19 to March 29, ensuring a busy schedule each new morning all the way until the night. In this review of Europe, I draw very heavily from my own experience and will be highlighting what I took away as the most important aspects of the trip; this is not a universal account of the trip! And so, without further ado, let us start with Germany.



Our visit to Germany centered mainly around Munich, the capital of Bavaria. We were able to witness this beautiful city firsthand via a walking tour. During this tour, the aspect of the city that stood out to me the most was the architecture. The architecture in Munich has staples

of many prominent architectural movements, from the Baroque churches to the neo-Gothic New Town Hall--every step taken on the cobblestone road led you to a new discovery of beauty you had never seen before. Unfortunately, we were on a tight schedule, so we were only able to spend one day exploring Germany. The next day we were off to Austria!

The first stop in Austria was Salzburg, the city of Mozart's birthplace. The highlight of this city was certainly learning about the history of Salzburg. In particular, our group had the chance to visit the very house that Mozart was born in, which was a dizzying experience. It's a unique feeling when you step into a place of such historic significance as a modern onlooker; you, with the gift of being in present times, know why this place holds such significance, and yet, this pristine museum that you've entered into used to be a lively home where the people did not know they were making history because they were simply too busy being people.

We said goodbye to Salzburg at the end of the day and said hello to Vienna instead! One of the main highlights of Vienna was being able to tour the Schönbrunn Palace. The Schönbrunn Palace was the



main summer residence of the House of Habsburg, a very powerful imperial house that was also a monarchy from the year 1282 to 1918. Walking through the palace gave the same dizzying feeling that walking through Mozart's house had with the sheer amount of history embedded into the palace. However, unlike Mozart's house, the palace was simply on a different level of dazzling beauty. The most notable piece was the Great Gallery. With its sprawling ceiling covered by three Rococo-style paintings, the ornately carved wooden and gilt chandeliers, and the plethora of gold detailing that lines the walls and ceiling, it is understandable why the room harbors the name the Great Gallery.

Our final destination was the Czech Republic! One of the towns we visited was Litomyšl, the hometown of Bedrich Smetana. Smetana is considered the father of Czech music, considering his accomplishments of putting Czech on the musical map with his brilliant compositions and bringing elements of Czech art and culture into classical music. We were able to attend a guided tour of his house, and the highlight was a room that projected animations on three sides of the wall while Smetana's music sang through the air. The animation was gorgeous and added to the





immersive effect of the music, letting me gain a new sense of appreciation for his music.

The next stop in Czech was its capital city, Prague! One of the first landmarks we saw in Czech was its National Theatre, and there are no synonyms of beauty that can describe the theatre. There are gold embellishments and details in every crevice of the building--the intricacies of each showcase the sheer craftsmanship needed to create a statue even the size of one's palm. And that is not even to mention the paintings that sprawl above you on the ceilings, dazzling in their grandeur and beauty. It's a wonder that people are able to focus on the performance in front of them when there's already so much to admire from the building alone!

The Prague Castle district was another tour we went on. Personally, the highlight of the tour by far was being able to see the stained-glass window that was designed by Alphonse Mucha in the St. Vitus Cathedral. The cathedral is the largest church in Prague and took nearly 600 years to finish building! The district's Golden Lane was the very street where Franz Kafka briefly lived and wrote his short story called "A Country Doctor." You can even step into his house to purchase a copy and it will be stamped with an official sign that you

bought it in his house.

Even though I have only been mentioning the positive sides of Europe, the history of WWII loomed almost constantly above the places we visit. From the square where Hitler made his speeches in Munich, to the bombed buildings of Austria that had to be rebuilt, Lidice is where the specter of WWII became an almost alive force. The town of Lidice was destroyed during Nazi occupation because of the death of a German SS officer who was assassinated by a resistant Czech group. In retaliation, Nazi Germany completely demolished the small town in the name of contrived security, murdering all the boys and men who were older than 15 years. The majority of the



women and children were sent to concentration camps and were then murdered there. The current memorial and museum of Lidice ensures that this atrocity will not be forgotten and forces you to view the people who were killed as what they were: not a statistic, but people who were

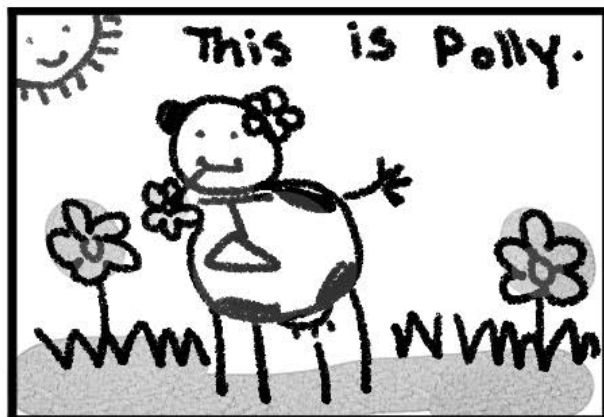
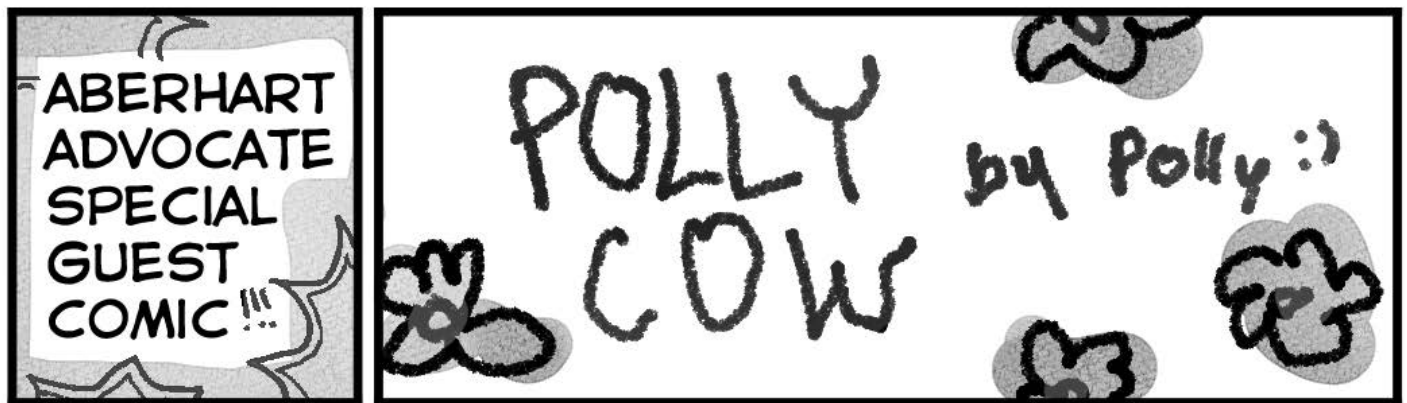


living their lives until it was violently and unjustly ended.

To conclude, Europe is a place of vast history that lives under the ground you walk upon. It breathes in the centuries-old architecture and cobblestone roads and takes you on an indescribable journey. If you are interested in history or are simply entranced by beauty, Europe is a staple for those aspects. You will come across the wide range of human history, the grand achievements and the terrifying tragedies, both only capable by man.



APRIL COMIC


Artist: Catherine Ang

APRIL HOROSCOPES


by: Oliver Kane




Aries (March 21 - April 19)

 April is giving you bursts of energy, but don't burn through it all at once. Channel that fires into something meaningful, not just impulsive decisions that you'll regret by next week. Someone unexpected might test your patience, but remember, you don't always have to win.


Taurus (April 20 - May 20)

 You're craving stability, but April's about to shake things up. Let go of that stubborn streak and lean into the chaos, you might end up enjoying the change. Your comfort zone isn't going anywhere, so you don't need to stay in it 24/7.


Gemini (May 21 - June 20)

 Your social calendar is packed, but don't forget to make time for yourself. April's buzzing with new connections and old friendships, but not everyone deserves your energy. Focus on the people who make you feel lighter, not the ones who leave you drained.


Cancer (June 21 - July 22)

 April is stirring up your emotions, and ignoring them won't make them disappear. Let yourself feel things, even the messy stuff, without overanalyzing every interaction. A little vulnerability might bring you closer to someone that you've been pushing away.


Leo (July 23 - August 22)

 April is bringing new opportunities your way, but not all of them are worth your time. Choose wisely, the path that excites you and challenges you is the one to chase. Sometimes, the best move is the one that scares you just a little.


Virgo (August 23 - Sept 22)

 April's chaos might have you itching to fix everything, but not every mess is yours to clean up. Step back and let things unfold, you'll find peace in the imperfections. Sometimes, the best solution is trusting that things will work out on their own.


Libra (Sept 23 - Oct 22)

 Your indecisiveness is in full swing this month, but staying on the fence isn't getting you anywhere. Trust your gut, you're better at this than you think. The right choice isn't always the easiest one, but avoiding it won't make it disappear.


Scorpio (Oct 23 - Nov 21)

 This month is all about reconnecting with old friends, forgotten hobbies, or even parts of yourself that you've been neglecting. You're not the same person that you were last year, and that's a good thing. Let yourself grow without overthinking it.


Sagittarius (Nov 22 - Dec 21)

 Your restless energy is through the roof this month, but running from one thing to the next won't fix the boredom. Slow down and figure out what you actually want, not just what sounds fun at the moment. The real adventure might be closer than you think.


Capricorn (Dec 22 - Jan 19)

 April wants you to remember that ambition is great, but so is having a life outside of your goals. Take a step back and enjoy the present instead of constantly chasing what's next. You're allowed to feel happy now, not just when you "get there".

Aquarius (Jan 20 - Feb 18)

 April's got you craving something different, maybe a new project, a new vibe, or even a new version of yourself. Embrace the urge to reinvent, but don't lose sight of what already makes you great. Change is powerful when it builds on what's already working!

Pisces (Feb 19 - March 20)

 Your creativity is really flowing this month, but don't let self-doubt slow you down. The ideas in your head deserve a shot at reality, even if they're not perfect yet. Start small, the only bad idea is the one that you never try.

The Advocate's Policy on Letters to the Editor

The Advocate encourages signed letters to the editor and prints both positive and negative comments.

Anonymous letters may be published if appropriate.

Letters to the editor are published as written by the author.

Spelling and grammar are not corrected.

Occasionally, letters will be edited for length and/or inappropriate language.

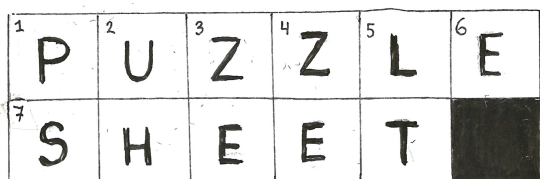
Editorial responses are not printed.

We reserve the right not to print letters that do not bring new light to an issue.

Please send your letters to sophial26@educbe.ca

APRIL PUZZLE

Artist: Max Czuczman



MAX CZUCZMAN

5. See 4 down
6. most common Scrabble tile

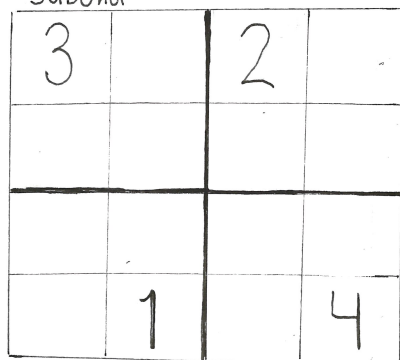
ACROSS

1. Crossword, e.g.
7. Bed Covering

DOWN

1. Letters after letters
2. unsure noise
3. Troy Bolton actor's initials
4. With 5 down, a german tent

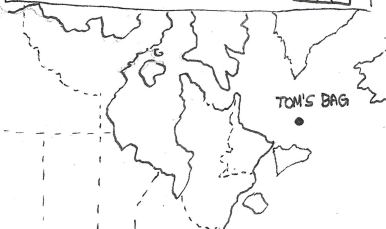
SUDOKU



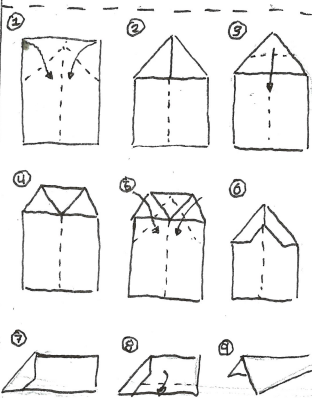
FIND 5 ANIMALS



OH NO! WESTJET HAS LOST TOM'S LUGGAGE ON A FLIGHT TO ICELAND! REPACK HIM A NEW SUITCASE!



OPTIONAL STEPS FOR AFTERWARD



RECYCLE AFTER

SCATTAGORIES

THINGS THAT START WITH 'S'

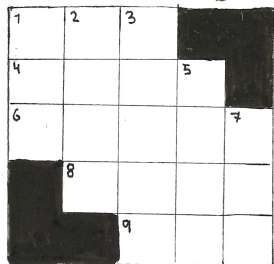
- | | |
|------------|--------------|
| 1 Beverage | 8 TV Show |
| 2 movie | 9 Holiday |
| 3 Athlete | 10 plant |
| 4 City | 11 Boy name |
| 5 Brand | 12 Girl name |
| 6 mammal | 13 Actor |
| 7 Country | 14 Dog breed |

BRAINSTORM SPACE

NOT REQUIRED FOR COURSE

TRY-IT-YOURSELF

DESIGN YOUR OWN CROSSWORD GRID

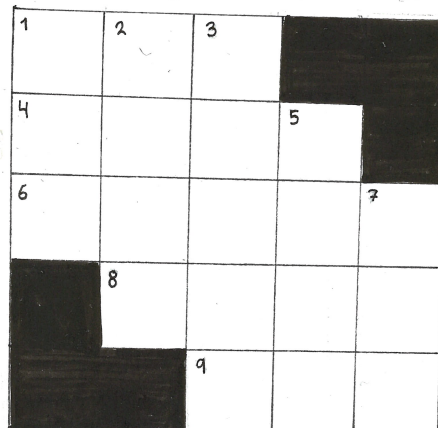


DOWN

1. Legal Code
2. You might find them in tight Jeans and with sideswept hair
3. Casual way to say "kind of"
5. What David was before Michelangelo sculpted him.
7. Doctor from Compton

ACROSS

1. Precedes plural French nouns
4. Name found in famous Cookie brand
6. It's your oyster
8. Hollywood Icon
9. Where you are! (probably)



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