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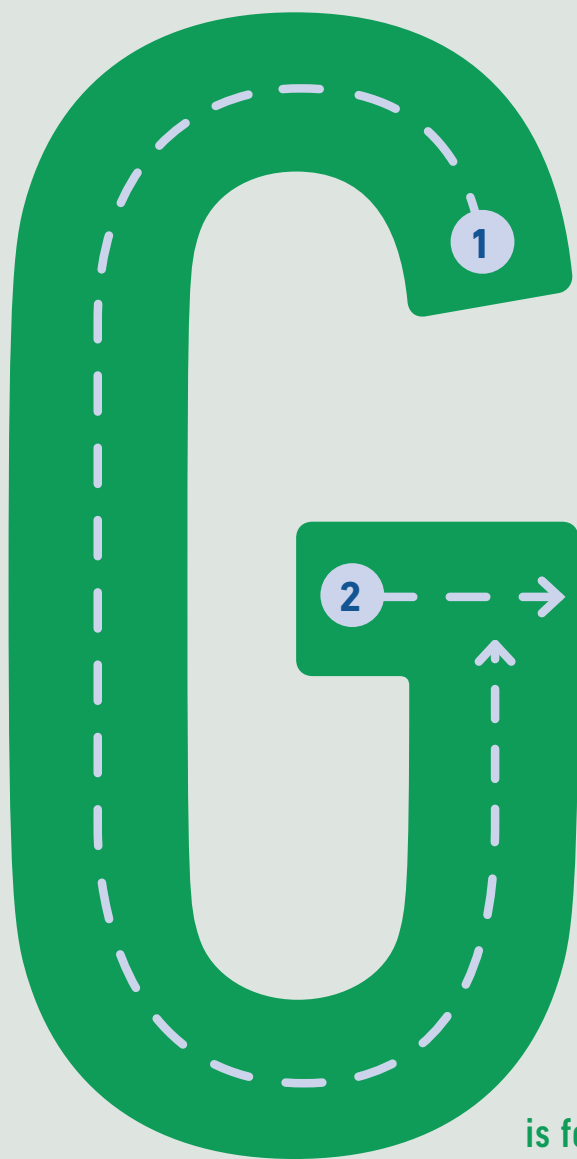
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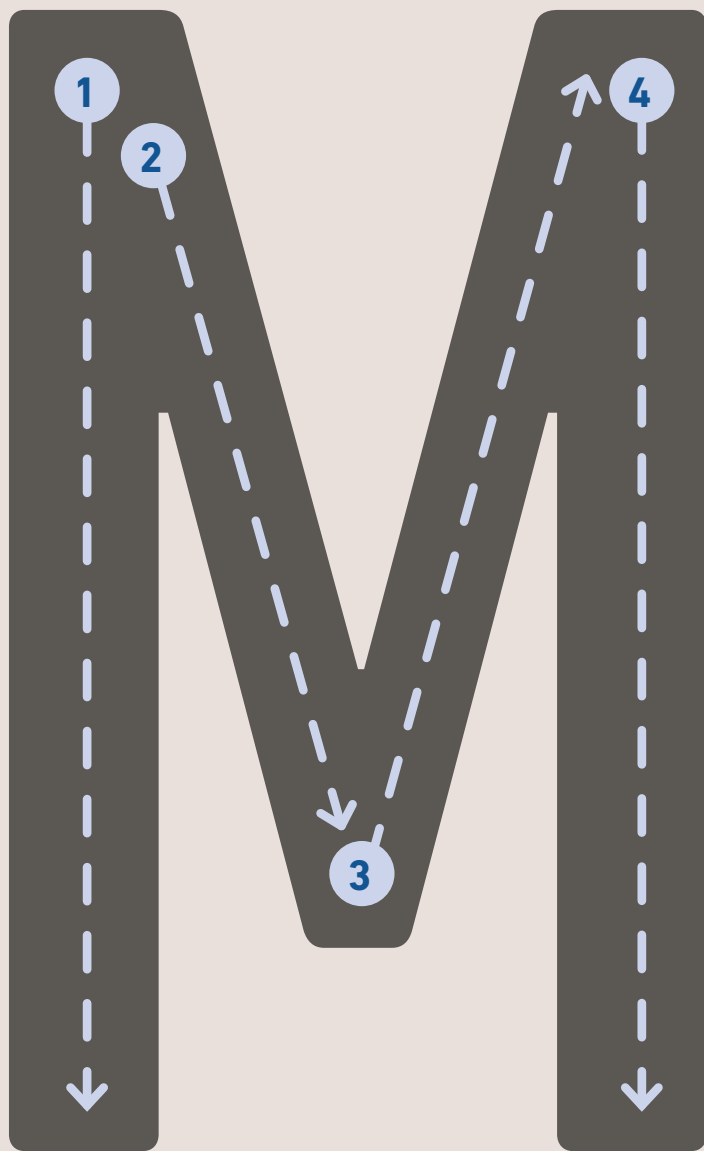
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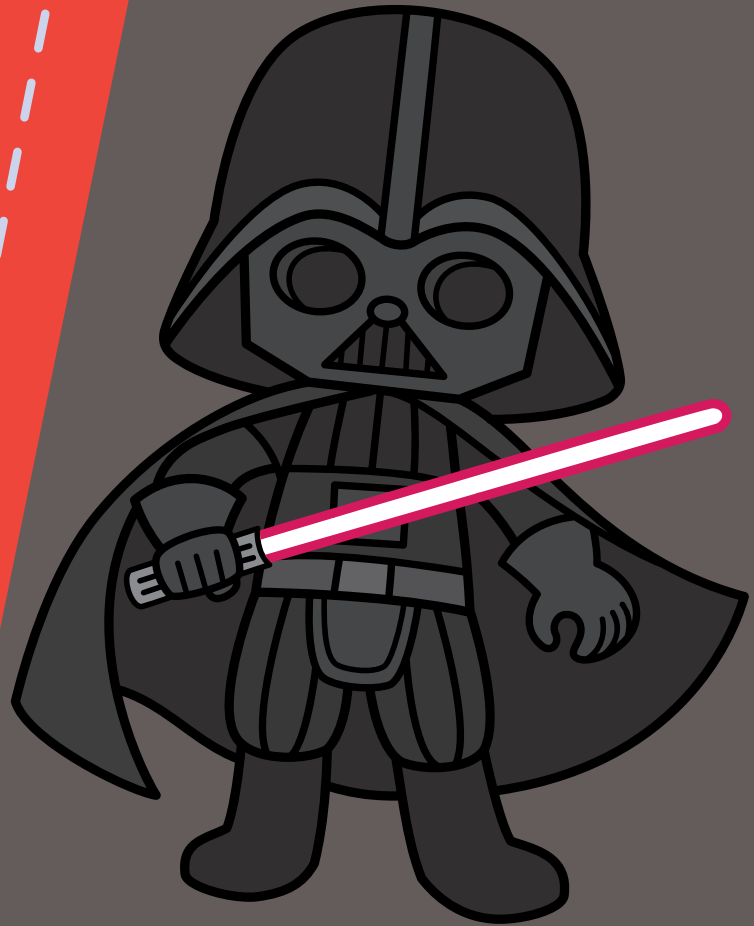
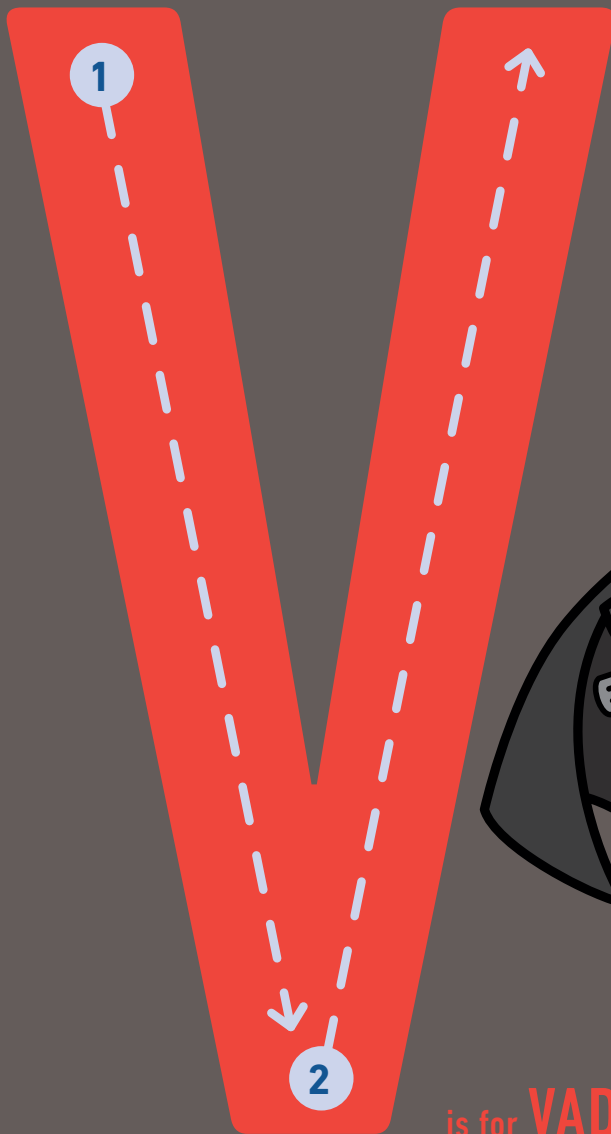
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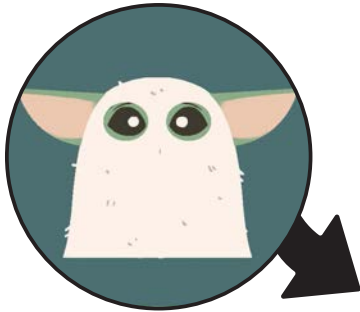
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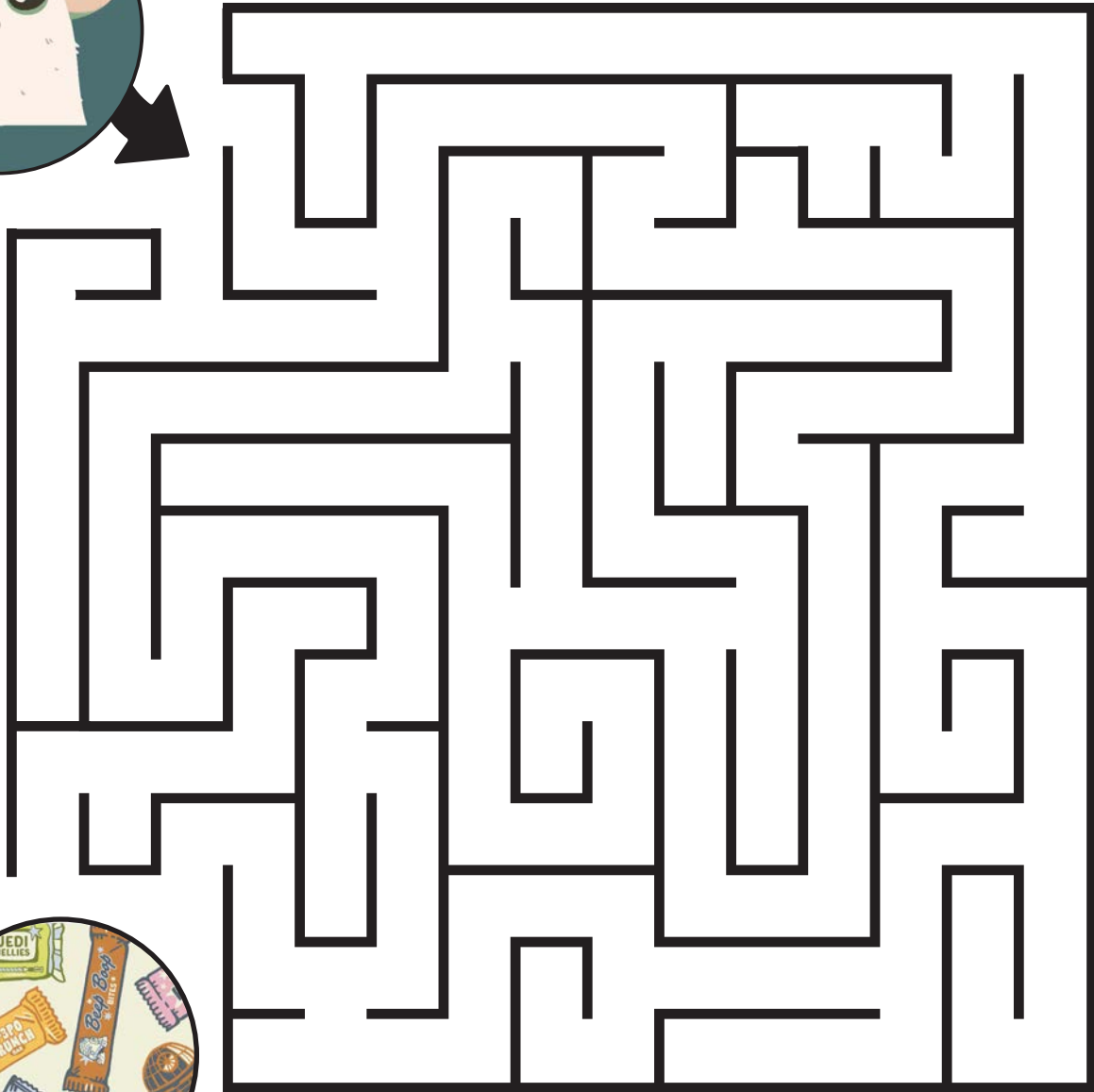
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Halloween Maze

Grogu is all dressed up for trick-or-treating! Help him find the candy at the end of the maze!

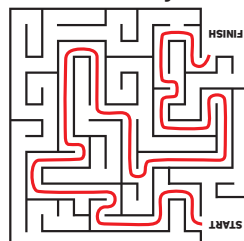


START



FINISH

Answer Key:



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**Star Wars: I Find
Your Lack of Candy
Disturbing**

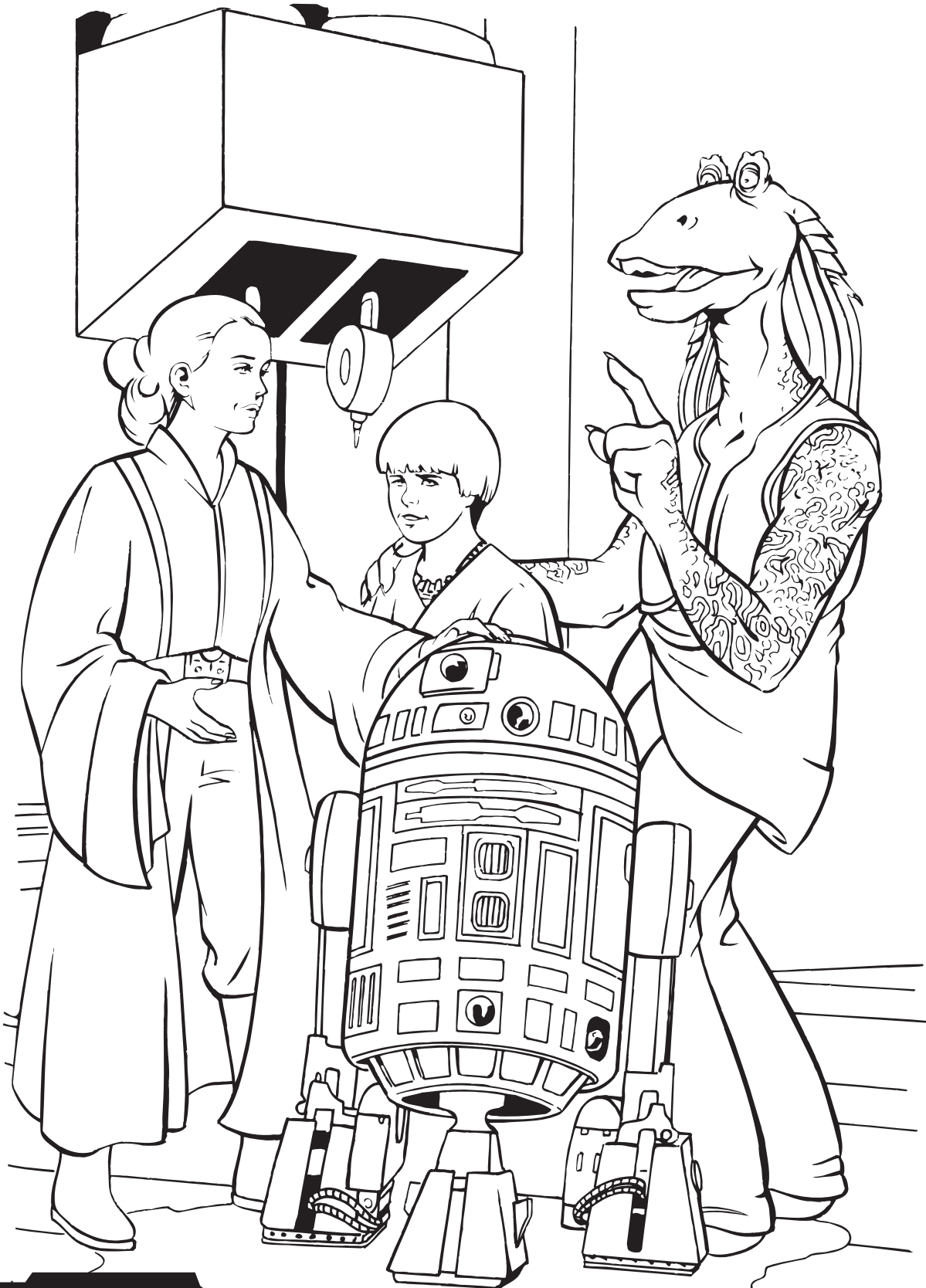
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A **STAR WARS** HORROR NOVEL

HIDING FROM THE DARK

NEW YORK TIMES Best-Selling Author

KIERSTEN WHITE

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“Or I can just start smashing things,” Loomer whispered. His orange eyes gleamed at the prospect. No more pretending to be her friends. At least she knew for certain they’d been lying.

But it was also much, much scarier now. They could hurt her. And she hated the thought of them destroying her home.

They’d find the transmitter sooner or later, no matter what. It wasn’t that well hidden. Besides, if she showed it to them, maybe they’d realize something she hadn’t. Bia had probably used the transmitter wrong. That was why the channel had been unauthorized. They might know the right switch to flip and—just like that!—her mother’s voice would be on the other end, clearing everything up. Somehow.

She didn’t want *them* to find her mother, but she did want her mother to be found. She was certain her mom could take care of these two menaces once she was back. And maybe if Bia gave them what they wanted, they’d let her go, or she’d find an opportunity to run.

“It’s in here.” Bia reluctantly led the men into her mother’s room. It felt bad, having them in there. They

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took up too much space. They made it feel small and dark. Holding on to her necklace for good luck, she flipped over the lamp and revealed the transmitter.

Blinker snatched it out of her hand. He pulled a cord from one of his many jacket pockets and connected the transmitter directly to a port in his head. If *that* was how to make it work, Bia had never stood a chance. But they didn't know about the code Bia had used on the switches. Maybe they'd be distracted for a while trying to bypass it.

"Well?" Loomer asked.

"Give me a moment," Blinker snapped.

Bia backed slowly out of the room. She'd run, head straight to the first adult or official or even stormtrooper she could find, like she should have done the moment she'd realized she was home alone.

Loomer turned his head, fixing those terrible orange eyes on her. He shifted his battered leather jacket open, revealing a gray blaster. Scorch marks around the barrel made it clear it had been used before.

Bia froze.

"Go to your room," he said, then watched to make certain she did as she was told.

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Bia stepped numbly inside her own bedroom. She let out her breath only once the door had slid shut behind her. She wanted nothing more than to curl up in bed, close her eyes, and wake up from this nightmare.

But there was something better she could be doing right now. If those men were going to find out where her mother was, Bia could, too. She crawled across her bed and eased the secret panel open, just a bit.

“Anything?” Loomer asked.

Bia pressed her eye to the crack. Blinker was twisting knobs and pushing buttons with increasing frustration. “She’s wiped it. I can’t trace the source of any previous communications. And if we send a transmission as bait, someone else might find this place, same way we did.”

“So we can’t find the smuggler. We don’t need her. We just need her stash.”

Who was this smuggler? Bia had thought they were looking for her mother.

Blinker set down the transmitter and nodded, licking his lips with a dark purple tongue. “She’s been selling your friend Imperial goods?”

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“For years. She must have a stash somewhere. We find that and we’ll have enough credits to buy a new ship. A fleet, even.”

They both looked toward the door. “I’ll bet her daughter knows how to find it,” Blinker said.

Bia’s blood went ice-cold. They *were* talking about her mother. But her mother wasn’t a smuggler! Her mother was a good person. Sometimes Bia wished she’d be a little less good and a little more like everyone else. Her mother was so brave that Bia didn’t understand how it was possible. Bia had once watched her stand toe-to-toe with a towering gray security droid. She’d cheerfully asked it questions. Her questions were paradoxes, riddles so confusing that the security droid just stood there, searching its programming for answers. In the meantime, its target, a scrawny, half-starved little boy, had slipped away into the crowd.

Bia had asked later why her mother saved the boy, knowing he’d probably broken a law. “What is lawful and what is right aren’t always the same thing. Someone had to protect that child from a system that can no longer tell the difference.”

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So maybe her mother could get . . . flexible with rules. But be a smuggler? Never. Bia's door slid open and she sat back, hoping they wouldn't notice she'd been spying. Loomer stood there, blocking her way out.

"You're going to tell us everything," he whispered.

"But I don't know anything!" It was the truth.

For a moment, Loomer looked like he believed her. Then he shrugged. "You can provide information or become leverage. Does your mother love you?"

What a terrible question. If Bia answered yes, they'd probably kidnap her, hoping her mother would come for her. And if Bia answered no, who could say what they'd do, since she would no longer be useful?

Suddenly, Bia was *angry* at her mother. For leaving her here alone. For getting mixed up in something that had put Bia in this situation to begin with. Bia was still sure this was all a misunderstanding. But why was she having to deal with it alone?

Bia heard a sound at the front door. She had the oddest sensation, like everything in the apartment had paused, waiting, listening, sensing something out there. The whole world was a held breath.

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CHAPTER FOUR

Bia blinked, trying to get her eyes to focus. Where she used to have a front door was now just a gaping hole. The power in the apartment and the hallway outside had died, so there were no lights. She couldn't see much of anything.

But then . . . movement. A shadow darker than the darkness stepped inside.

The noise it made froze Bia to the core. It was the sound from her nightmare: a whoosh of air as something unseen, something hidden, something *deadly* breathed out right before it attacked. Bia always woke up before she saw what was coming for her. She didn't want to know what it looked like. She didn't want to live in a reality where her nightmare existed.

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“Wake up,” she whimpered. “Wake up.”

Loomer scrambled past her and fired his blaster wildly. It illuminated the thing in a flash of red. It was even taller than Loomer. The darkness swirled around it, like the night was trailing behind. It had two large, lifeless black eyes in the middle of an expanse of black in place of a head. It was a *void*. It was everything she’d ever feared made real, the darkness itself coming to life. Coming to get her.

The glimpse lasted only a second. Bia still hadn’t woken up. She was trapped in her dream. That was the only explanation. Nothing made sense otherwise. And the noise had only gotten louder. It was a steady, even mechanical whoosh, in and out. Bia’s own breathing was rapid and shallow, each breath an unconscious reaction of absolute fear.

She was frozen in place. Only this time it wasn’t in her bed, under her covers. It was exposed in the middle of the floor. But having the monster out in the open, too, didn’t make it better. It made it so much worse. She was staring straight at it and she still couldn’t see it. She still couldn’t understand it.

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She wanted to squeeze her eyes shut and pretend to be anywhere else. She wanted to pull her blanket over her head. She wanted her mother.

Another whimper left her throat, surprising her out of her terrified stupor. With one hand, she reached up and pinched her other arm, as hard as she could.

Pain. Only pain. She wasn't asleep. She couldn't wake up from this.

"Where are the lights?" Blinker shouted. He sounded like he was on the floor. Maybe he'd been knocked over in the blast. Somehow it made Bia feel a little better that Blinker and Loomer were still here. Even though they were bad, at least she knew what she was dealing with when it came to them.

"Listen, we were here first," Blinker said, probably trying to draw attention so Loomer could sneak up on the thing. There was no other reason for him to be talking. "And—"

Blinker cried out in surprise. Something hit the wall behind Bia with a clatter. She took a step back and her foot hit a heavy object. Crouching down, she wrapped her fingers around a blaster. Had Blinker thrown it to her? Why?

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He didn't get it. This thing in the apartment wasn't like them. It was a nightmare. Somehow it had broken through to reality, and now Bia could never escape it.

"Let's just talk," Blinker said, his voice at last edged with panic. "We're all looking for the same thing."

Bia's hand closed of its own accord around the handle of the blaster. She lifted it. Maybe the thing in the doorway was a security droid. Maybe it was on her side. Maybe she should scream or try to get behind it. But no part of Bia could believe that thing was here to help her. Her body knew otherwise.

This fear was unlike anything she'd ever experienced. It was like being thrown into the deep end of an icy pool. She felt it on every centimeter of her skin. She felt it in her ears, her eyes, her nostrils. It coated her mouth and throat, slipping into her lungs, freezing them. She could no more cry out for help than she could run.

Bia couldn't see very well—everything was still just shadows and shapes—but she heard Loomer hiss and lunge toward the thing in the doorway. Before he

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got there, he flew sideways, thrown as easily as a doll. He slammed against the kitchen table and crumpled to the floor.

“Please,” Blinker wheedled, the lights from his implants giving away his position. “We can help you—” The lights went higher, like he was on tiptoe. Then they went even higher. Higher still. He was . . . lifting straight up into the air? His voice cut off. He wheezed, like he could barely get any oxygen. Bia saw the movement of his feet as they kicked.

But nothing was holding him. He was floating in midair. No, floating was the wrong word. Floating was peaceful. This was not.

If Bia stayed here, she was going to die. The shock of that thought was enough to jolt her into action. She needed to run, just like the voice on the transmitter had said. But the thing in the doorway was blocking her only exit.

She shifted her finger to the trigger of the blaster. Could she try to fire her way out of here? Was that the only way to escape?

Escape. The escape hatch! The laundry chute connected their apartment to the laundry facilities way

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down on the maintenance floors. Bia could fit. She just had to make it there.

She turned and tossed the blaster right at Loomer, who was still on the floor. He hissed in surprise, then let out a low rumble of a growl as he stood, armed once more.

As blaster fire lit her beloved home in violent pulses of red, the sound of Blinker dropping to the floor covered her noises. This was her chance. Bia darted across the sitting room, tugged the lever to open the hatch, and slid in feetfirst. *It's good to be small*, she thought as she tucked her chin and elbows. She started sliding immediately, picking up speed, and then she—

Stopped.

Her shoulders brushed against either side, but Bia wasn't too big. She hadn't snagged on anything, either. The chute was perfectly smooth. Her whole body had just been *halted*. It was like a giant fist was surrounding her, squeezing, holding her so tight she couldn't move or even breathe.

And then, impossibly, she began sliding *upward*.

Back toward the opening. Back toward whatever

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was waiting for her up there. Bia couldn't even fill her lungs enough to scream. All she could do was crane her neck to watch as the opening got closer, and closer, and closer. Just as she was level with it again, a blaster fired from right beside the chute, three times in quick succession. The pulses illuminated a terrible scene. The thing stood in the center of the sitting room, hand out toward her. Its other arm was extended like a shield.

One of the pulses bounced off it. Bia flinched, but the reflected bolt hit something right next to the chute. She heard a thunk as someone dropped in front of the hatch door.

She was staring at Blinker. His eyes were open, but he couldn't see anything anymore. He never would again. Bia looked up. The darkness looked back.

It had her, and it wasn't going to let her go.

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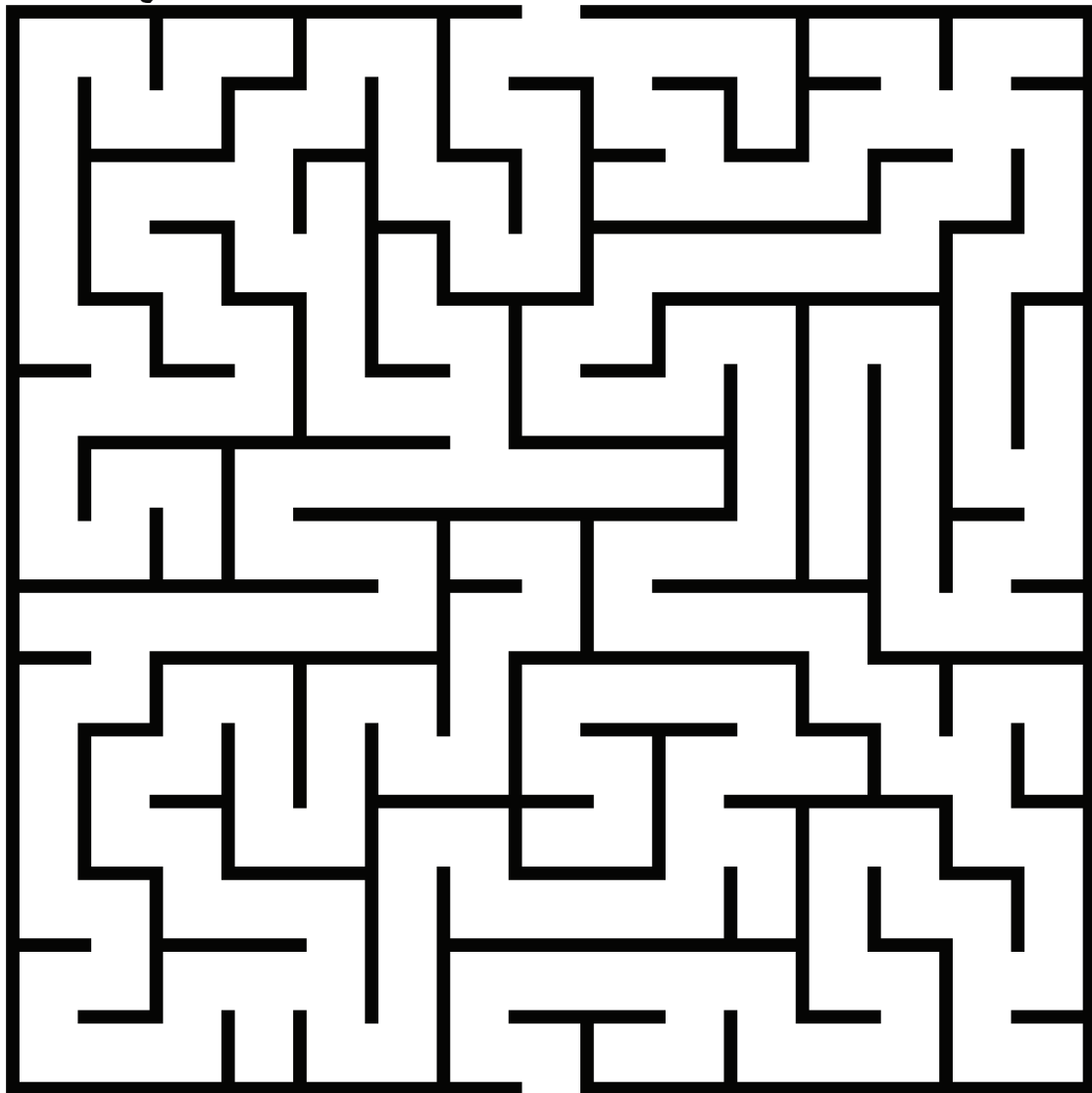
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Maze

Help Han and Chewie get back to the Millenium Falcon!



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Character Matching

Can you match the characters to their shadows?
Draw a line from the picture on the left to the corresponding shadow on the right.

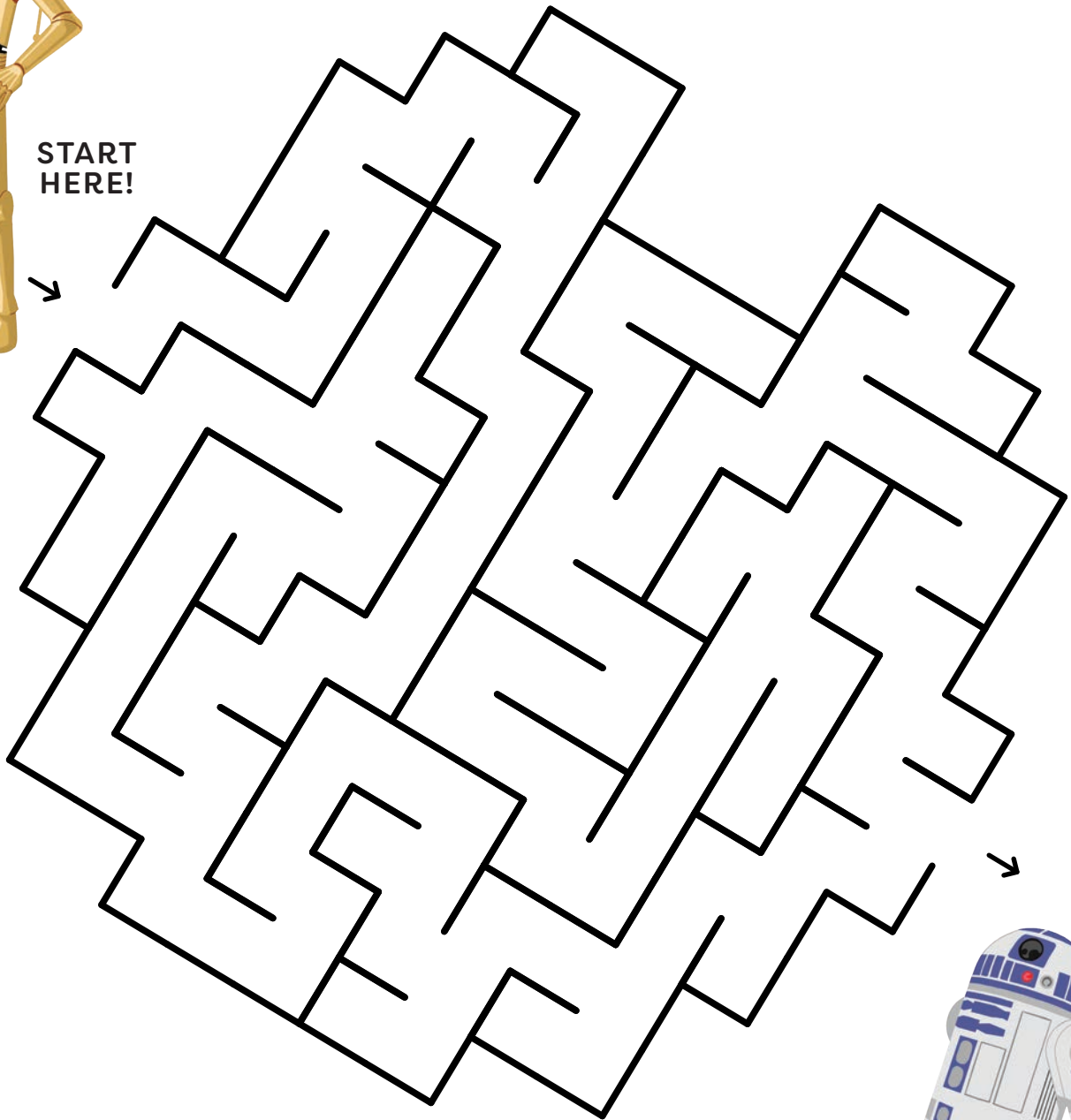


Maze

Help C3PO through the maze to find his friend R2D2.



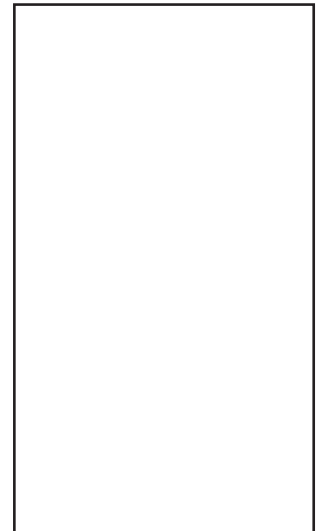
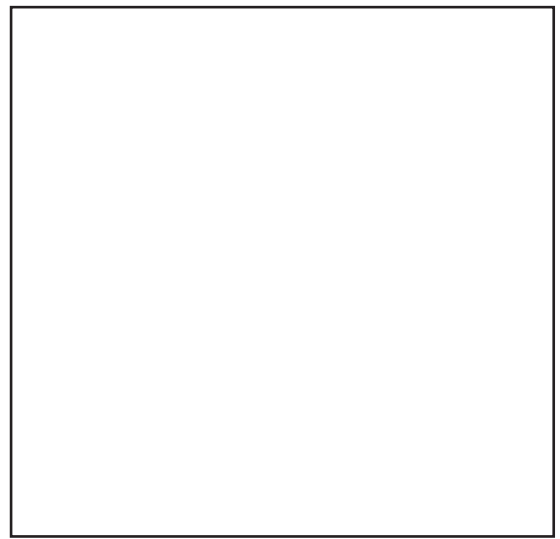
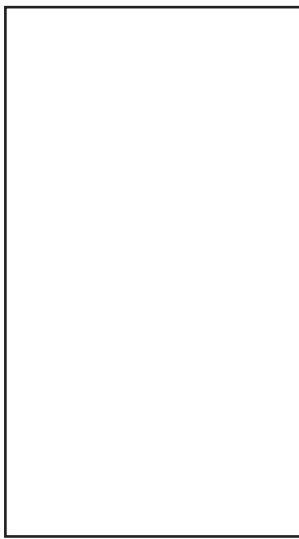
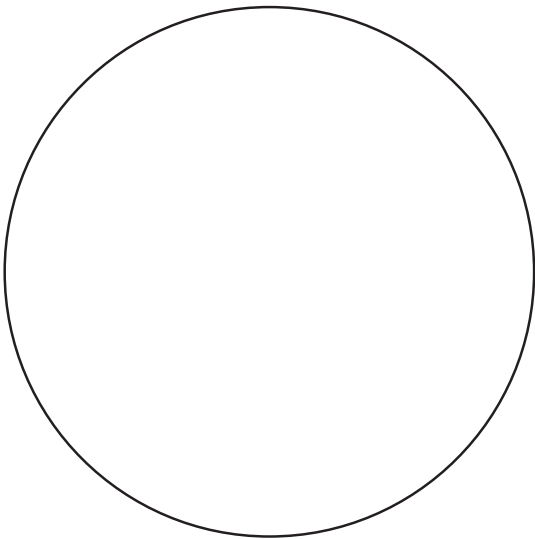
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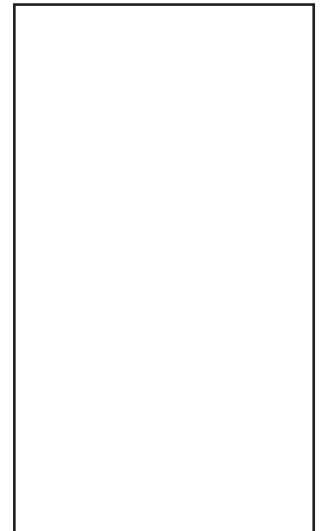
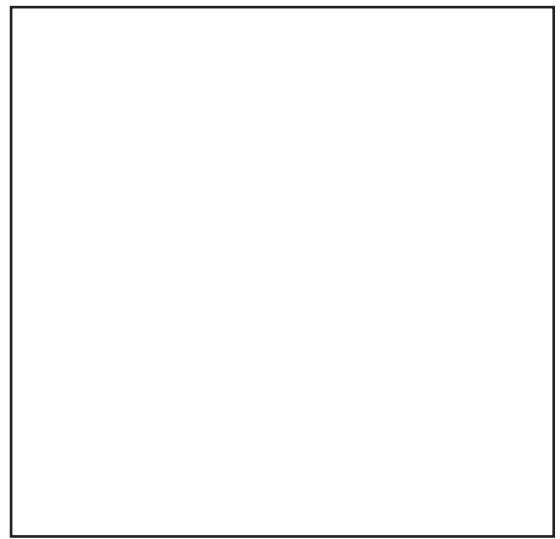
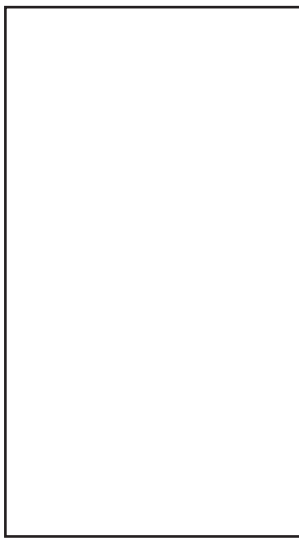
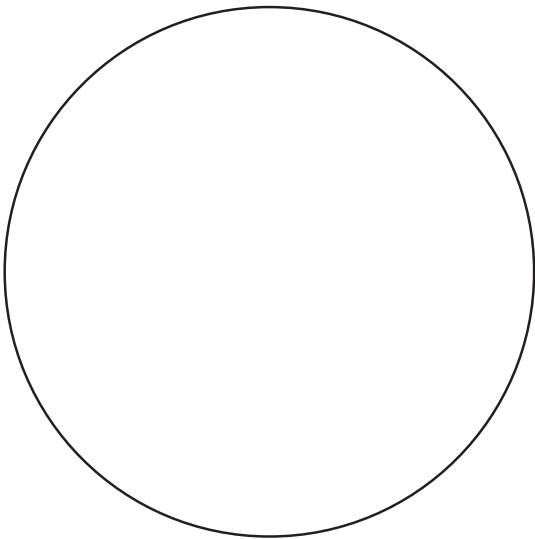
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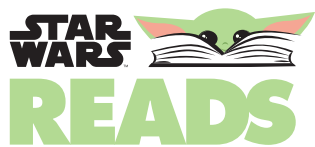


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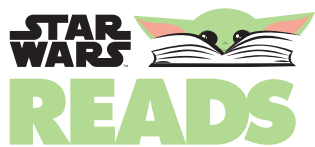
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