

Norm and Amy Lue: A story about an anxious unicorn

Growing up my youngest sister was scared of pretty much anything. One of her biggest fears: the swimming pool. As a coping mechanism, I made an animal that I called a Unipegy; part unicorn and part pegasus. I called him Norm. He came from a magical land called Unitopia and he went with us everywhere to protect my sister. I wrote a book, made illustrations, tied it up with a bow and gave it to my mom. She replied with, "Jordan, one day you're going to be an author and illustrator." Although I didn't necessarily know what that meant, it sounded like a lot of fun. That's what I wanted to do.

Immediately, I knew I wanted to bring Norm to life for my senior thesis project. After visiting this character a few times over my educational career, I wanted to give him justice and go deeper into his story. I didn't know what his story was and it took me months to be happy with his final form. It hit me one day that something I've always wanted to see in picture books was the issues that I dealt with as a kid and still do suffer from. I wanted to see hard topics discussed with kids. Ultimately, watered down, these topics could speak volumes to kids and to parents that don't know how to discuss these things with their kids.

In my first book *Norm and Amy Lue*, the story is centered around the main character Norm and how his anxiety gets in the way of him and his best friend Amy Lue from going on adventures. Amy Lue teaches him coping skills, but what happens when Norm is left alone and needs to figure it out by himself? My picture book is whimsical, eye catching, but has an educational value which parents will love. Picture books have a way of bringing people together and getting them into the mindset of a child. What better way to share a hard topic with kids. In the future, I want to continue this series focusing on other deep topics like loss, moving, making friends, and other conflict-resolution plots. These are all topics that kids can relate to and teaching them coping skills at a young age is important. As a part of my education, I also created a prequel to my picture book called *Amy Lue and...A Unicorn?* This story is a prequel to my bfa project and establishes how Many Lue received Norm. It focuses on Amy infatuation with a unicorn stuffed animal she saw and proceeded to beg her mom to get. After persisting and sucking up to her mom, she loses hope only to realize that everything comes with patience. Waiting and being patient is something that everyone struggles with and again talking about this and installing it into a child's brain can be beneficial and maintain good character.

For my project, I wanted to keep it positive with the color palette as well as the rendering of the illustrations. The environments, secondary characters, et cetera came smooth after developing the main characters' designs. While Amy Lue's design stayed pretty much the same from the beginning of the process, Norm's design changed a lot. From a more square body with large wings, to a rounded body with itty bitty wings, he was altered a lot. By including a unicorn character which just so happens to be trendy and popular, this draws the initial attention of young kids, potentially even adults. After all, the book is for the children, but the parents are the ones who have to buy it. Picture books need to appeal to everyone involved.

After graduation I plan on taking *Norm and Amy Lue* to a few publishing companies including but not limited to Holiday House, Kids Can Press, and Free Spirit Publishing which specializes in hard topic children's picture books. I want to make this series into a well known, hot selling series which is going to take a lot of time, but it's nothing that I'm not used to. I feel honored to have been able to bring this character to life and hopefully shine a new light on childhood anxiety.

Norm and Amy Lue

A story about an anxious unicorn



story and illustrations by Jordan Flinn



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for my family
&
my professors; I couldn't have done it without you

Hand-drawn decorative elements including a yellow star, a purple heart, a rainbow, a blue cloud, a purple heart, a rainbow, a blue cloud, and a yellow star.

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Hi, I'm Norm!

I'm a unicorn...with wings!
I can be quite a scaredy cat.

And this is my best pal,
Amy Lue.



We like to go on awesome adventures!



NO!!! DON'T TOUCH ME!

UHHH... AMY?
this guy looks like he means
BUSINESS!



But, we have to cut them short a lot of times because of me.



One day, Amy Lue had an idea.
So she began preparing.



NORM! It's time for an
OUT OF THIS WORLD
adventure!



but Amy!
WHAT IF...



toilet



Seriously?

we have to go to the
BATHROOM?



we get
HUNGRY?!



we get
SUCKED
UP?



So Amy Lue taught me some things to do when I get anxious.



1. MEDITATE

2. EXERCISE



3. RELAX



4. TALK IT OUT

So tell me How you feel...



5. WRITE DOWN YOUR FEELINGS







Amy Lue was brave and started exploring.
But somebody had to steer the rocket, right?

COME ON NORM!
floating is FUN!

Then all of a sudden...

SNAP!





I was out of control until...

BAM!

I crashed. I was scared and didn't know what to do!
But then I remembered what Amy had taught me.



I tried talking about my feelings.

HUHH?

Writing down my feelings was kind of hard.





WAIT UP!
(아아아아)

yeet AW!
(아아아아)

I took some time to exercise and I felt free.

I slowly got better at yoga.
It started to make me feel better!

Little did I know... my friends were busy.



They found Amy Lue! She was so proud of me.
Now I knew, we could do anything!





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The background is a dark blue, textured night sky. It is filled with numerous yellow stars of varying sizes and brightness. Some stars are simple dots, while others are larger and have a soft glow. There are also several purple, nebula-like streaks and patches scattered across the sky. The overall effect is that of a starry night sky.

Norm is a scaredy cat. His best friend Amy Lue loves to go on adventures and explore new things. Follow Norm and Amy Lue as they embark on their newest journey: SPACE! But what will happen when Norm is by himself and gets anxious? Will he overcome his fears or will he be lost in space forever?