

Toast, Tea and Productivity

When I begin to write, I feel like the Gates of Heaven have opened, and tiny, naked baby-angels are floating in the clouds, delicately playing their tiny harps. A fat viking woman gracefully dances with a kitten, singing an aria about pizza.

As I put my pen to that first sheet of paper, there's fear and excitement in my fingertips. I smile devilishly at an idea, at the thought of my own creation bending to my will. I am the master of my own game. I can do anything I want. Everything obeys my hands; nothing can resist.

At the first word, I hit my head on the desk repeatedly. I tell myself how pathetic I am. I can't get my ideas on paper. I waste time by endlessly scrolling through the Internet for character names and plot inspiration, stopping to pee and get snacks every once in while, until I pass out at the desk, too tired to continue.

I dream of a farm boy in search of a fortune so he can marry his true love. Alas, he is attacked by pirates and his true love is forced to marry a rotten prince who plans to murder her on their wedding night and frame an opposing country in order to start a war. She is kidnapped by — hang on a second!

I wake up and realize that I watch *The Princess Bride* more often than is healthy. So, what do I do? I mindlessly insert the poor, beaten up disc into my XBOX

360, and I watch it again. And again. Once more can't hurt?

OK, now that that's out of the way, I make a cup of Bigelow Cinnamon Stick tea. I have a few ginger snaps I brought home from play practice. Maybe a few more than a few. OK, so, I might have taken a quarter

of the box. I've got my cookies and my tea, and I open Google Drive. I create a new folder, and I write down my favorite names for characters for about three hours.

By this time, I've said the names so many times that they've lost all meaning. I hate them all. I cry in despera-

tion, banging my head on the desk once more. Twice more. I have a bruise on my forehead.

At this point, I am writing down whatever pops into my head, even if it sounds like a five year old wrote it. The product is the spawn of some weird hell that one probably doesn't ever want to visit (see cartoon in middle of story). Some people call this fanfiction, but I like to call it ... creative liberty.

I run out of tea, but I still have four cookies left. I'm not about to have cookies without tea.

So I give in and make another cup of tea. My mom's birthday is a day away, and I have nothing to give her. What a terrible child I am, not having a birthday present for my mother!

Then, a light in my brain flickers. Tea! We love tea! My mom taught me to love tea. So I write a poem (included on the opposite page), not stopping to breathe until it's finished. As I write faster and faster, the thrill grows and grows. At the last line, I beam with delight. Everything halts to a stop. The angels are singing! I finished!

I can't wait to show it to her. My tea is cold now, but I don't care. I dance around the room, singing and squealing with delight. Then I realize I actually do care that my tea is cold, so I heat it up and celebrate with the rest of my cookies. I'm sick from drinking too much tea, but at least I wrote a poem.

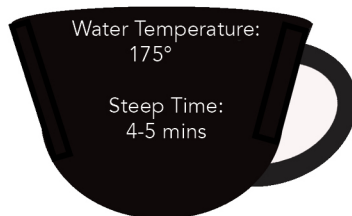


Steeped to Perfection

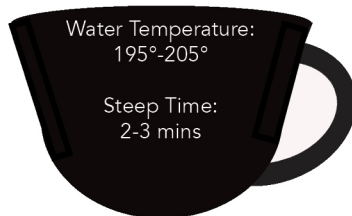
GREEN



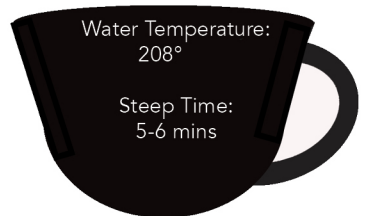
WHITE



BLACK



HERBAL



By Staff Writer Mia BLAIR

5 Teas to Try

5

Bigelow's Pumpkin Spice

Bigelow's Pumpkin Spice is like drinking liquid pumpkin pie incarnate. It has a warm flavor that is best complemented with lots of whipped cream and allspice on top. This is a classic pumpkin spice you can drink without getting the label "white girl." The reason it is ranked only at fifth owes to the fact that it does have a bit of a strangely textured aftertaste.

4

Celestial Seasoning's Ginger Spice

Celestial Seasoning's Ginger Spice is not for the faint hearted. Its spicy, sweet flavor owes nothing to sugar, because no sugar is in it: only cardamon, cinnamon and ginger. It is an exotic Indian tea, and it's great for aching joints as well as warming up on a chilly autumn day, but don't drink it when you have a cold or irritated skin. It might burn. This tea is delicious, but take heed; it's a dangerous one. Don't steep it for too long, because this stuff really gets spicy. Can you handle it?

3

Bigelow's Cinnamon Stick

This is a low-key spiced tea with a sweet cinnamon flavor. It has the most pleasant aroma, which makes those who enjoy it feel as if they've walked by one of those street-corner cinnamon broomstick stands. It's a favorite of those who can't handle the spice of the latter flavor. The taste reminds me of this apple orchard I went to when I was a little kid, called Coon Creek, and it always smelled of fresh cinnamon. It's nostalgia in a cup, and it tastes like a cinnamon bun.

2

Bigelow's Salted Caramel

Drinking this caramel-flavored wonderland is like strolling through fiery-colored leaves on a foggy autumn day. This tea is the most coveted at the Blair house. One box is bought, and it's only a matter of time before someone steals and hoards it. It smells absolutely fantastic, and it tastes just like a cookie.

1

Bigelow's Raspberry Royale

Bigelow's Raspberry Royale is a tea I have been drinking before I can remember. The reason I chose this tea as No. 1 is because I drink it year round. With a fresh taste like an elegant garden, this tea will make you feel like you're with the queen or king. Best with peanut butter on toast.

An Impossible Predicament

Toast and butter, so simple and sweet,
you make every cup of tea complete.
Toast with butter, you're full of smiles,
And, best of all,
You'll never go out of style.
Biscuits, crumpets, crackers and
things of other taste
Might come and go, but will never take
your place.
I've been through pastries
of all different kinds,
But none are as classically delicious
in my mind
As the one favorite of me:
Wonderful toast with butter and tea.
When I am lonely, you're always there,
but if I'm out of tea,
there's no way it can be!
I'll make more tea to go with the toast,
but if I eat the toast,
then more is what I need most!
I cannot drink tea without my toast,
and I cannot eat toast without my tea;
to my dismay, I've had too much,
more than I can munch, sip or crunch.
The scales have tipped,
my pants are ripped,
My cholesterol is off the charts;
Butter is getting too close to my heart.
I cannot have anymore toast or tea
Oh, no! Woe is me!

