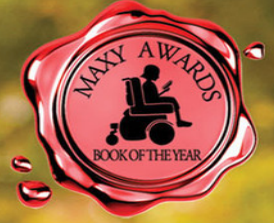


Joe Siple



The Five Wishes of Mr. Murray McBride

USA TODAY BESTSELLER



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Black Rose Writing | Texas

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To my dad, John Siple, who taught me perseverance through the
“Never Going To Get There” lesson. I’ll be forever grateful.

Acknowledgements

I've heard the creation of a book is a team effort, but I'm not sure I truly believed it until I wrote *The Five Wishes of Mr. Murray McBride*. So many people helped this story become what it is that I can no longer see it as exclusively mine.

First, a big thank you to my publisher, Reagan Rothe at Black Rose Writing. I'll be eternally grateful for the opportunity. My writers group, the WWTBAW, provided important feedback as well as creative brainstorming that led directly to some of the best parts of the story. My former agent, Paula Munier of Talcott Notch Literary Services, helped immensely with her professional editing abilities and necessary cheerleading over the course of our four years together. And, most importantly, my family provided me with support and encouragement throughout the peaks and valleys of writing. A special thanks to my wife, Anne. When I wanted to quit, you told me you saw me as a writer and bought a bottle of La Folie to toast this success before we even knew it would happen. I can't thank you enough. Lastly, I'd like to thank you, the reader. I hope you enjoy Murray, Jason, and Tiegan as much as I enjoyed creating them. May we all live life as if we had a limited amount of time to make our wishes come true.

After all, we do.

5TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION WITH INTRODUCTION BY THE AUTHOR

Five years ago, with the release of *The Five Wishes of Mr. Murray McBride*, my life changed dramatically. But I wouldn't realize it for many months.

Traditionally, successful books arrive with a bang. A big publishing company promotes the release, bookstores around the country give it space in the front of the store, and authors go on book tours, all in the name of maximizing those first few weeks or months. Because if a book doesn't take off right away, it likely never will.

But good old Murray McBride decided to be sneaky about it.

The Five Wishes of Mr. Murray McBride was released by a small publisher (Black Rose Writing) with very little fanfare. When Release Day arrived, along with my "author copies" in the mail, I didn't celebrate a momentous accomplishment and start a book tour. Since no one but my closest friends and family had purchased the book, I held back tears and put the books—still in the box they arrived in—into my basement storage space and tried to forget about them. I tried to pretend Murray, Jason, and their wishes had never existed. To let go of SBK and Tiegan Rose Marie Atherton. Because it was obvious that no one wanted to read the story you now hold.

But I would soon realize the difference between no one wanting to read it and no one knowing about it.

The change was slow. A contest here, an award there. A good review here, a batch of sales there. There was something satisfying about the organic nature of it. This story had to prove itself over and over again. About a year after the book was released, I could go onto Amazon and read new reviews daily, most of which were 5-stars. There was the elderly woman who said she read the story and found a reason to continue living, and the mother of a heart transplant recipient who thanked me for making her feel the

presence of her son, who had since passed, and countless others who were touched by the story. These reviews made the whole thing worth it, even when the number of copies sold was only in the hundreds. But eventually, through little more than word-of-mouth, Amazon ads, Facebook ads, and support from my publisher, the story began to find its legs. And then it began to run wild.

I wrote this story shortly after my dad died. I wish he could have lived to read it. I was very close to my dad and his death came as a heart wrenching shock that I was ill-equipped to deal with. I realized I had regrets about how little I had seen him in the years immediately before he died--due to my decisions, not his. In many ways, I found myself wishing I had been a better son. Writing this story was my therapy and my penance. Several people have asked me how I, as a forty-year-old, could write convincingly in the voice of a one-hundred-year-old. I think it's because my dad's death aged me. My soul, if not my body.

I miss him every day. It felt meaningful to dedicate this specific story to his memory. I like to think he would be proud to say his son wrote it.

This book will never be confused with Shakespeare or Whitman, and I couldn't write the beautiful, literary works of our best writers of today even if I tried to be like them. But, undeniably, something about this simple story has connected with many people.

Maybe it's the fact that it's authentic and written from the heart. Maybe it's that we're inundated with negativity and hate these days and people are looking for a little bit of love in their lives. Maybe I just stumbled upon characters and a storyline that "works". Whatever it is, I feel incredibly grateful.

I hope you, too, can allow yourself to be immersed in the lives of Murray, Jason, and Tiegan. I hope you get to know them and feel like you're a part of their lives for a couple hundred pages.

Most of all, very simply, I hope you enjoy the story.

—Joe Siple, 2023

JFK Center for the Performing Arts
Washington D.C.

Any magician worth his salt will tell you—there's fake magic, and then there's the real thing.

The fake is how we make our living. It's the magic the audience pays to see, knowing full well it's nothing but illusion and sleight of hand. We make hundred-dollar bills disappear. We levitate our assistants. Sometimes we cut an audience member in half and miraculously put her back together.

But the real stuff, actual magic, a lot of magicians don't believe in anymore. They think they've discovered all the secrets and learned all the tricks.

Not me. I've seen magic in my life. The real stuff. I know it exists.

"Prospero, you're on in fifteen minutes!"

It's the man who's been attached at my hip these past few days. His name is Miles, although he refers to himself exclusively as "Prospero's Biographer." I've argued a man of thirty is too young to warrant a biographer, but Miles simply hobbles along beside me with his hobbit-stride and half-dozen chins, insisting he's the luckiest man on earth to "have access to the greatest magician in history."

It's not true, of course. The "greatest magician" part. Not when there have been performers like David Copperfield and Criss Angel. And has Miles never heard of a guy named Houdini?

"Please, we've talked about this," I say to Miles. "Call me Jason. Prospero is just for the stage." His lips turn down so low they fold into his top chin. We both know he'll never call me anything but Prospero. "Forget it," I say. "Fifteen minutes?" I scan the backstage area. Several people bustle around—one rolls a thousand-gallon tank of water from which I'll inexplicably escape despite three-inch-thick chains...another prepares a series of mirrors, angling them until the woman in front disappears from view. I know I should finish preparations, but tonight the thought terrifies me. "I can make time for a quick question or two," I say, stalling.

He slaps a stubby hand to each of his pockets—his sport coat, his pants, and finally his front shirt-pocket, from which he removes an audio recorder. He bumps the curtain with a stray elbow, sending dust into the air and onto my newly-dry-cleaned tuxedo. I rub my nose and stifle a sneeze.

Miles presses a button and the machine makes the same beep I've heard nonstop for the past three days. He adopts a voice reminiscent of a newsman and forces his heavy black eyebrows together. "According to the magician himself, it's the biggest night of his life, less than fifteen minutes before he appears onstage in a puff of smoke. Prospero, Master of the Impossible, the greatest illusionist in history, turns to me and says..."

I put my hand over the recorder and angle my lips away. "Please," I say. "Nothing contrived. Tonight is too important."

The crowd continues to file in. Anticipation is building like the arc of a magic trick. I don't wear a watch—I need my arms clear from wrist to elbow—but the buzz of the crowd counts me down to showtime. I peek around the curtain again and stare at two empty seats. Front row, directly in the center, so close to the stage I'll almost be able to reach out and touch them.

"Why do you keep looking out there?" Miles asks. "Is it those two seats again? The reserved ones?"

I straighten my bowtie and replace the curtain in front of us. "Yes."

"Are they for your family?"

I heave a deep, regretful sigh. "I haven't seen my family for several years."

I can tell he's dying to ask why, but he resists. "Then who are the seats for?"

His audio recorder is outstretched and nearly touching my lips. I take a step back, but he leans onto his toes to keep the recorder to my mouth.

"Some very old friends of mine," I say. "They're the reason this night is so important. Actually, they're the reason I first got into magic."

"You've never told me about that," Miles says. "About how you got into magic."

“No?” It’s a baffling thought. This man hasn’t let me out of his sight for the past three days. He’s watched my tricks from every conceivable angle, asked me every conceivable question five times over. We’ve talked at length about the awards I’ve won, the masters who’ve taught me, and the various skills involved with illusion and sleight of hand. Is it possible he hasn’t asked me the simplest, most biographical of questions—How did I get into magic?

“It’s a long story,” I say.

“But the world needs to hear it.”

I think about the two open seats, right in front, and realize Miles might be right. Their stories deserve to be told. “All right,” I say. I brace myself against equal parts dread and curiosity, wondering if I’ll have the strength to finish the tale.

I guess I’ll attempt that trick when I come to it.

I ignore the growing murmurs of the crowd and find two folding chairs leaning against the wall at the very back of the stage. I set them up near the curtain and Miles and I sit, our knees almost touching. I try not to worry about wrinkling my tuxedo.

“When I was young, I was blessed to meet an amazing, wise old man and a sweet but feisty young girl,” I say. “The man, without my knowledge, taught me what it means to live a full, meaningful life. And in turn, I like to think I might have given him a glimpse into the memory of his youth. The girl...well, the girl gave me even more.”

Miles’ eyes are bugging out at me, his chins stretched forward in anticipation. Probably looking for my love story. A little sex to spice up his book. But what I have for him is beyond such things.

“Her name was Tiegan Rose Marie Atherton. And his was Mr. Murray McBride.”

I think back on how it all started. How I met an old man, randomly it seemed at the time, and my life was changed forever.

“I met him on his one-hundredth birthday...”

CHAPTER ONE

Murray McBride

Lemon Grove, Illinois

Twenty Years Earlier

Bran Flakes. Every morning for longer than this old brain can remember. Since Jenny died, anyhow. Chalky and bland and disgusting. But I'm not one of those picky folk who need the most expensive caviar for every meal. Never have been.

I stare at the Bran Flakes like they're a worthy opponent. I'll attempt to chew and swallow and they'll try to kill me with a lack of flavor. May the best man win.

It's my birthday—the Big Ten-Oh—which does nothing but remind me I have no one left. No family, except a greedy grandson who rarely visits. No friends, except the grocery check-out clerk with the pierced nostril—a sparkly hoop I can't help but stare at. I'm not proud of it, but I want to include my Internist, Doc Keaton, on that list of friends. Why else would he insist on a birthday physical? A glance at the clock tells me I'll be late for the appointment, but what do I care? Get to be my age, and people don't expect much out of you.

I crush my pill up good—I only need one. Not one of those old-timers who has to take twenty pills a day. I mix it into the Bran Flakes and slowly win the battle, though not without a good fight. Guess I'll live another day. Doc Keaton'll be happy about that, at least.

I've been dressed since 4 a.m. because sleep doesn't come as easy as it did, once upon a time. Seems backward, you ask me. A man my age should be able to sleep the day away if that's what he wants to do. Figure I've earned it. And kids these days can sleep like a baby, right when they're supposed to

be in the thick of their lives. I once saw a lad—looked about twelve—sleep through an entire Easter Mass. Made me curse under my breath and I had to confess it to Father James later that day. But the good Father just laughed. Now I'm not one to question a man of God, but that didn't sit too well with me, to tell the truth about it.

I only live two blocks from Doc Keaton's office, so I'm able to walk there in about a half-hour. They put me in a room by myself and Doc sweeps in a few minutes later. Seems happy to see me. He asks how I got here and when I tell him I walked he about bounces off the ceiling. "It's just walking," I tell him. "The day I can't do that is the day I go meet St. Peter."

My legs dangle over the examination table, same way they did at doctor's offices when I was 8, and 38, and 88. Same old, same old.

"Surprisingly healthy," Doc says over and over. "Heart of a fifty-year-old."

He conveniently forgets to mention the lungs that are only kept working by my morning ritual of Bran Flakes with crushed, life-saving-pill. Sometimes toast and jam on the side, if I'm feeling adventurous, but that happens less and less these days. Too much damn work.

"I'm thinking of the twenty-second," I say. I don't need to explain. He knows I'm talking about the pill. In truth, I would've stopped taking it a year and a half ago if I didn't feel like I was letting Doc down. I hate to think how bad he'd feel. Probably blame himself. But that doesn't mean I'm not serious about it. I've known for a while I won't live to see the new century. Just turns out I won't live to see 1998. What's the big deal?

"Don't joke about that, Murray," Doc says. "We've talked about this, remember? If you don't take your pill, fluid will build up in your lungs in a hurry. You'll suffocate in a matter of hours. Does that sound like what you want?"

I try to give him the answer he wants. Really, I do. But nothing comes out except a grunt and maybe a bit of gas down below. "What about work?" he says. "Has Brandon been calling? Have you had any shoots recently?"

“A fair few,” I say. “A lightbulb company a few weeks back. Couple different advertisements for oatmeal. One other, too, but I can’t think of it. Oh yeah, shampoo. Can you believe they wanted me for a shampoo ad?”

Doc straightens his tie and stifles a smile. Way I see it, doctors still ought to wear white coats. It’s only proper. He eyes what’s left of the wisps at the side of my skull. “What did they need you for?”

“Just wanted me to stare at some young lad with thick, black hair. Took about a thousand photographs of me sitting there looking at the fella—told me to act more ‘longing.’ As if I could look longing at a man’s hair! Then they gave me two-hundred bucks and told me I was free to go. If you were looking to convince me not to take my pill, that there was almost a clincher.”

Doc puts his hands up in surrender. “All right, Murray. No more shampoo ads. But listen. We’ve got to get you some socialization. Physically, you’re doing miraculously well, but...” He looks at me in that way so many people look at me these days. With pity.

“But what, Doc?” I say, daring him.

“How long’s it been now? Eighteen months?”

I try to keep my eyes down, but they glance up over my bifocals at the bulletin board Doc has covered with Christmas cards and baby pictures and people’s grandchildren. It’s a shrine, that’s what. Patients sharing their lives with Doc Keaton. Pinned right to the top is a picture of yours-truly planting a kiss on the cheek of the most beautiful woman who ever lived. The two of us are right below the headline *Local Couple Married 80 Years*. I swallow hard and blame it on the dry Bran Flakes. “Eighteen months next Tuesday.”

“I’m sure Jenny would have wanted you to be happy. To have friends. Have you met a single new person since she passed?”

I pick at the corner of my nose, because I’m old and no one cares if I do stuff like that these days. “There’s a check-out clerk at the grocery,” I say, studying the fleck on my finger. “She always smiles at me, even when I stare at the ring in her nostril, or when I’m counting out change and there’s a line behind me. Why doesn’t anyone use money anymore?”

Doc Keaton ignores my question. And my answer, for that matter. “There are organizations for retirees, you know? Or maybe you could join that group that meets at McDonalds for coffee every morning. You get up early enough to get there by seven, don’t you, Murray?”

Seven? What I wouldn’t give to sleep until seven. I don’t know how to answer in a way that isn’t insulting to my own kind, so I just tell the truth. “Everyone there is too damn old.”

I’m not sure what’s so funny about that, but Doc has a good, long laugh. “And you want to be surrounded by youth,” he says. “People who are the same age as you in spirit, if not body. Am I understanding that correctly?”

“My spirit’s not so young these days,” I say. Youth, I realize, was...my old brain’s not quite as quick as it used to be. *Invigorating*. That’s the word. Youth was invigorating.

Doc reaches under his desk and brings out a cupcake with a single candle. He lights it with steadier hands than I’ve got these days. “One candle,” he says. “For my favorite one-hundred-year-old.”

It’s a nice gesture. He didn’t have to do that for me. I could be just another fifteen minute check-up before he moves on to the next old bag. But I’m not. I actually mean something to him. Still, I can’t muster the energy to paste on a smile.

I inhale all the air I can force into my lungs, and let it out all at once. It’s still not enough to blow out the candle, but fortunately a bit of spit flies out of my mouth and lands right on the flame. “Youth was a long time ago,” I say over the sizzle.

My words drift out the window and dissolve into the humid summer air. Clean air, too, since Lemon Grove is a good twenty-five miles from Chicago.

“Well, I have a message for you,” Doc finally says. “From Brandon. He says you haven’t returned a single call since the shampoo shoot and that it’s not polite to ignore your agent. Not to mention it makes me look bad since I’m the one who set you two up.” Doc looks at me like I’m a kid about to be sent to the corner. “Although I don’t intend to become your secretary, he also

says he has something else for you. A Community Education art class. Could be what you need, Murray. It's today, later on this afternoon."

He hands me a piece of paper with a building name and room number on it, which I take and stuff into my front shirt pocket. "I'll think about it."

That makes Doc scowl a little bit. He leans forward, elbows on knees. "All right, let me give it to you straight, Murray. If something doesn't change—and I mean soon—you're going to die a pathetic old man. Sad and alone."

I'll say this for Doc, he doesn't sugar coat. I'd have preferred he said something like "You've had a good, long life," instead of "pathetic, sad, and alone." Those words don't sit so well. Actually makes me want to do something about it—I've always been a problem solver. But this problem is a doozy:

How can a man as old and washed-up as me possibly find a reason to live?

CHAPTER TWO

I think about whether I should go to Doc Keaton's art class later in the evening. I really do consider it. But the thought just makes me tired. And I realize all over again I'm just a broken down sack of bones. Pathetic, sad, and alone. That's the only thing Doc Keaton got right about me.

So I've made a decision. I'm not waiting around until the twenty-second. If this world's got no use for me anymore then I've got no use for it. Don't know why I've held on this long, anyhow. When Jenny passed, I thought about not taking my pill the very next day. Between her and Doc Keaton, well, I couldn't do it. But Doc would get over it and Jenny's long gone now. Only thing I want is to see her again, and that's not going to happen as long as I stick around this joint.

So I've decided to die. Only problem is, not taking my pill doesn't work the same as using a gun or a rope, and I can't use either of those because suicide's a sin. So I still have to stick around until tomorrow, waiting for my body to do the deed. In the meantime, I figure I should do what Doc said, just so I can have a clean conscience about it all. So instead of going back home with most of the day still to get through, I stand outside the clinic and consider what to do with my last hours on earth.

Sure, I could sleep them away and then go to the art class. But I can't help thinking about Doc's whole youth thing again, and it gets me brainstorming ideas. I could volunteer at a place where kids are looking for parents— orphanages, they used to call them. But with just one day left, I'm not going to be anyone's father. Didn't do a very good job of that the first time around, anyhow. I could visit a playground, that'd be nice and temporary. But the phrase "Dirty Old Man" didn't come from nowhere. I could do without the stares from overprotective parents.

Maybe a hospital—the children’s hospital. It’ll be full of kids with loving parents, so it won’t matter when I don’t show up tomorrow. And since the kids are all sick, it would stand to reason the parents could use a little support. They just might welcome some help while they sneak a quick nap. I always did enjoy reading, back when my eyesight was better. I never read to my boys, I’m sad to say, but every now and again to my grandkids. Big picture books with beautiful illustrations and funny stories. I especially liked when they got old enough to listen to “The Secret Garden” or “Sherlock Holmes.” Books in English, with no newfangled words or kid’s phrases.

Course, I won’t actually go into a hospital room. That’s something I’ll never do again, and wouldn’t even if I was going to live another hundred years. But hospitals have nice gathering spaces now. Real roomy, some of them, with books on shelves and pictures on the walls. I remember that from Jenny’s time before she passed on.

So I hop on a city bus and take it toward the hospital. Well, “hop” probably isn’t very accurate. I don’t know why they make those steps so big. Who do they think is taking the bus, Long John Gee? I lean on the railing and it takes all my breath to get to the top. I wipe my brow so no one sees the drop of sweat and plop down on the first seat I see.

There are two teenage girls nearby. Talking so loud I can hardly hear myself think. Using profanity, too, which never would have happened in my day. I consider giving them a piece of my mind, but then I think better of it. It’s my last day on earth. What do I care if the damn world goes to hell in a hand-basket?

I try to ignore the girls, and the stabbing pain in my knee every time the bus hits a pothole. You’d think with all the taxes I’ve paid I could get a decent ride across town. But here I am, dealing with shooting pain because the city council can’t get its act together. Some representatives we have.

When I finally get to the hospital I go straight through the front doors and rest my forearms against the information desk, doing my best to look casual, not spent.

"Heart ward," I say to the young woman behind the desk. Maybe she's not young, but she's a good generation younger than me.

"The cardiac floor is on level six," she says, and she gives me a look like I should know it's not called a heart ward anymore.

I do. I just don't care.

I take the elevator to the heart ward and step into a room with paintings of mountains on the walls and a bookshelf chock-full of books, just like I pictured. I don't really have a plan, but near the back there's a little boy, looks maybe six years-old, playing a video game on the biggest television set I've ever seen. Must be a good two feet wide, that thing.

The kid's plopped on a beanbag of some sort, his legs splayed wide like he's been there a good long time. And as I approach I see he's not playing the video game, he's just staring at the screen. His eyes are half-open—his mouth is, too, with a bit of drool on his chin. And he's holding an oxygen mask inches from his lips, like he fell asleep between breaths. I think about letting him sleep, but it's my last day. I don't have the luxury of time.

"What are you playing there?" I ask.

He jumps awake and slurps the drool from the side of his lip. He cranes his neck and looks at me through big brown eyes. The eyes are normal, but the rest of him looks...can't rightly think of the word. Deflated maybe. Like he's a tire that's run out of air. His skin looks almost blue until he sucks another breath from his mask, then it seems to whiten a bit, although it could just be my cataracts. Something in his cheeks makes him seem older than I first thought, but even plopped on his bean bag I can tell he's tiny.

"Shweetness!" he says. His body might look my age—swollen-looking legs and bags under his eyes—but his voice is surprisingly spry. From the beige carpet, he grabs a plastic controller of some sort and tosses it to me. It bounces off my chest and clatters to the floor before I move a muscle. There was a day when I'd have snatched it out of mid-air, but that was a good long while ago now. The boy looks from the controller back up to me. "Dude, come on. Playing alone sucks. I need someone to distract the aliens."

“The name’s not ‘Dude,’” I say. “It’s Mr. Murray McBride.” He tilts his head and the light shines through a space in the shirt of his hospital gown. It catches a scar on his chest which tells me two things: one, this kid’s pretty familiar with the heart ward, and two, his body hasn’t cooperated right from the first pitch. I shuffle my weight left and right until I’m low enough to sit in the bean bag next to him, then take the controller from the floor. Don’t know how I’ll get up, but I suppose I’ll cross that bridge when I get to it. “This a game?”

He snorts like it’s a funny question. That’s me. A regular comedian.

“All-Powerful Gods and Bloodsucking Aliens,” he says. “Last year’s version.”

It’s not much of an answer, least not one I can put into any context I’m familiar with. But this here’s a skill I’ve developed over the past many years—if I don’t understand something I just grunt a little and things tend to move along just fine. At first that made me feel like my hanging around this life didn’t matter. No one would even notice if I was gone.

Well, still makes me feel that way a bit, I suppose.

I take the controller and try to make heads or tails of all the nobs and buttons. No dice. There’s motion on the television, but I just watch.

“Come on,” the boy says under his breath. He’s more energetic than I thought he’d be at first sight. Course, his energy couldn’t have gone much lower than asleep and drooling in a bean bag.

Near as I can tell, it’s a building game of some sort. The kid’s moving the nobs on his controller, and a little character on the television starts setting up a shelter, or some such thing. Gold circles and silver flags come in from the sides of the screen and somehow disappear into his character while the character that must be mine stands just as still as I’m sitting.

The kid’s voice gets louder the same time a large spaceship drops down from the top of the screen. “Come on, come on, come on...yeah, baby! Look at that alien suck out your brain! God, I love this game.”

His eyes bulge real sudden-like and he grabs the oxygen mask from the floor beside him. He slaps it over his mouth and the plastic fogs and clears a

couple times. After a few deep breaths, his eyes slowly return to normal and his skin gets a little flush to it. He tosses the mask aside like it's not important, snatches his controller, and resumes the game like nothing happened.

Judging by his reaction before the oxygen, he must have done something good in the game. The character that seems to be mine sits with its head cocked to the side while an alien-looking character chews on its hair. A disturbing gurgling sound comes from the television set and then my character's head breaks open and spills liquid goo on the ground next to it.

"A boy your age, you shouldn't be watching this," I say.

"I'm not watching, I'm playing," he says. "Besides, I'm ten years-old. I'm not a little kid anymore."

Ten! And here I thought he was half that, little as he is. But now that I see him moving around a bit, ten doesn't seem so strange. It's just that he's little. Almost unnaturally small. A kid like this, I should probably cut him some slack.

"How do you play, anyhow?" I ask.

"You build stuff," he says, and he restarts the game.

"Build stuff? You mean houses and churches and post offices?"

"Holy crap, dude, what year did you come from, 1986?" I should scold him for calling me that word again but he grasps for his oxygen mask, and that stops me in my tracks. He doesn't stop looking at the screen, though, so his hand keeps missing the mask by a few inches either way. I lean over, put his hand on the mask, and he gets a couple good breaths before tossing it just as haphazardly as the last time. It smacks against an oxygen tank on a metal roller—almost like a rolling suitcase—and bounces onto the carpet. "You gotta build bomb shelters and safe rooms and castles you can shoot from," he says.

"Why?"

The kid pauses the game, puts his hands on his face, and rakes his fingers down the swollen area near his eyes. "Dude! The aliens!"