THE SPECTATORIAL

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THE SPECTATORIAL

VOL. III

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Let me tell you a lie.

This is the first plight of the storyteller—it is the first indication that reality has been set askew. The fantastic transforms the commonplace; fiction emerges from nonfiction.

Here at *The Spectatorial* we have chosen to define ourselves by the lies that stories tell us. Last year, we promised to highlight the importance of literary lies and to create a space for the unreal in society. Yet in reviewing the wonderful array of submissions that passed through my hands this year, I have stumbled against the profoundly true, the disturbingly accurate, and the endlessly universal in the most imaginative of spaces.

In reading and viewing the speculative, I have often marveled at the artist's talent for evoking human truths. What is it in us that accepts the lie, yet demands a semblance of truth? Is this the purpose of art?

A lot of what we have been doing for the past year has been about boundaries and transgressions. Just as the speculative has the uncanny ability to transform, so too does it have the imperative to exist between spaces (literary or otherwise). The speculative negotiates boundaries: between the real and the unreal; between the false and the true; between uniformity and diversity.

In our second year as a literary journal for the speculative—through the various ups and downs—we have redefined what the speculative means to each of us a thousand times over only to arrive at the conclusion that the speculative is ever self-transformative. You will discover its many varied definitions in the wonderful pieces we have chosen in this issue.

While putting together the third issue of *The Spectatorial* we have engaged in the creation and deconstruction of meaning. In the next few pages, we will tell you stories of ghosts, gods, fairies, monsters, mermaids, aliens, and robots. We will show you how we transcended the meaning of humanity and the value of acting out divergent realities in literature. I hope the journal's spellbinding nature will transform you as it did me.

So enjoy the magic trick; revel in the lie. Watch how a certain slant of light on a pair of rose-coloured glasses changes your world.

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF | ANNA BENDIY

LETTER FROM THE CREATIVE DIRECTOR

With the official publication of this issue, *The Spectatorial* has now triumphed over the most difficult of literary hurtles: the beast of consistency. A heartfelt thank you and congratulations to all the board members, contributors, editors, and readers that made this possible—we are now two years old!

As the journal reaches the end of its second year, we at *The Spec* continue to showcase what I believe to be a wonderful group of talented writers, editors, and illustrators. The creativity I have witnessed in my year as Creative Director is both diverse and imaginative, and remains a testament to the boundary-pushing potential of genre fiction. Within these pages you will find a variety of mediums—watercolour, collage, pencil, pen, and physical and digital paint brushes. I sincerely hope you will glean some additional value from their presence, as they all have an abundance to offer.

The four illustrators featured in this issue each take a different stance on what the depiction of 'speculative fiction' means to them. Maybelle Leung, *The Spectatorial*'s previous Creative Director, offers symbolism and fantastical beauty in her piece *Body's Beauty*, which was inspired by Dante Gabriel Rossetti's poem of the same name. Bethany Pile and Sherry Hucklebridge guide the reader towards the "strange" side of speculative art. The combination of eerie and intriguing elements in their respective pieces, *Blue Eyes* and *Candlelight*, asks the reader to pay attention—look closely, they say, because something interesting is happening here. The line between the real and the fictional is blurred, as it is in Lina Nguyen's lighthearted jellyfish painting, *What Remains*.

The journal could not be what it is today without all those who created unique accompaniments to every story and poem in this issue, and to them, I extend my applause. There is a wealth of style and artistic achievement both in this journal and on our blog, all of which I have been more than happy to oversee this academic year.

So please continue, and see it for yourself.

CREATIVE DIRECTOR | LORNA ANTONIAZZI

PLANT LIFE

by Penelope Evans

Adja had heard some time back that the new robots could feel pain. "*How barbaric*," she had said, touching a hand to her smooth face in the human gesture of surprise. But she had long since realized that pain wasn't all of it.

Pain and pleasure were connected—two ends of a spectrum—she concluded. "Two sides of the same coin," as the humans would say.

They were feelings and Adja wanted them. Every day they seemed more and more out of her reach. She wanted a way to feel, and with every piece of her that fell off, she wanted it more—even though her research suggested that the feeling of breaking apart would be incredibly painful.

She was missing something, although even her thoughts of the missing pieces or components were becoming distant. Now her treacherous, ancient legs had given out. It had been a long, long time since anyone had seen to them. So Adja sat alone in the house that had once belonged to the man who had owned her, filled with the sense that now it belonged to nobody.

• • •

The man from the bank had come after the sirens, after the body had been taken away. "*He was so old*," the neighbours had said, shaking their heads.

"*Must have died in his sleep. Adja wouldn't understand. The old models can't comprehend these things*," they had reasoned.

Of course she understood. She knew about death, how it claimed humans, and sometimes machines, too. She understood perfectly well, but she did not feel.

Days later, the man from the bank came up the steps again with dust clinging to his shoes. He wore a tie the colour of verdant forests. Though Adja had never seen a forest, her memory core—a remnant of her functioning days and a fragment of the human man she had once belonged to—was filled with images of it.

ED. EMILY WILLAN | **ASST. ED.** SHAHIN IMTIAZ

"It's an odd situation. The law is somewhat unclear," the bank man said.

Adja nodded.

His eyes lingered on her face, like he was searching for something in it. For a sign of life, maybe. *He won't find it*, Adja thought. *I am a machine. I can't feel pain.*

"You see, ordinarily, all of his property—since there is no next of kin—would simply belong to the Mars government. Despite this, it seems…it seems he has willed it all to you," the bank man explained.

"Oh," Adja intoned.

"Yes," the bank man said. "I, uh, I brought you something," he said, looking slightly sweaty.

He lifted a box out of his briefcase. Inside the box was a very small plant. Adja took it from him carefully.

"It's a cactus," he offered.

"I know. Thank you," Adja said.

"Be careful of, um, the spines. They can't hurt you, I suppose. Still, you wouldn't want to prick that pretty skin," he said.

Adja smiled.

When the bank man left, she set the small plant on the windowsill. Outside, Mars was dry. The metal houses on the street baked in the sunlight that shone through the domed structures that covered all human life on Mars. She went upstairs and looked at herself in the mirror. She thought of the first time she had ever seen herself. That was all a long, long time ago.

"*That's you*," he had said, pulling his hands away from her eyes.

"*This is…*" Adja had trailed off, unsure of the response he expected.

"*Humans call this pretty. We find it pleasing,*" he told her.

"*Yes,*" Adja had replied.

• • •

Now the rainy season had come and gone many times, and it had come again. Adja had many plants now. It started with the tiny cactus.

Eventually, she dusted off the connector cables for the Internet and found the nearest Mars florist. She started to buy plants. Then she found the best Mars florist, and bought more plants.

The more they surrounded her, the more she wished she could feel them—their smooth leaves, their soft hairs, their hard needles, the brush of petals on her synthetic cheek. But there was nothing.

She pressed her fingers to the spines and felt nothing. She wondered if the cactus could feel *her.*

• • •

Her face began to fall apart. At first it was just cracks, the paint wearing thin. But soon chunks of it went missing, exposing the bare metal underneath, like human bones. She wished she could grow new skin, like plants did.

When her legs gave out, Adja took to a chair in the midst of the plants. And she kept ordering. There had to be more. She believed their life would infect her somehow. It would grow under her peeling outer membrane and fill her body with vitality and feeling.

• • •

One day Adja could no longer recall the name of the street outside the metal house she lived in. She forgot the names of simple things and never found them again. She couldn't remember the face of the man who had owned the house and died, leaving her the money with which she bought the flowers. That was when she realized her memory core had become corrupted.

Now and then she would see people among the plants, one of the laughing characters that used to visit the house, play music, and drink wine with the man who owned her. They had talked to her as if she were a decoration, or sometimes as a person, depending on the human. Some of them seemed to view her as one of them. Some of them seemed to view her as something sinister. She saw the man from the bank once. She saw the man who owned her lying on the floor with his dead eyes staring at the ceiling, or in the kitchen making breakfast at noon like he always had. She saw the people who retrieved him, not as if they were really there, but as if they were mere shadows smeared on the walls.

Ghosts haunted Adja. Not like in human stories, but like the way scars remain on the human body or

the way clay remembers how it was shaped before being fired.

With humans from the past watching her, Adja contacted the florist a final time. She wanted an orchid. It would cost her almost all that was left of her money, though that hardly mattered. A white and pink orchid.

The girl who did the deliveries was called Missy. She had short, dyed blonde hair. If the sprinklers were on, pouring water from the sky, she wore a yellow raincoat and yellow boots. She was never shocked by Adja's face.

Adja sat at the window watching the children from the houses down the street playing in the mud. No plants grew in the dirt beside the sidewalks. Maybe if someone took the time to plant something. It seemed no one on Mars had the time for plant life. Even Adja was running out of it. Time was slipping away from her in teaspoons and handfuls.

Her eyes shut off. When they came back online the florist's van was stopped up the street where the neighbourhood children played. They were crowded around the back watching a young man point out flowers to them. From a short distance, a gleaming new robot with a sleek metal face minded the children. One child was clinging to the hem of the plastic rain slicker that protected its body. The young man in the van handed a box to Missy, who was tapping her foot, her hands firmly planted on her hips.

Missy carried the box up to the house and knocked. Adja lifted her arm to open the door. Her hand seized up. She closed and opened her fingers; the joints popped and clicked. At last, she was able to press the button, struggling to reach it from her chair. The door opened, and Missy stepped inside, her boots squeaking on the floor. Then there was the pitter-patter of smaller, faster footsteps.

"What are you doing here?" Adja heard Missy ask.

"The witch is going to get you," a smaller voice told her. Adja tried to look up what a witch was, but her connection failed.

"There's no witch, you little beast. Come and see, but you'd better not tell anyone," Missy said, appearing in the doorway. She had a small human girl with her.

"Did you buy the flowers?" the little girl asked, turning to Adja.

"I buy the flowers," Adja said. Her voice simulator was breaking. She sounded like a machine now, instead of echoing the smooth intonations of the woman she had been modeled after.

"What do you need them for?" the girl asked.

"Stop that, you," Missy snapped.

Adja didn't say anything. She didn't know that she was supposed to need them for something. Missy handed over the box, and then lifted the orchid out for Adja. It was what humans called beautiful. Missy set it on the table.

"We'll be going then," Missy said, taking the girl by the arm.

"Missy," Adja said softly.

Missy halted. "She won't tell anyone, I promise. No scrappers are going to come for you," she told her.

Adja wasn't worried about that. "Missy, can machines write wills?" Adja asked.

"Shouldn't you know?" Missy replied. Her expression was one of honest confusion.

"My connection has failed," Adja said. As had her face and her memory core. In the kitchen, at the table, she could see the bank man sitting down, smoothing his tie. He was there, yet he wasn't.

"I can, um, I can find out quick. Go on, you, get out of here," Missy said as the little girl scampered off.

Missy took a step closer, her boots squeaking on the floor again while water dripped from her hair. "Adja, what do you need to write a will for?" she asked.

"Missy, if I leave these plants to you, will you tell me what the orchid petals feel like?" Adja asked.

Missy looked at her feet. "You don't have to leave me the flowers," she said.

Adja nodded. "Do humans *have* to do anything?"

"I guess maybe not."

"Missy, am I human?" Adja said. It wasn't the question she had meant to ask. The real one got turned around.

"No," Missy said quietly, her eyes downcast.

"What does the orchid feel like?" Adja said.

Missy told her. And when she trudged outside, back to her van where the young man and the children were waiting in the rain, Adja thought for a second that something sparked in her metal fingertips. Something like feeling, but maybe it was just the warning signal as the circuits finally went dead.

ILLUSTRATED BY MARI ZHOU

ED. EMILY WILLAN | **ASST. ED.** LARA THOMPSON & MAGDALENA WOLAK

FICTION

HAUNTED

by Kayla Prior

James drummed his fingers against the space above the kitchen table, idly trying to remember how it felt to touch solid wood. His existence was absence, a want of sensory nuance. Beside him, the brown-haired woman scrubbed pots and plates, flinching at noises outside that he strained desperately to hear. But for him there was only ever silence, occasionally interrupted by the maddening hum of his sister's voice as it warbled out something dreadfully modern.

The flicker of an oil lamp caught the woman's attention and her eyes snapped up to stare uneasily through Margret, who was playing with the lamp's small flame. To the living an empty room was always what it seemed: nothingness, a vacuum, a profound lacking. James closed his eyes and tried to catch even a trace of sound from the living world—something to prove that the world beyond still existed, that there was more than old walls and the endless refrain of an insufferable song.

"Would you quit humming?" James snapped, scowling down at a saltshaker on the table to avoid his sister's inevitable glare. From the counter Margret pointedly finished the verse, whistling the last few notes too happily. He scowled harder at the condiment holder, rocking it in small, slow circles on the table. "I'm perfectly serious, Mae."

Margret rolled her eyes and, all at once, extinguished the lamp. The brown-haired woman nearly collapsed as she desperately fumbled to light it again.

"I don't see why you're getting so riled up over a harmless little tune," she said.

ILLUSTRATED BY LOLA BORISSENKO

"Harmless," he scoffed. "You've been humming for ages! It's a wonder I've not gone insane already."

In another room a clock chimed, ringing out the hour like a command to begin. James hesitated, trying to remember what it was like to be afraid, then brushed the saltshaker from the table. It crashed into the wall beside a disturbing collection of porcelain pigs, spraying grains of salt across their glossy hides. The brown-haired woman's shriek resounded—*Joshua! Joshua, it's happening again!*—and James savoured every second of it.

"You're only fussing because you dislike anything fun." Margret caught his eye, a playful smile fanning out across her soft, round cheeks. "Or new. You're as dull as the waltzes you worship!"

"There is absolutely nothing wrong with wanting things to remain as they were," he said, standing so suddenly that his chair went skittering across the floor. The woman screamed, falling back into the counter just as her scraggy husband rushed in—*Lynette, are you okay? What's happening?* He was just as scared and helpless as his wife.

"And as I recall you were quite fond of the waltz, you broke the heart of that poor baronet for being so hopelessly left-footed," James added.

Margret fought a smile. "I'm sure I don't know what you're talking about, Jimmy," she said, trailing a gentle finger along the woman's trembling jaw. The woman screamed again as the spectre's cold touch spread through her body.

"Ah, you considered the ballroom your kingdom and we your admiring subjects." James grinned, bowing artfully in front of his sister.

"Then you can hardly expect that such a small kingdom would satisfy me, if I am to rule it forever," she said.

They watched, bemused, as the ashen old man clutched his wife tightly. Margret jumped up on the kitchen counter, swinging her feet.

"Besides," she teased, "the past is far too gloomy to stay stuck in, brother dear."

"I'm hardly stuck," James grumbled, slamming the kitchen doors shut. "I simply do not wish to celebrate the products of a world that has excluded us for decades. We are shadows, Mae, forgotten by time, and I have no desire to revel in the triumphs of an age that has so carelessly disregarded us."

Margret groaned. "How thoughtful and deep you are. I would love to hear more of these musings on the passing of time."

He stared scornfully at his sister. "You, my dear sister, are a brat."

"Oh, but Jimmy! I absolutely must know more about your poor forgotten soul. Tell me, please, how else has jazz slighted you?" Laughing, the girl jumped from the counter to trace a line of lingering cold over the couple shaking and wailing in each other's arms. She draped herself over the man, letting her cold presence sink into his whole being.

"You are a devil who delights only in my misery," James said.

"I assure you, the only thing more pleasing to me than your unhappiness is the elegance of a saxophone," Margret replied, winking. "What a happy coincidence that the two should marry so well!"

"You are intolerable when you're like this," James sighed, and wandered over to the display of porcelain pig figurines.

"And you are a spoilsport," she said, watching him. "Your whining is exhausting. This is supposed to be fun." James knew she wanted to enjoy every scream from the shuddering couple before they were alone and bored again.

"This house is so dull, Jimmy! This haunt is the most fun we've had in ages and we're bickering like children. Can't we simply enjoy the evening?" she asked and began to hum her previous tune.

"It would be easier to enjoy if you'd refrain from singing those songs," he said, toying with a few of the figurines.

"Very well, you've won! I promise never to sing them again if only you'll quit sulking."

Smiling despite himself, James returned his attention to the display case. The pigs stared forward blankly, their beady black eyes watching the weeping couple with cool indifference.

"Goodness," Margret breathed behind him, looking at the animals over his shoulder. "These truly are a fright. I've hated this horrible collection of little beasts since she set them up. It's a wonder they get a wink of sleep with these things always staring."

The sheer quantity of ceramic swine was nothing short of unsettling, and the longer he considered them, the more they seemed to call out for destruction. James chuckled, sweeping his hand over the volatile animals in a grand gesture. "I think that these might make quite a fitting finale, wouldn't you say, Mae?"

They grinned wickedly at one another, their twin brown eyes shining with dark delight.

"On the count of three?" Margret asked quietly, as though her voice might somehow betray their intentions. Casting one final look at the cowering couple James nodded, hand poised as his sister slowly began to count.

"One. Two…" she paused, building the anticipation. Then, finally, she shouted, "Three!"

Pigs rained down from their perches, creating a series of tiny porcelain explosions. The woman screamed, trying to protect her face from the onslaught of ungulates as her wailing husband pulled blindly at her trembling body—*We need to go! Please, Lynn, get up!*—he screamed at his wife. The woman did not move. She seemed paralyzed, trapped in the midst of a violent storm.

Pigs—in straw hats and bonnets, with violins, in baskets and carriages, fat ones with spots, and piglets huddled together—ground to porcelain dust as they smashed against the floor.

The room was awash with so much sound that it drowned out the incessant, confining silence that plagued the house. James relaxed into the noise and let the staccato rhythm of smashing figurines crash over him, filling the house until the quiet was overtaken so completely that it ceased to exist altogether.

It was empowering to feel the full force of the noise. He was drunk off the sheer vibrating pleasure of it, barely aware that the woman was scrambling upright, sobbing and shouting—*That's it, stop! You win! We're leaving, we'll never come back here, we'll leave!*—her voice cracking as she begged the empty house.

Margret glanced at the last horrible, lifeless pig on the shelf. She shrugged at James and knocked it over.

"They never cease to astound me." James shook his head as the couple scrambled up the stairs to grab their children. "How absurd to surround oneself with trifles, and in a haunted house no less."

"They are rather foolish things, are they not? Though, I suppose, we were all fools once." She smiled sadly, stooping to run her hand through the crushed pieces of porcelain scattered across the floor. He wondered if she was still surprised whenever her body fell through something solid, or if she too had forgotten what it was like to touch and hold.

James coughed, trying to draw her attention from the mess. “Perhaps,” he said, rubbing a hand across his jaw, “but that’s over now.”

“What, are we fools no longer?” she asked, a strange, humorless smile curling at the edges of her lips.

“It hardly matters, one way or the other. We’re dead all the same,” James replied. He watched her run a hand through the debris one more time before rising.

He placed a hand on her back in comfort and her body sagged at the touch. “Come now, let’s go find the others,” he said.

“Yes,” she nodded absently, looking wistfully at her fingers.

James pinched the bridge of his nose and sighed, already regretting what he was about to do.

“Alright, Mae,” he said, “how does it go?” She looked up at him blankly. “That intolerable noise—I seem to have forgotten the tune already. Why don’t you sing it for me again?”

Margret stood slowly and slipped her arm into her brother’s, smiling victoriously as she started a pleasant racket. They walked through the narrow halls as she whistled the melody of their favorite waltzes—songs of the past, so familiar they had become a lullaby, a balm to soothe the melancholia of eternity. Upstairs, the living packed frantically—*Hurry, we don’t have time! We have to leave before it comes back!*—their shouts tangling sweetly with Margret’s steady voice.

Together they passed through to the attic, feeling so at ease that James had no inclination to tell his sister to stop, even as the others turned to regard them curiously. Inside, twenty or so ghosts murmured quietly as they listened to the scurrying sounds of the family taking their leave.

Most of the ghosts present had never gotten used to being dead. They tucked themselves away in spaces free of the constant movement of breathing humans, preferring to forget time altogether rather than accept that they existed outside of it.

“Are they to leave, then?” The ghost of a pompous-looking man demanded the moment he caught sight of them. He moved his large body over, making room for James to join him on the couch.

“Yes, most assuredly,” James replied, unbuttoning his jacket as he sat next to the man. “Though I must say, I’m rather disappointed we had so little time with them,” he added.

“Better this nasty business be taken care of quickly, Mr. Barnett,” the ghost said, nodding. “No need to drag things out, that’s what I always say.”

James closed his eyes and settled himself comfortably. “Expedience, I’m afraid, is a poor friend to the dead.”

“At least we’re alone again. As it should be,” the man huffed, smoothing a hand over his round belly.

“Yes, and unfortunately we’ve nothing to do now but wait for the next people foolish enough to settle here. It’s bound to be terribly boring,” James concluded. He listened mournfully to the hollow hum of chatter in the room, trying to recall the tenors of real voices.

“I’ve the most wonderful idea, Jimmy,” Margret offered after a moment’s pause. She beamed at him as she walked over and said, “You and I should take a spin about the room!”

He balked, making her laugh. “Come on, then. You were so very keen to rekindle my love of the waltz,” she teased.

“Mae,” he warned, already weary.

“Oh, come now! You’re such an excellent dancer—it’s a shame we’ve not had the pleasure of watching you in *ages*.” She pouted.

It had never been in his power to resist her flattery. He stood, re-buttoning his suit jacket before grudgingly offering a hand to his sister. She sang out an old, forlorn song that settled somewhere deep within them as she took his hand. It wasn’t long before others joined in the dance, twirling together to a tune long lost to the living.

They twirled on while years passed around them. Families came and went. They moved in slowly and then rushed to leave as the house loomed steady and unchanging around them.

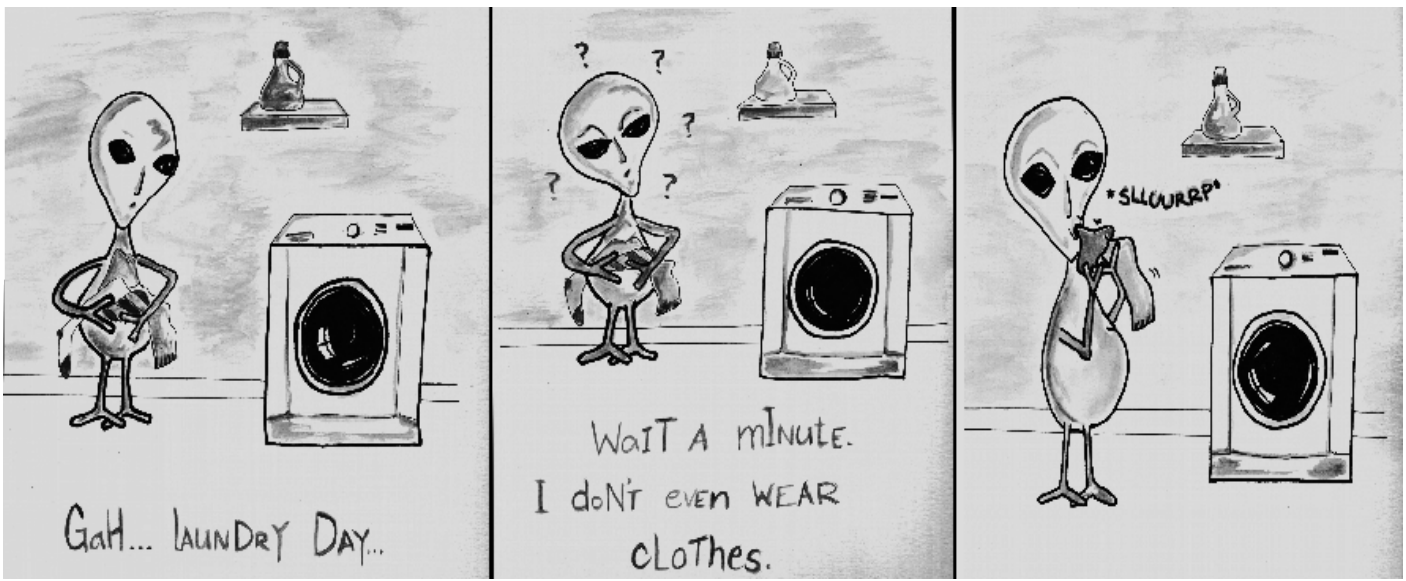
Everywhere the swaying sighs of old wood panels set the living on edge, made their hearts stutter, and stole the breath from their lungs. The house groaned out a steady rhythm of *now, now, now*! as ghosts danced breezily through its halls.

Time didn't matter in the house of the dead. A single dance could span days or months or years and it would be impossible to tell the difference. There were no clocks, no sounds in the hall, no way to tell day from night, or five o'clock from six o'clock.

Everything became an endless moment until another family moved in, breathing time back into their uncanny existence, reminding them that nothing living is ever still.

by Charlotte Marshall

LAUNDRY DAY

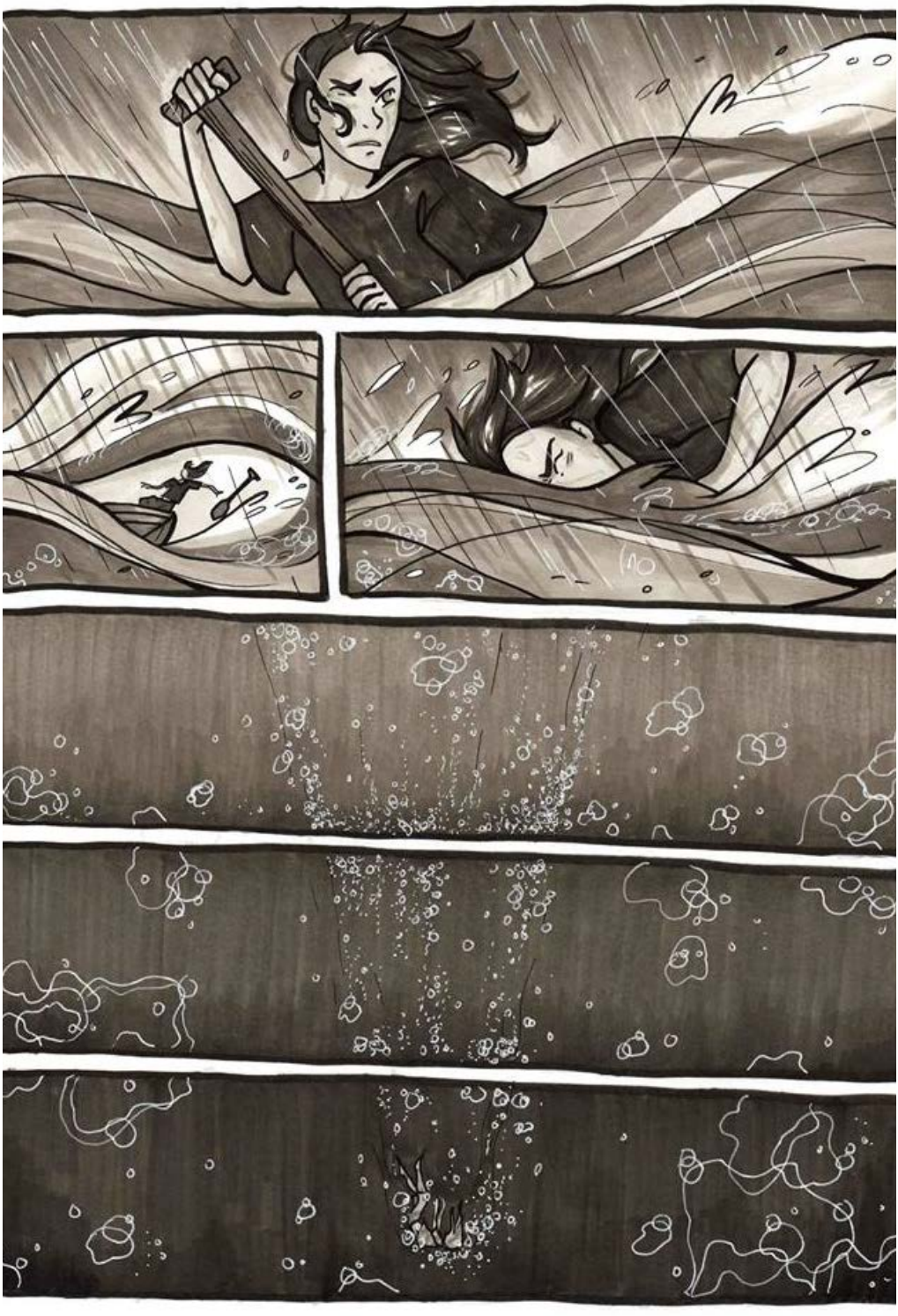


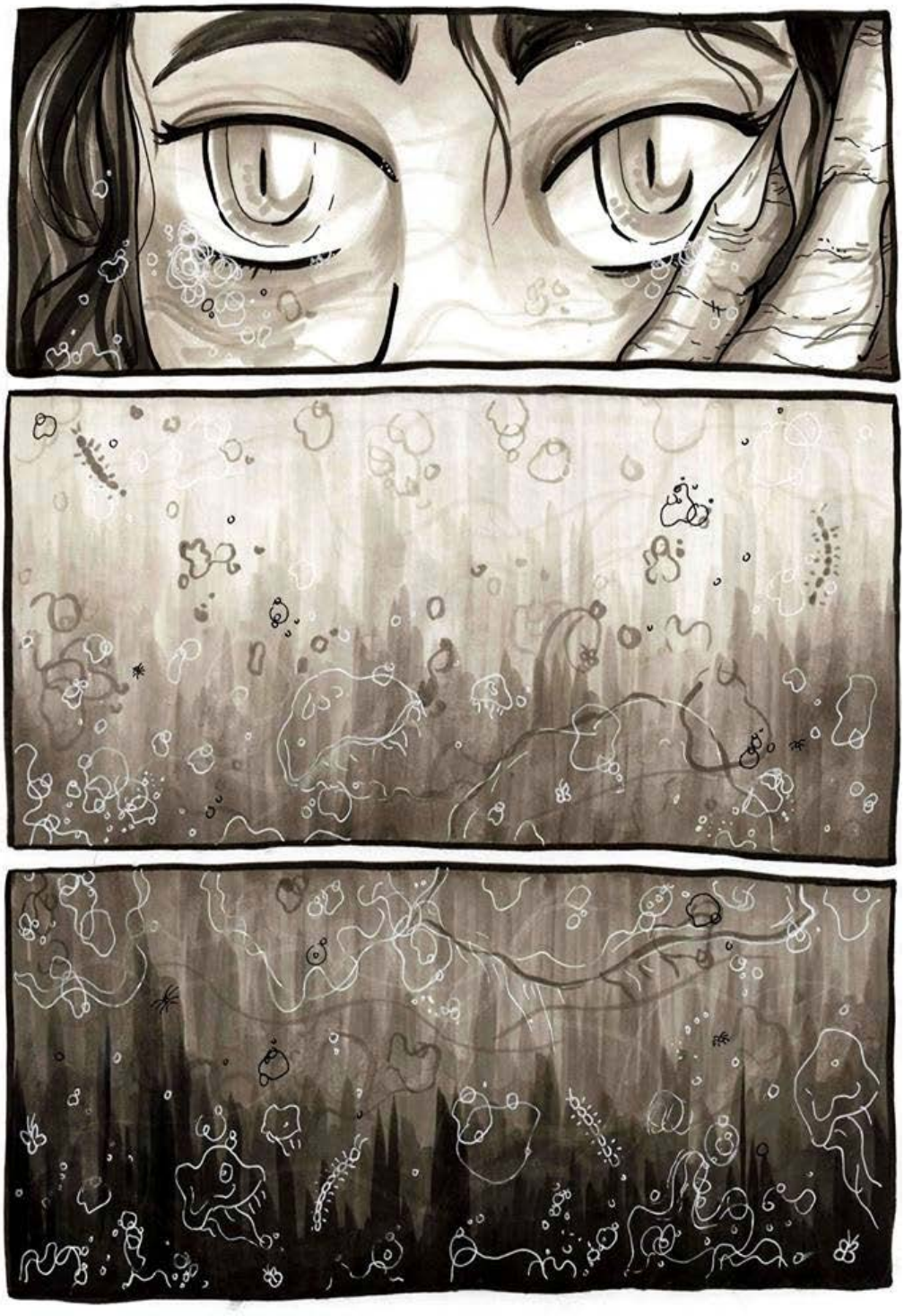
ED. AMY WANG

THE DEEP

by Charlotte Marshall

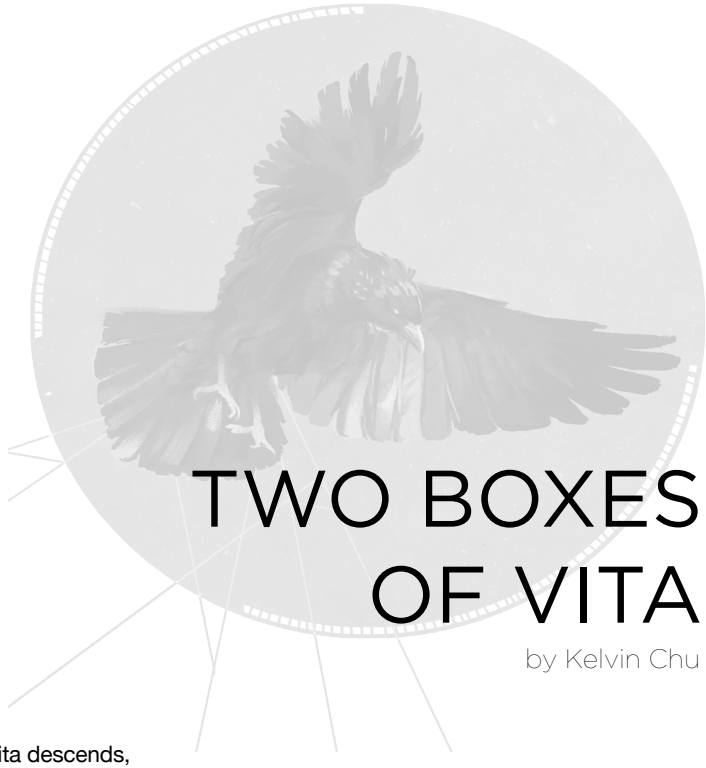
ED. AMY WANG






I GUESS...
HE WAS RIGHT AFTER ALL.

ED. MAGADLENA WOLAK | **ASST. ED.** ELIZABETH LAU & ARIANA YOUM



TWO BOXES OF VITA

by Kelvin Chu

POETRY

Vita descends,
to give Vir a gift.

Vita: Greetings! In front of you are
two boxes, each containing
one gift,
one precious gift.

Vir: *Gratias tibi ago! Gratias tibi ago!*

Vita: But you can only choose
one.

Vir starts deliberating: “WHICH?”
Which!
That is the question.
Which!
That is a predicament (certainly).

Vir: One box might contain
wisdom
(I am not wise!)
wealth
(poor am I!)

power
(oh powerless me!)
and the other…
(yes, the other box!)
Which!

Vita grows impatient and leaves, she who
is swift of divine wings, and
whose absence cannot go unnoticed.

Vir realizes his wrong, kneels down,
his palms turned upwards,
begs for the lost gift
(that was never gained),
a false supplicant.

Then Vita, pitying Vir,
descends again,
to give Vir a second chance.

Vir: This!

Vita: Granted.

Taking *this*, Vir thinks about that.
Thinking about that, he drops this.

And he isn't even aware.

ILLUSTRATED BY SHAHIN IMTIAZ

THE HOLE

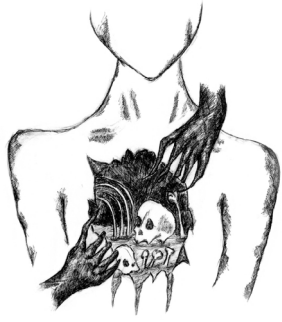
by Lucie Kim

She used to be a happy child,
With lovely hopes and dreams.
Her life was bright and well-defined,
But when she turned fifteen–

Men grabbed her wrists and knocked her down,
Ignoring all her pleas.
They gripped her to the dirty ground,
And stole her piece by piece.

This tore a hole within her chest,
Leaving a hollow heart.
The senseless black, driving her mad,
She waits within the dark–

She sees the men. The End. Revenge!
She takes their blood and bones!
Her form contorting to the wrench
Of her contorted soul.



ILLUSTRATED BY RACHEL CHIONG

"There's nothing here! There's nothing more!"
She wails and cries possessed.
Their blood and bones now fill the hole,
This hole within her chest!

ED. MAGDALENA WOLAK | **ASST. ED.** ELIZABETH LAU

CANTO 0

by Christopher Boccia

Arr. Mauberley
Within the irides of all great poets lies a profoundly disappointed child.
À les épaules des géant: Je suis désolé.

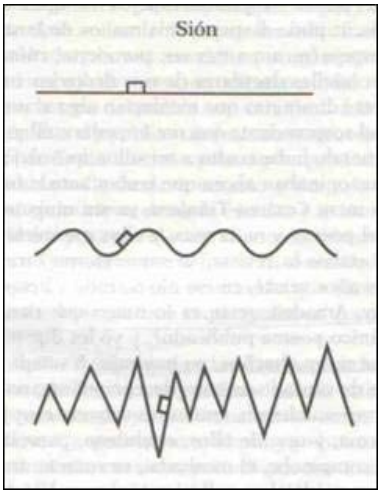
He wandered deliriously along Nevsky prospect,
St. Petersburg grime on his lips, his new christening.
Through the leering crowd,
Sonechka watching his steps,
Beatrice with a yellow pass.
Hesitation in front of gunpowder;
but she waited with reproachful eyes
that would follow a man to Siberia.
Без бога-то и без будущей жизни?
Ведь это, стало быть,
теперь всё позволено, всё можно делать?[1]

Astride a dust-stricken horse, by shot-up fence posts,
Wyatt Earp, nascent marshal of Wichita
"Had five thousand dollars in his saddlebags.
Few young men his age could have claimed
To have made that money honestly."

1 Russian; cf. *The Brothers Karamazov*. "Without God and the future life? It means everything is permitted now, one can do anything?"

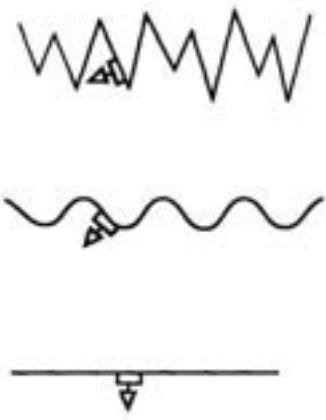
His floating Peoria residence of ill-fame suddenly forgotten;
but they wrote Sadie on his tombstone.

Flung amongst the impatient crowd that tried
to wrench the crown onto his brow,
Rama said ‘endure,’
Accepting his exile,
Divine Sita on his arm,
and wandered the ethereal song of the Dandaka Vana



I explained these lines once to an old man drinking Mezcal,
because the answer had disappeared in Sonora,
Among cacti spines and barbed wires fences,
dancing to the hymnal of a desert nocturne.

Riding shotgun with Belano, renegade poet,
I sailed past Gibraltar.



Cesárea wrote only this one poem—
I saw it in my dreams, the lines in a Stridentist magazine;
I wanted to shout it at Octavio Paz,
reading his government propaganda
in a bookstore I had stolen from,
but there were no syllables of protest.
I followed the dirt roads into the desert,
searching for my Penelope.

Раскольников повторил свое заявление[2],
Never wavering in his story,
and they found the rubles rotten.
Sonechka accompanied the prison train,
her presence a benediction.

Wyatt sought Behan's tin star,
chasing longhorns with Virgil in the Mexican sun.
The legendary butt of his six-shooters
making enemies with clan heads.

Sita urged Lakshmana,
her faithful guardian, to leave
and follow the demon's unwilling lies,
uttered in Rama's voice.
Ravana laughed at the success of his design,
and snatched her from the saddened forest,
Adharma briefly triumphant,
Sita's cries
flying
over the melody of Vishnu's transformed tears.

Rama faced Ravana, finding
his fate amidst battle-cries and sword-song.
The allure of a million years of peace
set the brahmastra to his bow,
his perfect brow furrowed to make
a mushroom cloud star blaze on Earth.
Ravana fell, rent by the atomic shaft.

Surrounded by expectant eyes,
Rama stood, questions of purity on his mind,
ignoring Sita's waiting arms.

Until she walked through white fire to shocked cheers,
all futile, because of Rama's cruelty.
The earthquake accepted
her, weary and sorrow-ridden;

ILLUSTRATED BY AMY WANG

2 Russian, cf. *Crime and Punishment*. "Raskolnikov repeated his statement"

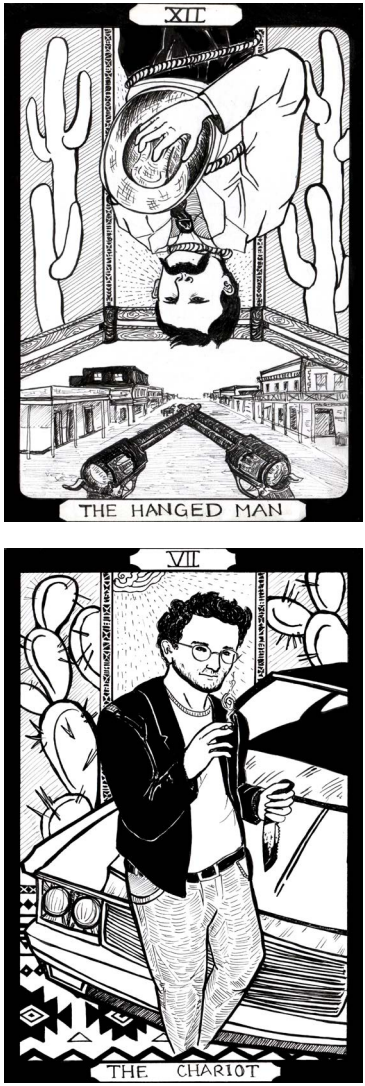
Valmiki, semi-divine poet,
did not hear her
last words, or disbelieved them.
“I was always faithful, you blue bastard.”

When the petty dust was done being stamped
and blown apart by steel colts,
the McLaurys missed the wedding in Iowa.
Virgil was left
only one arm to hug with.
And riding after his assassins,
Wyatt and the dentist
solved mysteries with shotguns.

We disinterred Cesárea from Juarez
to bring her death.
She pressed her factory bulk
into the bought cop’s bullets to
save my life.

And Belano sat on the headlights of the Impala,
blood on his knife, and
our redemption dead in the sand,
in February.
And there was no work in Villaviciosa.
So it goes.
But still, somehow,
there was Sonechka.

In the drawing room,
spectral fibres of bleached canvas,
lightly beating speakers:
hit ‘em with a little ghetto gospel.
Ink pen waits in the uplifted hand,
a Podolski quote tattooed on her left shoulder,
‘A girl arose’ on her right.
Distant oil refinery wavering in the dusk,
flowering muskeg through the window.



ILLUSTRATED BY AMY WANG

ART

BODY'S BEAUTY

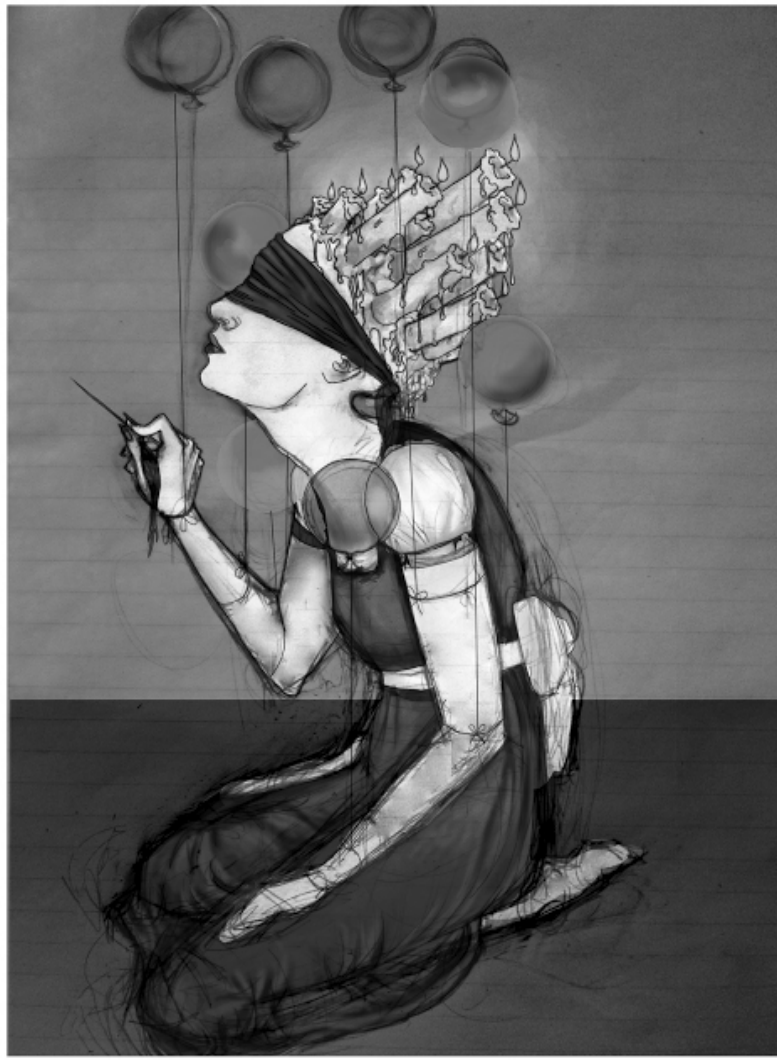
"The rose and poppy are her flowers; for where / Is he not found, O Lilith, whom shed scent / And soft-shed kisses and soft sleep shall snare?" Dante Gabrielli Rossetti writes in his sonnet "Body's Beauty." I am transfixed by this poem. The sounds intrigued me first, but the depth of its images entranced me after. Who is Lilith? She's allegedly the first woman created before Eve, a temptress. Why does she snare men with her soft kisses? I'm not sure if the poem really answers this question. What ultimately attracts me to it is its dialogue between art and death, between the beauty that is eternal and the body that must die. Yet Rossetti confuses us with slippage. *Body. Beauty. Body's beauty.* One word elides into the next. Does he speak of beauty subservient to the body? Or the beauty *of* the body? We can only speculate.

by Maybelle Leung

BLUE EYES

by Bethany Pile

I have recently been interested in manipulating the portrait and the surreal in order to create an effect similar to that of the collage. There is an odd flatness and tension between the undulating waves and the eyes that look as if pasted on. This painting is about the overabundance of visual stimulation in our modern culture and how we need more than two eyes to take it all in. The portrait is also a personification of modern surveillance culture, looking at you and following you wherever you go.



ART

CANDLELIGHT

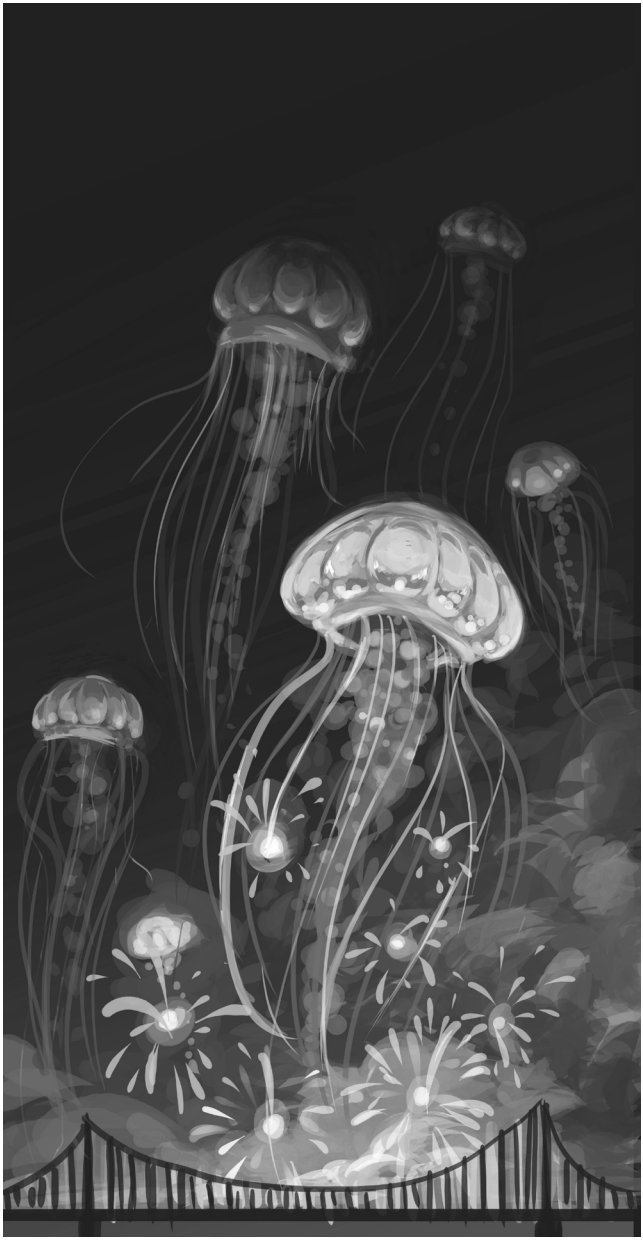
This is about context-licensed ignorance and the ritualization of turning a blind eye as identity is shaped for you. It is about uncertainty and manifold speculation—speculation about the real nature of your relationship to your environment. It is about what the effects of this have been and what they will be, and what the consequences of your actions really are.

by Sherry Hucklebridge

WHAT REMAINS

ART

by Lina Nguyen



This piece was inspired by the fireworks at La Ronde in Montréal. As I watched the fireworks explode, all I could focus on was the aftermath. I was fascinated by the movement of the smoke and the way it seemed to change the colour of the sky. All I could think of while watching the smoke left behind by the fireworks—watching it curl and dissipate—was jellyfish disappearing into darkness.

FORMS OF FANTASY

THE FAIRY SPECTATOR AS A SUBVERSIVE DIDACTIC TALE

by Kerrie McCreadie

NONFICTION

ED. JANICE TOI | **CO-ED.** EMILY MAGGIACOMO

I. Historical Context, Contemporary Criticism, and the Objective of The Fairy Spectator

Lady Ellenor Fenn should not have been writing fairy tales. Regardless, Fenn produced her fairy tale *The Fairy Spectator* in 1789 in the depths of an anti-fantasy reform in children's publishing. Despite this seemingly pro-fantasy move, Fenn was tied inextricably to the reform movement; Mary Jackson calls Fenn a leader of the movement (Jackson 131), pairing Fenn's name with Sarah Trimmer's, an author of children's books, educator and reformist. In *Keywords in Children's Literature*, David Booth names Trimmer as one of the first censors of children's literature (26): she sought to expurgate material from Charles Perrault's fairy tales. Deirdre Baker, also of *Keywords*, quotes Trimmer as saying that fairy tales are confusing for "little children whose minds are susceptible of every impression; and who from the liveliness of their imaginations are apt to convert into realities whatever forcibly strikes their fancy" (80). This confusing nature of fantasy was concerning to the censors who were monitoring how, exactly, eighteenth-century England read its fairy tales.

Baker also discusses how "rationalist educators" such as Thomas Day and Maria Edgeworth critiqued Perrault's tales as being "dangerous and confusing to mind and soul" (80). In *Children's Books in England*, Harvey Darton states that neither the Puritans, nor the Rousseauists, nor Maria Edgeworth, nor the BlueStockings Society would acknowledge fairy tales "on the grounds of truth and reasonableness" (Darton

96). Fenn's eighteenth century was not one that welcomed the fairy tale into its topology.

Due to this literary landscape, *The Fairy Spectator* is not a typical fairy tale. It is not situated in a world that requires a suspension of disbelief. Instead, the *retention* of disbelief is enforced. Fenn, under the pseudonyms Mrs. Teachwell and Mrs. Lovechild (Jackson 136), makes it emphatically clear to her reader that fairy tales are not real. M.O. Grenby notes in his essay "Tame Fairies Make Good Teachers: The Popularity of Early British Fairy Tales" that Fenn insists in her introduction that "no Fairy watches over" (14) her readers. Meanwhile, in the *Spectator* itself, when Miss Sprightly tells Mrs. Teachwell of a wonderful dream about fairies, Mrs. Teachwell reminds Miss Sprightly that she must not be distracted by fancy. The threat here is that Miss Sprightly focuses on the fantasy instead of reality and is confused by it, as reformists feared children would be (Lovechild "Spectator" 2-3). Mrs. Teachwell assures her that "all stories of Fairies are fabulous" (Lovechild "Spectator" 9) and proceeds to give her a moral for her dream.

Governesses provide the moral foundation for a fantastic story, and act as living reminders that fantasy is not real. This morality makes up the content of *The Fairy Spectator*: the *Spectator* is a series of stories that seek to normalize fairies and fantasy in eighteenth-century children's literature by introducing a didactic, moral story into the canon. The fictional Mrs. Teachwell lives in a diegetic world which parallels our own non-fantastic one, and as such she mimics the warning of the nonfictional E------- F----, as Fenn signs her name at the end of the introduction. The *Spectator* is a move away from the typical fairy tale—the dangers of Perrault's fairy godmother!—because it does not immerse its reader within fantasy, but instead draws attention *towards* fantasy. Presumably, this is done in order to take away fantasy's power over "susceptible" minds.

However, if Fenn was interested in drawing power away from the fantasy and fairy tale genre, why did she write within it? Current criticism of the piece suggests that *The Fairy Spectator* is an anti-fairy tale. Mary Jackson describes the *Spectator* as a story of "ruthless brainwashing" that is "in the form of a mean-spirited anti-fairy tale" told until Miss Sprightly "agrees that her beautiful dream of a fairy world and magical gifts is false and illusory" (147). M.O. Grenby references another critic, Samuel Pickering, who also asserts that *The Fairy Spectator* is "an anti-fairytale" (Grenby "Tame Fairies" 13). Grenby himself, however, argues that *The Fairy Spectator* was not an anti-fairy tale. He writes that the *Spectator* was an attempt to cleanse "the fairy tale of objectionable aspects, not an attempt to subvert, suppress, or supersede the genre" ("Tame Fairies" 13) and that Fenn wished to "pioneer a new kind of fairy tale" ("Tame Fairies" 13).

The cleansing of the fairy tale differs from the anti-fairy tale in that it acts as a work of censorship and reformation, editing the fairy tale structure to better suit the needs of eighteenth century reformists. The anti-fairy tale, in the meantime, functions as a work of revolution, completely demolishing the form in the name of Jackson's "mean-spirited"-ness. In fact, the chapter of *Spectator* where Miss Child takes the advice of her fairy is named "Reformation" (Lovechild "Spectator" 40); fairies exist in *Spectator* for the purpose of reform. This chapter heading and behavioural adjustment is a microcosm of the *Spectator*'s objective.

By virtue of being an individual leading a reform against fantasy, Fenn must have wanted *The Fairy Spectator* to pioneer a new kind of fairy tale. The title itself suggests voyeurism, pointing to Fenn's desire to draw attention to fantasy. The *Oxford English Dictionary Online* defines "spectator"—the earliest recorded usage stemming from another English fairy story, Spenser's *The Fairie Queene*—as being "A person who is present at, and has a view or sight of, anything in the nature of a show or spectacle" ("spectator" 2.a.). Miss Sprightly is told of fairies by Mrs. Teachwell, just as the audience of *The Fairy Spectator* is told of fairies by E------- F----; the story is fashioned from an awareness that when a narrative is told, there must be a listener. Or, in this case, a spectator. Fantasy becomes spectacle, something acknowledged as a show by the spectator.

Spectatorship functions in two ways in *Spectator*. Primarily, the spectator is a listener-reader, and distance is created between the spectator and narrative in order to pointedly divide between reality and fantasy. Secondly, the protagonists become objects of spectatorship

themselves: they are followed by fairies who can read their minds (Lovechild "Spectator" 22) and who monitor their thoughts and decisions. This second form of spectatorship ties into *The Fairy Spectator's* second title: *The Invisible Monitor*. The two titles reflect the two forms of spectatorship. This imposition on privacy is justified through two moralizing, allegorical roles imposed on the fairy: the governess and God. The fairy in Mrs. Teachwell's story is called a governess by Miss Child, who says she has no need for a governess when she already has one (Lovechild "Spectator" 22). Meanwhile, Mrs. Teachwell herself reminds Miss Sprightly to not overvalue the prospect of a moralizing fairy when God is an actual presence in their lives (Fenn "Spectator" 9-11), creating an analogy between fairies and God. *Spectator* appropriates the figure of the fairy, and subverts it by imposing moralizing, reformist roles onto it.

On the level of meta-narrative, the objective of *The Fairy Spectator* is to synthesize fantastic children's literature with didactic literature. It does so by creating an awareness of fantasy as imaginary, as suggested by censors like Sarah Trimmer that "care should be taken to make children understand that fairies are imaginary beings" (qtd. in Darton 96). On the level of narrative, the *Spectator* works with the meta-narrative objective of disenchanting children from fantasy's hold: it provides a moralistic purpose for the fantasy it contains. When Miss Child takes the advice of her fairy, she is granted the powers of a fairy (Lovechild "Spectator" 60), and as such becomes a case study for a moralistic purpose of analogical fantasy. Fairies become the moral aspiration for the girls in the story, and through the allegorical relationship that fairies hold with governesses and God, they are ultimate moral beings that the girls are encouraged to grow up and emulate.

In defence of reading *The Fairy Spectator* as a cleansing story rather than as an anti-fairy tale, M.O. Grenby states that Fenn does not "suppress" or "subvert" the fairy tale (Grenby "Tame Fairies" 13). However, it is the subversion of the fairy in *The Fairy Spectator* that allows Fenn to cleanse the fairy tale. The fairy is appropriated from the fairy tale canon and placed into the didactic canon for the purpose of both expanding the power of the governess and acting as a reminder of the power of God. It is, as Fenn writes of Miss Child, a reformation of the fairy tale; it is subversion in order to cleanse, as opposed to cleansing rather than subverting. Fenn takes power over fairy tale structures and synthesizes them into her own canon of didacticism, as a writer of educational texts. *The Fairy Spectator* is not a piece of fantasy literature that is written during a period of reformation so much as a piece of reformation literature written with the intent to subvert and cleanse fantasy literature.

II. Mothers, Fairies, and the Schoolyard Allegory: The Spectator's Heroines as Spectacle

Fenn's late eighteenth-century contemporaries were as very interested in the role of the mother as a teacher. In "The Origins of Children's Literature", Grenby states that for Fenn, the book symbolizes the mother "giving her child the book as a continuation of her own tuition, and, in more general terms, the book is being identified as an admissible component of domestic education" ("Origins" 13). He quotes Fenn addressing "the 'judicious mother' who 'condescends to prattle with her children,' and 'thus infuses ideas in their tender minds, whilst she engages their affections'" ("Origins" 14). To Fenn, the purpose of a narrative is to infuse ideas, and Mrs. Teachwell certainly intends to infuse Miss Sprightly's dreams of fairies with didacticism. Mrs. Teachwell condescends herself to "give [Miss Sprightly] a moral for [her] dream" (Lovechild "Spectator" 8). However, there are no actual mothers in *The Fairy Spectator*: Miss Child has a father who never appears in-scene, and otherwise the only adults are governesses and fairies. Because Fenn—and Fenn's literary context—was so focused on the benefit of motherly education, the governess takes the role of the mother in *The Fairy Spectator* as the educator through narrative. Just as Fenn believed that giving a child a book was a component of domestic education, so must the transferal of narratives between the governess and her students be seen as a component of domestic education.

In the moral narrative Mrs. Teachwell uses to domestically educate Miss Sprightly, fairies become the governesses; Miss Child directly names her fairy as a governess, claiming that she "already has one governess" (Lovechild "Spectator" 12) and as such does not need the fairy's guidance. This aligns with Miss Sprightly's own desire for a fairy guardian to "teach [her] to be good; for [she] should be ashamed to have even a naughty thought" (Lovechild "Spectator" 9). Fairies in *Spectator* are holistically good and moral characters. They are "very beautiful female[s]" (Lovechild "Spectator" 21-22) who are "guardians of [the] mind" (Lovechild "Spectator" 21-22) and who know every thought their charges have. A governess, in the meanwhile, is described as being "genteel in her appearance, and pleasing in her manner" (Lovechild "Spectator" 15); a parallel description in more modest terms. Both figures act as guides to an ultimately moral state of being: the governess because Mrs. Teachwell gives moral to fantasy, and the fairy because she is the product of Mrs. Teachwell's moral. The conflation of these moral creatures with governesses not only alters the state of fairies in the fantasy canon but also expands upon the power of the human governess. The impossibly moral nature of the fairy-governess enhances the word of the governess, through the analogical relationship between them, which inevitably enhances both Mrs. Teachwell and Fenn's promise that fairies do not exist.

It is significant that *The Fairy Spectator* takes the form of a literal fairy story: a story about fairies, and a story that re-situates the fairy within a moralistic and didactic context. Fairy lore is longstanding and fairies have a particular place in the fantasy canon. In *The Fairies in Tradition and Literature*, Katharine Briggs divides fairies into two types: the good and the bad, stating that "there is a definite folk tradition of benevolent and malevolent fairies" (127). Fairy tales emulate this tradition. In Jeanne-Marie Leprince de Beaumont's "The Beauty and the Beast", the father first believes in good fairy (202), and at the end of the piece Beast reveals himself as being under the curse of a wicked fairy (207). Another example is the fairies who give both good and bad gifts to the princess in Perrault's "The Sleeping Beauty" (40). Both contemporary fairy stories acknowledge the presence of good and evil fairies. *Spectator* does not interact with this tradition, instead creating a realm where only moral fairies exist. This is *Spectator's* main breaking point in the fairy tale tradition, and is a main manner in which it subverts the fairy. There are no bad fairies in *The Fairy Spectator's* worlds: there are only good, moral, didactic ones. Fenn's fairies are not a part of Briggs' folk tradition, but instead are the creatures of reformist, didactic fantasy.

Only once Fenn has performed this exorcism of evil fairies from the *Spectator*'s mythology can her fairies perform their duty: to "direct" (Lovechild "Spectator" 22) their charges, as governess-mothers, towards the ultimate moral state of being. Mary Jackson writes that John Newbery's heroes and heroines have a crucial goal "to achieve their moral, educational, and social maturity" (89). Fenn's heroines must also achieve this same goal. Miss Sprightly, the first heroine, and Miss Playful, the last heroine, are both anti-social at the start of their social arcs. Respectively, Mrs. Teachwell and the fairy Amiable—Miss Child's final form—educate each heroine into social personas. Miss Child's original form, Miss Lavish, and Miss Pettish are each immoral for varying reasons of pettiness, narcissism, and refusing to grow up. As a result, each are educated by the fairy who appears to and reformed Miss Child. Miss Child's story, as the focal point of *The Fairy Spectator*, is the most important, as she makes the full transition from impudent child to fairy, introducing herself to Miss Playful in the last story as the "good fairy" Amiable (Lovechild "Spectator" 69). Fenn's fairies are not only good; they are figures of aspiration. The moral of *The Fairy Spectator* is that the girls ought to aspire to be as moral as the fairy-governess.

Due to the analogical relationship between fairies and governesses in *Spectator*, this also suggests that they ought to be as moral as governesses. The analogical relationship between fairies and God created by Mrs. Teachwell suggests that the fairies in Mrs. Teachwell's narrative emulate Godly morality; the fairies she tells stories about are the voice of God, acting through the moral feminine teacher. The fairy is thus entirely appropriated from fairy lore and situated in a religious bildungsroman allegory; Fenn si-

multaneously cleanses the fairy and uses it to increase the power of governess figures.

Most reformist children's stories in the 1780s did not feature children who grew up (Jackson 89). For Fenn, this is a crucial device, as *The Fairy Spectator* is not the examination of how a child is but rather how they should be. Miss Child herself is given two mirrors by her fairy: one that shows her how she is, and one that shows her how she ought to behave (Lovechild "Spectator" 25-26). The fairy explains to her that she ought to aspire to the latter, and when she does Miss Child is granted the powers of a fairy, eventually becoming Amiable. Mavis Reimer writes in "Traditions of the School Story" that "the school story redirects allegory into a narrative of the progress of the child through the 'little world' of the school towards the achievement of successful adulthood in the 'wide world' of modern life" (209-210). Fenn redirects these children through the school narrative with the added element of fantasy, where fairy-dom represents a perfect moral adulthood. In doing so she synthesizes the fantasy of the fairy tale fairy with the didacticism of stories like those of Sarah Fielding's, who believed a book ought to provide "the 'strictest observance' of those social duties appropriate to 'the Female character'" (Summerfield 89) and that it might make its reader "wiser and better" (Summerfield 89).

Reimer writes that in other works—specifically, *School Dialogues for Boys*—Fenn hoped that her book would "'fortify' the young boys…'against the contagion of bad example' and… put him on his guard by showing him 'what characters he may expect to meet with'" (Reimer 210). *The Fairy Spectator* is the female version; however, rather than being put on guard by the characters they might meet, the *Spectator*'s heroines are put on guard against themselves, and against the watchful eyes that surround them. The girls themselves are spectacle, monitored by the fairy who acts as the anthropomorphic manifestation of socio-religious expectation. Mary Jackson writes that Mrs. Teachwell is written in the tradition of Sarah Fielding's Mrs. Teachum (Jackson 146), who, as Reimer states, expects repentance from her charges (210).

The fairies, too, encourage repentance. When Miss Child begins to feel "shame enough for [her] folly" (Lovechild "Spectator" 44), her fairy states that Miss Child has the "discernment to see [her] faults, and the humility to own them" and that Miss Child will be aided "in the necessary work of reformation" (Lovechild "Spectator 45). Characters in both stories are expected to grow into adulthood and repent for their past wicked ways; they are their own bad examples. Fairies are repurposed into a symbol of adulthood, the goal of social maturity, and simultaneously act as a symbol of the child outgrowing fantasy. For it is children who are confused by fantasy, and not adults.

When the fairy gives Miss Child her two mirrors, it is not so she can make a choice. It is so she can give up her autonomy, her will to live as she pleases. Like the girls in Fielding's narrative, it is so Miss Child can repent her non-normative behaviours. Instead, she must aspire to fairy-likeness, which is the equivalent to godly morality. By subverting the fairy from folk tradition, Fenn cleanses the fairy of its negative traits and creates a tale where children ought to aspire to the fantasy. Narrative, through surrogate governesses fairy and human alike, mothers the children into this state of moral perfection in the wake of bad examples—as a book ought to, from Fenn's perspective. For the greatest fantasy of all in didactic children's literature is of the ultimate moral figure. There is a reason that the "invisible monitor" is invisible; it is fantasy itself. In the end, the monitor itself is little more than a social fantasy, reforming the spectacles of young women and fairy tale literature alike.

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BECOMING THE MONSTER

IN LOVECRAFT'S "*THE SHADOW OVER INNSMOUTH*" AND FILES' "*THE EMPEROR'S OLD BONES*

by Alexandra Balasa

NONFICTION

ED. JANICE TOI **| CO-ED.** EMILY MAGGIACOMO

Sigmund Freud defines the uncanny as "that class of the terrifying which leads back to something long known to us, once very familiar" (1). Specifically, the uncanny is created by returning to something "established in the mind that has been estranged only by the process of repression" (Freud 13). In H. P. Lovecraft's "The Shadow Over Innsmouth" and Gemma Files' "The Emperor's Old Bones", the uncanny is evoked through the protagonists' decisions to return to a primitive, feral state of existence that mankind has evolved to find unfamiliar and monstrous. The monster arouses psychological discomfort precisely because it occupies the ambiguous territory between the familiar and the unfamiliar.

In Files' and Lovecraft's stories, the monsters—Ellis and the fish-frogs, respectively—are familiar because they are governed by primal, animalistic impulses that all humans possess. However, they are unfamiliar because humans have evolved to dissociate themselves from animals, categorizing themselves as superior creatures governed by reason rather than by carnal impulses. Files' and Lovecraft's protagonists muddy the distinction between the human and the monster by becoming monsters themselves, thus relegating the monster into the realm of the familiar. Each protagonist chooses the transformation into the monster over the preservation of his humanity, and so physically merges with the horror. The "Innsmouth" narrator undergoes a physical metamorphosis into a fish-frog and chooses to live in the ocean with his kind, while Tim incorporates the horror into his body by consuming the Emperor's Old Bones dish and becoming like the cold, calculating Ellis. Thus, the return to animalistic physical and mental states is the source of the uncanny in the two narratives.

Lovecraft foreshadows that the narrator is going to abandon his humanity by personifying the non-human, mainly Innsmouth and its residents, while dehumanizing individual people in the narrative. The narrator's confusion of humans, animals, and objects is indicative of the tentative distinction he makes between what should be two easily distinguishable categories: the human and the non-human. The uncanny is aroused through the dissolution of humanity in the narrative, as Jentsch, in "On the Psychology of the Uncanny", argues: "in telling a story, one of the most successful devices for easily creating uncanny effects is to leave the reader in uncertainty whether a particular figure in the story is a human being" (5). While he remembers being horrified by the fish-frogs, the narrator admits that "for all of their monstrousness they were not unfamiliar to me" (Lovecraft 43). The fish-frogs are frequently compared to animals, and the narrator claims that he was "horrified by the bestial abnormality of their faces and the doglike sub-humanness of their crouching gait" (40). At the same time, he states that he had "seen none of the lower animals in Innsmouth" (42). By refusing to conceptualize the Innsmouth fish-frogs as "lower animals" despite the multiple similes comparing them to reptiles and dogs, the narrator puts humans and fish-frogs on the same evolutionary plane.

Furthermore, the town of Innsmouth itself is personified, disintegrating the boundaries between the human and the non-human. An ancient church's steeple is referred to as being "decapitated" (16), and the narrator states that "the sight of such endless avenues of fishy-eyed vacancy and death, and the thought of such linked infinities of black, brooding compartments given over to cob-webs … start up vestigial fears" (17). The reference to eyes suggests that the town is alive and intently watching the proceedings. Words like 'brooding' further invoke the human, imbuing the town with sentience that allows it to reflect and to think. The personification of Innsmouth stands in stark contradiction to the dehumanization of Zadok. Zadok is one of the few truly human residents of Innsmouth, yet the narrator describes him with almost as much revulsion as the fish-frogs. The narrator states that "the hideous suddenness and inhuman frightfulness of [Zadok's] shriek almost made [him] faint" (28). Zadok's physical form is further stripped of its humanness when the narrator says that Zadok's "bony claw dug monstrously into [his] shoulder" (28). In viewing Innsmouth and its residents as more human-like than Zadok, the narrator foreshadows his eventual decision to identify completely with the fish-frogs by becoming one of them.

While Lovecraft evokes the uncanny by blurring the boundaries between humans and animals, Files blurs the boundaries between humans and commodities. One of the first lessons Ellis imbues in Tim is that "everything's got its uses — everything, and everybody" (Files 2). Transforming people into commodities is the first step to being able to separate one's identity from one's humanity, which is necessary for Tim to complete his transformation into a dehumanized individual like Ellis. Dehumanization is apparent in the way Tim reduces himself to an object when he recalls the day "Ellis Island broke in, and took everything she could carry. Including [him]" (1). By referring to himself as a 'thing' to be passively transported, Tim denies his own human agency. Ellis is similarly stripped of agency through her name, a play on Ellis Island in New York. Her name marks her not as a human being but as a gateway that facilitates the trafficking of humans, alluding to the immigrant inspection station. Ellis's humanity is thus denied by her role as a conduit through which inhuman affairs are allowed to transpire.

The extent of Tim's dehumanization is shown when he recollects Brian's murder. Tim recalls that "even after Wao Ruyen's court had consumed the rest of his pathetic little body, they had left his face nearly untouched — there not being quite enough flesh on a child's skull, apparently, to be worth the extra effort of filleting" (Lovecraft 11). Words like 'pathetic' and 'apparently' distance Tim from the brutal murder, making him seem more like an impartial observer than a potential victim who was close to suffering the same fate. The monstrosity of this passage is as evident in the form as the content. Tim recalls the scenario as the sixty-year-old who plans to re-create the horror of his past, not as the child who first experienced it. His description evokes Ellis' blasé account of filleting a live carp in the same manner, showing that the only way to overcome the monstrous is to become the monster. Ellis and Tim switch places by the story's end, cementing Tim's transition from the victim of horror to the perpetrator.

Lovecraft's protagonist abandons his humanity in favour of the monster within him, while Tim abandons his humanity by physically incorporating the horror into his body and making it a part of

himself. In order for both narrators to abandon their humanity, they must let themselves be overrun by primal instincts, without being constrained by human rationality and morality. Abandoning rationality for primal instincts evokes the uncanny as it involves a return to a once familiar state of mind that has been made unfamiliar. Freud states that "as soon as something happens in our lives which seems to support the old, discarded beliefs, we get a feeling of the uncanny" (17). The "Innsmouth" narrator first experiences a primal connection with the fish-frogs when viewing the engravings on his ancestor's tiara. He states that he "could not dissociate [the monsters] from a certain haunting and uncomfortable sense of pseudomemory, as if they called up some image from deep cells and tissues whose retentive functions are wholly primal and awesomely ancestral" (Lovecraft 8). The uncanny is subsequently elicited through the lack of mental control the narrator has over this immediate and visceral primal connection. This 'pseudomemory' is an instance of the uncanny because it implies the reverting to a mental state that is no longer familiar or definitive of human experience.

The monster is something that cannot be rationalized, as the narrator explains when he states that the sight of Innsmouth stirs up "vestigial fears and aversions that not even the stoutest philosophy can disperse" (17). Reason, and in particular the narrator's empirical mind, are at odds with the otherworldly instinct that drives him toward the monsters. When he determines that the Innsmouth inhabitants bear no resemblance to any other race, he states, "I myself would have thought of biological degeneration rather than alienage" (9-10). The narrator attempts to justify the supernatural with reason and science—concepts familiar to the modern human. Throughout the story, however, he is forced to abandon this mindset in favour of the idea that the supernatural cannot be rationalized.

Even though the narrator's rational mind is horrified by the prospect of becoming like the fish-frogs, a subconscious instinct impels him to shed his humanity, which he realizes when he states, "some frightful influence, I felt, was seeking gradually to drag me out of the sane world of wholesome life into unnameable abysses of blackness and alienage" (47). Dreams, over which humans have no conscious control, become the vessel for the narrator's transformation. The narrator claims "during the dreams they did not horrify me at all—I was one with them; wearing their unhuman trappings, treading their aqueous ways, and praying monstrously at their evil sea-bottom temples" (47). This merging of dreams and reality results in the uncanny, as "an uncanny effect is often and easily produced by effacing the distinction between imagination and reality" (Freud 15). Identifying with the monster is the narrator's way of diminishing the chasm between the familiar and the unfamiliar and is also the vehicle through which Lovecraft creates a sense of the uncanny.

In "The Emperor's Old Bones" the primal instinct that overtakes Tim, turning him into the monster, is hunger, which prevails over morality to do so. Morality, as an exclusively human attribute, must be shed if Tim is to identify fully with the monster. Just as the "Innsmouth" narrator sheds his reason and harkens back to a time when humans were governed by impulse, so too does Tim shed his sense of morality and allow himself to be driven by physical needs. Tim speaks about his lack of morality with no apparent horror, such as when he casually says, "Was Ellis evil? Am I? I've never thought so, though earlier this week I did give one of those legendary American Welfare mothers $25,000 in cash to sell me her least-loved child" (Files 15). According to Tim, his lack of morality is excusable because he is ruled by the primal need to feed.

The need to understand the monster—to resolve the tension between the familiar and unfamiliar—is so consuming that Tim links it to his basic survival. He states, "I'm not mad, or sick, or even yearning after a long-lost love that I can never regain, and never really had in the first place. I'm just hungry, and I want to eat. And morality...has nothing to do with it" (16). Tim's diabolical mindset allows him to fully understand the monster, rendering it familiar and eliminating his horror. This worldview is also a source of the uncanny, since "we also call a living person uncanny, usually when we ascribe evil motives to him. But that is not all; we must not only credit him with bad intentions but must attribute to these intentions capacity to achieve their aim in virtue of certain special powers" (Freud 14). Tim's willingness to murder human beings for the power of rejuvenation recalls a concept once familiar to humankind that has grown unfamiliar through civilization: the ritual sacrifice of people for supernatural purposes. Extinct practices now considered barbaric can

be reinstated if primal instincts already inherent in us, such as hunger, are allowed to take over.

Tim and the "Innsmouth" protagonist are initially victims of grotesque creatures or situations, and thus elicit sympathy from the reader. By the stories' conclusions, however, we are left with the unsettling realization that we have been sympathizing with the monster all along. The true horror is that monsters cease to be horrifying at all to our protagonists, and we realize that the narratives have been filtered through the intimate consciousness of the very monster from which we want to be separate and that we deem so unfamiliar. The reader is tricked into experiencing the consciousness of the monster—personified by Tim and the "Innsmouth" narrator—and is ultimately consumed by it through the respective narratives. The cost of resolving the tension between the familiar and the unfamiliar is risking the evocation of the uncanny. Tim and the "Innsmouth" narrator take this chance, eventually giving up morality and reason and regressing to animals merely governed by bodily impulses and instincts.

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CONTRIBUTOR BIOS

Born in 1993 in Abu Dhabi, **ROCHELLE ARANHA** is an illustrator and pizza-loving feminist now living in Toronto. Rochelle obsesses over glitter, melanin, and fat cats, and tries to include these essentials in her works. Through the mediums of gouache and gel pens, she expresses the hilarity in the mundane. She frequently sketches animals or extraterrestrial creatures and places them in modern day situations that portray adulthood, love, and cuteness. Apart from illustrating, she makes miniature fake foods and monster figurines from polymer clay. You can check out her current projects on her Instagram: @ blobbface.

ALEXANDRA BALASA graduated last year from the University of Toronto with a Double Major in English and Psychology. Currently, she critiques manuscripts for a literary agency in Toronto, works as a tutor, and is taking a creative writing course at the School of Continuing Studies. She has been published in *The Danforth Review* and the *Beyond Science Fiction* magazine, and has won an honourable mention in the Writers of the Future contest. She enjoys reading about hard magic (in the style of Brandon Sanderson and Brent Weeks), love-hate relationships, and colourful antagonists.

CHRIS BOCCIA is a third-year student at the University of Toronto. He is currently conducting research on flower evolution and bumblebee behaviour with the Thomson Lab. He is also working on a major in Ecology & Evolutionary Biology and a minor in English. Chris enjoys hiking, birdwatching, and road trips, and has travelled throughout much of North America. His poetry has been influenced by a wide variety of writers, styles, and experiences, and has benefited from the criticism of noted poet A. F. Moritz and best-selling author John Bemrose.

KELVIN CHU is a fourth-year student studying English and Modern Languages (French and Italian). His main passion lies in literature, and he particularly enjoys reading and discussing texts in their original languages. Within him there seems to be a battle between the critical and the creative. “Might not universities’ institutional approach to literature,” he sometimes muses, “hinder one’s imaginative impulse?” In any case, “Two Boxes of Vita” is his first published poem. He is grateful to *The Spectatorial* for this opportunity, and looks forward to seeing more of his poems published in the future.

PENELOPE EVANS was born in London, Ontario. She is a first-year student at the University of Toronto. On July 2, 2012, she began writing 750 words a day. She has not missed day since, and has now completed eleven novel-length projects. She is currently the Comics Editor of the University College newspaper. In her spare time she likes baking bread and working

on digital design. Penelope writes primarily sci-fi and fantasy, and firmly believes that no book is truly complete without at least one bear attack.

LUCIE KIM has been an avid reader since the day in her early childhood when her mother cut off cable television. Along with reading, she spent the ensuing years listening to her dad's retro music and re-watching *The Lord of the Rings* on VHS. Nowadays, Lucie can be found watching documentaries on her laptop, seeking organic things in grocery aisles, or undergoing existential crises at the Exam Centre. She is also quite fond of camping, road trips, and big dogs. Lucie was blown away by all the fantastic talent at *The Spectatorial* this year and is honoured to be a part of its magic.

CHARLOTTE MARSHALL is a second-year illustration student at the Alberta College of Art and Design. Currently, she lives in Calgary Alberta with three roommates, two cats, and one gecko. As she is awkwardly writing this blurb in the third person, she's watching one of her all-time favourite films, *Howl's Moving Castle*, which has always been one of her major artistic influences. She aspires to make comics for a living, and hopes to premiere a web-comic in the summer of 2016. You can follow her on her art tumblr at awizardspuffysleeves.tumblr.com.

KERRIE MCCREADIE is incredibly passionate about grammatical integrity, speculative fiction, and a cappella music. She is currently finishing her M.A. in English and Women's Health at the University of Toronto, and intends to pursue a PhD studying the rhetoric of fantasy in realist literature. Previously, Kerrie has been the Editor-in-Chief of *The Spectatorial* and of *Sign: A Semiotics Journal*. Her essays have been published in *Sign* and in *HUMANITAS*, and her fiction has been published in *The Hart House Review*. She is honoured to be featured in *The Spec* this year. In her spare time (what little of it there is left), Kerrie enjoys good books, bad movies, and the occasional bourbon on the rocks.

KAYLA PRIOR is a third-year English and Political Science Double Major who spends an inordinate amount of time crying over fictional characters. When she's not crying, she's busy reading, writing, or possibly baking effigies of her favourite spec-fic heroes. One day (if all goes to plan), she hopes to attend Starfleet Academy, kiss the earth goodbye, and graciously take up a position on the bridge of the USS Enterprise. Shy of that, getting the opportunity to write and share stories will do just fine.

MAYBELLE LEUNG is in the final year of her undergraduate studies. She majors in English and minors in Art History and Semiotics & Communication Theory. She was the Creative Director of *The Spectatorial* last year and is grateful and excited to have her work featured again. *Body's Beauty* is the first in a series of paintings to be completed this year, so keep an eye out! Apart from painting, Maybelle writes creative fiction, reads everything, goes on adventures, and daydreams too much. Everyone knows she is addicted to—rephrase—healthily adores coffee and bubble tea.

BETHANY PILE is an aspiring artist from the island of Barbados, currently studying Visual Studies at the University of Toronto. She works mostly in oil, acrylic, and watercolour, and loves to paint in great detail in order to capture the texture and character of her subject.

SHERRY HUCKLEBRIDGE is a self-taught visual artist who hails from the mighty Ajax. In her off hours she is a full-time undergraduate student at the University of Toronto. She expects to complete her degree by summer 2015.

LINA NGUYEN is a Linguistics Specialist minoring in Computer Science. Born in Toronto, she is a resident of Mississauga and has spent most of her life drawing. She has recently taken up digital painting. When not doing schoolwork or art, she can be found sleeping, playing board games, messing around on the Internet, or volunteering at the Museum of Inuit Art.

STAFF BIOS

Editor-in-Chief

ANNA BENDIY does a little bit of everything. To prove it, she decided to double-major in Ethics, Society & Law and History, minor in English, and become the Editor-in-Chief of *The Spectatorial*. Anna is passionate about all forms of good literature, but she is most inspired by what *The Spectatorial* calls the "greatest lies in literature". She loves being in the middle of a new era in literature, and doesn't mind suffering the blows of a few pointy elbows to make a space for speculative fiction on campus. In her free time she watches YouTube videos on contemporary feminism, engulfs hundreds of books from her personal library, dreams of pirate-like adventures on the Black Sea, meditates on the way fantasy seeps into the real world, and envisions herself as an editor for a big publisher in the next five years. Sometimes, she also works on the journal.

Creative Director

Fantasy and dystopian enthusiast **LORNA ANTONIAZZI** is a second-year student studying English, Sociology, and Women & Gender Studies at the University of Toronto. She loves creating pieces—either written or illustrated—of speculative fiction in numerous genres and styles. Beyond reading books for pleasure, Lorna also relishes in analyzing texts. All intelligent discussion is welcome, as she's always willing to open up a dialogue on the social elements of literature. This coming year Lorna will be writing, editing, reading, illustrating, and acting as the Creative Director of *The Spectatorial*!

Fiction Editor

EMILY WILLAN is a third-year student double-majoring in English and History. She was introduced to the creativity explosion known as *The Lord of the Rings* at the age of eight, and has been a speculative fiction fan ever since. Spec-fic has been a consistent source of inspiration for her own imagination as a writer. She has been published twice, and is considering a career in editing. She currently runs her own editing service. As a staff member at *The Spectatorial*, she is eager to share her passion for this underrated "genre".

Non-Fiction Editor

JANICE TO is an expert all-you-can-eat sushi-eater, movie addict, and sloth-lover. She spends 90% of her day wishing she were a wizard and the rest of it being a third-year English and Psychology Major. When she's not lost in University College or in her own thoughts, she's indulging in the mildly sadistic pastime of dragging scissor blades across grammar mistakes in *The Globe and Mail*. Naturally then,

Janice is drawn to speculative non-fiction—and horror!—and she is extremely excited to be working at *The Spectatorial* for a second year. One day, she will bake a cake filled with rainbows and smiles and everyone will eat and be happy.

Graphic Fiction Editor

AMY WANG has been a ravenous reader of comic books and speculative fiction for most of her literate years. As a student of English and Visual Art, her pipe dream has always been to work in the comic industry in some capacity. Her current dream is to become a space pirate. She is also a technical theatre geek and can usually be found lurking backstage at the Hart House Theatre or the Isabel Bader Theatre, adjusting lights and muttering to herself. She is so excited to be a part of the stunningly talented *Spectatorial* Staff and has high hopes for the upcoming year!

Poetry Editor

MAGDALENA WOLAK is a student at the University of Toronto where she studies English and—as a quite recent interest—Political Science. She is currently the Poetry Editor of *The Spectatorial*, and superbly excited about it. While most of her life has been spent in Canada, she began her journey as a fervent reader in Poland. Her love of writing was piqued in high school, and it has been a lifeline ever since. Her inspiration comes from the mundane, the painful, and the everyday.

Online Editor

MIRANDA WHITTAKER is a writer, reader, editor, dancer and—occasionally—a student at the University of Toronto. Though she mainly studies English Literature, her imagination is riddled with the fantastic elements of fairy tales and myth. As a result, she fell in love with *The Spectatorial* and is currently the editor of the journal's blog. She has written both fiction and non-fiction for the journal and can be found struggling to carry a dozen books from the library she works at.

Copy Manager

ALEX DE POMPA is an English and Literature & Critical Theory student at the University of Toronto. He plans to study law upon the completion of his undergraduate degree. His literary influences include Mervyn Peake, John Crowley, Marina and the Diamonds, and Lana Del Rey. Aside from reading and writing queer speculative fiction, he tutors English and has recently taken up swimming. A long-distance runner, he has completed several half-marathons and plans to run a full marathon once a pesky knee injury has healed. His short story "Sasori" was published in the second volume of *The Spectatorial.*

Layout Editor

ARIANA YOUM enjoys partly cloudy weather accompanied by berries, books, and a hammock in which she can occasionally nap. She is in her second year of university, studying English and Psychology. Please excuse her when she gets abnormally excited over some obscure grammar rule. She is also rather obsessed with science fiction, and is patiently waiting for the day when she will be able to teleport. Until then, she shall edit away. She looks forward to working with the amazing *Spectatorial* crew this year, and wishes them much love.

Editorial Board

EMILY MAGGIACOMO likes books more than anything else. She has a passion bordering on obsession for speculative fiction, especially fantasy. She is working on an English Specialist degree. Since she cannot study at Hogwarts, nor dwell in Rivendell, nor become the Mother of Dragons, the University of Toronto is the best place in the (real) world for her. You will most likely find Emily in the Hart House Library slogging her way through a mountain of essays. Otherwise, she'll be absent-mindedly stumbling around campus, one foot in this world, and the other in one that no one else can see. She's very excited to combine her love of speculative fiction and academia by working on *The Spectatorial*.

LARA THOMPSON is a third-year student majoring in English and Classical Civilizations. No, to her shame, she cannot read Ancient Greek or Latin. When not reading ancient myths, she is reading fantasy and mystery novels (her favorite is a two-in-one!). Lara is currently the online features writer and Events Editor for *theBUZZ*, a new LGBTQ magazine in Toronto. She is also a member of the Editor's Association of Canada. After university, she plans on becoming a Certified Professional Editor, a job that will deal with grammatical and stylistic inconsistencies and consistently earn her no money. Lara is thrilled to be part of U of T's one and only genre journal.

BRENDA BONGOLAN is a Sociology and Book & Media Studies student at the University of Toronto, preparing herself for a career in the publishing industry. She loves both the narratives in books and the book medium itself. Stories have guided her through most of her life, and she gets excited about crafting books through design, binding, and layout. Her bookcases are overflowing with books at the moment, but she still likes to pick up more whenever she can. Currently, she 's a freelance copy editor and the co-Editor-in-Chief of The Victoriad. She plans to start a blog and to write more for various University of Toronto publications next year.

POLINA ZAK is a quirky third-year student at the University of Toronto. She is double-majoring in Biology and Sociology and is minoring in English. She greatly enjoys learning about different world views and being able to understand new concepts by applying ideas from the three subjects she studies. She likes to encourage the people around her to pursue their own expression through writing. Creative writing has been Polina's hobby for many years and she believes it is one of the best ways to relax and let off some steam—especially after a long, stressful day.

First-Year Editorial Board

SHAHIN IMTIAZ is studying…stuff, as yet to be determined. Her most notable achievements include almost skydiving once and getting to level 95 in Tetris. She is also the proud recipient of a national award from HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum of Dubai and Cambridge University. When she is not glued to her phone, you can see her reading, writing, taking photographs, drawing, or trying to be funny. She hopes to become a well-rounded student of…stuff, and to survive her first Canadian winter with minimal frostbite.

ELIZABETH LAU is a first-year student at the University of Toronto Scarborough specializing Molecular Biology and Biotechnology. She is an avid lover of all things speculative, including novels, video games, and anime. Elizabeth balances a full course load, co-curricular involvement, and an active social life. As a First-Year Editorial Board Member, she assists other team members in their tasks, reads over submissions, and, of course, edits! Elizabeth is eager to work with *The Spectatorial* team and to help in the production of great works to come.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED WITH THE SPECTATORIAL

We are always looking for students to participate in the publication process of *The Spectatorial*! We strongly encourage interest from propsective blog writers, designers, illustrators, copy editors, and print issue writers. And every time you participate with us, you earn one contributors' point!

Contributors' points are how we keep track of how many times someone has contributed to *The Spectatorial*. They can be collected in many ways. Any instance of copy editing, designing, blogging, illustrating, or submitting is considered a point; you can help market us through postering; and, finally, you can attend our contributors' meetings, which occur once or twice per semester. Once you have two points you can apply to be on staff for the following year.

If interested in applying for a staff position, please send an email to thespectatorial@gmail.com outlining which position you're interested in and how you would like to collect contributors' points (should you not already be contributing to the journal). The elected positions are:

Editor-in-Chief; Creative Director; Online Editor; Copy Manager; Fiction Editor; Poetry Editor; Non-fiction Editor; Graphic Fiction Editor; Communications Director; Layout Editor; Editorial Board Member

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