

HARD WORK FOR JUICY BERRIES

Breaking news! Gwendolyn, our Editor In Chief, has been doing a TON of gardening lately! A few days ago she was outside when she saw her grandma. Soon she found out that her grandma was planning to plant blueberries. Gwendolyn decided that she wanted to help. Soon she was digging. And digging. And digging. AND DIGGING! She dug up a huge ivy patch and clipped the ivy that was still there. Gwendolyn put the scraps of ivy into the compost and then she decided she wanted to help with the digging of the bed. Soon she was digging and then her grandpa was sawing. Soon they had put boards around the bed so that the ivy that was still growing could not get in and choke the blueberries. So, yeah, all in all, a lot of digging and after she went out at something like 9 am, suddenly it was 12:30!!!! Gwendolyn has earned some blueberries for her hard work digging, clipping and composting!!!!

A literary INTERVIEW VIEW

This is Creative Consultant Laurel T with my first Daily Excitement feature. I sat down with the Editor in Chief to talk about *The Giving Tree*, a book I'm sure many of our readers are familiar with.

Given that it was a Saturday morning during quarantine, Gwendolyn was dressed for the occasion in fleecy Santa pajama top and some unrelated Christmas pajama pants. I, too, was wearing pajamas, but they weren't nearly so fun.

The following is a lightly-edited transcription of my interview with Gwendolyn.

L: I am here with Gwendolyn and we are here to talk about some books. So, first of all we are going to talk about *The Giving Tree* by Shel Silverstein. Can you give me a summary of the book in your own words?

G: A summary of the book. That's a tough one but I think I can. So, *The Giving Tree*. *The Giving Tree* is about a tree and a boy and the boy is extremely selfish and the giving tree gives the boy everything it has...

L: What kinds of things does it have?

G: It has apples and branches and it has itself, you know, the tree trunk. And the boy is very selfish, I feel, and then he grows up and he chops down the giving tree to get wood and it takes him 60 years to realize that he misses the giving tree and then he comes back but there is nothing he can do and then it's the end of the story

L: Do you remember how it ends exactly? What does the boy do with the tree, or the old man [he's not a boy anymore]?

G: The old man sits on the stump of the tree and then...

L: And that's it?

G: Mm-hmm

L: Do you think that the author means you to be happy or sad at the end of the book?

** Regardless of how you actually feel, do you think the author means you...

G: Happy

L: why does the author think you'll be happy?

G: I can't really explain but maybe the author thinks you will be happy that the old man has came back?

L: And how does the book make you feel?

G: Depressed

L: And why does it make you feel depressed?

G: Because the giving tree just gives everything it has, it even lets the boy chop it down and when it gets to that point you need to have boundaries because... you need to have boundaries

L: you think that the tree shouldn't have given quite so much?

G: Yeah. And the boy shouldn't have been quite so selfish

L: And the tree can't use words, obviously, because it's just a tree, but if the tree could talk to the boy, what do you think the tree should say to the boy instead of letting the boy cut him down?

G: I think it should say, maybe, 'Find another tree that...' well, I can't remember why he chops it down?

L: Maybe he needs a house or something? I can't remember either, it's been a long time since I've read it

G: Maybe he could buy a house?

L: Do you think the tree should keep on saying yes?

G: No, I think the tree should have boundaries

L: And the tree should say...

G: No sometimes

L: Do you think that it's possible to show love even when you say no?

G: Yes. It is **definitely** possible

L: We were talking earlier about *The Giving Tree* and you said something I found really interesting. What comparison did you make between *The Giving Tree* and something else?

G: The comparison I made was I realized the giving tree and the boy was kind of like the Dursleys with Dudley [from the Harry Potter series, particularly book one], I mean they give him everything he wants and they never say no to him so it's like the giving tree in that sense

L: They love so much that they don't set any boundaries?

G: Yeah, they don't set any boundaries and they never say no

L: Do you think that the boy and Dudley Dursley are really happy being given everything?

Pause

G: No

L: Why do you think they may not be truly happy?

G: Because you need "no" in the world. If you got everything you wanted...if you got everything you wanted then...you might sort of feel bad because... it's hard to explain but you do need "no" in the world

L: Do you think children, especially, do they thrive if they have all the power?

G: No. They aren't happy

L: Is there anything else that you want to say about *The Giving Tree* or *The Giving Tree* and *Harry Potter* comparison or anything that we've been talking about?

G: It's just, it's depressing and it's meant to be a nice book but to me it just isn't

L: It's a book that's supposed to show what selflessness looks like...

G: Yeah

L: And kind of shows the opposite. Would you agree with that?

G: it doesn't show **selflessness** it shows **selfishness**

L: And do you think that it can take less than 60 years for someone to learn...

G: YES it can!

L, chuckling: Well thank you very much for your interview today, Gwendolyn

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G: YES it can!

L, chuckling: Well thank you very much for your interview today, Gwendolyn

Chocolate digestive biscuits: are they worth it to make at home?

About a year ago, I tried a chocolate covered digestive biscuit for the first time. I absolutely loved it. So, when I found this recipe, on serious eats, I immediately wanted to try it. The recipe itself was not problematic, up until it asks you to roll out the dough. It says to roll it out to $\frac{1}{4}$ inch. It wasn't that this made it bad, necessarily. It was mostly that I was expecting a crisp biscuit, not a cakey biscuit. When I tried the biscuits for the first time, I also noticed that they don't really have much flavor. The dark chocolate overpowers it, and that is all you taste. Overall, this recipe wasn't terrible. I liked the biscuits. I just didn't love them the way I love commercially made ones. Mainly, I just don't think they are worth the time, when I have other, better things I want to bake.

Elspeth

Salted Caramel Sauce: Dangerous, or Delicious?

I have always been slightly scared to make caramel sauce, because I know that hot sugar is dangerous, and I *really* don't want to get a third- degree burn from something I love as much as caramel, because it would ruin it for me forever. However, I have been so bored during quarantine that I decided to face my fear. I looked through recipe books, and in *Crave*, by Martha Collison, I found a recipe for salted caramel sauce that looked good. I was very careful, and didn't stir it, and made sure not to put the heat up to high. And then I waited. And waited. Maybe because I have an induction stove, or because I used evaporated cane juice and not white sugar, or a combination of the two, it took forever for the sugar to finally get to the right color. It did get there eventually, and then I put in the butter, cream, and salt. It did splutter, but not as much as I worried it would, and I got no burns whatsoever. As soon as it cooled down enough not to burn me, I tasted it. It was incredible. I could just eat all of it with a spoon, but it tastes great on chocolate cake as well. Overall, the recipe worked well, the caramel tastes great, and I would make it again anytime.

Elspeth

COZY GAME

CORNER: STAR- DEW VALLEY RATING

What it is about: You live on a farm in Pelican Town, and it was left to you by your grandfather, who, sadly, has died. He comes back on the dawn of your third year, but that's another story. Anyways, you go around and make friends. Soon you meet a person named Morris, Head of Jojo Co. I will say one thing about him: DO NOT TRUST HIM. If you go into the kitchen at Pierre's, you will find a note from him that basically says Sorry, but I'm going to take over your business. So, don't trust him.

Rating:

4/5
★★★★☆

How likely to recommend to a friend:

★★★★★★★★★★

How many cozy game trophies:

5/5
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Note: iPad & Phone only.
-Gwendolyn

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from our co-reporters

New Contributor--Kenny from Portland!

Mom put pedals on my bike and I wanted to not do it with pedals but mom made me do it and then I started to do it and then I showed my dad--on learning to bike on a two-wheeler.
Congratulations, Kenny! Well done!

The Daily Humor aka Jokes to laugh by!

I can't believe I got fired from the calendar factory.
All I did was take a day off.

I wasn't originally going to get a brain transplant, but then I changed my mind.
From Grandpa Fred

What does a house wear?

A dress.

From Uncle Brian

The Daily Birder aka Carol's Commentary

- The Caspian Terns are back with their weird gravelly squawk
- The Yellow-rumped Warblers (also known as butterbutts) have arrived in all their bright spring plumage
- I watched a male House Finch feed a female House Finch. He's trying to demonstrate what a good provider he would be for her and the little finches

if I could SHRINK...

by Gwendolyn, our editor in chief

If I could shrink, I would keep a tiny farm and have tiny vegetables and tiny livestock. I would have piglets, and chicks, and I would have tartigrades. The tartigrades would be like horses, and I would host a riding camp in the summers. I would climb on flowers and fly on bees. I would work in a tiny bakery and fly there by bees that were my friends. Sometimes I would go by tartigrade. I would make tiny bread and tiny cookies and tiny cakes & tiny pies & tiny cupcakes. I would give them to tiny people. To wrap it up, think of a story write it. Fly away... creating with the world of

Meet the Co-Reporter

Name: Grammy Carol

Age: 320 in cat years (formula available on request)

Motto: Take a look

Hero:

Favorite Food: Ice cream is pretty high on my list

Favorite Book: Book: Hardest Question Ever!

For silly: Anything by P G Wodehouse

For serious: Harry Middleton's *The Earth is Enough*

For learning interesting things: Most of Bill Bryson's books

Favorite Movie: Cat Ballou

Something about you: The best things in life are playing in the dirt, wandering around with my binoculars, creating with my sewing machine and hanging with the family (includes the dog, of course)