

My Artist's Journey / Brian D.

Grade 12

Something wasn't right in Wimbletown. Perhaps it was the unwanted, discarded household items out on the street. Or maybe it was the tall, shadowy figure that shambled through the streets. Each dawn started with tremors shaking the town's foundations. Yjor the Giant enjoyed walking through town, each day unique in its own right. It was common knowledge that Yjor was unaware of the Wimbletons, and they preferred it that way. His presence brought a sense of fear, something that the village coped with often. He walked through the town, gathering objects until his arms were full. The Wimbletons didn't know what he did outside of the city, only that his routine was the same every morning. It wasn't to say that they didn't like Yjor. In fact, it was convenient that his time spent in Wimbletown was predictable. Little did they know that there was more to it than that.

Each leg swinging in front of the other, Yjor marched into the forest, his arms holding all kinds of junk- TVs, lamps, bicycles, blenders, coat hangers, antennae, cables, wires, plug-ins, everything and anything you could imagine. His strides shook the trees, stirring the forest. The occasional toaster or trash bin slipped from the mountainous pile in the giant's arms, adding to a flattened trail of metallic, shining objects on the ground. Arriving at a wide clearing, Yjor dumped all that he had found onto the autumn floor. With a craftsman's precision, Yjor sorted his new collection of small, delicate objects into varying categories. By the end of it all he piles organized by color- reds, greens, blues, purples- and material- metals, woods, plastics- so diverse a pallet of choices. Looking at what he had laid before him, Yjor thought of what he wanted to create. Using his surroundings, he looked all around for inspiration- in the infinite blue sky, in

the trees rustling in the wind, in all the movements of the forest. Yjor thought back to his younger years spent wandering through a forest not too different from this one. He remembered all the Summer nights and Summer days spent with his giantess mother.

*They were walking towards their cave, the day's game dragging along behind. The foliage of the forest transitioning between shades of reds, yellows, and oranges, the trees becoming thinner and thinner as they tread along the path. Arriving at a large cave entrance, Yjor ran ahead to the warmth of his home. His mother lumbering in behind him, he stoked the coals of the fire and prepared the spit for cooking. She hung the limp creature above the fire and began preparing their meal. The smell of a delectable roast wafted through the air, Yjor's mouth watering in response. He snatched a morsel of food and scarfed it all down. Hungrier than he could imagine, he came back for seconds, thirds, fourths... until half of the entire meal had disappeared. At this point he could eat no more, his sides aching from all the food. Yjor's mother sat to the side, waiting for her turn to eat. She reached for the remainder of the food and ate it with one large bite. Yjor lay on the cave floor, staring at the ceiling above him. Giants from before had left markings along the walls, pictures of stars and long forgotten tales painted before him. He began to drift into a daze, his head nodding off.*

Before he knew it, he awoke from his daydream. Yjor returned to reality, nighttime making its presence well known. A chilled wind drifted through the air, the leaves around him rustling as if to taunt him. A sense of disappointment and regret filled Yjor as he realized that he failed to do any form of sculpture tonight, yet again. Indeed, this wasn't the first time he had

spent his time sitting around doing nothing. In fact, it was a normal occurrence for Yjor, to the point that he had grown used to it. He looked at all the trash that lay before him and, just like every other day, carried the heaping pile to the nearby cliff edge. He released it into the never-ending void of fog, not a sound heard. For a moment, he stared into the void, contemplating his predicament. He thought of what he aspired to do and who he wanted to be. Snapping out of his introspective thought, he lumbered to the large pile of decaying trees that he called a bed. He flopped onto the heap and descended into slumber, beginning the cycle once more.

The following morning, the Wimiblytons left more trash out for the giant, and once again hid in their small homes. As usual, the streets tremored with each step, the town frozen with fear. His steps came and went, fading back into the forest. A short lived sigh of relief echoed throughout the town. They began their day with your typical suburban morning rituals of plant watering, dog walking, bakery opening, and neighborly social obligations. Half an hour passed, the town bustling with movement as villagers made their way to work. One of the village's richest business executives, Mr. Smith, stood in his office on the fifth floor of Wimibly Tower. He sipped from his coffee, trying not to burn his tongue, and stared at the rising sun. Out of nowhere appeared a hulking figure, the ground beginning to shake. Mr. Smith's jaw dropped, along with his cup of coffee. After producing an uncharacteristically high pitched scream he ran to the emergency signal- a big red button on his desk. Slamming it with all his force, the emergency sequence deployed. As the town realized what was happening, villagers swarmed the streets, scrambling into nearby shelters. First Responders stood on street corners, directing those in need of help to safety. Once all the villagers were locked away, Wimiblytown had an eerie silence to it.

They waited. And waited. And they continued to wait, until, finally, the giant's footsteps faded away into the forest. The Wimbyltons realized that they had a second giant on their hands.

Yjor continued to stomp through the forest, trash in arms. As he walked along his path, a tremor from within the forest became impossible to ignore. He stood at rest, sensing the disturbance. Listening to the sound, he changed direction. The noise of metal scraping and shifting together heightened with each step until Yjor slowed to a stop. A large figure stood in the middle of a wide space, surrounded by heaps of iron and steel, hard at work. Setting his own pile down, Yjor tip-toed around the expanse as quiet as a giant could possibly be. From this angle he watched the other giant with an intense stare, curious about what lay before him. The giant bent over, piecing together a combination of steel girders, long cables, and other building materials. Curious as to what lay before him, Yjor continued to watch the giant bend, twist, and warp the fragile metal in his hands. Deep inside, he felt a tingling sensation- his hair stood on end, his pulse quickening- a thrill coursing through his body. He was absorbed in what he was watching, unable to look away. Hours went by, the world standing still. Yjor, exhausted, remained watchful over the other giant's progress. A beautiful sculpture, unlike any other, had formed. A leaning tower of tires, cables, metal beams, and antennas stood in front of the giant. He made sure the structure was well-supported and, brushing his hands off, walked into the forest. Yjor stood there, still taking in the scene that lay before him. By the end, he was left with what looked like a leaning tower of Pisa built in industrial New York. Yjor stared at the shining work of art. Such a profound and mind boggling art piece struck a chord within him. Thinking of his own success, he realized he found his inspiration. He followed the other giant around, as a child does a parent, watching art materializing right before his eyes. He began to see the giant as

someone to aspire to- a mountain to climb. Yjor decided that he would begin making art of his own, instead of delaying it any further. One morning, without a moment's hesitation, he set to work.

The villagers of Wimblytown awoke to Earth-shattering quakes, but that was only an assumption- a predisposed notion that nature was after them. Instead, it was Yjor himself sprinting from neighborhood to neighborhood, trash falling from the large heap in his arms. Excited to begin anew, he gathered the rest of the supplies he would need for the day's work. He stormed into the forest and searched for the first clearing that he ran into. One particular place stood out to him: a quaint little meadow, the autumn foliage casting a warm glow in the vibrant morning sun. Surrounded by nature, he looked around and took it all in- the steady breeze on his skin, the chirping of birds as the morning grew old, the rustling of the leaves as winter neared closer. Setting his materials down, Yjor thought until an idea struck him. He gathered an odd collection of sharp, triangular metal plates and sticks, rounded objects and metal rods. Yjor began tweaking the metal to his own design, his general fingers altering details within each individual scrap. Absorbed in his work, time passed without notice, everything around him white noise. Yjor was in his own world, the physical realm disappearing with every movement. It felt like he was watching through a stranger's eyes, rather than his own. He was in a different place now. His thoughts alone were subject to his manipulation. They drifted back to memories of his mother and his adventures with her, shaping the metal itself. Soon, before he knew it, he had finished. A sculpture of a campfire with a creature hanging above shone in the meadow, reminding him of those Summer days and Summer nights spent with his giantess mother. Off to

the side stood a statue of her, gazing off into the distance. Yjor stared in awe at what he had created. He followed his mother's gaze to the sunset, finding what he was looking for all along.