

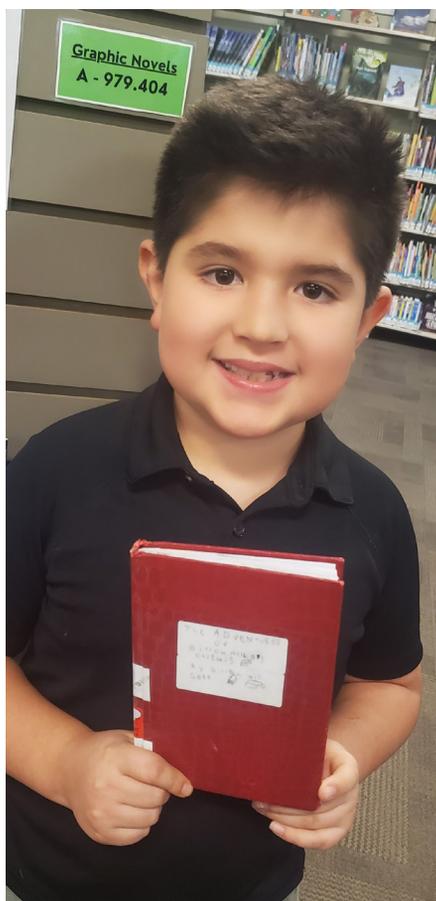


Boy's Debut Novel Sneak Goes Viral

Madisyn Steiner

Eight-year-old Dillon Helbig has loved writing his own stories for as long as he can remember, so he used the journal his grandma gave him to create an epic, action-packed holiday story, and within days, he filled eighty-eight pages full of vibrant, colorful illustrations.

He was so proud, he wanted the whole world to see—what better way than to get his book on library shelves! So, on a visit to Ada Community Library's Lake Hazel branch in Boise, Dillon secretly snuck his book, *The Adventures of Dillon's Crismis*, by Dillon His Self, onto the shelves in the youth section. When asked by a local



TV reporter about his method, Dillon replied, "I always [*sic*] be sneaky."

Soon after, Dillon told his family that his book was now available for check-out at the library. But when his family looked on the shelves, it wasn't where Dillon placed it. So, Dillon's mom asked the library to search for it.

Lake Hazel librarians were so impressed with the work of literature, finding it fit all the criteria necessary, that they chose to officially catalog Dillon's work for their collection. And while his book may never qualify for a Newbery Medal, Dillon got something even better—a 2021 Whoodini Award for Best Young Novelist, awarded by library staff.

Dillon's story quickly went viral—being featured nationally and even globally; he's heard from readers all around the world anxious to read his book.

With only one copy, the wait list is several years' long . . . guess Dillon better keep writing; his fan base is growing! &



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Got a great, lighthearted essay? A funny story about children and libraries? Books and babies? Pets and picture books? A not-so-serious look at the world of children's librarianship? Send your Last Word to Sharon Verbeten at childrenandlibraries@gmail.com.