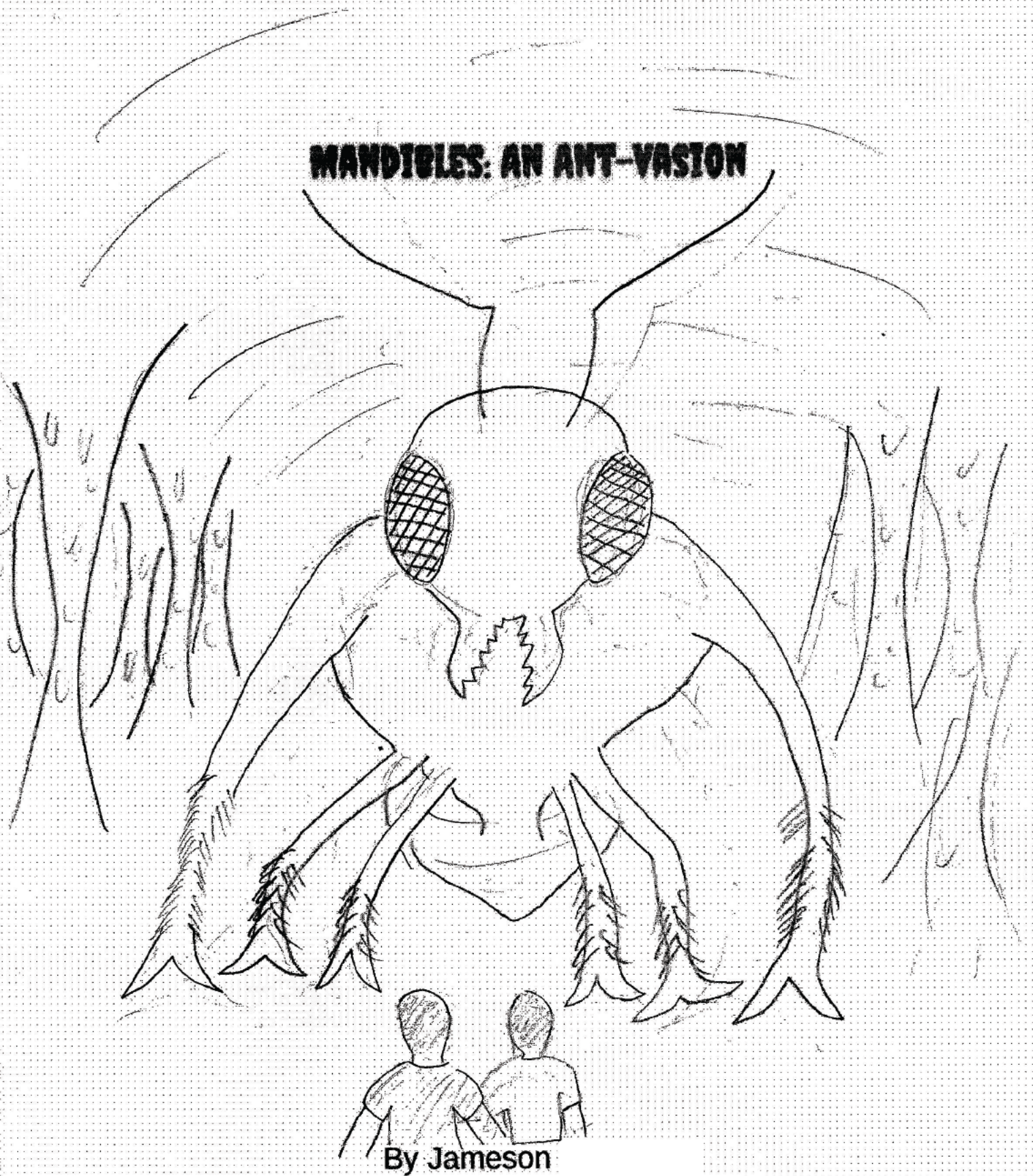


MANDIBLES: AN ANT-VASION



The day of the Ant-vasion started like any other. I grabbed my backpack, ate breakfast, waited for the bus, and talked to some friends. When I boarded the bus, that's when I noticed something strange—ants were swarming under the wheel cases. I didn't think much of it at first, but there were a lot of them.

"What's up with all those ants?" Eddie asked.

"I dunno," I replied. "Maybe someone's eating sugar."

Eddie grinned and went back to his phone as the bus rumbled down the road. When we reached a stop sign, the driver stepped on the brakes.

"Hey!" yelled the driver. "The brakes aren't working!"

The bus ran through the stop sign and almost hit a car. Kids were screaming as we careened down North Main Street. I shouted, "Eddie! We need to get to the emergency exits!"

I pried open the back doors, and we all jumped out, including the driver. The bus exploded after crashing into a house.

Sandy, another kid, screamed, "The ants are coming from the sewer! Run!"

I looked at the sewer, and it was overflowing—not with water, but ants.

"Oh my gosh," said the bus driver. "Run!"

Eddie and I ran toward West Main Street and made it to a convenience store.

"We're safe here! The ants aren't big enough to set off the motion sensors!" I said, relieved.

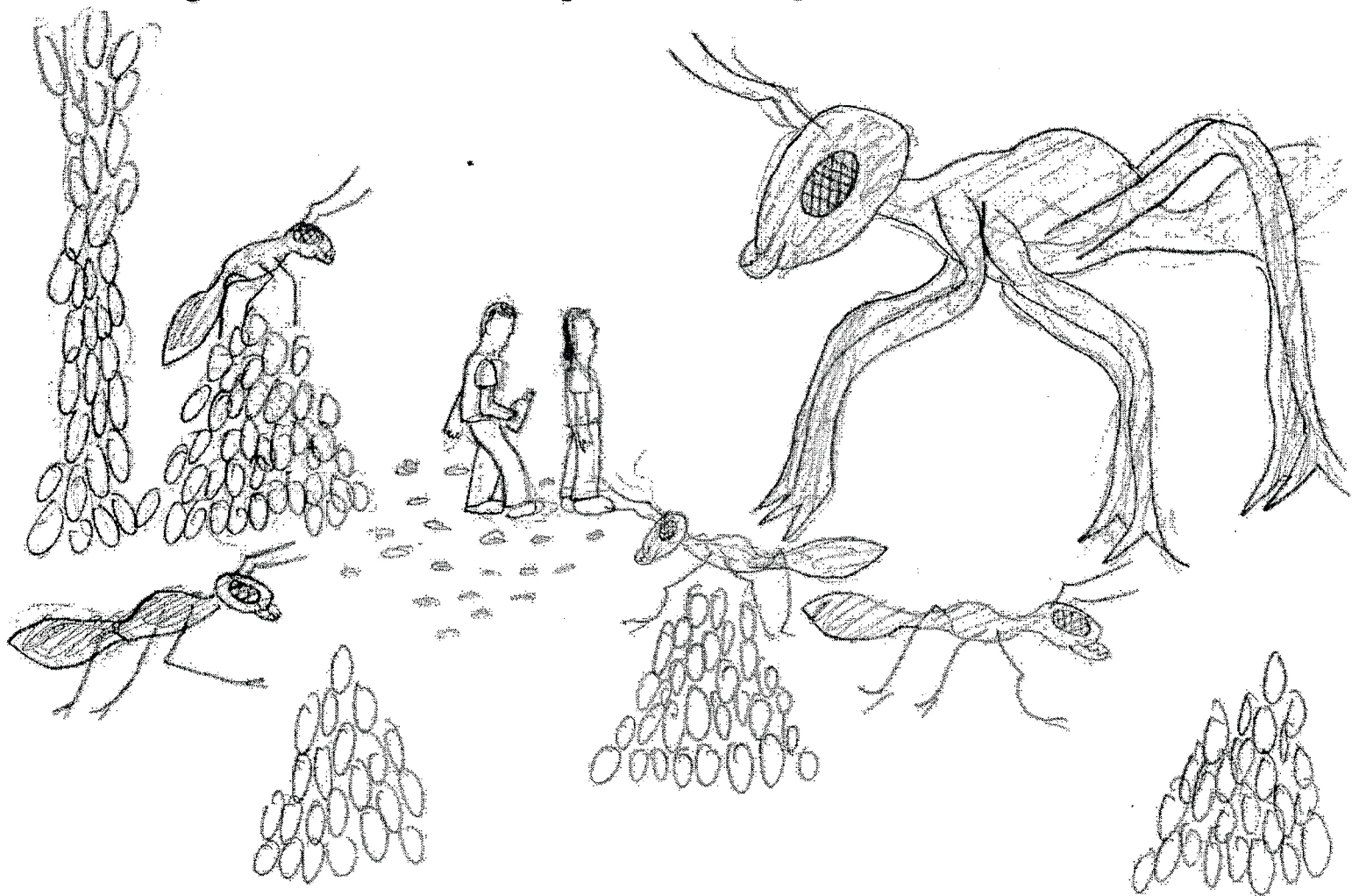
Eddie whimpered, "Wasn't this place shut down for a bug infestation?"



"Crud," I whispered as ants came from behind us. I heard Eddie knock something over but didn't have time to worry about it. The ants dragged us to the storage closet, where we found a cave full of ants the size of dogs.

"This is crazy! The biggest insect ever was a prehistoric dragonfly two feet long! Why haven't we heard about this?" I said hysterically.

We reached the center of the cave, which was the size of an airport runway and filled with pulsating egg piles. Before I could react, an ant the size of an eighteen-wheeler emerged from the ground.



"I AM THE QUEEN. WHY ARE YOU HERE?" she rumbled.

"Uh... your minions brought us here!" I said angrily.

"DO NOT INSULT ME, CHILD!" the queen roared. **"I WILL CRUSH YOUR WORLD—"**

Her words were interrupted by a hissing sound. I turned and saw Eddie holding a can of Raid. He sprayed it across the ants, and within seconds, they were twitching on their backs.

"Hasta la vista, jerks! I took this from the store when we got kidnapped." He explained

"We need to get out of here," I said.

We ran back to the tunnel, but before we could reach it, I was grabbed by my ankle and thrown into the ceiling of the tunnel. I crashed down and tasted blood in my mouth.

"YOU DARE," the queen shrieked, **"TO THINK YOU COULD STOP ME WITH A SPRAY CAN?"**

"Yeah. Catch," Eddie said, tossing the can towards the queen. It disappeared down her throat.

"I TOLD YOU A CAN OF POISON COULDN'T STOP THE RULER—" she choked. The queen staggered, knocking over dirt columns. The tunnel collapsed on her.

We stood in front of the cave-in for a while. Then Eddie pulled me to my feet. "Come on. We need to get to the surface."

We made it to the storage closet and stepped into the

sunlight. No ants were in sight.

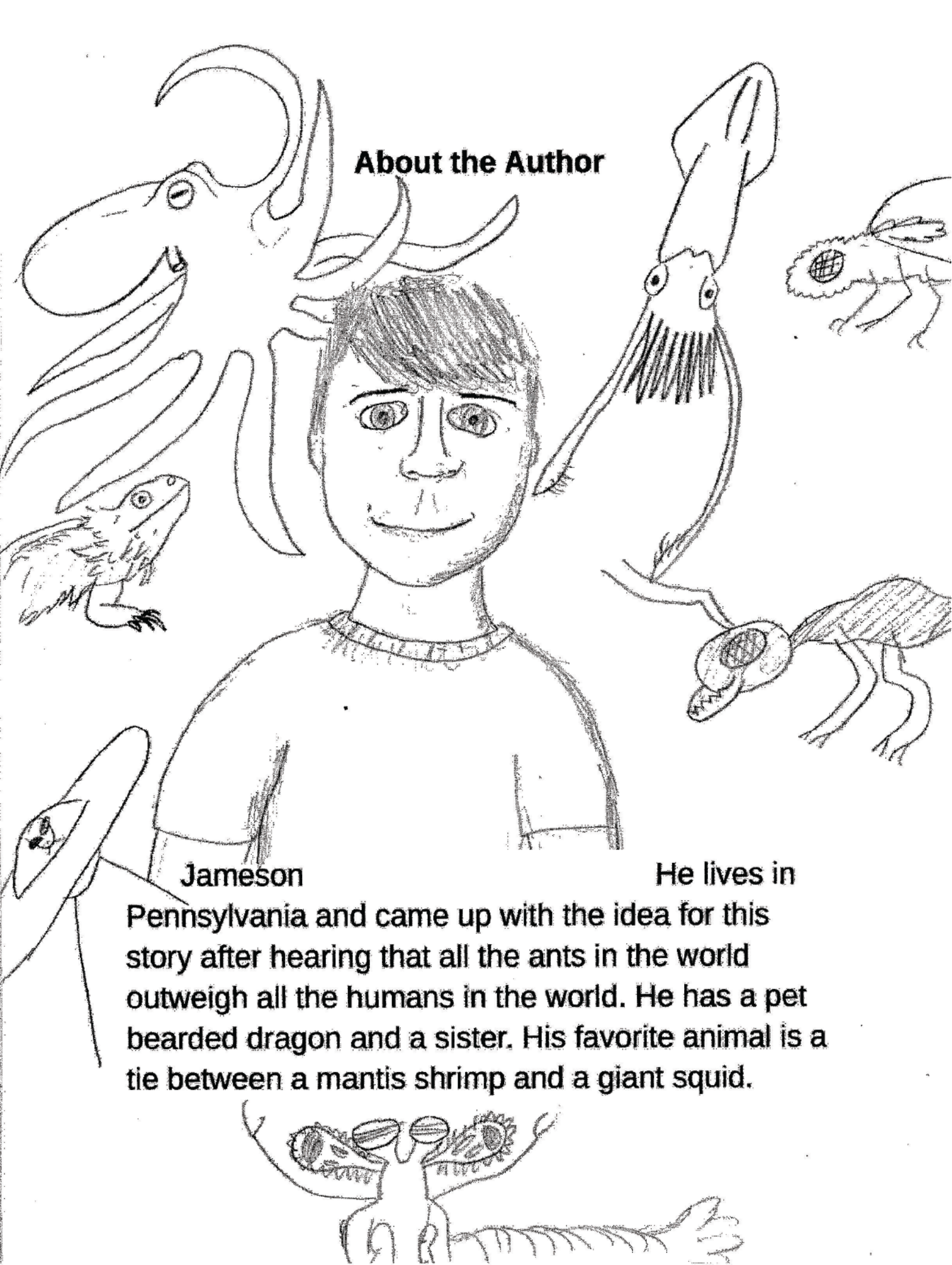
"One thing bothers me," I said.

"What?" Eddie asked.

"What about the queen's eggs?"

We stared at each other, wide-eyed.

"Shoot," Eddie whispered.



About the Author

Jameson

He lives in

Pennsylvania and came up with the idea for this story after hearing that all the ants in the world outweigh all the humans in the world. He has a pet bearded dragon and a sister. His favorite animal is a tie between a mantis shrimp and a giant squid.