

# The Mumball Gamorandum

by Mr. Bruff

## To the students of 4B September 2014- June 2015

Brufftopians prevail with a growth mindset.



**Back row (left to right):** Ms. Ivy Lee, Mrs. DeCola, Mr. Bruff. **Third Row:** Maddi Chu, Annie Smith, Moussa Gueye, Laila Zaidi, Boone Gross, Nick Doyle, Franca Ellerman, Amelia Ash, Nylah Ntwatwa. **Second Row:** Artie Oganezov, Audrey Cheng, Alex Lho, Christian Katende, Matt Cohen, Jack Bram, Cullen Pitts. **Front Row:** Chloe Bausemer, Solai Solaiyappan, Collin Fiske, Alice Rho, Zoe Zachary, Russell LeBert.

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Brufftopians prevail with a growth mindset.

All events within the story are a work fiction, especially student personalities. The students decided to become villains or heroes in the story. With that being said, we studied a number of texts during the literacy block and learned that no character is perfect. Because everyone has room for improvement, this story would be a wonderful opportunity for the students from 4B to meet their alter egos and see the flaws within them.

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## Prologue- Lost Letter

Dear Priest or Preistess of Plays,

We, the people on the island of Seclusion, have lost our way. Many years before we set sail for Seclusion, a question was asked. For hundreds of years scholars from all over the world poured over books to find an answer. But no one could find the book with the question inside.

Eventually, nations sent their best scholars to Seclusion. By going to Seclusion and dedicated oneself to searching for the answer, everyone believed that would help people find the answer more efficiently than searching for the answer in their local library.

We were also sent with one copy of a particular book that had been published. That would ensure books were only read once. Previously, many scholars had reread books over and over while people fought what the meaning or theme of books. But we decided that only one book would be brought to the island to prevent people from making that error. Once a book was read, it was placed into the Restricted Library. The books had to be placed into the Restricted Library so they wouldn't cause future disagreements. The only person with the knowledge that was found in the book was the one person who had read the book. Books that entered into the Restricted Library were never to return to the daylight again.

To establish some sense of order how the scholars read books, Ms. Ivy Lee and Ms. Annalise Simonson were selected by me to distribute books in a new way. Ms. Lee would distribute nonfiction books and Ms. Simonson would distribute fiction books. The two women began to give specific books to the same readers based on their interest in a genre. Soon, the readers who received books became known not by their names, but by the genres they read. Realistic Fiction always read realistic fiction books, Humor always read humor, Biography always read biographies and so on and so forth.

As years passed on, many readers began to **yearn** (*have an intense feeling of longing for something, typically something that one has lost or been separated from*) for their friends and families. So the borders were opened and we began to see more than families make the trip to Seclusion. Soon people from every nation began to visit Seclusion as a vacation destination because it was so peaceful.

Once people began to vacation, they began to stay long term. With the warm weather, cool breezes, **perpetual** (*never ending or changing*) sunshine, and near unlimited choice of books, people wished to immigrate to Seclusion and begin a life there. Laws were passed that allowed people to sail to Seclusion and become citizens, to become citizens people had to contribute a new book to a genre scholar.

Soon, the people who traveled to Seclusion had trouble becoming a citizen. Priests wouldn't accept more than one copy of a particular book. So those people who couldn't provide a book to a genre priest had to stay on board the boats. They were known as redemptioners and they had to work their debt off from a priest who sponsored them.

The redemptioners felt set apart from the scholars and other citizens on the island. Often, the scholars would argue between one another about what genre a book fell into. It all

got out of control when a redemptioner brought The Van Gogh Cafe by Cynthia Rylant. Realistic Fiction, Children's Literature, and Suspense began to argue over who would accept the redemptioners' book. Realistic Fiction said he would bless the new redemptioner with a happy life on the island, so he was given the book.

The redemptioner who had given The Van Gogh Cafe ended up having a great life and people began calling the genre scholars, priests. Calling the genre readers priests wasn't the worst part. Redemptioners began bringing over more books and the "priests" began bribing one another with books they thought other priests would want to read.

Laws were established to stop the bribing and the judges were born. Judges were put into place to decide what genre the books brought by redemptioners fell into. The judges were supposed to be immune to bribes, but soon they began giving books to favor one priest over another. In short, books became currency.

Over a short period of time, the 30 scholars had forgotten their purpose. They had once been the finest scholars in the world who had become genre experts and finally priests. Along the way they had begun to bribe one another to acquire and **hoard** (*a stock or store of money or valued objects, typically one that is secret or carefully guarded*) books instead of searching for the answer to a question and putting books into the Restricted Library.

I had lost my temper and I locked myself away in the Restricted Library. For over a decade I wanted help to search for the answer to the question. The only people to notice I had secluded myself from the people of Seclusion were Mrs. Chi, Ms. Keenan, and Mr. Frank. They would visit me in the library and relay my thoughts to all of the Secludanites (*people of the island Seclusion*).

Lots of things had changed during the ten years I locked myself away. An arena was built in the city square. The three people who visited me became known as my Inner Thoughts. They used the arena to relay messages from me to the Secludanites. Mr. Frank became my **Herald** (*an official messenger bringing news*). He would speak with my voice and authority. Ms. Chi was the leader of the nonfiction priests but outside of the palace she became known as my Moral Conscience because she backed everything up with evidence and facts. Ms. Keenan was the leader of the fiction priests but was known as my Guilty Conscience, because fiction tended to **distort** (*pull or twist out of shape*) some of the true facts.

People once questioned why Mr. Frank had the power to speak for me. They wanted to know why, I, Mr. Bruff did not speak for myself. Mr. Frank declared to the Secludanites, "I have seen Mr. Bruff reading a book called *The Lord of the Flies*. In that book, whoever held the conch shell had all of the power. But once the leader spoke, they needed to give the conch shell to the person they spoke to. The leader **forfeited** (*lost or surrendered as a penalty for doing wrong*) their power."

So the citizens of Seclusion had accepted that I would no longer lead them because I couldn't speak without losing my power. Naturally that **resonated** (*relate, understood*) with the priests. They only wanted power in the form of books, so they told their followers and every redemptioner that I had become the King of Seclusion, pun fully intended.

There was no reason for me to come out of the palace, which was formerly known as the Restricted Library, to correct Mr. Frank. The people of Seclusion seemed happy with they way things were. The people of the world did not seem to care that we hadn't answered the question

either. The redemptioners had a place in the civilization and the priests kept their fighting amongst themselves.

Another decade had passed and things on the island still bothered me. I was in seclusion because the priests had lost their way and I didn't want to be around them. Now that many of the original priests had died and new priests had been re-elected or appointed, I thought it was time to **emerge** (*break out*) from the palace. What I saw inspired me to take further action.

Seclusion had temples built for every genre of book. There were minor genre temples like Fanfiction, Metafiction, Magical Realism, and many more. There were major genre temples for Realistic Fiction, Fantasy, Poetry, Folktales, and many more. Each temple had statues built around the walls of the authors who wrote for those genres. Some statues appeared to be standing guard with aggressive faces to keep people out, others looked to be welcoming people into the temple to offer books.

Walking around Seclusion I realized that my time away in isolation inside the Restricted Library had not been used very well. There was a giant sign in front of Library that said, "Palace of Isolation. Leave King Bruff alone, or else!" I needed to inform the people of the question that led everyone to Seclusion in the first place.

So I looked for Mr. Frank and couldn't find him. Apparently he had moved on from Seclusion and the new herald was young man named Jack Foley. I found him and he bowed deeply to me and addressed me as King Bruff. He told me that I couldn't speak otherwise he'd become the king and that was something he didn't want to become. He wanted a happy life where he was able to communicate with his friends. But I didn't care. I told him my plans to go back to Bowman on the mainland to find the **charter** (*a written document by a country's legislative or sovereign power, so that a group of people, company, college, or city is created*) for the island civilization of Seclusion.

I know my desk would be undisturbed because that was written into the charter that my classroom wouldn't be touched until the question was answered. However, before I could get a boat to take me back to Bowman, Jack spoke to a friend, which made the friend the new king and Jack had been rumored to have been seen sailing off into the sunset. Now, no one knows what my plans are or what the question was that we are supposed to be looking for on Seclusion.

If you are reading this letter, it means I have not returned to Seclusion. I spoke to the current queen and she has new plans for the island. Her herald informed me that she wishes to change the name of the island from Seclusion to Brufftopia in my honor. Little does she know that I want the island to change and that is why I am leaving. It is not an honor to have this island named after me, it is a disgrace.

I have put this letter into a timed lock box underneath a statue of my favorite **playwright** (*a person who writes plays*), Thornton Wilder. This lock box should open 100 years from the day I closed it. I have trusted the recently demoted high priest, now regular Priest of the Plays with the knowledge of the lock box, but not what is inside. I hope that, you, the current Priest or Priestess of the Playwrights are up to the challenge of finding the charter. It is in my desk at the Bowman School in Lexington, Massachusetts. Please bring the charter back as fast you can, I fear for the new land of Brufftopia and also the citizens of the world who trusted us to find the answer to the question, "To be, or not to be? That is the question."

## Laila Z. - The Queen's Gamorandum

In the sweet land of Brufftopia, Queen Laila wished to pass a law that would impact every citizen. The law was put in place many years ago but the queen just had to change it. The law stated, "Every citizen of Brufftopia must always wear socks." Not only did Queen Laila wish to change the law, she wished to eradicate socks entirely. Since she was five, she wore a constant reminder of the danger of socks with a scar on her wrist. So Queen Laila decided to hold a Mumball **Gamorandum** (gamorandum's are the Brufftopian way of resolving legal issues or battles through a game of Mumball).

Waking up in the palace, Queen Laila waited for her maids to get her ready for the day., but no one came. The queen thought to herself, "Why won't anyone do anything when I try to get their attention? They are the *worst* loyal servants ever." After waiting for what seemed like an eternity, but it had only been 45 seconds, the queen rung her bell frustratingly and incredibly loud to get her servants attention, but still no one came.

"I am so mad I could yell at my servants. Where is Boone? He is supposed to be on duty today!" Taking a deep breath, stretching and counting back from 10 to 1, Queen Laila cooled down enough and got ready on her own.

After going through her old clothes that hadn't been put away from the previous day, she decided to wear the same outfit again she'd worn the day before. After all, she didn't know where her own closet was. Boone was supposed to announce to Maddi and Audrey that she was awake. They would then pick out her clothes and be sure that her room was cleaned up.

"Where are Maddi and Audrey? They must be hiding because they didn't clean my room last night." The queen stared at the door and realized that a pair of soft, slippery, velvet socks were laid out neatly in front of the door. "They have some nerve. They didn't clean up my room but they took out socks for me to wear. It's like they want me to get hurt again," she scowled. "I am going to sneak up on them in the servants **quarters** (a place where people live) to find out what they are really up to."

Opening the door and stealthy making her way down the long hallway to the servants quarter, the queen stopped right outside the bland door. Just as she put her ear up to the door all of the talking stopped. "That's weird," Queen Laila thought. "I wonder if they know I am here."

"Look at what we have here. The queen was trying to sneak up on us," Audrey said with a sneer.

The queen began playing with her braces. The door squeaked open and Maddi sandwiched the queen in between herself and Audrey. Looking back and forth to the servants the queen wasn't sure what to do. Both servants had the look of evil intentions written on their faces. "If I didn't know better, I would think they are trying to corner me and get me to speak so then they will become the leader of Brufftopia," thought Queen Laila. The queen then made a shooing motion with her hands but neither of the girls moved out of the way. So the queen threw her hands up in the air, "Uhh, just move!" is what she really wanted to say.

"You're so close. Go ahead, say something. Do all the citizens of Brufftopia a favor and make me queen," Maddi says.

The queen put her hands up in the air to get everyone's attention and then made an "x" with her arms and pointed to both Audrey and Maddi. All of a sudden both girls pounced on the queen. They forcibly put on the slipperiest socks Queen Laila had ever worn on her feet.



“Scream for me to stop.” Maddi yelled.

“No, she is going to yell at me and I’ll become queen,” Audrey exclaims after ignoring the queen’s gestures.

“None of you are going to be queen,” Moussa interrupts.

Both servants bow their heads in respect and say, “We were just kidding **Judge** (a person who’s chosen to decide on any competition, contest, or matter at issue) Moussa.”

“Actually, you were getting the queen breakfast, right?” Moussa asks while he fingers the whistle around his neck that will summon the guards who will throw both girls into the deepest dungeons.

The girls vanish faster than a flash of lightning while the queen and Moussa begin walking back towards the queen’s bedroom. Queen Laila touched her chin with her fingers and then extended it towards Judge Moussa. Moussa just stared at her and didn’t say anything. “Thank you Judge Moussa,” the queen said in her head and repeated the gesture again. Still no signs of understanding from the judge.

Then she pointed to the whistle around his neck and put both her hands together like she were praying and smiled. Judge Moussa looked at the whistle and said, “You can’t have it. Only Judges of Mumball can wear them. We use them to declare the new rules of Mumball and to call the royal guards for emergencies.”

“What’s wrong with these people,” the queen thought as she threw her hands in the air again for the third time in 3 minutes. “I know what the whistle is for. I am trying to say thank you for saving me without blowing your whistle.”

Judge Moussa just shrugged his shoulders and turned to walk away. Just then the queen saw a **high priest** (leader of a reading genre, in Brufftopia the high priest is the keeper of the books) walk by. “He is around the palace enough to know what my gestures mean,” the queen thought. Waving frantically, Queen Laila was able to get High Priest Russell the Third’s attention. He was in the midst of carrying an important book to be put into the Temple of Knowledge. Not wanting to be bothered by the queen, Russell pretended not to notice the queen.

So, Queen Laila chased after Russell, not too fast so that she’d slip in her socks, but just fast enough to catch up to him. Laila tapped Russell on the shoulder and got him to stop, Russell rolled his eyes, bowed to the queen and said, “How might I serve you, your all knowing highness?” After 5 seconds with his head bowed and not being told to stand up and look at the queen, Russell fluttered his hand the way his father Russell the second, and his father before him, Russell the first had taught him and went on his way.

Turning around and seeing the judge was gone, the high priest and the evil servants were no where in sight, the queen said, “Well, that was rude. Actually, I hate that I can’t talk to people out loud. If I do, then who ever I talk to will become the ruler and I want to be the ruler for just a little bit longer. I have to, I must, I will change this ridiculous law about every citizen in Brufftopia wearing socks.”

## Amelia A. - The Queen’s Herald

“Is that the queen’s voice?” the Herald of the Queen thought. Amelia ran as fast as she could down the hallway. She heard someone screaming and throwing what sounded like rocks

through the glass cases. As Amelia walked around the corner she paused to catch her breath and practiced stepping in front of the queen. If by chance she could startle Queen Laila into speaking to her when she was scared, it would make Amelia the new queen of Brufftopia.

Stepping directly in front of the queen earned a swift ninja kick to the shins. Amelia fell to the ground breaking her **electronic-reader** (e-reader). The queen put her hands on her hips then pointed directly at Amelia and began walking, jumped with her hands in the air, and then she kicked the air.

Amelia stood up, without any help from the queen. She stared down at the cracked screen of her e-reader and said delicately, "I wasn't trying to scare you on purpose."

She had lied to the queen so much it was like second nature. "I heard a voice that I'd never heard before screaming." The queen pointed to herself and did a talking motion with her fingers. "So it was you who was talking. I am glad no one besides myself heard you talking." Looking over her shoulder to hide the laugh and smile breaking across her face, Amelia looked back at the queen and whispered, "There are some people in the palace are trying to get you to talk on purpose."

The queen touched her palm to her forehead. "Oh, so you know? How'd you find out?" Amelia asked. Queen Laila put her hand up to her ears, showed two fingers, mimed talking with her fingers, clashed her two hands together, whistled and grabbed her heart like a valiant knight in shining armor. "So you were saved by a judge," Amelia said nodding her head in fake concern. "I'll let the captain of the judges know that there should be more judges in the palace to root out all of the people not loyal to you.

"Why didn't you ring the bell in your bedroom? Then you wouldn't have been out of your room in the first place.." Amelia asked. The queen pointed to herself and then gave a thumbs up. "Oh you did, did you?" Stopping at the bedroom door of the queen, Amelia said, "That's strange, Boone, did you hear the queen's bell ringing to get your attention?"

Boone put his book down, wiped the hair from his eyes and said, "Good morning, your Majesty. No, I didn't hear a bell ringing at all." Boone was genuinely surprised to see the queen standing in front of him. "If I had heard it, I would have told the queen I was on my way to get her servants."

The queen made a bowing gesture with her hands to Boone who repeated the hand gesture back to Queen Laila, "She's the nicest queen ever. The two of us have this special way of greeting each other," Boone tells Amelia.

"She's telling you that you are supposed to bow before you talk to her," Amelia mentioned as she tried to get her broken e-reader to work..

Boone turned his back to the queen to face Amelia, "How do you know? Are you the Herald of the Queen or something?"

The queen kicked Boone in the shin. "Hey, oww. What was that for?" Boone uttered while rubbing his sore shin.

"She kicked you because you aren't supposed to show your back to the queen." Amelia responded.

Boone looked thoughtful for a moment and stared back at Amelia and said, "How do you always know what the queen is saying? I've never tried figuring out what she's saying. It is just too hard."

“Well first of all, I once had a teacher who would teach me things and then I would use it later. Sign language was one of the things he taught me.” Amelia said with a satisfied smile on her face. “That made me the Queen’s Herald. I can speak for the queen with all of her authority because she isn’t supposed to speak out loud.”

“Oh.” Boone said sitting back down and flipping open his printed book again. “What happened to your screen? Looks like you should have had a book printed on *paper* because a cracked screen wouldn’t ever happen to my book.” Boone said dropping his book on purpose and picking it up again without a scratch on it.

“I suppose you have a point.” Amelia responded. “But what happens when you lose your bookmark?”

“You have to find your reading spot again, which can be a real big pain if you don’t know the page number.” Boone replied. The queen moved her two fingers like some walking away, tossed an imaginary ball back and forth, and wrote with a pencil in the air.

“I’d love to talk to you all day, but, I can’t. The queen has decreed there is to be a Mumball Gamorandum to decide an new law. I must get all the Genre High Priests together so they may get their mumballist ready for the competition tomorrow.”

And with that, the queen made the bowing gesture to Boone and Boone repeated the gesture back, much to the displeasure of the queen. “You see, I told you we have a special way of greeting each other.” Queen Laila stormed into her room and Boone began to do the gesture to the Queen’s Herald, Amelia. She repeated the gesture, much to Boone’s pleasure, and the herald slipped into the queen’s room.

At the last second before the door was closed, Amelia snuck her hand out and ripped Boone’s bookmark out of his book so that he lost his reading place. “Just great!” Amelia heard Boone yell sarcastically at the freshly closed door.

## [Russell L. - The High Priest of Fantasy](#)

“What took you so long? I thought you’d be here 10 minutes ago. I thought you weren’t going to show up.” Solai murmured to the high priest. Solai took the book from Russell and put it under a lamp. For weeks Solai and Russell had been stealing books out of the queen’s room and putting them into their own underground library of only fantasy books.

“I got stopped by the queen. I thought she saw the book in my hands and noticed that I recovered it from her room.” Russell put his hands out to show how they were still shaking from still being so nervous. The High Priest of Fantasy said, “She was going nuts about no one answering her bell this morning.” Russell assured Solai.

With a nod of understanding Solai relaxed just a little bit. “I’m not surprised. The queen is always waving her hands up in the like she’s trying to put out a fire. Just pretend you don’t know what she’s saying and she’ll give up eventually.”

“Speaking of fire, what are we going to do about the books if this room catches fire?” Russell asked aloud. “It would be a tragedy to lose all the books that the queen banned Brufftopians from reading.” It was improbable that the underground library would catch fire because it was below the Fantasy Genre Temple that was used for people to re-enact, quote, or talk about their favorite scenes from fantasy books they’ve read.

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“We should convert all of the books into a digital copy so we can never lose them,” Solai suggested. Without a second thought, Solai took out his computer and began to copy the paper edition of the recently recovered Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief, by Rick Riordan.

“All books should be in paper.” Russell says slamming Solai’s computer closed.

“Well I am not going to steal anymore books if you aren’t going to help me type them so they can be read on a tablet, computer or an e-reader.” Solai screeched.

“Books were meant to be read on paper.”

“But you can’t even read a book at the same time if it’s in paper.”

“Who said anything about reading more than one copy of a book? You lying, thieving scoundrel.”

After arguing for 10 minutes about the benefits of reading on an e-reader or physically holding a paper copy of the books, the boys were startled when they heard the library door open. Stepping out of the shadows was the person who gave the idea about reacquiring the books from the queen in the first place, Alex. “Does it really matter what format the books are in if you both get caught because you’re too busy yelling at each other?”

“You could hear us from the street?” Russell asked.

“Yup.” replied Alex.

“If a judge had heard us, we could have lost all of this,” Solai said gesturing to books all around them. The look of panic that flashed across Russell’s eyes was clear and evident. He would prefer to read a book on an e-reader rather than never reading it at all. The last time judges found a library of books stolen from Queen Laila’s personal library, things didn’t go so well.

The Herald showed up to speak with the queen’s authority. Herald Amelia went inside the library for a couple of hours and then declared that Queen Laila wanted the building burnt to the ground with the books inside. Apparently, the books had been poisoned by the thieves.

Every Brufftopian knew that Queen Laila wanted to control what everyone read. If she thought people were reading really good books, she’d have those people sent to the dungeons and take their books for herself.

All three book thieves scanned the shelves of their underground library. “We’ve got to be careful about what books we remove from the queen’s room. Otherwise she’ll begin to notice,” Russell firmly stated. Some of the books they had recovered or relieved from the clutches of the queen included the complete collection of the *Warrior Cats* books by Erin Hunter, the *Books of Ember* Tetralogy (set of 4), the 7 books from the *Harry Potter* series and the *Unwanted* books 1-5.

“Come on guys. Let’s take some time to cool off.” Alex suggested. “The herald announced there is going to be a Mumball Gamorandum tomorrow.”

“You’re right Alex.” Russell says when he shoved Solai’s computer under a shelf. “Besides, I’ve got a Mumball Gamorandum to **preside** (be in the position of authority in a meeting or gathering) over.”

Being a high priest had some really good benefits. It allowed Russell to go anywhere inside the palace and walk around with books without being questioned by judges who enforced the laws of Brufftopia. Another benefit was that he sometimes led the ceremonies of the Mumball Gamorandum.

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To please the genre gods, people who watched the mumball game would give offerings of books to the high priests. But many of the high priests abused their power and Russell was one of them. Every once in a while, Russell would be given a priceless book he had never seen or had heard of before. When he was given a priceless book, Russell would either pick a mumball player who had no hope of winning or he would pick a mumball player who would have a strong chance to win.

Obviously, Russell would be careful who he told about the books he received. Once he had been really fortunate when Alex was the judge that came to investigate a rumor that a priest was given books as a **bribe** (any valuable given or promised with a hope of changing the behavior of a person) before a Mumball Gamorandum.

Bribes had always been a part of the Mumball Gamordandum. The priests often bribed each other with priceless books if they wanted a particular law passed. Once the whole collection of *Anne of Green Gables* was given to a minor Priest of Historical Fiction. Another time, *Jedi Academy* was given to the Priest of Poetry so that he could bribe the Science Fiction Priest in the future. Bribes were just apart of the priest's culture in Brufftopia.

As the High Priest of Fantasy began to lock up the library the underground library, Russell counted his blessings and was fortunate that he wasn't caught by a judge loyal to the queen. He'd could have been thrown into the deepest depths of the dungeons, or even worse, his eyes might be plucked out and he'd never be allowed to read again. He would need to talk to his spy in the palace, Audrey. She needed to lay low, and not steal books from the queen's personal library.

## Solai S. - The Book Thief

Running out into the hot sun of Brufftopia, Solai knew he had to keep from drawing attention to himself. He'd been number one on the Most Wanted Book Thieves list for the past 3 years. Was it his fault he could squeeze into tight places? Was it his fault he had a dashing smile that could get past most guards? Was it his fault the books he stole were worth a small fortune? Was it his fault he made an even larger fortune from selling the books? Was it his fault he was connected to the Mistress, the Inner Thoughts, spies all over the palace, and people who were willing to buy books on the black market?

If answering yes to any of those questions could move you up one spot on the top ten list, Solai would have been stuck at number five. How did Solai get to number one? Selling more than one copy of a book. Making the books digital made it so much easier to print of a copy, email the book to a friend or sell books on his website Gardenyappan.com. After all, the laws of Brufftopia **prohibited** (*forbidden by the law, not allowed to do something*) people from distributing more than one copy of a book

So what, who cares about being the most wanted man in a community of people who dedicated their lives to reading and learning all they could from books? His mission had changed over the years. He once stole books to get enough food to eat. Then he began to steal books to help others who were in need. Eventually he began to sell books on the black market because he was taking all the risk and getting a little bit of the profits.

Solai no longer wanted his **legacy** (*what is left behind for others to remember someone by*) to sell books on the black market for large sums of money. His spy in the palace who tutored

the queen in piano gave him access to a collection of books in the queen's private library. Apparently Queen Laila was personally attacking the High Priest of Fantasy by seizing all fantasy series books.

Solai had made it his life's goal to bring those books to every citizen in Brufftopia. Printing copies of books from Queen Laila's private library was too risky to the citizens. No one was willing to read a book in public that would land them in the dungeons. Instead, Solai had turned to his good friend and **accomplice** (a person who knowingly helps another in a crime or wrongdoing).

### Artie O.- The Queen's Guilty Conscience

Sitting in a plain shirt and pants at Chris' Cozy Cafe reading a book on an e-reader, Artie looked up as someone bumped into him. The physical contact made Artie drop his e-reader on the ground and it broke into pieces. "Don't move. Play it cool." the voice said. Without turning around, Artie knew it was the most diabolical book thief in Brufftopia who sometimes sounded more like a myth and legend instead of his longtime friend, Solai.

"I just met with Queen Laila and the Inner Thoughts." Artie wasn't what he appeared to be when he left the palace. Artie was one of the 3 people who made up the queen's most trusted advisors. The 3 advisors who helped the queen control Brufftopia were called the Inner Thoughts (since the kings and queens of Brufftopia couldn't speak out loud).

When Artie wasn't around, people unofficially called him the Queen's Guilty Conscience. He always made it a point to tell the herald what she could and couldn't do. Artie explained "As you already know, the queen has decided to have a Mumball Gamorendum to decide if books should be published on paper or digitally for e-readers."

"That's awesome." Solai thought. But all he did was nod his head. No one was to take note of him if he wished to get out of there alive. Alex was the only judge who was sympathetic to Solai and his **uncanny** (*strange or mysterious*) ability to rescue books. If Alex were ever to find out about Solai selling the books illegally, that would be the end of their friendship so Solai couldn't ever get caught.

"Although I have never tried to learn sign language, I have a feeling that Amelia, the Herald, didn't exactly say what the queen wanted her to say." Artie confessed. "Annie, the Queen's Moral Conscience as the Brufftopians so kindly say when they think I am not around, raised her eyebrows in concern when Queen Laila threw her hands up in the air as if she were frustrated."

Solai's nod was barely perceptible but it was there.

"I am not sure what's going on. I am going to have Cullen enter the Mumball Gamorandum. He won the last game and he had me decide what the law should be." Artie suggested.

Solai didn't nod. Instead he flashed four fingers out on his left hand and then flashed five fingers out on his right hand. Getting up from the table Solai finally spoke out loud, "I see you're reading an article about Cullen being the greatest Mumballist of all time. Christian Katende is the best because he hasn't let his fame get to his head, plus he's got cat like reflexes."

Artie understood exactly what wasn't being said, "Four finger for N-I-C-K, and five fingers for D-O-Y-L-E. Cullen can't be trusted." Saying Christian Katende's name was nothing but a

decoy. Everyone knew that Nick Doyle had just signed a **lucrative** (*producing a great deal of profit*) deal with the most popular shoe company and he was in the talks to get his own signature Mumball Gloves.

Artie turned around to make sure no one noticed Solai flashing signals. As Artie turned back to face Solai, he found the table empty. *Whoosh!* Solai had disappeared into the crowds like a ghost and was lost.

“Don’t you hate those e-readers?” A girl said as she picked up a menu and sat at an **adjacent** (*next to or adjoining something else*) table to Artie.

“How do you really feel about about them?” Artie asked.

“They break all the time because they are much flimsier than real books,” Franca declared finishing the secret code. “How do you know you can trust Solai?” Franca questioned.

Without a second thought Artie changed the subject, “What have you found out about the Mumballists who are going to play in tomorrow’s Gamorandum?”

“Well, Christian has been seen around town reading on an e-reader and so has Nylah and Collin. As most people around town know, Matt has written lots of different books calling for people to stop using e-readers. He thinks he is some kind of reincarnated author-god who talks in third person. Zoe is widely considered the best mumballist to some people but...” Franca trailed off as a nosey lady began to look their way to see what they were talking about.

After the Nosey Nancy moved along Artie growled, “But what?”

“But, she, was handpicked by...”

“By who! Spit it out!” Artie nearly yelled as he was reaching the end of his patience level.

### Franca E. - The Informer

“Annie, the Queen’s Moral Conscience.” Franca said. She tried to keep some of the sting out of the “Moral Conscience,” but there was no holding that back. Annie always agreed with the queen. She never disagreed, ever. She went above and beyond to ensure the queen had everything she needed especially when it came to reading books.

Artie looked around extremely uncertainly as if Annie were right behind him. “Relax, she’s not here now. Plus she’d never recognize you in your disguise.” Franca assured Artie.

“I can’t help it.” Artie sneered. “She is so perfect that she makes my skin crawl with all her “*Yes, my queen,*” this. And, “*You’re so smart queen,*” that. Don’t forget when she says, “*Oh your Majesty, you are so smart. May you reign (the period of time when a royal rules over others) over Brufftopia forever.*”” Artie mocked. “She makes me want to burn a book!”

As Artie continued his explosion about how he wanted to influence the queen, Franca began to lose interest in what Artie was saying. She was no longer on her guard and didn’t notice Jack take a seat closer to Artie and herself in the cafe. Jack sat at a table directly across from Franca and Artie. Jack listened to Artie blabber on about the changes he’d make if he were the king of Brufftopia. He looked around expecting to find people disagreeing with Artie, but he was wrong. Lots of people were shaking their fists and coffee cups.

Stealthily Jack took out his e-reader and began taking notes on everyone in the room to show his boss, the High Judge, Moussa. Putting his e-reader away, Jack got out of his seat to order a drink directly from the counter. He walked out of the door instead of picking up his coffee up at the pick up counter. That drew Franca’s attention. “Hmm, that was weird. I thought he was

a reporter when he was taking notes on Artie's rants and raving. Artie was just getting started. Now would not be the time to leave."

Franca got up and began to follow Jack who was quickly threading his way through the busy night time streets. Brufftopians were getting excited about the upcoming Gamorandum. There were large groups of people cheering for their favorite mumballer. People were dressing up in the colors of their genres. There were people in fuchsia from head to toe to support fantasy, purple to support poetry, forest green for folklore, red for realistic fiction, black for biographies, and navy blue for narrative nonfiction.

Just as Jack was getting out of sight, Nylah, who was wearing navy blue the colors for narrative nonfiction, emerged into the street with a parade of supporters behind her. People were chanting, people were waving their genre flags in hostility while Nylah was going around and giving pedestrians fist bumps.

"Digital books are what I'm going to vote for when I win the Mumball Gamorandum tomorrow." Nylah declared to Franca, much to the delight of the crowd. "You are wearing purple for poetry, what would you vote for if you won the Gamorandum?" Nylah asked.

Just as Franca was about to give an answer Mrs. DeCola threw herself in front of Nylah and offered, "Nylah, I will promise to donate my signed copy of The Land of Stories and the whole series of Ranger's Apprentice if you change your vote to books being published in print."

The onlookers stared at Nylah with their mouths opened. Conversations stopped as if someone had turned the mute button on. The only thing that could be heard was Mrs. DeCola's heart and some flags fluttering in the nighttime breeze. If Nylah were to have those books in her possession, she'd be able to bribe the High Priest of Fantasy with ease, because he wielded the most power in the land. Most people hadn't seen a fantasy series book in years because they had been stashed in Queen Laila's personal library.

As if Nylah didn't have a care in the world, she swished her braids back and forth on her head and said, "Judges, arrest this woman. She is attempting to influence a Mumballer before the Gamorandum."

### Annie S. - The Queen's Moral Conscience

Without looking back, Nylah swept past Franca and Mrs. DeCola was taken away. Jack ducked into an alley and found the door he was looking for. There was a snare drum carved into the wood where the peep hole should be. Jack knocked 3 times, paused, knocked 1 time, paused, and then knocked 2 times. The door opened a crack and a muffled voice croaked, "Are you sure you weren't followed?"

"Yes, I am positive. I sent Mrs. DeCola to cause a distraction in case I was being followed." The door opened just enough for the person on the other side of the door to come out into the alleyway. It was Judge Moussa. He began to pat down Jack to make sure he didn't have any listening or recording devices. Moussa took an e-reader out of Jack's pocket.

After a judge taps his own combination on the door, Annie emerged from the building. "Spill it. Tell me all that you know Jack," Annie sneered. Jack was caught of gaurd. He only reported to Moussa, but now Annie. The Queen's Moral Conscience, what had he gotten himself into?

Jack began to relay all that he knew to Annie while she listened intently without interrupting. Except the time she asked, "Are you sure Artie flashed 5 left hand and 3 right



hand? Are you positive that means Alice Rho? I've never even heard of her before today." Jack assured Annie that his spies were reliable. The spies had told him who the up and coming mumball players are and what genres they supported. Alice had been close to victory many times but she always got out of the game on a technicality.

"We are going to need to find out more about this, *Alice Rho*," Annie spit her name out as if she had taken a bite out of a peanut butter and jelly sandwich that had no peanut butter in it. "I'll have my spy inside the palace look into her reading logs to see the genre she supports."

Just then, on a roof directly above where Jack and Annie were talking, a shadow could be made out. In the **silhouette** (*the dark shape and outline of someone or something visible against a lighter background, especially in dim light*), you could just make out bobbing hair above the onlookers shoulders. Jack yelled, "Judges, to the roof. Franca, the spy for the Queen's Guilty Conscience is eavesdropping. Arrest her!"

Annie snapped back to Jack and pushed him up against a wall. "Did you lead her here on purpose? Huh? Tell me now!"

Jack was so caught off guard again for the second time of the night that he didn't know what to say. Here he was, reporting to Annie about what he saw Franca and Artie talking about. How could Annie not trust him? "When the judges catch Franca, she'll tell them all the same things I've said. Trust me." Jack pleaded.

"Trust you?" Annie mocked. "Fool me once, shame on you. Fool me twice, shame on me. I don't plan to be shaming myself anytime soon." Annie glared.

"I promise, I would never do something like that. I promise." Jack said going to his knees groveling before Annie.

"Judges!" Annie screamed. They halted immediately half way up the wall. "Let Franca go. It doesn't matter what she tells the Guilty Conscience. They don't know who I am so. All they know is that Jack is a spy with no more use because his cover is blown."

"What should we do with him?" asked Judge Moussa.

"Send him to the paper mines or the print shop. He can spend the rest of his days printing paper or copying books on a printing press for all I care." She smiled as Moussa strapped on the handcuffs to Jack's wrist. Annie was left alone in the dark and dingy alley way. She looked left and right before going into an unmarked house.

Taking off her hooded cloak, Annie began putting together her plan for outsmarting her nemesis, Artie. She could only assume that Artie's spy passed on everything Jack had told her. The safe thing to think was that the whole conversation was overheard. That meant Alice Rho would be useless, Artie would have to change his plans. But who would Artie pick instead of Alice?

## [Zoe Z. - Moral Mumballer](#)

Underneath the main floor of the arena, Zoe and the other mumballists were preparing for the Mumball Gamorandum. Some were hopping around on one foot. Others were reciting states and capitals. A few are sitting in the Warrior 1 yoga pose. But only one person was reading a book.

Zoe walked over to the mumballer and asked, "Hey, what are you reading? Is it anything good?"

## The Mumball Gamorandum

“Is it anything good?” she asks Matt.” Matt slyly replied back. “Of course it’s good. Matt Cohen wrote it.”

Zoe stared at him. “Are you talking in the third person for a reason?”

“Am I talking in the third person for a reason?” she asks.” Matt replies back. “Of course Matt is talking in the third person. All of the best authors do and that is why Matt is talking in the third person. Matt can only get the best view of his awesomeness when Matt talks in the third person.”

Zoe was so speechless, that her mouth hung open enough to stuff a tennis ball inside of it. “Zoe, you should close your mouth unless you have something to say. You could say something like, “Matt is the best writer to ever grace the shores of Brufftopia with his presence.”” Matt put on his best smile and one eye flashes green and the other blue in the sunlight.

“Um, let’s not and say that I did.” Zoe responds. Before she leaves she wonders out loud, “How successful of an author can he be if only one book can be printed?”

“How successful of an author can Matt be if only one book can be printed?” she asks.” Matt mutters. “Very successful if you ask Matt. Clearly you haven’t heard of Solai the Book Thief. He has helped Matt sell 10 copies of Matt Can Teach You How to Talk in the Third Person. Solai also helped Matt sell 6 copies of Matt Cohen Goes Beast Mode. Each book sold for over \$100 because everyone thought they were buying the only copy.”

“Zoe is getting bored talking to you!” Zoe yelled. Alice fell out of her yoga pose because she was laughing at the exchange of conversation. Zoe walked away as quickly possible hoping to never speak in the third person again. “I can’t believe I started to talk like Matt. That was really weird.”

It was hard for Zoe to shake the conversation she had with Matt. He had mentioned selling more than one copy of a book. Everyone knew that it was possible but against the law. Only a diabolical book thief like Solai would do something like that.

“Matt is going to go beast mode!” Matt yelled when he banged his chest with his hand. Hearing that reminded Zoe that she’d heard a couple of people talking around the coffee shops saying they were going beast mode too. There was a possibility what Matt said about printing multiple copies of books being true. It was also hard to believe that Solai would sell multiple copies of a book when the talks in the third person.

After watching Matt toss a mumball around, Zoe knew that Matt had no business being in the Mumball Gamorandum. He tried and failed to catch the ball because he attacked the ball as if he had two left hands and two right feet. “He must have bribed someone to get into this game.” Zoe thought and was now compelled to get to the bottom of what was going on.

“Hey, Zoe,” someone whispered. Zoe looked around but didn’t see anyone near her. The closest people were Christian stretching and skip counting by 9 and Judge Moussa who was guarding the door to the arena. “Zoe. Over here. I’m in the dark corner,” the voice clarified.

As Zoe entered the creepily lit corner, she couldn’t help but feel that someone was going approach her with a bribe. She had once seen a good friend of hers take a bribe and not honor the bribe. Her friend and her family had been thrown out of Brufftopia in less than an hour.

Everyone knew how to tell if they were being bribed or if someone was being a real friend. If you were being bribed, the person would say something like, “This isn’t a bribe,” or “This will cost you nothing.” But then they would show up to your house expecting you to pay up or deliver a Mumball Gamorandum vote to them later.

## The Mumball Gamorandum

“Hey, I’ve got some information that you’ll need to know if you want to win the Mumball game.” Zoe couldn’t help it. The boy offering the bribe was wearing a palace gown. That meant they worked directly for the queen. He wasn’t wearing a cloak to hide his face or even talking too quietly so that no one could hear. It seemed like this person wanted everyone to hear. “This isn’t going to cost you anything.”

“Right!” Zoe mocked as she walked away from the second strange conversation in 2 minutes.

“Hey, I just wanted to tell you that shouldn’t trust Cullen. He is a villain!” the blonde haired boy said as he offered his bribe. He moved the hair from his face and said, “That didn’t as well as I had thought. I never thought I’d miss doing my bow gesture and trying to talk to the queen. But that would have been easier than talking to Zoe. My **handler** (*a person who trains or manages another person*) never told me what to do if Zoe didn’t take the bribe.”

Moving over to talk with Collin, Zoe interrupted his meditation. “Hey, what genres have you read?”

“You mean, do I like to read paper copies of books or on an e-reader?” Collin corrected.

“Nope. What genres have you read?” Zoe assured Collin.

With a hand gesture, Collin said, “Look at the colors I am wearing Zoe and figure out I only read biographies.”

“Haven’t you ever wanted to read other types of genres?” Zoe questioned.

Collin shook his head from side to side frantically and said, “With talk like that, you could end up in the dungeons. Do you want to get me thrown into jail with you?” Just talking about reading other genres could get someone thrown into jail. Since Boone had just announced out loud that he was a spy and he was wearing the palace gown, no one would want to say anything **treasonous** (*the betrayal of a trust*) with him around. The judges would **confiscate** (*take or seize someone’s property with authority*) the traitors books and Queen Laila would add more books into her personal library in the palace.

Collin turned away from Zoe faster than a King Cobra strikes its prey. Judge Moussa began walking over to the two mumballers. Zoe was left to ponder what she should do. Looking around, Zoe realized there was no one she could connect with. Almost every mumballer was working with someone else. Should she take the bribe so she could feel included? Not being sure if she should trust the advice of Boone, the spy. Zoe decided she wasn’t going to listen to a person offering bribes. She would be a **moral** (*a person’s standards of behavior or beliefs concerning what is and is not acceptable for them to do*) mumballer, even if that meant she’d not be successful in the upcoming Mumball Gamorandum.

### Collin F. - Mumball Gamorandum

Collin looked across the room at his opponents. He was there to represent Biography. But there were almost 70 other people there to represent their genre priest. Usually, more than half of the mumballers would have already been bribed by now. Because Collin had never officially taken a bribe, he didn’t know what mumballers would have made an **alliance** (*a relationship based on interests, nature, or qualities*) to work together.

He didn’t actually need to know who would be working together before he left the room, he’d find out once the Gamorandum started. Mumballers would start getting out on purpose or

tag team to get a specific person out. The people who accepted bribes tended work with deadly efficiency to get people out.

There was a good reason why Collin had never taken a bribe. He was living up to the expectations of his favorite mumball player, Nick Doyle. Mumballers were important. When a mumballer won the Mumball Gamorandum, they would make the decision on the law. It was expected that the mumballers pass their decision to a genre priest. Mumballers spent most of their time training, not paying attention to politics. Some were drafted straight out of elementary school to take part in Gamorandums.

Other times, the mumballers would decide on the new law themselves. The mumballers who made the decision of the law themselves often were never used by a genre priest again, unless they were extremely talented.

Whenever Collin's idol, Nick, would take part in a gamorandum, he always made the decision himself. Nick had become famous for making decisions for himself. There was a 40 foot billboard in Brufftopia of No Bribe Nick selling his Nick Doyle IV shoes.

Collin looked down at his ND 4's and pulled his good luck charm out of his pocket. "Today is the day we show everyone that High Priest Biography shouldn't have overlooked me. I am going to win and vote for digital copies of books."

Tucking his good luck charm back into his pocket, Collin began scanning the groups of people preparing for the Mumball Gamorandum. There was a large crowd of people taking selfies with none other than the golden boy of mumball, Cullen. There was another boy with blonde hair reading a book printed on paper, but he was dressed in the palace garb so he looked out of place. But there were no signs of his idol anywhere. No Bribe Nick wouldn't miss this mumball game. It was way too important.

This law was going to have a major impact on every citizen of Brufftopia, Nick would want to be the person to make the decision today. Without Nick at the Gamorandum, it gave almost everyone else a chance. Collin had pulled out his good luck charm for one last time. Looking down at it, Collin ripped it in half and threw it on the ground. "Today I will make my own luck. I don't need to count on heroes when I can count on myself."

Collin took two steps away from his good luck charm. He had never played a mumball game without his good luck charm. Today was not the day to start a new way of doing things. Collin turned on his heels quickly and discovered his ripped good luck charm was gone.

## [Alice R. - The Villain](#)

According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, a villain is *a deliberate scoundrel or criminal*. The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines mega is as *being of the highest level of rank, excellence, or importance*. Alice is what you'd call a mega-villain because she can operate her criminal **enterprise** (*a business or company*) in plain sight. She had been watching the whole interaction between Zoe and the boy wearing the palace robes.

She knew the robed boy from the palace. He was one of her many spies. Unfortunately for Boone, he had never seen Alice face-to-face. So he had walked by her when he searched for his handler. Fortunately for Alice, she could ignore him because he had announced to the whole room that he was a spy and he was looking for his handler.

Alice motioned for Judge Moussa to interrupt Zoe's conversation with Collin. She needed to get her hooks into Collin. He was a promising mumball player. Alice couldn't win a

Mumball Gamorandum, it would cause the judges look into her background. So she would always do well enough in mumball games but then lose. It made her look like an unsuccessful mumballer.

It was always way more satisfying for Alice to control other mumball players. Representing Mystery Genre meant she needed to be the most mysterious person in Brufftopia. She became known as the Mistress or Leader of the Underground Library Movement. So that she wouldn't draw too much attention to herself, Alice didn't speak too often. She rarely made eye contact and could quickly get in and out of a room without anyone remembering she was ever there. So when she picked up Collin's ripped good luck charm, no one noticed.

Putting it back together wasn't hard because it was ripped into two pieces. The good luck charm was a first edition mumball trading card of Mr. Bruff. The card was priceless. Some would say it was worth more than a temple filled with books. Alice could get in touch with her agent on the black market, Solai. He'd know someone who would be interested in buying it. But she couldn't concern herself with that now. There was a Mumball Gamorandum to **rig** (*manage something fraudulently to produce a result or situation that is in the advantage of a particular person*).

Alice signaled her corrupted judge by cracking her knuckles. Judge Moussa came over to her. With his back turned away from her he said, "Mistress of Mystery, I have heard from our spy within the castle. She is **detaining** (*keep someone in official custody, typically for questioning about a crime or in politically sensitive situations*) someone."

"I've got lots of spies working in the castle that are female. Be more specific. Is it Maddi or Audrey?" Alice asked.

"No Mistress. I heard it from the herald, Amelia herself." Alice made a mental note not to have Amelia's family sent to the paper mines because she had done well. Moussa continued speaking, "Apparently the Priestess of Plays went on a quest to recover some long lost document that no one but the priest's of Plays had ever heard of."

Alice raised her eyebrows in interest. "It is probably nothing." Moussa assured her.

Alice's temper was wearing thin. "It's a good thing you're just a judge of mumball. I don't pay you to think, I pay you to tell me information so I can think. Now do me a favor and find out why Annie is asking questions about me."

There was nothing Moussa could say. Three years ago Judge Moussa had left his home and sailed for Brufftopia to have a better life. He'd even brought eight different books with him so that he could start well in a new place. After all, in Brufftopia, books were currency. But all the books he brought were already on Brufftopia. The only priest that was willing to sponsor him was Alice. Moussa was one year away from working off his debt to Alice. Until then, all Moussa could do was go along with Alice's wishes. He replied to her insult with, "Yes, Mistress."

### [Matt C. - Third Person First Person Narrative](#)

Matt led the mumballers out of the tunnel and into the massive outdoor stadium. The crowd cheered for their genres. Black flags for biographies, tons of fuchsia for fantasy and countless other colors could be seen. A woman and a camera crew stopped Matt to ask him what he was feeling at that very moment. Matt replied by saying, "Matt has finally made it to the big time. Matt is going to go beast mode on these mumballers."

## The Mumball Gamorandum

Nick could be spotted sitting courtside taking pictures with people near him. Matt walked over and said, "Doyleton, why aren't you dressed and ready to play mumball?"

Standing up straight, Nick pointed to his latest pair of mumball sneakers, the ND 5's. "I just signed a new mumball sneaker deal. These shoes cost \$150 or 3 books." Not getting why Nick wasn't playing, Matt motioned for Nick to continue talking and explaining why he wasn't going to play. Nick continued, "I got a new contract and I can't play in this Mumball Gamorandum. It isn't good for my brand image."

"Don't worry. Matt was going to mop the floor with you anyway. That would have been really bad for your image." Matt responded and he climbed up onto the mumball stage.

Nick yelled to Collin, "Be careful Collin. I have a new contract that kept me out of this game. Something big is about to go down. You better get out of this game before you get involved." Collin looked like he'd seen a ghost.

He started stuttering and wiped his head because his idol knew his name. But did he know what he was up to? Collin fainted under the stress just as judge Moussa said, "Mumball begins now!"

"Collin, it's okay. The best author in the world is here to help you."

"Matt, you're out." Moussa declared.

"What?! Matt was just telling Collin that the best author in the world, Matt, would help him since he fainted." Matt whined.

"You're still out because you've talked and argued with a judge. Get off the stage." Moussa bellowed.

On the way to the Out Zone, Matt decided he'd be better off sitting with his own people from the realistic fiction genre section of the arena. Within the safety of his supporters, Matt got lots of encouragement and the inside scoop as to who had taken a bribe for the Mumball Gamorandum.

A friend of Matt's with blonde hair, a spy from inside the palace who was no longer wearing his palace doorman's **garb** (*clothing or dress, especially of a distinctive or special kind*), started to tell him who had been bribed. And true to Boone's knowledge, every person he named began dropping out of the game like flies. "Boone, how do you know all of this?" Matt asked.

"I have been pretending to not have a clue as to what is going on. People tell me everything I want to hear because they think I am not paying attention." Boone replied with a smug grin on his face.

Matt's face lit up. "Matt thinks you're a genius. I not have a new idea for a book. Matt Reveals the Super Spy Secrets."

Meanwhile, back in mumball game, one person purposely dropped the mumball. A couple of other people were attacking Christian. He was able to fend them off with his cat-like reflexes and a little help from Nylah. Within 5 minutes the only people left in the game were Alice, Cullen, Christian, Nylah and Collin, who had finally woken up from his fainting spell.

"Hey, Judge Moussa, it's not fair Matt's out and Collin is still in the game. No one could pass to him because he was on the ground asleep." Matt yelled. Obviously the judge ignored him but the crowd seemed to agree and they also began yelling at the judge too.

Boone started a chant that swept over the arena like the wave, "The judge took a bribe! The judge took a bribe!" To get control of the situation, the queen left her luxury box with her

three inner thoughts, her two servants, and Judge Alex close on her heels. She began waving her hands frantically at Matt to get his attention. Before Matt could speak, Boone said, "I'll handle this."

Boone waved his hand in front of his face to greet the queen. She jabbed Boone in the chest, crossed both her hands, pointed to herself and then pointed to her conch shell crown and made the bowing gesture back to Boone. Matt said, "I think she wants you to bow to her."

"Hey, you just said I." Boone giggled.

"No Matt didn't." Matt grimaced.

"That's how we greet each other. We have a special way of saying hello." Boone repeated the gesture to the queen's herald, Amelia. "Sometimes if I do the gesture too much she kicks me in the..."

"Oww." Boone yelled as Queen Laila kicked him in the shin.

### Maddi C. - Serve Yourself

The queen began making so many motions that no one could follow. The queen slipped and fell. So all of her wrath shifted and seemed to be pointed at the socks on her feet. She kept trying to take them off. But she wasn't allowed to. Who would want to wear shoes with no socks? She pushed Boone and some guy who kept talking in the third person out of their seats so she could sit down. Then she tried to take off her socks.

Amelia would just say, "Your Majesty, you have to wear your socks. It's still the law." The queen would then get an evil sneer on her face, rub her fingers together like she was up to no good and then cackle to herself like a super villain does when they think their plan is foolproof. Within 10 seconds, the queen would be trying to yank her socks off her feet again and the whole process would start over with Amelia saying, "Your majesty, you have to wear your socks. It's still the law."

Audrey couldn't take it anymore. She pushed Amelia out of the way, threw the queen's shoes onto the mumball stage and pulled the socks off of the queen. Nylah dropped a pass from Collin when she ducked the oncoming shoe as it *bonked* Christian on the back of the head.

Christian howled, "Hey, that servant hit me with a shoe and she's **assaulted** (*make a physical attack on*) the queen."

"Christian and Nylah, you're out!" Judge Moussa declared.

"But she did assault the queen." Nylah insisted.

Amelia beckoned to the guards, "Take Audrey to the deepest dungeon you can find. Give Christian and Nylah servant's robes since they clearly know how to respect the queen." Christian was caught up in the whirlwind that he wasn't sure if he was supposed to be happy to have a job in the castle or sad because he was out of the mumball game. Nylah just put out a fist to Christian for a fist bump.

Audrey screamed as she was getting dragged away, "Just say thank you. I took your socks off your feet. Make me queen!" The queen made circular motions around her ear and pointed to Audrey who was trying to wiggle her way out of the guard's hands.

"Let's continue without anymore interruptions." Moussa beckoned to the remaining mumball players.

Alice caught a pass from Collin but she wasn't able to repeat the pattern correctly before throwing the ball to Cullen so she was out. The slight satisfying smile that crossed Alice's lips

was nothing compared to the smile that crossed Annie's. Annie looked over to Artie and **replicated** (*make an exact copy of; reproduce*) the queen's evil cackle. She said, "You thought I didn't know that you had been working with the leader of Underground Library Movement. Better known as the unsuccessful mumballist, Alice Rho! But I did know, and she is out of the game and your library in the Mystery Temple is being raided as we speak."

Artie looked at her like she had transformed herself into a flying lion. "Um, I decided to go with Cullen Pitts. I couldn't trust a book thief like Solai. Cullen will choose me to set the law today." Annie was speechless. Her spy Jack had gotten the signals incorrect. Artie had never even known who Alice was. Artie had no knowledge of the Underground Library Movement. How could this be happening? She should have listened to Jack and had the judges get Franca before she escaped.

"But I do know about the person you and Amelia are keeping hidden from the queen." Artie growled. The look of **malice** (*the intention or desire to do evil*) was clearly written on Artie's face. It was as clear to see as a quarter under a microscope.

The queen stopped stretching her feet with no socks and stared at Amelia and Annie. Everyone knew the first person to talk would throw the other under the bus. Annie jumped at the opportunity like a fish out of water. "Amelia did it."

"Hey. The Priestess of Plays said she had some charter and it didn't make sense to show you until after the Gamorandum. Remember? You want to pass the law." Amelia hinted while she pointed at the sock free feet of the queen.

Maddi spoke up, "Why do I have the feeling the queen needs to see the priestess now? Amelia, you're hiding something." Maddi didn't really care about the priestess. Maddi wanted the queen to get too emotional about being lied to and speak directly to her. Then she wouldn't have to be a servant anymore, she'd be the queen of Brufftopia with hundreds of servants.

### Cullen P. - The Untrustworthy Mumballer

Amelia observed, "Oh my, the mumball game is over. It looks like Cullen won again. It's no surprise because he is the best mumball player in Brufftopia." Amelia tried to slip away when everyone turned their attention to the mumball stage. Judge Alex, who had remained quiet during the whole exchange grabbed Amelia by the arm to keep her from getting away.

As Cullen began his march up to the realistic fiction box where the queen was sitting, someone yelled, "Cullen went beast mode on genres. He is wearing two colors. Purple for Poetry and plum for Plays." Gasps begin going up all over the stadium. Cullen was taken into **custody** (*imprisonment*) by judges before he could even make it to the queen.

The queen's herald had been exposed as a traitor, the queen's Moral Conscience seemed to be as guilty a kid who got caught with their hand in the cookie jar. No one trusted the Guilty Conscience either. The queen looked like she really didn't care. Maddi had put socks back on her feet so now the queen was playing with her hair and sneakily trying to read the back cover of a book without anyone noticing.

Alex decided to ask Cullen the question everyone in the arena was wondering. "What priest are you going to choose to make your decision for you since you are representing more than one genre?" Alex asked. Cullen had never made a mumball decision. In fact, it was widely expected that Cullen would be the next king of Brufftopia. He had been the best mumball player since he was 5. He had also begun practicing being silent and not speaking.



Cullen looked around the outdoor arena and saw some familiar faces. He saw Alice, who had told him that he'd never see his family again if he didn't pick the Priest of Mystery to decide on the law about publishing books. Cullen also saw a shattered up-and-coming mumballer, Collin.

Collin looked to be in shambles because he had just been forced into working with Alice. He had wagered, if he won the mumball game today and passed his vote to the Priest of Mystery, he would get his lucky charm back. But if he lost, he'd always work for Alice. Looking at the pain in Collin's face. Cullen could easily be in Collin's shoes and owe Alice a lifetime of service and votes in Mumball Gamordandums. If Cullen became king, he would just be Alice's puppet.

Cullen smoothed out his shirt, cleared his throat, and looked for the most honest and only uncorrupted face in the arena. Settling on the person, Cullen spoke for the first time in 3 years. "I pick another mumballer, Zoe, to decide on the law."

This was **ludicrous** (*so foolish, unreasonable, or out of place as to be amusing*). No mumballer ever picked another mumballer to set the new law. Rarely ever did a mumballer chose the law themselves, they always picked a priest. The queen laughed so hard out loud that she snorted and fell out of her seat. Maddie jumped in front of the queen hoping the queen would say something but all Maddie got was a swift kick to the shin.

Artie began laughing and joked, "Zoe probably doesn't even know what the law is. You'd be better off picking a judge to set the law. At least they know more than a mumballist would."

Zoe looked at Artie and nodded, "Guilty Conscience," the arena went silent. No one had ever called him that to his face. "I will pick a judge. Judge Alex, please set the law."

### Chloe B. - Priestess of Plays

Chloe was being dragged onto the mumball stage just as Alex stepped in front of the queen to set the new law. From her vantage point, she could see everyone on the edge of their seat. People had brought their e-readers and books in print. There were signs posted all over the stadium that said, "Buy print, support the economy," and other signs that said, "Buy digital, go green and save a tree's life."

"They have lost their way." Chloe thought to herself.

Alex bowed to the queen who stopped sliding her bare feet on the ground for a moment and readjusted her conch shell crown on her head. The queen nodded once and Alex said, "Queen Laila, in regards to the law stating books should be in print or digital. I declare that there should be books on e-readers and in print."

The queen waved her arms like she was trying put out a fire, jumped up and down like she stubbed her toes squinted her eyes like she had a brain freeze from drinking a slushie too fast and screamed, "Are you kidding me!" to Alex at the top of her lungs. "You were supposed to be deciding that socks would be illegal in all of Brufftopia! Why didn't you vote for socks like I told you to? I am the queen!"

Christian nudges Laila, "You have to take the king's crown off." Laila raised her arms showing that she was asking Christian what is wrong with him. "You talked to Alex so you're not the queen anymore. Sorry."

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“Would you like a fist bump?” Nylah asked trying to take some of the sting away from Laila who was no longer queen. Instead of handing Alex the crown, she ripped the conch shell crown off of her head and threw it at him.

“No. I don’t want a fist bump. I don’t even want to be queen anymore. I have only wanted two things, 1. Never to wear socks again and 2. To have a to have a conversation with someone. But no, evil people won’t learn sign language or they pretend they don’t know sign language to make me frustrated. So I am stuck with myself. When I talk to myself, evil people come in and stop my conversation, with myself. That is crazy!” Talking a mile a minute Laila continues. “It’s so bad not being able to speak. You want to say things and you can’t. When you do talk, you will no longer be queen. Not talking means you’ll be separated from the things you want, like being with a friend.”

Alex goes to the mumball stage where the prisoner, Chloe is being held in chains. She waves something in the air and he smiles. Walking over to the stage King Alex sees row after row of people bowing towards him.

Chloe handed Alex the document over. Alex reads it out loud to every citizen in Brufftopia.

*The official charter of Seclusion: Seclusion will be an island civilization in the Pacific Ocean where 30 scholars will be lead by Mr. Bruff to find the book that will answer the following question. “To be or not be?”*

Alex folds the document and Matt screams out, “King Alex spoke to Matt. Bow to beast mode.” Just like that, chaos sets in the arena. Everyone is claiming that Alex spoke them and now they are the king or queen of Brufftopia. Maddi goes as far as taking the conch shell crown and placing it on her own head. After what seemed like an eternity, or only 5 minutes, the judges get the arena under control.

Chloe, the Priestess of Plays announced, “I have a letter from the man whom the island is named after, Mr. Bruff.” Chloe read the long lost letter. Most people had thought the Mr. Bruff was just a tall tale or a fable to get people to keep working hard. After all the **mantra** (a *statement or slogan repeated frequently*) said before every mumball game was: “Brufftopians prevail with a growth mindset.” Like most things in Brufftopia, the words had lost their meaning shortly after Mr. Bruff set sail for the mainland.

The whole arena was speechless. “Let’s find the answer to the question. That’s what we are here for.” Chloe insisted.

Seeing this as her time to finally step forward and become queen, Amelia spoke up. “But who is going to be the king or queen? Alex talked to all of us but he looked right at me.” Most people had given up wanting to be king or queen of Brufftopia. You could see it in their faces. What Laila had said about wanting having a friend to talk to, the isolation Mr. Bruff face didn’t make it very appealing to anyone to become king or queen anymore.

People had once come together and gone to the island to find an answer. But the Brufftopians had grown too used to leaders guiding them in their decisions and having priests. They needed some form of government with structure before they could search for the answer to the question.

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Alex spoke to the crowd, "From now on, Brufftopia will be a republic. You all get to vote and you are all leaders." Murmurs and an applause of approval went through the arena.

Chloe continued, "People over a hundred years ago changed the name of island to honor him. He didn't feel honored then and he still isn't being honored now. We have a second chance to honor Mr. Bruff's wishes. Let's all work together. Let's stop hoarding books. Let's work hard and support each other. Let's figure out, *are we* to be or not to be? That is question."

The End

## Epilogue

Zoe left the arena with the intention of **eradicating** (*destroy completely; put an end to*) all bribery from the island nation, Brufftopia. So she followed Alice back to the Underground Library Movement headquarters. Even though the name of the group was called the Underground Movement, they weren't actually underground like the underground fantasy library. The library was hidden in plain sight in the Temple of Mystery.

All genre temples had been opened to the public. Cullen's bravery to openly support reading books from multiple genres had really inspired change all over the island. Brufftopians were walking in and out of the building with more books than they could carry. Apparently, the queen's herald, Amelia, had been stealing books from the citizens and blaming it all on the queen. The stolen books were brought to the Mystery Temple. There were books from every genre on the shelves.

Most people didn't make the connection that Amelia was in **cahoots** (*colluding or conspiring together secretly*) with the Mistress of Mystery. Brufftopians were happy to be reading multiple genres and get their stolen books back. Collin was walking out of the temple with an arm full of books when he bumped into Alice. He screamed and tried to hide behind his tower of books he had brought out of the temple.

Alice went to apologize for what she had done to him but Collin screamed louder and dropped a couple of books before he hightailed it out of there. Alice shrugged her shoulders and moaned, "I deserved that. I am going to have to have a growth mindset and keep trying to do a lot of apologizing." Zoe stepped on the book Collin dropped so that she didn't step in mud and also so that she could keep up with Alice.

The dungeons of Brufftopia had been emptied because most people had been locked away falsely. So many of the former Brufftopian prisoners had been enjoying their freedom by going in and out of temple libraries. Chloe and Audrey were two of those people enjoying their freedom.

Chloe who had not been on the streets of Brufftopia for 7 years. One of those years she had spent in a dungeon while she held on to the charter from Mr. Bruff's desk. Audrey spent 20 minutes walking to the dungeon but once she heard there would be no piano, she fainted. The guards felt bad and sent her home with a warning. Just like that, Chloe and Audrey became fast friends.

With their new found freedom, the girls decided to go for a stroll. Chloe looked down to see a book pressed into the mud. She couldn't read the title of the book but she decided to open the book to see if the title was written anywhere inside. All that she could make out was \_i\_ \_i\_ \_ \_ha\_es\_e\_re's Hamlet at the top. Opening up to a random page that wasn't soaked in mud Chloe read:

*To be, or not to be, that is the question:  
Whether 'tis Nobler in the mind to suffer*

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Those were the only words that could be made out in the whole book. Audrey snatched the book and frantically flipped through the rest the muddy pages. Momentarily reverting back to a fixed mindset Audrey said “If I didn’t have bad luck, I wouldn’t have any luck at all.”

Staring at the mud caked pages, Chloe muttered, “This doesn’t make any sense. I used to think paper copies were the best but if this were digital, I’d be able to figure out who wrote this book.”

As if being called out of a lamp like a genie, Solai appeared and said, “I know how to get you a copy of that book. I sold a digital copy of that year and years ago.”

“Um, no thanks. The pages inside will have to do.” Audrey explained not getting suckered into her old way of questing for power by hoarding books and spying.

“You might want to think about changing your line of work. I’ve heard the **inaugural** (*marking the beginning of an activity or period of time*) vote will be to raise the number of printed books. You’re going to be out of a job.” Chloe pointed out.

Solai smiled brightly, “Where there’s a will, there’s a way. Someone will always need something and I will be there to provide it.”

As Solai disappeared into the crowd as stealthily as he appeared, Chloe got to thinking. “Where there’s a will, there’s a way. I know I’ve heard that before. When I lived in the UK, people used to say that a lot. But t’was there more meaning?” Chloe pondered using her english accent to spark new meaning from the saying. “Where there’s a Will, Anne hath a way. Anne Hathaway was William Shakespeare’s wife. This book was written by the English playwright, William Shakespeare.”

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<b>Name</b>	<b>Roles</b>	<b>Villians or Hero</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Space</b>	<b>Outdoor Organism</b>
Amelia Ash	Queen's Herald	villan	1	Neptune	Bumble Bee
Chloe Bausemaer	Ambassador to the Mainland	villan	2	Uranus	Bumble Bee
Jack Bram	Spy for Annie	villan	3	Saturn	Flower
Audrey Cheng	Servant	villan	4	Pluto	Dragon Fly
Maddi Chu	Servant	villan	5	Pluto	Butterfly
Matt Cohen	Author against e-readers	villan	6	Sun	Lady Bug
Nick Doyle	Very famous mumballer	hero	7	Neptune	Flower
Franca Elleman	Spy for Artie	hero	8	Uranus	Dragon Fly
Collin Fiske	Biography Mumballist	hero	9	Saturn	Butterfly
Boone Gross	Door attendant	hero	11	Pluto	Flower
Moussa Gueye	Judge	hero	12	Sun	Dragon Fly
Christian Katende	Folklore Mumballist	hero	13	Neptune	Butterfly
Russell Lebert	High Priest of Fantasy	villan	14	Uranus	Bumble Bee
Alex Lho	Mastermind	hero	15	Sun	Butterfly
Artie Oganezov	Queen's Guilty Conscience	villan	16	Saturn	Dragon Fly
Cullen Pitts	Expert Mumballist	hero	17	Sun	Butterfly
Alice Rho	Mitstress of Mystery	villan	18	Pluto	Bumble Bee
Nylah Ntwatwa	Mumbalist for Narrative Nonfiction	hero	19	Neptune	Bumble Bee
Annie Smith	Queen's Moral Conscience	hero	20	Uranus	Flower
Solai Solaiyappan	Book Thief	villan	21	Uranus	Butterfly
Zoe Zachary	Moral Mumballer for Fantasy	hero	22	Saturn	Dragon Fly
Laila Zaidi	Queen	villan	23	Pluto	Flower
		evens	paper		
		odd	digital		

## Mumball

**Players:** 4 or more

**Age:** 6 and up

**Aim of the Game:** To be the last one standing after passing the ball and following the directions from the judge.

**Preparation:** Players need to decide who the judge is going to be. They also need to decide where to go when you are out. The playing area needs to be large enough so that all of the players can stand in a circle.

Rules:

1. No talking.
2. You must make a good throw and catch the ball if it's thrown to you.
3. You must follow all the rules the judge makes.
4. No arguing with the judge while the game is in progress (because of rule 1).

Materials Needed:

1. Mumball, tennis ball, or ball big enough to be held in one hand
2. Playing area

Playing the Game:

1. Judge begins saying, "Mumball begins now," and creating a rule.
2. Players pass the ball back and forth according to the rules created by the judge.
3. When a rule is broken the judge can say, "You're out," or players can remove themselves from the game.
4. Judge continues to add or remove rules from the game.

End of Game:

1. When there is only one player left the game is over. That player becomes the next judge of Mumball.

Strategy Tips

- Pass the mumball to every player who is in the game. Often times some players try to hide in the large games and end up winning because they haven't had to toss the mumball often.

## The Mumball Gamorandum



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