

# ZigZagZine

No. 1

CREATING, THINKING, IMAGINING

Nov./Dec. 2007



**“The Golden Compass” comes to the big screen in December**

Movie made from the first book of the suspenseful trilogy by Philip Pullman looks to be an exciting holiday adventure

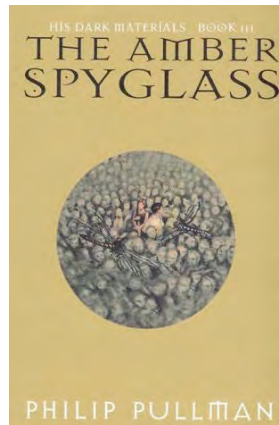
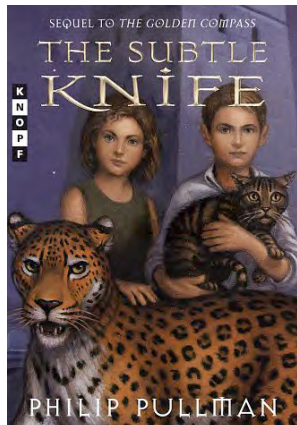
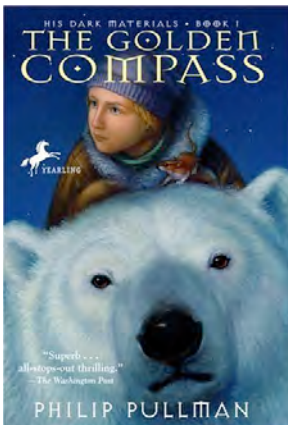
A new movie, “The Golden Compass,” will be coming to theaters on December 7. The movie is based on the first book in Philip Pullman’s popular “His Dark Materials” trilogy.

The trilogy follows the adventures of two children, Lyra Belacqua and Will Parry, in three different worlds. First, the world where Lyra was born and has lived most of her life, a world with the same geography as our own, but where every human’s soul appears outside of their body in

animal form as a “dæmon.” Second, the world where Will was born and has lived most of his life, a world just like our world today. Third, the world of Cittágaze, a once prosperous place now overrun with horrible “Specters.”

In *The Golden Compass*, we meet eleven-year-old Lyra and her dæmon Pantalaimon, in her world’s version of Oxford, England. Since her parents died, she has been raised at Jordan College by great Scholars. Then she is sent to live with someone named Mrs. Coulter, but before she leaves the Master of the College gives her something – a

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## Welcome to our new zine

ZigZagZine is a bimonthly publication by and for kids. It’s published on the Web as a pdf. Kids can contribute fictional and non-fictional stories, poems, and art by email. Contributions for our next issue are needed by December 15. For details, see our Web site at [zigzagzine.com](http://zigzagzine.com). Thanks to Kaizen Betts-LaCroix for his help on this issue. — Jessica Chase, Editor

golden alethiometer – the golden compass. But when the rumored Gobblers, who kidnap children and take them to “the north” for unknown reasons, appear in Oxford and kidnap her friend Roger, she begins a desperate journey to rescue her friend.

It should be interesting to see how they portray this book in the movie. I know they’ll be mixing animation with the live actors, as in the screen shot shown on the front page. You can go to the movie Web site at [goldencompassmovie.com](http://goldencompassmovie.com) and watch the trailer, meet your own dæmon, and much more.

Although we haven’t seen the last of Lyra, the second book, *The Subtle Knife*, opens onto the completely different world of twelve-year-old Will. When the book starts, Will is taking his mentally ill mother to stay with Mrs. Cooper, the kindly old woman who used to give him piano lessons, knowing that she’ll be safe there as he cannot take care of her anymore by himself.

As Will returns home, we learn about his past, and how when he was only a baby his father, the explorer John Parry, disappeared while he was on an expedition in the north. But when Will accidentally kills a man who breaks into his home to steal a writing case with letters from his father, he takes the letters and sets off to find out the truth about his father.

Then Will finds something strange on a busy street: a small window in a hedge—a window to another world. It is in this world that he meets Lyra, and they set off together to find Will’s father.

*The Amber Spyglass* wraps up the series, resolving all the issues brought up in the last two books. Will and Lyra are attempting to go where no living soul has gone before—to the land of the dead—and we find out if they succeed.

The “His Dark Materials” books spin us into a world of parallel universes, “Dust,” good and evil, courage and betrayal. They show us

the dangers of a strong, central power when it gets out of hand, or has evil intentions. Along with the page-turning action, there is a lot of violence, more so in the second and third books. So these books are for mature readers—probably best for ages 10 and up, but use your own judgement.

To learn more about the books, visit the publisher’s Web site at [hisdarkmaterials.com](http://hisdarkmaterials.com). To learn about the science behind “His Dark Materials” (such as what is “Dust” anyway?), visit the very extensive fan site, *Bridge to the Stars*, at [bridgetothestars.net](http://bridgetothestars.net). *zzz*

—Jessica Chase



# CROSSWORD

## Fact or Fiction?

by Jessica Chase and Kaizen Betts-LaCroix

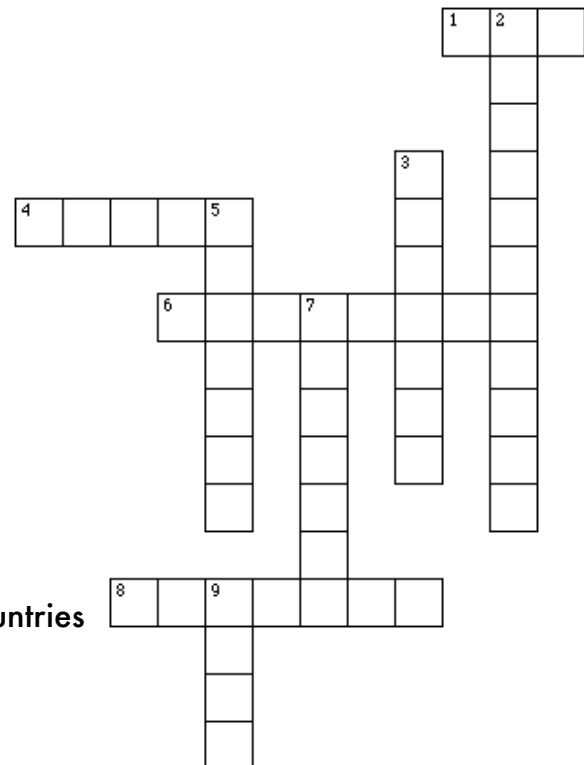
### ACROSS

- 1) How to find your way
- 4) Avians
- 6) Math that comes after trigonometry
- 8) 1,2,3,4,5,6...

### DOWN

- 2) Eoin Colfer's most popular children's series
- 3) J.K. \_\_\_\_\_ (author of Harry Potter books)
- 5) A language spoken in Bolivia and 21 other countries
- 7) Where you go after 12th grade
- 9) Labyrinth

Answers on page four



# A Mysterious Sound

By Erin Chong

I awoke in the middle of the night because I heard a strange sound. It sounded like pots and pans clattering in the kitchen. Then I heard footsteps, a door closing, and then silence. I got out of bed and went to the kitchen. I saw pots, pans, forks, spoons, and plates everywhere; the kitchen was a mess.

When I went outside, I saw that one of my neighbors, Nickerson Kent, had his upstairs lights on. I had hardly ever seen him. I saw him a couple times pulling up the weeds on his lawn and said hello on my way to pick up the mail, but he never answered back.

I looked across the street at my other neighbor Alex... Alex... hmm... I didn't know Alex's last name because he had never told me and I had never asked.

I went back into the house to investigate the kitchen more thoroughly. This time I found chewed fingernails and black hairs. I thought the fingernails and the hairs were from Nickerson but then I remembered that Nickerson was not the only one who had black hair. Alex! Alex had black hair!

The only problem was that Alex only chewed his fingernails when he was nervous. I thought that it would be a good idea to talk to them both so I got dressed and got ready for some real detective interrogation.

I walked down the street to Nickerson Kent's house, reviewing the questions I wanted to ask him. Once at Nickerson's house I knocked at the door. I waited... and waited ... and finally he answered. Nickerson was tall, and had black hair and a moustache.

"Yes?" He asked, "What do you want?"

"My house was broken into, " I said, "and I need to ask you some questions. What were you doing at 12:01?"

"You mean twenty minutes ago," he asked bluntly.

"Yes," I said.

"I was trying to sleep," he said.

"But I saw your lights on! Explain that!"

"Like I said, I was trying to sleep, but I couldn't so I turned on the lights and read my book.

"That's it?" I asked.

"That's it," he answered. "Now can you please go?" he asked, starting to close the door.

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY JESSICA CHASE



"Wait! I haven't finished asking questions!"

He didn't answer; he just slammed the door shut.

It was time to interrogate Alex.

When I knocked on Alex's door, instead of hearing the sounds that you would normally hear if you knew someone had woken up in the middle of the night, I heard a couch creek and footsteps coming toward the door. He opened it.

"Who is it?" he asked.

"It's me," I said.

"Oh! It's you! What's going on?"

"My house was broken into!" I said.

"Oh, my God! Well, come in and we can talk about it," he said, welcoming me into the house.

We sat down on a couch that looked and sounded as if it was fifty years old. You could just hear the 1950s calling for that couch, with its pink, outdated look.

"Um...nice couch," I choked. It smelled too.

"OK, to business" I said. "

Where were you 12:01?"

"I was here on my couch the entire night," he answered.

"Why?" I asked.

"For personal reasons," he said.

"Oh," I said. I decided this was a good time to change the subject. There were wind chimes laying on a table. "Nice wind chimes, I have exactly same kind."

"Really?" Alex said.

I was surprised he had the same wind chimes. Then I realized something. I hadn't seen my wind chimes in my house when I searched! Let's see if I can make him confess, I thought.

"So," I said casually, "when did you say you got those wind chimes?"

"I...I got them two hours ago."

"But I thought you stayed on your couch all night! Why did you lie?" I asked.

"Because when you told me your house had been broken into I didn't want to be suspected."

"I see," I said.

"Okay, now what about the wind chimes?"

"Where did you get them?" I asked.

"I bought them from the guy next door to you," he answered.

"Nickerson!" I exclaimed.

"Yeah, but why do you want to know?" Alex looked perplexed.

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# A Friend of Mine

By Hailey Joy Scandrette

"Ella!" A loud shriek broke the quiet of my afternoon as I walked along the stream.

"Ella!" The voice echoed through the patch of woods where I stood, up from the edge of the town where stands our house. I knew it was my little sister calling me. I knew I should go help Mama make dinner. I knew, but I didn't want to leave my sanctuary by the stream.

"Ella." Now I also knew that Annie, my nine-year-old sister, was right behind me.

"Ella! Your hem is covered in mud. Mama already has enough laundry to deal with! And—"

"What is it, Annie?" I asked, cutting her off.

"Mama wants you to help make dinner," she stated primly.

"What about you?" I asked.

"Mama wants me to work on my embroidery. Come on, she's been waiting for you for ages." She had already started walking back toward our house, lifting her skirts delicately. I ran back to our house. Mama was waiting at the door.

"Eleanor Francis Lockwood!" she began. I knew it was coming. "How on earth did you get so filthy? Where have you been? Go wash up quick and help me. Dinner should've been ready half an hour ago," and with a tremendous sigh, "Why can't you be more ladylike?"

Two days passed before I could go back to my favorite little patch of forest by the stream. On Friday afternoon, I seized my chance.

Annie was visiting a friend. Margaret, my five-year-old sister, and my twin two-year-old brothers were napping. Mama was having tea with Auntie Francis. I crept out our back door and ran up into the woods.

Climbing my favorite tree, I looked down at a small path I'd worn by coming up here so often. I

discovered this haven five years ago when I was eight. I came up here whenever I felt happy, unhappy, lonely, afraid, or just bored. It was a place all my own. At least, so I thought. Lost in my thoughts, I hadn't noticed a tall, dark-haired boy around my age meandering up my trail. His voice shook me from my reverie.

"Hey, you!" he called. "What on earth are you doing up there?"

I looked down at him, startled, and then said calmly, "I am climbing this tree."

"Girls don't climb trees!" he said incredulously.

"I'm a girl," I said, hopping down, "and, as you see, I have just climbed that tree. So, obviously girls do climb trees." I grinned at him and

"Oh, yes." I recalled the scrawny boy who sat in the back of the classroom last spring. He'd grown nearly a head taller since then. "Well," I said into the awkward silence. "Why did you come here?" I demanded abruptly. "Are there no other boys you could be playing with?"

"They've all moved this summer," he stated forlornly, "to some new farming country or other."

"Oh," I said, feeling suddenly very sorry for him. I could tell he was even more lonely than I. "Hey!" I said, brightening up, "Why don't I show you the salamanders, the squirrel's hole or the owl's nest? We could go wading in the creek or we could catch some grasshoppers."

He looked up and smiled. "I'd

ILLUSTRATION BY JACK WOODBRIDGE



his lips twitched. "I am Ella Lockwood," I said, curtsying clumsily. "What's your name?"

"Nathaniel Martin," he replied, "but most everyone calls me Nat."

"Where do you live, Nat?"

"Over there," he answered, pointing to our town. "We go to the same school, you know."

like that," he said happily.

At that moment, "Ella!" It was Margaret's voice this time.

"Oh, no," I breathed. "Sorry, Nat, Mama must want me for something. I'll show you the owl's nest tomorrow, okay?"

"Okay," he sighed, "I'll be here."

*continued next page*

"Bye," I called over my shoulder as I tore back to my house.

I finished all my chores extra quickly the next morning. "Where are you going?" Mama called as I tore out the door.

"I'll be back to help with dinner," I yelled. Nat was waiting by my tree, his eyes sparkling and expectant.

"So," he asked, "what first?"

I showed him everything from the fuzzy grey owlets to the ripe blackberry patch and the smooth skipping stones.

"You know," he said as we waded in the stream, "you are certainly the oddest girl I've ever met."

"I know. Mama says I should be more ladylike." I laughed and splashed him.

"I disagree," he said laughing and soaking wet.

"You do?" I asked.

"Yeah," he said, grinning. Pretty soon I was soaked, too.

"We'd better stop," I giggled.

"Mama will be angry if I come home dripping wet." We got out and dried ourselves as best we could. The rest of the afternoon was one of the most wonderful I have yet spent.

However, one of my boot-laces broke while I was racing Nat to the tree. (I won.) One of my short blonde braids came undone while I climbed into the tree. My dress ripped in two places as I climbed down. (I hope to mend it before Mama sees.) And I stained my apron while eating juicy blackberries. I hoped to sneak into our back door and change quickly without Mama noticing.

"Bye, Nat," I called, running home, "see you tomorrow."

He waved, grinning. I pushed open the back door. Unfortunately, there sat Annie, playing dolls.

"Ella!" she yelled, "What did you —" I clapped my hand over her mouth, but too late.

"Eleanor!" It was Mama's voice now. I looked up guiltily. Mama looked livid. The storming rant about my dirty clothes, my muddy face and hands, my

*continued next page*

ILLUSTRATION BY JACK WOOLDRIDGE



## **Hamster on the Run**

*By Emma Stearns*

My hamster is running all over my desk  
With bright red eyes  
She is at her very best  
Her one stripe of white  
Blends in with her grey  
She runs at night  
And sleeps in the day  
Her short little tail  
Wags behind her as she runs  
She stands up on her hind legs and nibbles,  
She is having fun  
She climbs up on my lamppost  
Then nibbles on my books  
She scoots around my scissors  
Then climbs up on my wrist  
I take her back inside her cage...  
She quickly eats...  
Then falls asleep.

twiggy hair, and the multiple rips and stains on my dress seemed to last forever. When it was over, I wasn't allowed to leave the house, except for church, for a week.

On Thursday night there was a knock on our front door. Papa was out to dinner, I was confined to my room, so Mama answered the door, "Hello," said Mama.

"Hello ma'am," replied a polite voice. It was Nat. I listened. "Is Ella home?" When Mama said nothing he added, "She's a friend of mine."

A friend of mine. . . I had never been referred to as a friend of anybody's before. None of the other girls ever wanted to be associated with me, fearing that their mothers would not approve. I had been the friendless oddball. I hadn't really cared until I was about eleven and then... How I had longed for a best friend, just like everyone else. I felt a warmth spread through me- Nat considered me as his friend!

"Um," said Mama, "She's busy right now."

"Oh," said Nat. I could hear the disappointment in his voice. "Alright then. Good evening ma'am."

"Good evening."

I heard the door close. He'd gone.

"Mama," I called. "Why didn't you invite him in?"

She was standing in the doorway to Annie's and my bedroom.

"I don't want you playing with that boy anymore. He's the one who gets you into all this trouble. Your dress would be clean and mended if it weren't for him! Besides, it's improper."

"I don't see anything improper about it! And he didn't get me into any trouble at all! None of this is his fault!" I yelled. Mama had already left, shutting our door behind her.

I threw myself onto my bed. Mama thought everything was

Nat's fault, she'd never allow me into the forest alone again, she'd never even let me out side alone again! This was horrible. I fell asleep and woke again still thinking.

I'd had a real friend for two days. Now I didn't know if I'd be allowed to see him ever again! I had to do something! So I did.

I climbed from my bed, scribbled a quick note to Nat, and listened. No one else was awake. I looked over at Annie's bed. She didn't stir. I crept down the stairs, out the door and out towards the trees. I began to run. I don't know why. The situation seemed desperate. At any moment Annie could wake up to use the outhouse and realize that I was gone. I'd be in such trouble, but I had to contact Nat.

Suddenly, I lost my footing, tripped over the hem of my dress and, falling, hit my head on a tree branch. I tried to get up but everything went dark, even the stars, and I sank into a heap on the ground. I'm told that Mama woke up at 5:00, realized I was gone and woke Papa at once. Papa gathered a search party, but they didn't come to the forest.

Nat, however, hearing the news, did. It was he who woke me.

"Ella," I heard as though from the opposite end of a tunnel.

"Ella," I heard my name louder this time. Nat was shaking me. "Ella, everyone is looking for you. Your family is in hysterics and you've been out cold for hours."

"Nat?" I said, bewildered. Then it all came rushing back to me. "Oh, Nat," I said, "Mama thinks that you—"

"Come on, Ella. Your Mama thinks that you're dead. Can you walk?"

"I don't know," I replied, trying gingerly to stand up. "Ow!"

"You may have broken your ankle. Here, lean on my shoulder." Clumsily, we made our way back

to my house. Nat, still supporting me, knocked on the door.

My mother opened it and cried, "Ella, where have you been? What were you—oh, that doesn't matter now. You're safe."

"I'm sorry, Mama," I whimpered. "I know I shouldn't have." We were in each other's arms.

"Say no more about it," she said, holding me at arms length. "Are you badly hurt?"

"Just my ankle. Nat said he thought it might be broken."

Mama looked at Nat. "Oh, dear! Thank you so much! You found her, didn't you. Dear me! How can I ever thank you enough?"

"We should get someone to look at her ankle, Ma'am," he said awkwardly.

"Dear me, yes!" Mama said quickly, her face tear-stained and relieved. While Nat ran to get the doctor, she propped me up in bed and very soon I fell asleep.

Months later, after all was healed and mended, my sisters would demand to hear the story over and over. One of these many times, I broke away and ran to the forest. There stood Nat under the very tree where we first met five months ago. So much has changed since then. Mama has decided that, in my own time and in my own way, I will eventually become a lady—a strong-willed, independent lady, but a lady nonetheless.

A slightly more spunky Annie can be seen frequently walking through the forest, though never wading in the creek. Nat has continued to grow, and I fear he will never stop. None of his old friends have moved back, but he doesn't seem to mind. And I have a friend. As we walk up the stream, laughing, talking, and splashing, I realize just how lucky I am. *zzz*