



- ONE - Amazing Family

By Olivia Piazza

- 5th grade -

Gratton Elementary School

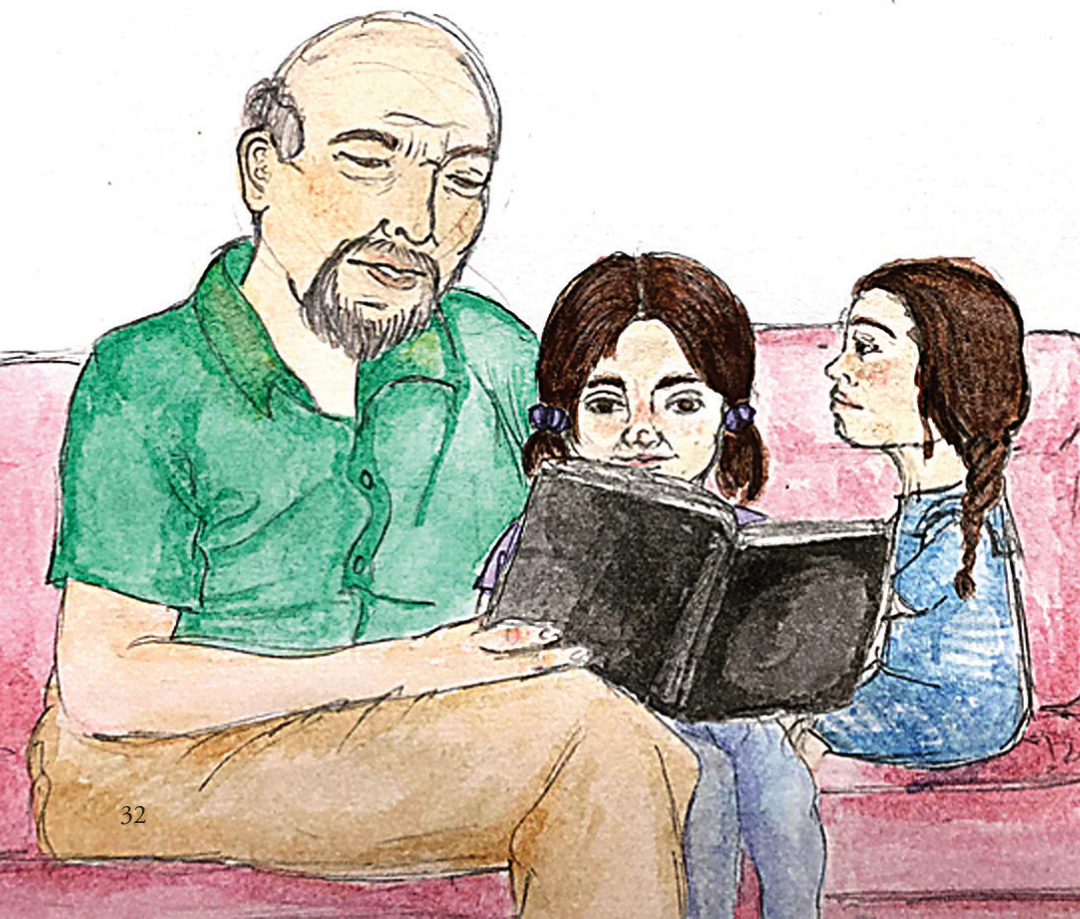
Sheila Amaral, Teacher

Stanislaus County

Illustrated by Woodland High School

One night after dinner, my sister, Izzy, and I were sitting on the couch with my family. Dad and Grandpa were talking about our family history. They were looking at some old pictures Grandpa found while cleaning his office.

“This one is of my dad, whose parents immigrated to America from Sicily, Italy. They landed in Portland, Oregon. They came here in the 1900s. This photograph is very old,” said my grandpa.



“Oh, that looks like you, Dad,” I said as I leaned over. It was an old black-and-white photo. On the back it said 194 with a stain covering the rest of the year and what looked like a signature. “What does that say?”

“It says 1947, Tony Piazza,” Grandpa explained. “My dad’s family moved from Portland to a farm in Mountain View.

Then in the 1950s, we moved here to the small town of Denair. That's when we started this farm."

"How did the farm start?" I wondered.

"My parents had a farm by the river. It was the second time in three years that the farm had flooded. So, in 1950 they found this place and moved here," stated Grandpa.

I replied, "That's so cool!" I was learning so much by listening to my grandparents and dad talk.

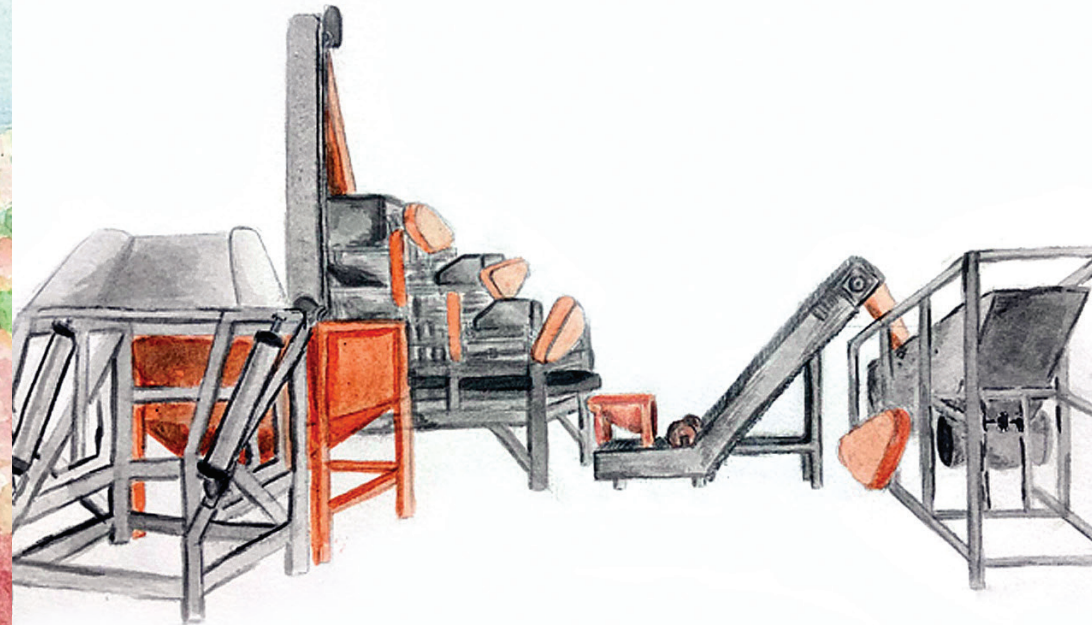
Grandpa was saying, "California is the best place for almonds to grow because of our climate. We have hot summers and cool winters that almonds need."



Eventually, Dad said, "Well, girls, it's time to go." I gave Grandma and Grandpa a hug goodbye.

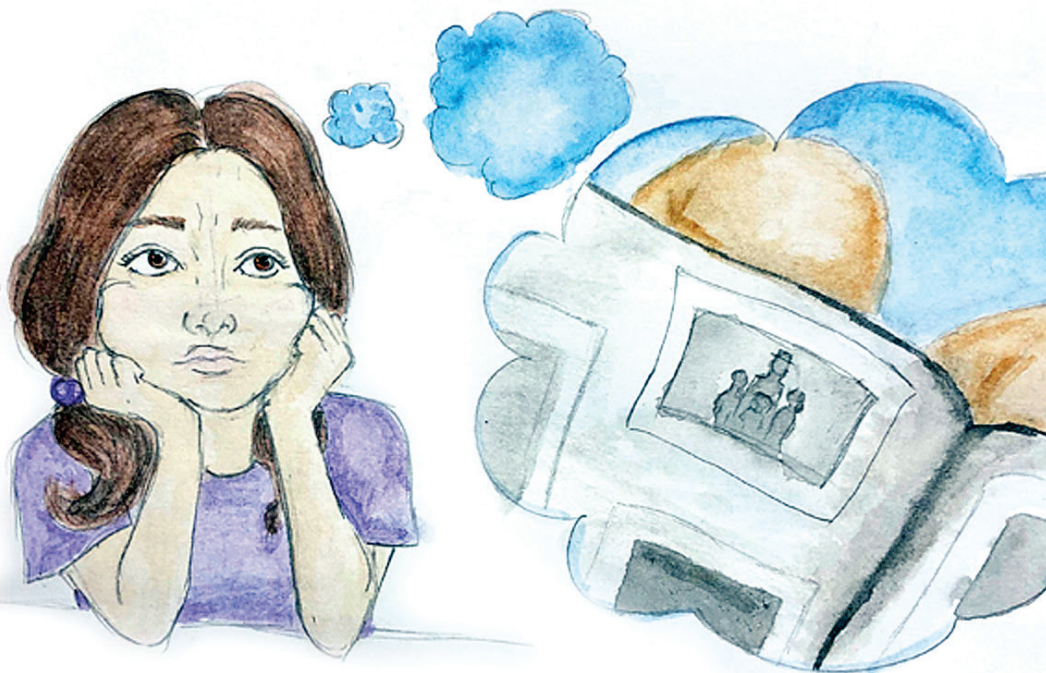
The next morning, I went to school. When I got home, I didn't hear the loud noises of machinery. It wasn't until dinner that I knew what happened.

"The huller broke down," Dad explained. "Nothing to worry about. We'll have it fixed by tomorrow."



The next day, the huller still wasn't running. I thought by the time I got home, it would surely be back on. After school, the huller was quiet as a ghost town. I did my homework and read in my room. Outside, I saw Dad with a worried look on his face. He was talking to a worker. Suddenly, he started walking toward the house.

Three days later, Dad sadly said, "I don't know how to fix the huller." I was thinking about the picture of Grandpa Tony. "Grandpa!" I announced loudly.



"What?" asked Izzy.

"We could ask Grandpa how to fix the huller!" I yelled.

"Calm down, Olivia," Mom said.

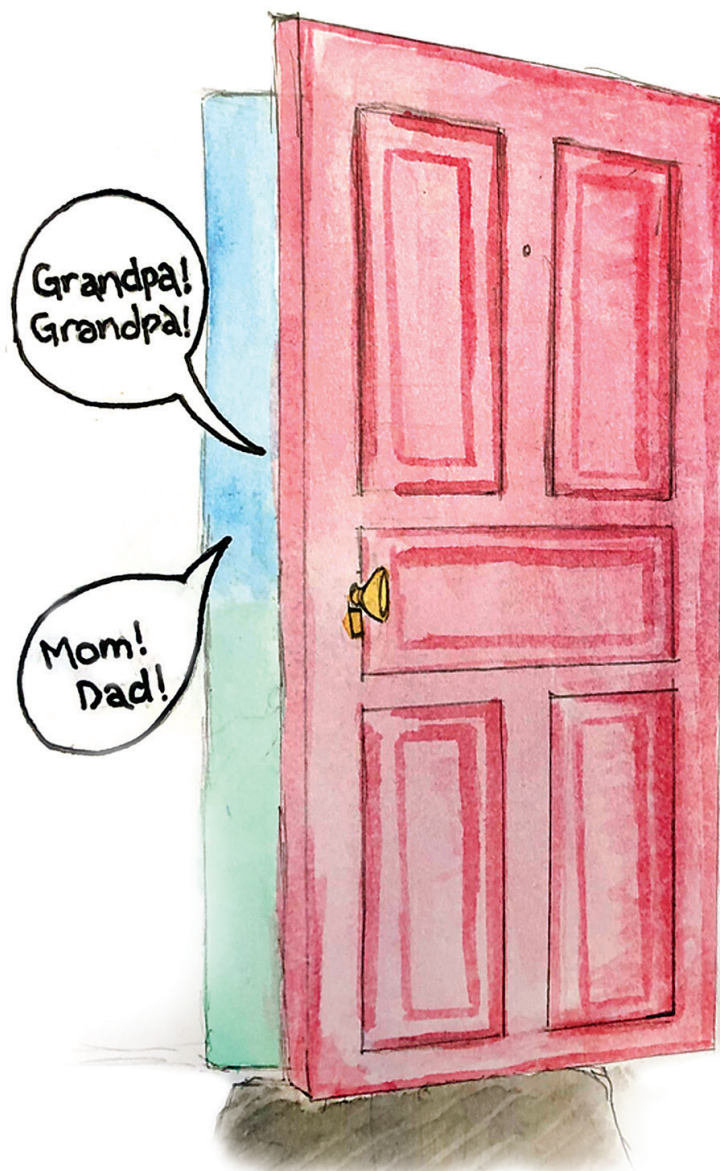
"No, that's a great idea!" exclaimed Dad.

Right away, my family went next door to my grandparents' house. I was the first there. I opened the door; Dad was right on my heels.

"Grandpa!" I shouted.

"Mom! Dad!" called out my dad.

"We're right here," Grandma said.



“What’s going on?” Grandpa asked.

“The huller broke down and we don’t know how to fix it! Do you know how to make the repairs?” questioned Izzy.

“What’s wrong?” asked Grandpa. Dad told him, “It just stopped. Completely stopped.”

“Oh no,” he whispered.

“What?” I whispered back.

“This has happened only twice before, and it was long ago,” he said quietly.

“But you know what to do, right?” Izzy asked.

“Right?”

“No,” he muttered. “No, I don’t know what to do.” We sat in silence, all thinking.



Finally, it dawned on me. “What about, what if, somehow...”

“What!” gasped everyone.

“Maybe we could search the office for ideas,” I finished.

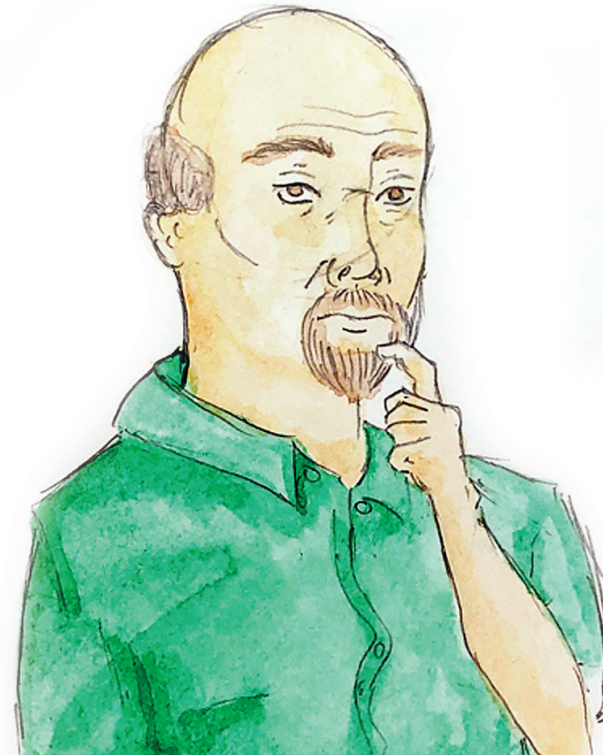
Grandpa said, “This photo was in a file with other documents.”

“Let’s look for it!” cried Grandma.

So, after some intense searching and scouring the office for the file, Mom held up a thin file.



“That’s it!” Grandpa announced. We all started reading the file. I saw it said, To fix the broken huller, check a secluded conduit. There might be damage such as...





“Mice!” announced Grandpa.
“I know how to fix this!”
The next day, Dad and Grandpa fixed
the huller. It was loud and annoying,
but I couldn’t be happier to hear it.



Later that day, Grandpa and I added two pictures to a brand-new file with a note. One was the picture of Grandpa Tony. The other was a picture I had taken on my sister’s camera. And the note, in my own handwriting, said, If the huller breaks down, all you need is an amazing family to help you fix it.

About the Author:



Olivia Piazza, age 11

Olivia's story, *One Amazing Family*, was inspired by her own family and their almond huller. Her family lives on an almond ranch and so Olivia was able to learn a lot about almonds and the hulling and shelling process from her family. She started preparing for her story by researching facts about almonds and almond hullers and talking with her grandparents. Then, she started writing and editing!

Olivia's favorite part of writing her story was asking questions about her family's past. She was able to learn about her grandpa's life and is excited to share this history with readers. She hopes that readers enjoy learning about her family, and she hopes that they learn about the growing and shelling process. Olivia is looking forward to having her story published!

About the Illustrators:



Addie Ferrer & Lauren Peña Turner

**Woodland High School
Scott Coppenger, Art Teacher**

Addie and Lauren are both seniors in the AP Art classes at Woodland High School. In illustrating *One Amazing Family*, they learned about the almond hulling process in order to accurately draw the almond huller. Addie created the backgrounds and inanimate objects of the story while Lauren was in charge of illustrating all the people. They took inspiration from some of their favorite children's books and used watercolors and Sharpies to create the artwork. Lauren and Addie were very excited to bring the author's story to life. They both felt honored to be asked to illustrate this story.