



The All Hallows Authors Club Presents

Volume 2, Issue 3

Spring/Summer 2011

REIGN of FICTION

Contributing Authors:

DEVIN ALMONOR (9-4)
 LANCE GLOVER (9-4)
 JUNIOR JIMENEZ (10-5)
 JUSTIN JOYCE (9-1)
 JAH-SEE MARTIN (11-2)
 BRANDON MONTALVO (11-4)
 DAVID MORDLE (11-4)
 EDUARDO RAMIREZ (9-5)
 LUIS RIOS (9-1)
 LUIS RIVERA (9-1)
 ANTONELLO VELEZ (10-1)

Editor

MR. DAMIAN VERUTES

Letter from the Editor

Reign of Fiction is All Hallows' premiere creative writing publication and includes the creative writing of students from a variety of homerooms and class years.

The student members of the All Hallows Authors Club have been anxiously awaiting the publication of their original short stories and poems. Club members present their work to one another at club meetings in order to gain valuable feedback and criticism from their peers as well as the club moderator.

The stories and poems contained in the *Reign of Fiction* reflect the wide variety of voices and viewpoints

that make up the All Hallows community.

The *Reign of Fiction* contributors and moderator wish to thank our readers because without someone to appreciate the text, writing becomes meaningless. It is for you, dear readers, that we write. Thank you for taking the time to read what is here-in contained.

Some of the works featured in this issue include: the continuation of the tale of a Machiavellian madman's mission to make mayhem and commit murder as he crosses another name off his list, a series of suspiciously-edited journal entries belonging to a

U.S. Marine living through the collapse of civilization, an excerpt from the epic saga of a Dantesque hero's journey through Hell, and a dramatic tale dealing with a devilish demigod's daring quest to prove himself a hero.

This editor hopes that any student with an interest in fiction and/or poetry will submit pieces to be considered for publication in future issues and encourages any member of the All Hallows community with a passion for creative writing to join the All Hallows Authors.

The All Hallows Authors Club meets every Tuesday, after school, in room 21. New members are always welcome!

Nero [Lust] by Justin Joyce (9-1)

Our heroes passed through the gates that separated the two circles. They stepped onto a path that led straight forward, instead of spiraling downwards like the path of the first circle. On both sides, they could see deep into the never-ending drop. They stepped forward and felt a large gust of wind go by as the souls of the shades flew past them. Nero and Eden watched the shades fly

and slam into spikes on the side of the rocks. Nero slammed his scythe into the path as a stronger gust of wind went by. He kept himself planted to the floor while Eden observed the area.

"Eden! Are you going to explain to me why the hell there is wind in the middle of the Inferno?"

"The sinners that succumb to the temptations of their own lust

are forced to be blown by these violent winds. They collide into each other and become impaled on the spikes and, in many cases, are blown even deeper into the inferno to suffer much worse fates."

Nero nodded to him and they continued along the path. The winds of the land were harsh, but Eden used his powers to keep Nero from falling. It seemed as though the path was

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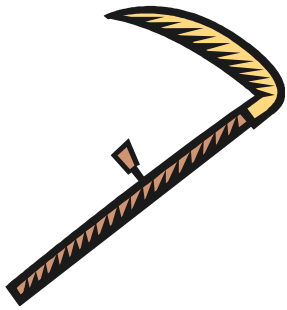
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REIGN of FICTION

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OUR HERO
TOOK A FEW
STEPS BACK
AND RAN
FORWARD AS
FAST AS HE
COULD. HE
LEAPED ACROSS
AND LANDED
ON THE OTHER
SIDE OF THE
GAP, BARELY
KEEPING
HIMSELF FROM
FALLING BY
KEEPING ONE
FOOT ON THE
LEDGE.

only a straight shoot to next gate. Eden understood that there must have been something awaiting them slightly ahead. They looked and saw 4 shades on the path. 2 of them turned to Nero and had evil in their eyes. They stood up and ran at him. Nero drew his scythe and swung it at the first demon. The blade grazed the demon and its intestines fell out of its chest; the demon fell to its knees. Nero swung at the second; the blade went straight into the demon's neck. Its head fell back. The demon was dead, but its head was not removed. Nero once described it as a living Pez dispenser. The other demon looked up at our hero. Nero stepped on its intestines and crushed them between his foot and the stone. A good punch met the demon's jaw, and it fell into the winds. Nero approached the other 2 demons and looked at them. One was a man and the other a woman. That was the most you could make out of their scorched and scarred bodies. Eden continued along the path, showing more apathy than even Nero. Nero decapitated the shades with his scythe and followed along with his guide.

They continued on and noticed that the path they followed was slowly moving downwards, like a ramp. The path slowly went down until it reached an area where the path had broken. They could see ahead that getting across the gap would lead into a cave that connected to another mountain. Nero realized that using the eagle wings to get across would risk getting sucked into the gusts of wind. Our hero took a few steps back and ran forward as fast as he could. He leaped across and landed on the other side of the gap, barely keeping himself from falling by keeping one foot on the ledge. Suddenly, the path cracks under Nero's weight and breaks off. Our hero falls and a hot gust of wind blows by. He was no longer shielded by the divine aura of the Path of the Inferno. He slams his scythe into the side of the mountain quickly and slides down while his scythe cuts through the rock. The scythe slowly begins to fall out of the desecrated rocks. The hero gets to another cave below and swings, quickly jumping into it. He loses his grip on the scythe and it falls into the dark abyss. There is

no sound other than the wind. Eden appears beside him and they stare into the pit. They turn to continue down the new path they have discovered. Nero is prepared to fight demons with his metal plated fists. They turn and see Nero's scythe; it leans against the wall of the cave. It is obedient and must serve the master it is awarded to. The hero grabs the scythe and puts it away once again. As they walk down the path, they notice that a form of smoke begins to fill the cave.

The black smoke thickens until they are unable to see. Nero used his sleeve to try and filter out the smoke while he breathed. Eden continued to guide him through the cave. A sound could be heard. It was not the silence that Nero enjoyed so much. It was the sound of footsteps on the rock path. They then heard the sound of a voice singing to them. This sound was once described as the call of the sirens. Nero followed the voice, and Eden stayed close behind him. As they walked, the thickness of the black smoke decreased, and they were able to see forward. A female shade walked towards them. Her body was scorched

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like most shades, but it lacked the scars that make the shades weep. She had long claws on her nails that were nearly a foot long. Nero drew his scythe made his way towards the demon. He prepared to swing when the shade let out a deafening cry that forced Nero and Eden to their knees. The demon slowly began to approach them. It raised its hand into the air and prepared to strike Nero. Nero looked up and pulled his hands away from his ears quickly. He used the metal armor to punch the demon in the stomach. The demon stopped yelling as Nero's fist was inside its chest. He grabbed the siren's stomach and ripped it out of its body, dragging some other organs out with it. Eden stood up and Nero picked up his scythe. He stepped away from the siren and slammed the blade into the siren's head, splitting it in two. They continued to walk and the smoke slowly cleared.

"So Eden, are you going to explain to me why Dante got Virgil as a guide, and I got you? You never gave me an answer to that."

"Virgil was named as Dante's guide because they were both

intellectuals, nobles in their respective societies. Both were poets. We share the same social status, mere low-level warriors. It was destiny that you would find the stone on the wall and release me. We are both similar in many ways Nero."

"Oh please, you know nothing about Nero Alighieri."

"Your real name is Nicolas Antony. You're twenty-two years old. You were adopted after your birth parents abandoned you. And your favorite movie is 'To Kill A Mockingbird'." Nero turned to Eden in shock.

"How do you know so much about my life Eden?"

"I am your guide Nero; I have to know everything about you."

They continued on in silence until the smoke was fully cleared away and they were back on the Path of the Inferno. More shades awaited them. One swing from Nero's scythe and they all were cut in half. They continued to walk and more of the shades began to appear. They posed no threat to our heroes. From the large amounts of demons that slowly began to rise, they knew that they were near the

gate to the third circle. They continued on and fought against the harsh wind. Suddenly, the wind stopped. All the souls that were being blown by the wind hung in mid-air for a second. Then, they all dropped like rocks. All that remained was a cold breeze. No need to fight the wind, no need to fight anything really. The winds were controlled and powered by the divines of all the divine atmospheres. It is impossible for them to just stop unless the divines themselves choose for this to happen.

"The winds have stopped. This can only mean that the divines' power over this land have been overturned. The Inferno is beginning its last leg of completely freezing over and not allowing the souls to burn to keep the demons from rising up." Eden said quickly as they began to run. They were finally realizing the full gravity of the situation. Our heroes continued to move along the path as fast as they could. Slowly, they approached another cave. This one was large like an arena. They entered it, and a rock closed the entrance behind them. A woman

walked towards them wearing a dress that was covered in scorch marks. She was surrounded by sirens and other lost souls.

"Hello. You must be the so called warrior that Samuel told me about" The woman said. She introduced herself as Theodora, the 8th member of the "Dominion." She pulled out a black rose and picked a petal from it. She threw it at Nero. Nero caught and crushed it in his hand. Suddenly, he yelled and dropped the petal. His palm was bleeding because of the petal, but it had remained in the same form. "Interesting. Using the symbol of lust as a weapon, while making it remain in its normal form. You are trying to say that lust in its purest form is just so beautiful," Nero said and stepped on the flower petal. "You're a smart one," Theodora said. She ripped off more petals from the rose and tossed them at Nero. The Sirens stepped forward and all gave one large scream. Nero was forced to the floor, covering his ears, and the petals began to cut Nero. Eden looked to the sirens and snapped his fingers. The rock under the sirens cracked and the sirens fell through into the drop. The sound of the scream was not as loud, and Nero looked up at Theodora and the other sirens.

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THE FLASH OF WHITE SUDDENLY DISAPPEARED, SAMUEL GOING WITH IT. NERO REAPPEARED IN THE CAVE AND LOOKED TO EDEN. "NERO, ARE YOU FEELING OK?" EDEN ASKED.

Nero uncovered his ears and made a sprint to the other sirens. He quickly took shots at them with his scythe and cut them all to pieces. Theodora threw the rose on the floor and fire surrounded her. Nero rolled through the fires and slammed the blade through her heart. The fire disappeared and as Nero pulled the blade out of her chest, blood splattered on him. He threw his trench coat on the floor and started to stomp out the fire on the coat. Eden walked over to him.

"What did she mean by the 'Dominion'?"

"I don't know, Eden. All I know is that we are running out of time." Nero stepped to Theodora's corpse and picked up the rose. It was no longer black. It was now pure red. He put his coat on and put the rose in his pocket. Like the eagle's eye, this would be able to provide him with power as he moved through the circles. He approached the gate, and suddenly, he appeared inside a pure white room. Samuel stood there with his black wings and cobra's tongue. "Hello once again, Nero. I see you

defeated the weakest of our Dominion. She was of no use to me anymore." Samuel approached him. "Are you going to tell me what this Dominion is yet, Samuel?" Nero responded. Samuel grabbed Nero by the throat "I'll explain when you're on your death bed and on your way here."

"I don't fear you, Samuel."

The flash of white suddenly disappeared, Samuel going with it. Nero reappeared in the cave and looked to Eden. "Nero, are you feeling ok?" Eden asked. Nero just nodded and they continued on through the gate. As they passed through, a gust of wind from the second circle came, and a snow flake dropped in front of the closed door to the third circle.

At the same moment in the ninth circle, Samuel approached his father. The dragon form of Samuel's father was frozen in the ice. Samuel explained the news of Theodora's death and that Nero had gone into the third circle. Satan had no reaction. He remained silent through all of the news. Samuel prepared for the next meeting with Nero. As he walked away, Sa-

tan turned to him and asked, "Who was the monster and who was the man?" Not knowing how to respond to this vague question, Samuel just walked away from his father and let him continue to feed on Judas.



Covert Operations: Prologue by Luis Rios (9-1)

A monitor flashes on. A USB flash drive is inserted into the computer. A monotone voice from the computer repeats the following phrase: “WARNING! CLASSIFIED FILES BEING OPENED PASSWORD REQUIRED.” A shadowy figure types in the word “GERONIMO”. Then, the phrase stops repeating. Soon a flurry of files pops up on the screen. The figure scrolls through them. Then, after failing to find what he/she is looking for, the figure grows angry. In a hoarse voice the figure begs the USB to cooperate. A second figure appears.

“Come on hurry up they’ll be on to us at any moment now”

“Don’t rush me” says the first figure “I need some time to find the file; we aren’t talking about any hard drive. This the U.S. military’s files on here. I need some time.”

“Fine but be a little faster. The military is without a doubt gonna

send their best guys to take back their crap, and I don’t wanna be here when those guys get here. Just search for the file marked ‘Al Qaida surveillance,’ and delete all videos pronto!”

Outside the apartment building that the figures live in, a group of highly skilled and very classified soldiers arrive. They are six men strong and are called the Viper Six squad. They have no names except “Viper 1” through “Viper-5”. The captain retains his name.

“Captain Marc Rein, we have confirmed the terrorists are in the apartment complex sir!” exclaims viper 3.

“Good job; Men, surround the perimeter and prepare for a breach and clear. Keep weapons hot just in case, but, for the most part, we want to keep casualties at a minimum. Remember we are retrieving what is rightfully ours and capturing some new intelligence. Did I make myself clear?” says Cpt. Rein.

“Yes sir!” they all exclaim.

“Good now move out!”

Viper six then breaks up into three groups of two and surround the building. They plant C4 on the walls and prepare to breach the premises.

“Hurry I hear someone coming”

“Almost done...”
In a split second the bombs go off and a once structurally sound building becomes a modern day ruin as Viper Six breaches it. The figures are taken aback by the blast. The two men by the computers are easily captured, but they are not the only ones on the premises. Soon, three men leave the bedroom; all three are carrying the AK-74u. Soon, what was supposed to be a simple breach turns into a deadly shootout. Viper 2 and Viper 5 are being shot at and are calling for reinforcements.

“We need some help over here! Three hostiles shooting and we are forced to take cover.” Cpt. Rein replies, “Help is on the way. Move out men. Fire at will and



IN A SPLIT SECOND THE BOMBS GO OFF AND A ONCE STRUCTURALLY SOUND BUILDING BECOMES A MODERN DAY RUIN AS VIPER SIX BREACHES IT. THE FIGURES ARE TAKEN ABACK BY THE BLAST.

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THE MAN
JUMPS UP
AND GRABS
THE WOMAN,
SCREAMING
SOMETHING
IN ARAB. CPT.
REIN PULLS
OUT HIS M9
AND SHOOTS
THEM BOTH
WITH A FEW
SHOTS.

provide suppressing fire for our allies.” Soon the other Vipers arrive to help Viper 2 and Viper 5. The men start focusing their fire on the other vipers. Cpt. Rein helps give suppressing fire so that the two stranded vipers can flee. Viper 2 sees no fire coming towards them, so he stands and sprints towards his squad-mates. Then, Viper 5 sees one the hostiles point his gun towards Viper 2. In a flash, a bullet goes whizzing through the air towards Viper 2. “Get Down!” Viper 5 exclaims, but it is too late.

He is killed as the bullet hits him in the neck, cutting his carotid artery. He bleeds out very rapidly as blood squirts everywhere.

Viper 5 gets up and sprints towards him screaming “Jon! Damn it Jon, why did you run!” In his last breath Jon says “I’m so-or...” Jon dies in Viper 5’s arms. The terrorists see this as an opportunity to kill another viper. They all leave their cover in order

to get a better shot. Then, in mere seconds, all that could be heard is “ping, ping, ping.” The terrorists all fall dead on impact. Soon after taking out the terrorists, Cpt. Rein searches the apartment for any more hostiles. He walks into a second bedroom with two people inside: a man and a woman in bed. The man jumps up and grabs the woman, screaming something in Arab. Cpt. Rein pulls out his M9 and shoots them both with a few shots. Rein, commenting on the situation, says “A man and his hooker.” Then, he says, “Men, I have two confirmed dead. Call in the chopper, and grab the hard drive and the men, including Jon.”

The chopper comes in, and Viper Six heads for it. They put Jon on a gurney, and one of the terrorists sat next to Cpt. Rein. Rein was holding a laptop with the USB plugged in. He had a Bluetooth in his ear and a gun pointed at the terrorist.

Rein begins to

interrogate the terrorist. “Okay you’re gonna tell me the whereabouts of a mister Osama Bin Laden, or else, I can promise you a stay at Guantanamo Bay. The terrorist replies, “You don’t scare me, and you don’t know why you fight for your country. They are all filthy lying rats who will stop at nothing to get whatever they want. If you don’t believe me, take a look at a file named ‘C. Rollins Bolt Action Miracle’.”

Cpt. Rein hesitates at first, but then, he decides to take a look at the file. When he opens the file, he sees a picture of a man with a rifle shooting at JFK. Next to him are the secretary of state and a mystery man. Cpt. Rein is startled to see the image. Could the government be in on this? He calls the head of the CIA.

“Sir I have to keep this short and sweet. Mission accomplished but that isn’t important right now. I have discovered some startling evidence in JFK’s

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assassination and was very worried with our government's involvement." The CIA director says slowly, "I'm glad about the mission Rein, and I will definitely look into the situation you are speaking of. Good job soldiers, now I must be going, but be safe and protect that USB." Rein interjects, "Wait sir..." but he is too late. He hears the dial-tone on the Bluetooth.

"Men, there is something not right here. When we get back state-side we need to get some information about these files."

"I told you Rein, I told you Rein," the terrorist repeats over and over again. "Cpt. what was that!" exclaims Viper 3. "Who cares about anything? Jon is dead we are failures," says Viper 4. "Men, keep your cool. I'm your Cpt., and what I say goes..." Then there is a pillar of smoke and a sound that sounds like a rocket launch.

"STINGER!" The missile hits the helicopter dead on and a huge ex-

plosion appears. Hours later, a new squad comes looking for the wreckage. They are lead by a Caucasian, middle-aged, 5'11"-tall man named Hancock.

Hancock gives his men these orders: "Men we are searching for a chopper that was shot down and contains a very important USB. We are also looking for a man that is 6'3", tan, bald with a grey/black beard, and is very muscular. His name is Cpt. Marc Rein, and he is officially an enemy of the state. Apparently, he has gone rogue, and we are to find and capture him if he is alive, which I doubt." Private Doogan exclaims, "Found him sir!"



Untitled by Devin Almonor (9-4)

I Hold Women To The Highest Of Heavens
And My Love For Y'all Is Unimaginable
We, Men Are Striking Upon An Adventure
Finding Our Queen-While Strutting in Your
Majestic Queendom,
Not Lifting a Pretty Finger,
Waiting For Thy King To Appear
And Have The Key to Your Heart-
Your Care For Life & Love Itself is Benevo-
lence,
Invincible You Gave Birth To Man And Woman
-All Respect.
Your Dignity, Pride, Honor, Wisdom
Words Can't Nearly Explain Because My Love
I Desire To Share With You Can't Be Dismem-
bered.
Want it Felt Between Pulses
I Won't Hold Back.
Body Full Of Wonders -Face Of A Goddess-
So Please Keep Your Beautiful Face Always
Smiling
I'll Promise to Offer Everything I Have For
You, To You, Us Two :-*)
Men are Not Complete Without a Woman's
Touch-
We Know We Can Be Selfish And Inconsiderate
But We Are Willing, Painting With Eloquence
Of Divine Promises Kept
And Become More Harp- Hearted For the Cap-
tivation Of Your Benign Romance
You Give I, Us Placed In The Melody Of Your
Rhythm
I Take Your Hand To Marvelously Mingle-From
The Heart.



DANNY SHOOK HIS HEAD, "ANOTHER NEW DAY." HE WALKED TO THE MIRROR ON HIS WALL AND COMBED HIS HAIR. HE LOOKED INTO THE SOLACE IN THE GREEN EYES OF HIS REFLECTION.

Providence: Prophecies-Part One by Junior Jimenez (9-5)

"Good Morning Providence City, This is Radio MTPC. I'm your host Kip Yardeling, and in today's news, the Prophet Elazarus has died today at age 900. The Prophet, whose predictions came true throughout most of his life die-

Sleep mode. Raises his head, rubs the crust from his eyes, yawns, and looks around his dorm. A knock at the door is heard. He looks at his alarm clock. Precisely 7:49 am. "Come in!" he yells. In came Gailden as he cracks his usual smile and says, "Danny, you were supposed to be awake 20 minutes ago."

Danny groaned, "I was up all night studying the Doragon no Buresu technique."

Gailden chuckled, "And I wonder who put you up to that assignment." Danny looked at him.

"Haha, very funny teacher, I'm surprised you haven't killed your students by overworking them."

"Uh-huh, I thought the great Daniel Leinhart always accepted a challenge."

Danny got out of his bed, "But of course."

"Be in the gym in 10 minutes, and DON'T

be late."

"That won't give me enough time to eat breakfast-

"Your punishment for oversleeping." As Gailden left the room he said, "Next time you should set that alarm clock to its appropriate time."

Danny shook his head, "Another new day." He walked to the mirror on his wall and combed his hair. He looked into the solace in the green eyes of his reflection. He put on his clothes and brushed his teeth. He looked at his bed, which had an acoustic guitar leaning on its side against it. He grabbed the guitar and strapped it to his back. "Yep," he said in confidence. "Another new day."

He ran out of his dorm into the hallway and passed by an old man in a suit, "Hey Dean Amistad!"

"No running- oh, what's the use." Down the stairwell he went and entered the gym where other students and their teachers were training. There was Gailden sitting on the bleachers waiting with the upmost patience.

"Glad to see you're on time." said Gailden.

"Only because you rushed me." Danny replied.

"Well, my young (and eager) pupil, today instead of training I'll be taking you outside."

"For what?" Danny asked.

"A little re-cap on life."

Danny looked to his left and to his right, "By the way, where's Minayo?"

*Besides the Autumn poets sing,
A few prosaic days
A little this side of the snow
And that side of the Haze.*

Minayo Heishiro would love to sit by the Atilus River and recite poetry. She was one of Gailden's students and Danny's best friend. Across the river was Downtown Providence, where the skyscrapers reached almost all the way to heaven. It was mid-autumn in the city and the cool autumn breeze was silent yet whispered in the ears of many that winter was on its way. She looked to her left and saw two familiar faces heading her way.

"I knew I'd find you here, poet." Danny called to her.

"Lemme

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guess,” said Minayo. “You overslept?”

Gaiden nodded.

“I’m sure Mr. Leinhart will learn his lesson. Now, on another note, instead of training I decided to stay out here and talk with you two.”

“Is this like an oral exam?” Minayo asked.

“Somewhat,” Gaiden replied. “Now, what is the name of this planet?”

“Terra,” The two pupils responded.

“And what are we?”

“We’re Mythologists,” Danny replied.

“What are Mythologists?”

“Direct descendants of human beings,” Minayo said.

“Very good, Minayo,” said Gaiden. “Both of you know the story of how our world came to be, right?”

“Who doesn’t?” asked Danny.

Gaiden nodded. “Well then, tell me.”

“The Earth belonged to the creatures,” Danny started. “Then the Council decided to give dominion of the Earth to the humans.”

“Then,” Minayo continued, “they decided to create a world of their own. And that’s

how Terra came to be.”

“Very good. You two know your history very well,” said Gaiden. “Now tell me, where did the Mythologists come from?”

“When the creatures began leaving Earth for the new world, goblins began to capture and enslave a couple hundred or so humans,” said Minayo.

“A few humans escaped and began to colonize,” Danny interrupted. “And here we are today!”

“The word ‘Mythologist’ is what we are called for we were ‘born in this mythical like world’,” Gaiden stated.

“So, what’s with the questions teacher?” Minayo asked. In a slow, calm voice he responded, “The Prophet Elazarus has died.”

“We know, we know,” said Danny.

“You probably don’t know the importance of this news,” said Gaiden.

“Of course we do Gaiden,” said Minayo. “A prophet is dead and now a new one will emerge.”

“That isn’t the point,” said Gaiden. “Throughout a prophet’s life, he or she is ranked

amongst past prophets on how many of his predictions actually come true. Elazarus was the greatest.”

“Almost the greatest,” Danny replied. “Only 99% of his predictions had come true.”

“Almost?” asked Minayo.

“99% of his predictions came true,” said Gaiden. “All but one.”

“And which one was that?” Minayo asked.

Gaiden sighed and recited, “The Falling Stone that fell from the sky, until the Land was seen no more.”

“Was that supposed to make sense?” asked Danny.

“Through most of my school days,” said Gaiden, “I’ve studied that one sentence to try to figure out what it meant. I even asked Elazarus himself, and he didn’t provide the answer.”

“So... like what, is it our own apocalypse or something?”

“Perhaps,” Gaiden replied. “But we’ve seen darker days on Terra. The Dwarves at the brink of war with the Elves and the Orc Civil War is still going on. The Council is trying to maintain peace but to

no avail.”

“What a tragedy,” said Danny sarcastically.

“Anyways,” said Gaiden. “Our group has been assigned on an official mission by the Dean himself.” Both Danny and Minayo looked at him with curious eyes. “As you may already know, the Van Helsing family is the most prominent here in Providence City. Lately they’ve been receiving threats from Goblin supremacist groups.”

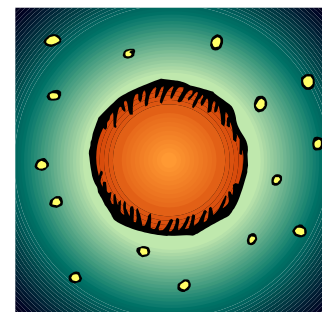
“The Wart Heads?” asked Minayo.

“Maybe,” said Gaiden. “Our #1 priority is to protect them at all times.”

“Sir yes Sir!” exclaimed Danny as he saluted.

“Dismissed,” Gaiden replied.

They both got up and left Gaiden alone. He watched the ripples of the water get larger and larger until they were no more. *The prophet*, he thought. *Dead*. The last time he



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spoke to the prophet, certain words were said that Gailden to this day would never forget.

"I must talk to you Gailden."

"About what, Prophet?"

"It's about the boy."

"Danny?"

"I've had a vision."

Gailden began to chuckle. "And to think, that boy might actually save us all."



FAITH WAS CRYING AS SHE SAID, "WHAT WERE DAD'S LAST WORDS?" SON, YOUR MOTHER AND I HAVE ALWAYS LOVED YOU. IT WAS VERY EMOTIONAL FOR ME. ALL I REMEMBER WAS A LOUD BANG AND DAD LYING ON THE FLOOR WITH A GUNSHOT WOUND IN HIS HEAD," SAID JEROME.

Jerome went to pay Faith a little visit in Miami, Florida. He changed his car and his license plates to Florida plates under Evan's name. He drove his beautiful all black Dodge Charger from Charlotte, North Carolina to Miami, Florida, which takes approximately 10 hours. It was windy and raining heavily.

He goes to the hardware store and buys a machete, two sets of brass knuckles, and a sledgehammer. He continues his journey to Faith's house. He exits the car dressed completely in black. He was wearing black Timberlands, an all-black White Sox cap, baggy black jeans, and a black hoodie, which was covering his face. He knocks on her door gently. Faith yells, "Who is it? Why do you trouble me in one of my darkest hours? I just want to be alone!"

"It is Jerome! I have come to comfort you and talk to you about dad. Can you please let me in?"

"Okay, come in Jerome! The door is open."

"How have you been? I know it is a hard time for all of us. I have been strong for mom, but it hurts from time to

time. Sometimes, I feel as if it was my fault for dad's death. I was the last to see him," said the emotionless Jerome.

Faith was crying as she said, "What were dad's last words?" *Son, your mother and I have always loved you.* It was very emotional for me. All I remember was a loud bang and dad lying on the floor with a gunshot wound in his head," said Jerome. "Excuse me. Every time I think about this horrible memory, I fall into tears. I just can't believe someone was so merciless as to do this. Daddy was a good man. He never hurt anybody." "Hey where is your husband, Calvin?"

"Calvin is at the Holiday Inn in Tallahassee, Florida taking care of some important business." Jerome curiously asked, "What important business, and how long will he be there?"

"He was called there for a teacher's conference. Calvin will be there for three more days. He really loves helping children the best way he can. Why do you ask?" questioned Faith. "I just wanted to know. You know me I'm always curious. Hey, I am going to my car. I'll be right back. Can you get me a beer?"

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“Okay, a cold one coming up. I will prepare a bowl of cashews too.”

Jerome went to his car pulled out the brass knuckles and put them on, over his black gloves. He hid the machete in the sheath on his back. The sledgehammer was held in his freezing, arctic hands. He slowly entered the house and watched as his sister was washing dishes. He swung the sledgehammer at the back of Faith’s head. She immediately collapsed; he dragged her up the stairs as blood rushed out of the back of her head. He broke into her bedroom and handcuffed her to the bed. Jerome took a bucket of ice water and threw it on her. Faith screamed, “Why are you doing this?”

“Shut up! I’m tired of hearing you complain about every little thing. Do you know how it feels going through life hearing your voice all of the time. I can’t take it anymore! I’ll be the one who finally shuts you up. I’m going to kill you now. Please, some peace and quiet,” Jerome screamed. “I am going to give an opium based shot that will make you stay awake and alert. Stay

still, or I’m going to shoot you in the neck.” Faith laid there as she watched her only brother inject her with the shot. Jerome started to laugh as he picked up the sledgehammer. He began to break Faith’s legs. Faith was screaming bloody murder, but he didn’t stop. Jerome then broke her arms; he dropped the sledgehammer and wiped the blood off his face.

He set up a video camera to record this glorious moment. He covers his face with a ski mask. Jerome felt he needed to vent his feelings before he killed Faith. “Mom and dad never loved me. They loved what I did. They saw me as an escape. An escape from the real world is what they desired. We lived in the ghetto. Our neighborhood was filled with alcoholics, drug addicts, bums, and gangs. Ma and pa rode my coat tails for years. I paid for their house. Yeah, my future was important only because your parents wanted to leave their agony, moans, and misery in the past. I’m exhausted from being the scapegoat of the household. I will no longer hold the weight of the world on my shoulders. I will not

have my feet shackled for you all to come along for the ride. I struggled, grieved, and whimpered every day and every night to make it. My family is no more than a bunch of dead weight that I’m willing to remove; you haven’t felt the things that I’ve felt. I want to terminate the discomfort, so I guess this is the end.” Faith began to sympathize with Jerome, but her physical pain was unbearable. “Faith, my favorite sister, sorry it had to end this way. I’m going to enjoy every minute of this.” He pressed record on the camera. He slowly pulled out the machete and blessed it with rubbing alcohol. He began to quote Psalm 23. “The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, and he refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name’s sake. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.” Jerome takes a pause and thinks about what has happened and what is about to take place. He picks up some holy oil Faith had on her dresser and blessed her with it. “Shall we begin now? We will meet again in the afterlife. Soon, you will join dad on the other side.” Jerome started cutting her open and removing every organ. The bed began to absorb her blood. The bed was dyed a dark red and soaked in Faith’s blood. Jerome went down stairs to get the cooler and filled it with ice from the refrigerator. He stored the organs in there. Jerome did not shed one tear.

He looked back at Faith’s bleeding corpse. Jerome laughed insanely and decapitated her. He lit up a cigar and drank the beer that Faith had put out for him. On the night table, next to the bed, there were directions to the hotel where Calvin was; Jerome couldn’t help himself. He took the heart and placed it on a plate on the kitchen table. He sent the head to his mother in the mail. He drove the cooler to the hotel where Calvin was staying with a letter saying it was urgent that he come to the front desk. A man gives

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him the cooler as Jerome leaves the hotel. “Oh no! What in the world is this? There’s a letter.”

Dear Calvin Joshua Williams,

Are you having fun yet? I hope you are having a lovely time. I paid your charming wife a little visit before I dropped off this little package for you. I wanted to give you something before I left. This gift is something that is near and dear to you. My gift to you is your soul mate. In the green case before you are the remains and relics of your once stunning wife. Her organs are on ice except for her heart. I have something special planned for that. Anyway, go home and relax. All your troubles are gone. Her loud mouth wouldn’t be screaming anymore. Enjoy the rest of your life. I will be seeing you soon.

Peace be with you and God bless,

Your humble savior

Calvin immediately takes off in his green Toyota. Calvin arrived back in Miami. He saw that his house was broken into. He busted in and saw the heart. He fell into tears.

“How could I let this happen? Who could have done this horrible act?” wept Calvin. He went upstairs and saw the body decaying. He vomited all over the floor from the very smell and sight of the body. He was so depressed that he decided to hang himself. For him, life was over. He started to drain his sorrows in whiskey. He drank so much he could barely talk or walk. He grabbed a barrel and went outside. He took some rope from his shed and made a noose. He attached it to the highest part of the tree in the backyard. He tied it tight and jumped off the barrel. He was left out to dry for ten hours with the bottle of whiskey at his feet. Jerome came back to the house and put Calvin’s fingerprints on the weapons. As he cleaned up any evidence of him being there, he smiled at the sight of his dead brother-in-law.

A few days later, his neighbor realized the body and called 911. The police had no idea what to suspect. Then they found the bat and machete. They ran some tests, and Calvin was blamed for the murder. The officers interrogated the clerk who gave Calvin the letter, and it was

found that the clerk was paid off and had destroyed the tape of Jerome being in the hotel. The clerk went to jail for fifteen years. The story was on the ten o’clock news. The Miami police had to break the news to Mrs. Johnson. Denise couldn’t believe it; two of the four most important in her life had died. Evan and Jerome were the only two that were still alive. This finally proved that Jerome has hate in his heart and ice in his veins. He decided to get high and have a few more beers before he killed the next person on his list.



The Victim List: Victim 3-Parents Just Don't Understand by Jah-see Martin (11-2)

On January 26, Jerome decides to pay a little visit to his mother. He travels back to Charlotte in his blue Cadillac Escalade with new license plates and registration under Evan's name. He drove back to his mother's house. Mrs. Johnson decides to move out of her old house because it reminded her of her husband too much. She now lives in a little blue house surrounded by foliage, three miles out of the city. First, he stops at his old school's lab. At Duke, Jerome takes a few ounces of mercury. He arrives at his mother's house wearing his Duke Varsity jacket, a backpack, a white T-shirt, a sapphire cross chain, and blue Converse. He walks to the shed out back and picks the lock. He takes the crowbar with him. Jerome hides it on his belt; the mercury was in his book bag.

He strolls to the front door. He takes a deep breath and knocks. Denise weeps, "Who is it?" He replies, "Mom, it's me, Jerome. I have come to give my condolences." Denise warmly replies, "Come in, son! The door is open." Jerome entered with a bou-

quet of white and blue roses. Mrs. Johnson was sitting down talking to Jerome's elementary school sweetheart, Candice Olivia Harrison. She is a light skinned African American Barbadian with long, black hair and hazel brown eyes; she has an hourglass figure. Her mother is African American, and her father is Barbadian. She had a close connection to the family because she was friends with Jerome. He respected her too much to add her as a notch on his belt.

"Hello, Candice! It's been a long time. How are you doing? How has your life been?" Candice said, "Hi, Jerome. I see you have grown up. Life has been good. I went to Empire Beauty School in New York. I just opened a salon in Durham, North Carolina. I use it as my hobby. My sister runs the salon because I sold it to her. I needed a career change. I'm now at North Carolina Department of Agriculture State Fairgrounds Police in Raleigh, North Carolina. I want to be a detective. It's sweet that you are giving for some flowers. Congratulations on being mentioned as

one of the youngest, smartest men in the world."

"I don't want to get all in your business, but are you married or seeing anyone, Candice?"

"No, I have not gotten to Mr. Right yet. I always figured I might have let him go when he left for New York."

"Too bad because I was wondering if we could give each other a try."

"That sounds like plan. I have to go but call me later. Here's my number."

"I'll do that. See you later."

Jerome said, "Hey mom, I bought you some flowers. I know it hasn't been easy, but I am still here. I will always love you mom. I'll do my best to end the pain. Mom, I just found out that I'm the 100th richest man in the world." Jerome takes a pause as he sees his mother crying. "I will relieve you of all your pain and trouble forever."

"Baby, keep your money to yourself. I'll be fine. If you know anything about a strong, black woman, you know they can make it no mat-



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"TOO BAD BECAUSE I WAS WONDERING IF WE COULD GIVE EACH OTHER A TRY."



I DIDN'T STOP TILL SHE WAS DONE. I TOLD HER HUSBAND ABOUT WHAT OCCURRED AND HE COMMITTED SUICIDE. TOO BAD, I WOULD HAVE KILLED HIM FASTER.

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ter what. Thank you for the thought though.”

“Hey mom, I have to confess something to you. It’s very important!”

“What is it? Get it off your chest! ‘What’s in the dark always comes to the light!’ Come on. You know you can always talk to your mama.” Jerome started to talk in a wimpy voice, “Alright, I know who killed dad. I see him every day. He threatens me to keep it undisclosed or else. I’m afraid to tell you.”

“Baby, you must tell. It’s the right thing to do. Your father and I always taught you to do the right thing. Please tell me. It will give me peace of mind.”

“Mama, it is me. I murdered dad. I shot him with my gun and placed him outside of the station. It was all me. I planned it a little before I escaped Haywood Correctional Center. I messed up, mom. One night, I got uncontrollably drunk and assaulted several people. You and everyone else are at fault for my actions. You and dad always pressured me in school. I have something else to tell you. Did you hear about Faith? I killed your only daughter. She is dead because

of me. I enjoyed every minute of her screaming and begging for mercy. Denise cried when she said, ‘Jerome, please have a heart.’ I didn’t stop till she was done. I told her husband about what occurred and he committed suicide. Too bad, I would have killed him faster.”

“Son, how could you? I’m heart broken! You killed three of the most vital and significant individuals in my being. Did you think how this was going to wound me? Did you think about ripping the very core of your beloved mother out of her chest?”

“Three mother? I haven’t killed Evan, at least not let.” Mama said, “You slayed yourself. You pierced and drained your heart out of every emotion known to man. You are no son of mine. As far as I know, you will deteriorate in prison because I’m calling the police.”

“Oh no mother, you will not call the police department or anyone because this is your last hour in this world. I’m going to eradicate you slowly and painfully. I’m going to add your name to my list of targets. I’m sorry it had to conclude this way, but you will have five

minutes to pray to your God before you meet him.”

Mrs. Johnson runs upstairs trying to escape her son. Jerome quickly tackles his mother. He clutches her and smashes her cranium till she collapses into a semi-conscious state. As she slowly gains consciousness, Jerome is standing in front of her. She is tied up in the shed; her hands are bound together by a rope, which is connected to a huge hook. Her feet were bound together by shackles. “Ah mother, how are you feeling? Well? Don’t worry, the pain you are feeling will soon be over! I will personally end your grief, heartache and anguish forever. Remember something though, I will always love you.” Mrs. Johnson was full of fear. She began to say the only thing that would calm her down, John 3:16.

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.’ If I should die today, I am ready to meet my Maker. I ask that all of my sins to be washed away. I want my soul to be white as snow when I see my Savior,” said

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Denise as she looked up to the sky. “Son, don’t do this. Your father and I raised you better than this. We come from a history of people that solve our problems rationally. Put the weapons away and turn yourself in. Do it out of love for me.”

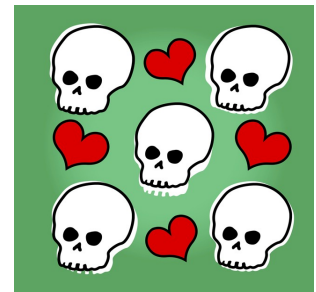
“No, woman! I will no longer listen to you. As far as I know, you are already dead to me. Love is meaningless. It is an emotion that causes hurt and pain to all those who fall too deeply into it. Now, *shut up!* I will need time to meditate on your massacre.”

Jerome laughs as he duck tapes the mouth of Mrs. Johnson. He picks up a crowbar and smashes it against his mother’s knees. He broke both of Mrs. Johnson’s knees caps permanently. He places his hands in his pockets. He pulls his brass knuckles on and punches his mother in the face repeatedly. As a result, he broke his mother’s jaw. Jerome looked at his momma and felt he owned her an explanation for his actions. “I felt as if I was an out-cast. In school, children made fun of me. At home, I felt as if my parents were in love with

my actions not me. When I was younger, I was depressed all the time, I had no friends. I cried myself to sleep frequently. I was alone and petrified. I sensed that it was as if I was in constant war with my pop. I wanted to commit suicide at the young age of eight, but I heard a little voice that said not to. I was only loved by Evan; he never wanted anything from me. He is my best friend. I felt that I had to make myself successful in spite of all those who hated and cursed me. I turned to alcohol and drugs to numb my pain from depression, my hatred for my father, and the lack of genuine love from my family. I’m sorry I’m not perfect, but the drugs and alcohol aren’t working anymore. I’m rich, but I’m not a work horse. I’m your son, your own flesh and blood. You treated me as if I’m not even yours. I’m not the adopted son. Save that type of treatment for Evan. I never had a father. That man was a dictator. You, mother, were an enabler. You saw him drink himself nearly into an early grave until he changed. You always wanted me to be like Nathaniel. Well, you got your wish. I’m a drunk

and a smoker. I get so high and drunk that I feel like I’m on another planet. Aren’t you happy? Are you not proud of me? I’m what you want a weak, spineless shadow of a man. Don’t move, or I’ll do something you’ll regret.”

Jerome started to feel sad for his mama’s woe. “Mother, I think you should stop suffering and get a sense of relief. Here, I’m going to give you a shot. It will discharge you of your agony.” He goes in his knapsack and pulls out a 20oz.biohazard flask of mercury, two needles and two test tubes. He rapidly attaches them to one another. The mercury slowly fills the needles. “Mom, this is the chemical, mercury. You wanted a way out, well here is your way out. Stay still, or I will take my machete and hack at you until you die.” Jerome injects the needles into each of his mother’s arms. The mercy began to course through her veins. Her body started to react to the mercury by causing her to have a seizure. He left at the horrible sight of his mother’s death. He knocks down all the gasoline tanks in the shed. Rats crawl out and begin to feast on Jerome’s



JEROME STARTED TO FEEL SAD FOR HIS MAMA’S WOE.

“MOTHER, I THINK YOU SHOULD STOP SUFFERING AND GET A SENSE OF RELIEF. HERE, I’M GOING TO GIVE YOU A SHOT. IT WILL DISCHARGE YOU OF YOUR AGONY.”

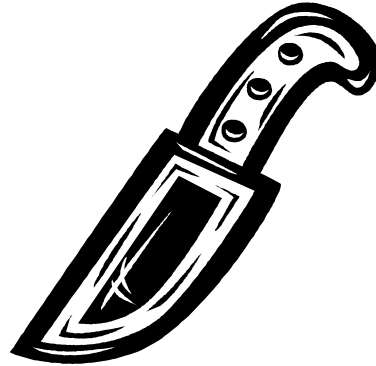
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mother's corpse. Jerome burned the shack down and left his mother to die in the locked tool shed out back, where rats were feasting on her.

Jerome takes out a cigarette and begins to smoke it slowly. Then, he pulls out his BlackBerry and calls Candice. They plan to go out every day this week. The two grow extremely close to each other. They walked through the park at nights, went to the movies and dinner, and spent time indoors at Candice's house. After eight days of dating, Jerome tells Candice that he must go to Pittsburg, Pennsylvania to take care of some business. It was urgent he leave immediately. Although she was depressed at the thought of seeing him go, she knew it was important to him. He promises to call her after he arrives. Four days after Jerome left, his mother's body was found in her backyard. Police figured that the murderer of Mr. Johnson came back to kill the widow. All they can tell is that the murderer is a tall, young African American male.

Jerome was finally done killing off his family. He decided to keep Evan alive for now because he has some-

thing special planned for him. He now has his eyes on his fourth target: the judge that sentenced him to jail. It's time for justice to work its way around in favor of Jerome. Victim number four will pay for his crime.



ALTHOUGH SHE WAS DEPRESSED AT THE THOUGHT OF SEEING HIM GO, SHE KNEW IT WAS IMPORTANT TO HIM. HE PROMISES TO CALL HER AFTER HE ARRIVES. FOUR DAYS AFTER JEROME LEFT, HIS MOTHER'S BODY WAS FOUND IN HER BACKYARD.

The Outbreak by Brandon Montalvo (11-4)

The following is excerpted from the revision of the private journal of Pvt. Alex McCloud "The Voice". After the emergence of "The Voice", Pvt. McCloud accessed the journal and numerous entries were edited. The journal appears as it always has. It has not been edited or revised. As far as you are aware, "The Voice" has not changed what Pvt. McCloud originally entered.

Chapter 1: Entry

I'm writing this journal entry because my English teacher, Mr. Eagan said to. Every Friday we will make a journal entry. I sit here not writing even though my pen continues to move, writing exactly what I'm thinking as if there is no real thought to my words. All that's here are the words that "The Voice" in my head spits out. Even as I consciously read what my hand is writing, I still choose to add no thought-out complex ideas. Only what "The Voice" tells me is what's written. It's as if "The Voice" is controlling my hand and I have no control of what's written; all I can do is watch. But still, my hand writes on its own through the guidance of

"The Voice". Even as it explains my current predicament, it writes what comes to my mind but I still have no control. I want to stop writing; I'm lazy in that way, but I can't. My hand will not respond to me trying to stop. It only stares at me with a smug grin as it grips the pen I borrowed from Mr. Eagan not long ago- literally five minutes ago. Could it be the pen? Has Eagan cast some hex on it? Could it be that, because Eagan is a literary genius and English enthusiast, his brain fluid and knowledge has become infused with this pen giving me a momentary ghost like countenance where my thoughts are relayed but my body does not respond. My body is in a state of paralysis, and only my mind and "The Voice", which is a harsh combination of my mother and a drill instructor, is controlling my immovable corpse. Can "The Voice" be silenced? Was it there, in my mind since birth? Has it been there since the beginning only waiting for a moment where my literary intelligence was heightened enough for a chance to escape and because of The Pen which combined with Eagan's es-

sence set free a horrid monster deep inside my cerebellum. "The Voice" controls all. The words being written are not words at all. It's as if "The Words" are being used to mock me, to tell me that I am not in control, calmly reassuring me that the words, although not my own, still reflect me. I can't help but think about how I've lost all will and power over my own mind. "The Voice" is guiding me through this hell, trying to fool me into thinking that it is not responsible for my current situation. "The Voice" gives itself too much credit. It relays to me how I lost to it and that "It" has all the control. It gloats about how I finally reached a literary pinnacle, finally giving it room to escape. I've realized an important life lesson because of "The Voice". I have hit an epiphany; there are things about us that should never be seen or found. The human mind is full of contempt, and "The Voice" is in us all. We all have an inner being discreetly controlling us, a fervent creature, with a supercilious attitude, mocking us. What we fail to realize is that we are "The Voice". "The Voice" is our inner



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HUMAN KIND WAS BECOMING MORE DEPENDENT ON TECHNOLOGY AND UNFORTUNATELY, AS GREAT AS THE UNITED STATES IS, ITS INHABITANTS WERE BECOMING MORE MORONIC EVERY DAY.

most desires. It is our desire for power, our desire for control. “The Voice” is what makes us human; it is what separates us from beast. We make our own future. We control our destiny, and we decide what our fate is. Memory Terminated. This is log 842; I am Pvt. Alex McCloud. Days without signs of life: 249. I don’t think I can keep doing this!

Chapter 2: The Fall of a *Country* World!

Log 843. This is Alex McCloud, Pvt. in the United State Marine Corps. If you are reading this, then I’m most likely dead. I believe the year at the moment is 2022. The outbreak started in 2012. I can still see how screwed up the world was before the “outbreak”. The “2000’s” were, and most definitely still are, hell. Human kind was becoming more dependent on technology and unfortunately, as great as the United States is, its inhabitants were becoming more moronic every day. During the age of “MTV” and internet porn, things such as books and reading were considered “unpopular” and not practiced. Don’t get me wrong. Around the time of my high

school career and on, in around 2011, “SAT” scores were higher than ever. They were so high that they needed to be regulated. At first, only distinct idiots bought into the mass media of “MTV”, but then, the entire teenage population was enthralled with the crap, and even later, “intellectuals” were beginning to take part in the convivial and slowly dying times of the 2000’s. Technology wasn’t the only aspect that took part in the fall of man. For example on the morning of September 11th, 2001, 19 al-Qaeda terrorists hijacked four commercial passenger jet airliners. The hijackers intentionally crashed two of the airliners into the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center in New York City, killing everyone on board and many others working in the buildings. I was in the first grade at the time and was too young to comprehend what had truly taken place, but, as young as, I was just like the children before me who had seen Kennedy assassinated or the attack on Pearl Harbor. I could feel the sorrow in the atmosphere, the melancholy of the city and even that of the country as it wept. I asked my-

self, “why?” I came to the epiphany that it was just because the world was falling apart. The world was just going to hell, on a train bound for the inferno, and this train was going express. In 2003, my younger brother Ethan was born, not that that pertains to the ending of the world. As time went on, “music television” became reality T.V. “Music Television” was no longer music television. It was just a ploy, a device to further weaken the minds of the human race in preparation for something bigger and horrible. Shows like “Jersey Shore” and “The Real World” and any of the other garbage shows broadcast were all used to feed the slowly increasing idiocy of man. The worst was still to come; the “F-Virus”, as I call it, would destroy man as we knew him. The virus was developed by a man named Mark Zuckerberg, an American computer scientist, software designer, and most importantly a technological terrorist. In 2004, Zuckerberg, in the guise of a Harvard student, created (along with some friends) a social networking site. Zuckerberg effectively spawned a technological weapon ten times as powerful as

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Love Poems by Lance Glover (9-4)

Einstein's atomic bomb. A few years after the site launched, it became the most popular site on the "inter-web". I've had nearly a decade to figure out Zuckerberg's plan; I believe I have figured out exactly what he planned and how he planned this worldwide attack. Zuckerberg is a very smart man and knows how media works. He knew the "site" would be abused by all because of the technological slump man was heading into. He gave his plan a great time gap before putting it into effect. During 2009 and 2010 "Facebook", as the site became known, was the number one site on the internet. It was also the number one source for everything; the site had pointless pursuits- things such as liking posts, updating statuses, posting your deepest, most profound information or playing endless games. It appealed to everyone- the young, the old, "the good, the bad, and the ugly". Most everyone had it. It was the perfect tool to destroy the world.

World Love

The world is full of love
Why is there a need to push or shove
leading to harm or even shame
love is something hard to tame
some may consider it to be lame
but with correct love
it can lead to fame
not like actors
Oh, not the same
but as a lover
your life will change

Nerd Love

I see a chick
she's not that thick
some may consider her to be "sick"
if I were to say that to her
I would most likely get kicked
and, as a result, have to use a walking stick
maybe I should show her a card trick
but the only thing is, I'm not that slick
I guess I just have to find the right magic

Love Failure

I would love to have you back
but you do not know how to act
you were my special plaque
when you left I needed an ice pack
almost about to have a heart attack
our relationship was on a railroad track
until it turned soot black

Relationship Strength

Our relationship is easy to misunderstand
but becomes clear as we hold hands
love held together as if with rubber bands
I will always let you take command
follow every single demand
even give you my adrenal gland

Silence the Violence by Antonello Velez (10-1)

When we stop the violence,
Will we wait until the world is in total silence?
All the kids think guns are cool,
Parents complain when they fight inside school,
We promote killing in movies and video games,
They aren't real, so is it the same?
Yet parents want to make a common claim,
That the entertainment industry is to blame,
They don't blame themselves,
They blame all of this,
And they don't realize they sound ridiculous,
But when they look into their mind,
All sorts of secrets they will find,
That as the increase of people seems to climb,
It becomes necessary for the human population to decline,
When they see death in the news they pretend to care,
But when they experience it first hand they say it isn't fair,
Bask in the ignorance,
No such thing as innocence,
Let's move on to the topic of war.

More and more dead bodies falling to the floor,
Since the beginning of time when we started with spears,
Doesn't matter how it started because it always ends in tears,
Fights to end slavery,
Death we call bravery,
What does America look for in a soldier?
Besides checking if they're eighteen and over,
They want to know if they can handle a gun,
So they can either die or shoot someone,

We don't know what they go through truly,
But act like it when we play Call of Duty,
Do a good deed and put down the controller,
Go to a dead soldier's wife to console her,
To avoid death soldiers try to flee,
Prevent injuries that cause illiteracy,
Hopes to return to the families,
But the enemy is the last thing they see,
Americans call them the enemy,
Whether they're from New York or Tennessee,
They aren't just killing machines though,
This is the part the government doesn't want you to know,
They get sad and cry just like we cry,
To them, we are all the bad guys,
I don't see why whenever there is a conflict,
America feels they have to respond to it,
They don't want to let the rebels rebel,
Instead they spray fire and send the rebels to hell,
We fight for others because of what we teach,
So our views aren't just something we preach,
This country is always letting the world get upset,
Because we can't pay them back and we stay in debt,
I wonder if there were really weapons of mass destruction,
I wonder what would have happened if they pressed the button.
America's life is not filled with cookies and ice cream cones,
This place is a battlefield and a true war zone,
There is no safety in the streets,
People are preying on helpless people to defeat,
They think they're winners and find people to beat,
And stop when the loser has no heartbeat,
I don't understand why the rich prevail,

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They come off easy when it comes to jail,
All the Wall Street sinners,
Eating their expensive dinners,
We need to open the eyes of American establishment,
Because the lower class doesn't get the same special
treatment,
We think all the bad people go through imprisonment,
Who is to say a criminal can't be the president?
I don't want to start any drama,
That was an insult to Clinton, Bush, and the beloved
Obama,
Why do you like Barack,
Give me ten reasons,
Can't do it, but they want him to run the United States
for sixteen seasons,
How could you give us false hope?
This isn't religion and you aren't the pope,
It was his destiny,
To make groundbreaking history,
To be honest it lost its flair,
Because people want a better economy and healthcare,
During the next election,
Will he be the right selection?
They say the choice is yours,
The votes are gathered up to settle the score,
No one knows what is in store,
And when the winner is revealed people will drop to
the floor,
I don't know if it is because they will rejoice,
Or they will be upset that the people ignored their
voice,
People say there is such a thing as karma,
And there could be retaliation for what happened to
Osama,
Paranoia strikes and you look over your shoulder,

You should know that the war isn't over,
To say that would be an error,
Right now, we aren't close to the end of war on terror,
Obama thanked the president of Pakistan for his partici-
pation,
Now we await possible retaliation,

Any person born is dead on arrival.
Whether it's a natural death or poisoned by a rival,
It isn't until you are in a deadly state,
When you realize everyone has an expiration date,
There are too many ways to kill,
Decapitation, Assassination, or a pill,
We can add fighting, but that takes skill,
All these methods just give me a chill,
The whole world needs good and evil,
I want to be the one to point that out to people,
What if evil gets the upper hand?
And causes the end of every woman, child, and man.

Should I even bring up drugs?
Are you intrigued or will you just shrug,
I don't want to make my mother cry,
Lost a son that wanted to get high,
Let's get one thing clear,
Cocaine is as deadly as an ice-cold beer,
You are bound to experience intoxication,
Don't drink and drive- just walk to the train station,
You don't want to have an emergency operation,
I don't consider this a lesson,
I just want the answer to my question,
When will we stop the violence,
Will we wait until the world is in total silence?

Tales of the Underworld: Part One-Swan Song for Demigods by David Mordle (11-4)

In a garden unseen by the Olympian gods, on Mount Olympus, a woman named Tiffin gave birth to a child named Esau. Tiffin was worried about Esau because he wouldn't smile or cry, so she decided to pick some flowers at the very end of the garden. While picking the flowers the ground opened, and a god-sized hand grabbed the baby and pulled it down, into its abyss. Tiffin returned without having heard the kidnapping and saw that her only child was taken from her. Knowing this was the will of a vengeful god, Tiffin shouts at the ground "Curse you Lord Hades!!!" Without a doubt the child was taken into the Underworld by its ruler, himself for a purpose that not even the Fates knew since they had not deemed it. Lord Hades is genius. Esau was raised as well as a normal, mortal child could be in the Underworld and was overseen by the ferryman Charon while Lord Hades wife, Queen Persephone, was away. I am Esau, demigod son of Hades..... This is my story.

Since I could remember, I always dreamed of going on my own epic adventure to prove myself to the gods

of Olympus, mortals, and ultimately my father. I envy the demigod Perseus, who killed the Gorgon Medusa. I am not very envious of Hercules with his twelve labors. I envy even Odysseus and Achilles, who weren't demigods but had the pride and the courage to continue on. When I learned that I was a demigod myself, I couldn't wait to begin my adventure. Yet who would know that it just took one glorious song, to catch my attention. This song was within my dream. The dream started out with Charon telling me that my father requested my presence in his palace. Well, for starters, I was nervous because this was the first time I ever saw my father, a.k.a. Lord Hades, ruler of the Underworld, god of the dead.

Suddenly, I heard a glorious song calling me. I wanted to continue my journey to my father's palace, but the song was so mesmerizing that I couldn't ignore it, so I followed. This song leads me to the doors to Tartarus, the place where all poor souls go to endure perfect punishments, which was also the new home of the Titans who lost the Great War to my father and his brothers and sisters. The chains to the doors were said to be so tight that it would take

my father and both of his brothers to open them, but when I approached the door, the chains unraveled as if they were for show. Suddenly, a dark being with mottled lava skin emerged out of Tartarus and attacked my father's palace. Then, a beam of light left Tartarus and overwhelmed the dark being. The light then transformed itself into a woman more beautiful than the goddess of love, Aphrodite, herself.

As I pulled my sword out to defend myself, she says, "Do not fear me Esau, for you will save your father in the future and save me as well." Before I had a chance to say anything, a bearded man with wings flew towards me. I again pulled my sword out, but before I could strike him, I immediately woke up from my dream with a cranky, skinny, old man, who had white skin, and a few long hairs hanging over his head standing over me.

"Bad dreams my prince?" the old man asked.

"No," I respond, "and please don't hover over me while I sleep, Charon."

"My apologies," Charon said as he raised his hand to his ferry boat. "It is fascinating how you mortals sleep. Being on ferry duty and guarding

you while Queen Persephone is gone have put a toll on me my prince."

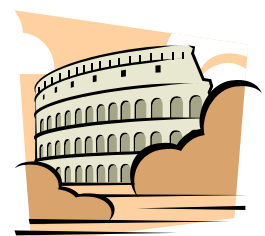
"Ever since I was born, you know, father hasn't wanted me seen by anyone. Why do you raise your hand to your ferry boat?" I asked, searching for a good place to rest my head before anyone else would interrupt me from my sleep.

"Well, you must because it's time for your judgment," Charon said, which puzzled me.

"I'm... I died? Am I dead Charon?" I asked.

"No, but you must go to the three judges to see if you are worthy enough to be known as the demigod son of Lord Hades to the mortals and to the gods of Olympus. Others were judged and failed. They went to Tartarus and endure the punishment with other brothers and sisters who too failed the judgment in the arena," Charon said.

Just as I was about to enter Charon's ferryboat, I heard the glorious song which I had heard in my dream. I told Charon that I was going to walk to the Judgment Arena, so I could walk with the song one last



Tales of the Underworld: Part Two-Highway to the Judgment Arena by David Mordle (11-4)

While walking with the glorious song, a winged figure was flying towards me. I drew my sword, and the figure made a small gesture which made my sword turn into ashes. The figure landed in front of me and was covered with rusted armor and the handle of a sword strapped to its belt. The figure turned out to be the same bearded man with wings on his back from my dream.

“Do not fear me Esau,” the bearded man said. “I am practically family.”

“Who are you?” I asked.

“Alright then, my name is Thanatos, god of death,” the bearded man said, “mostly referred to the personification of death.”

“Like my father?” I asked

“I’m nothing like your father! Without me, your father would be out of a job. Once your father was crowned ruler of the underworld, mortals forgot the *true* god of death. Yet, I like it when people blame your father instead of me, ha, ha, ha,” Thanatos said.

As I was talking with the god of death, I wanted him to tell me about my mother. I wondered whether she was dead or not, because I would try my best to see her once I saw the mortal

world again.

“If you are the god of death....?”

“Sorry I will never tell you who is alive or dead even though that is one of my rare talents,” Thanatos said.

“Why?” I asked.

“If I tell, it will disrupt the order of balance between my power and that of the Fates,” Thanatos said. “By the way, where are you going anyway Esau?”

“I was going to the Judgment Arena by foot,” I said, which made Thanatos laugh.

“Are you mad? Walking to the Judgment Arena is risky even if you are the prince of the Underworld. You have to walk past that hungry three headed dog Cerberus at his lunch hour.

Then, wait on the long line of souls waiting to be judged since the beginning of time,” Thanatos said. He then reached out his hand, and with no other choice, I took it. He immediately pulled me onto his back and flew me to the arena.

The Judgment Arena was surrounded by billions souls waiting to be judged. All of the souls were shouting at each other for cutting in line, while nervous souls were begging others to go in front of them. Thanatos brought me to the front of the line where one of the

souls shouted, “Who are you to fly this soul in front of me? I, John of Athens waited almost three life times for my judgment, and now, I have to wait even more!”

“You dare shout at me, Thanatos, god of death, and my friend Esau? For this, you, John of Athens will spend another three life times on your way to the Judgment Arena,” Thanatos said as John suddenly vanished. “See you soon Esau, that is, if you fail.”

“Don’t worry, I won’t,” I said as I turned to the door to the arena and entered it.

The Judgment Arena was filled with souls, but all were chanting “Thunder!” All souls were said to be royal subjects of the three deceased judges Minos, Aeacus, and Rhadamanthus. Suddenly, the three appeared in front of me.

“Here is Esau, demigod child of Lord Hades,” a royal subject said. The first judge set before me had a scar on his eye and no hair.

“I, Judge Aeacus, see that you Esau are not worthy for Lord Hades plans as his demigod son, because you always manage to leave the place where you were ordered to be,” said Judge Aeacus. The second judge was a dark skin man with gold paint underneath his eyes.

“I, Judge Rhadamanthus, see that you Esau are worthy of Lord Hades plans as his demigod son, because you defended his Queen against the Furies, who attacked her garden,” Judge Rhadamanthus said. The final Judge stood, and the Arena shouted, “THUNDER!!!”

“I, Judge Minos, have the final say in this Judgment Arena,” Judge Minos said as the souls screamed, “Tartarus.” “I agree with the souls, for once, as you are not worthy. Rhadamanthus should have not seen you worthy because of that story. In the future, you will have to give up some of your own to continue on.”

Before I could say anything, a darker voice behind them said, “Reverse your judgment Judge Minos. Judge Minos was shocked that the voice said to reverse his decision. “I have watched you throw my demigod children into Tartarus for far too long. He will be the first.”

After finally figuring out that the voice belonged to my father, I wanted to see and speak with him for the first time in my life, but the three judges waved their hands and made me appear in Queen Persephone’s Garden.

The Fight for the Island-Chapter 2: Awakening in a Foreign Land by Luis Rivera (9-1)

“Wake up. Hey, wake up! Kid, wake up!” Lance had awakened to an old man leaning over him. He had white hair, with a white beard, wrinkly skin, white eyes, and white skin. “Let’s go now, get up.”

“Where am I?”

“Why, you’re in Lisbon my dear American.”

“Where’s Lisbon at?”

“How do you not know Lisbon? It’s the capital of Portugal.”

“Portugal! How did I get from the mid-Atlantic to Portugal?”

“How do I know? I just found you here lying in the sand, so I came to see if you were alright, which I take it you’re not because you’re covered in blood. Here let me take you to my house and I’ll clean you up.”

The old man took Lance back to his rather small, simple house. It was painted white, and the house was surrounded by a forest of trees. What stood out the most was the golden yellow door in the front of the house and a golden fence surrounding the house. Inside the house, it looked ten times bigger than what it appeared to be from the outside. The exterior of the house could be compared

to a shed, but, on the inside, it was the size of a football stadium. Lance took a seat in a big rocking chair near a corner of the living room, which had no T.V., no telephone, and not even a radio. The house looked of old age. The old man came out with iodine and water. He poured the iodine on the open wound on his head which was pouring out blood. “OUCH!” Lance screamed in pain as the old man poured iodine and then flushed it out with water.

After the cuts were taken care of, Lance asked the old man a question. “Who are you?”

“The question is who are you- Lance Jim Hunter?” the old man replied.

“How do you know my name?”

“Ha!” The old man gave off a sarcastic laugh. “I know everything about you Lance, like how your parents were killed while on a cruise trip on their 13th anniversary, when you were 12. The cruise ship sank, sparing everyone on the ship except your parents. You were left alone in the streets, wandering aimlessly for years, feeding on what was thrown out by the wealthy. You waited until you were 18 to join the navy to prove to your fallen parents that you

would conquer what killed them. Lance, there is a reason you’re still floating in the water off the coast of the island.”

The image of the old man started to blur and it seemed that Lance was losing consciousness, or was regaining it back.

Lance tried to get that one question he asked earlier answered, “But, who are...”

“I am and will always will be in your mind in your heart and in your...” The image disappeared, and Lance woke up on top of a floating piece of metal from the explosion. Choppers and search lights were searching overhead. The cut in his head was still bleeding, as if it hadn’t been healed, but it seemed to Lance to be a figment of his imagination. He stood up with all his strength in the cold, windy waters of the mid-Atlantic and tried waving at the chopper. It took a couple of minutes, but one chopper finally spotted him. They lowered a rescue ladder to which a marine was hanging on, trying to grasp a grip on Lance’s hand.

“Gotcha!” said the marine. He gave the signal to pull the ladder up to a fellow marine when all of a sudden, a splash hit the water; this was not just a normal rock or item splashing into the water, it

was a big, heavy object. As Lance looked behind him, he saw an unbelievable scene. The helicopters that had passed him had all fallen and crash landed on either the island or the water. The Marine was stunned, looking at the unnatural event. He was very concerned since his brother was a marine and was in one of those choppers that had fallen on the island.

He told the marine controlling the chopper, “Head straight for the island.”

Lance screamed with what little voice he had left in him, “No, don’t go towards that island. That place is where all my fellow sailors died.”

“But, my brother is in there solidly, and I have to help my family member.”

“Then leave me here. I would rather drown in the freezing waters then take one step on that island.”

“Alright sailor, I’m not going to argue with you. There’s a fallen comrade on that island who will take your spot.” And with that, the chopper had left Lance and headed straight toward the island. The last thing Lance heard was one more loud splash into the cold waters. Then, he fell into what felt like a very, very long sleep.

The Fight for the Island-Chapter 3: The Pentagon Takes Action by Luis Rivera (9-1)

Now, we're back in America, at the Pentagon in Virginia. The place is a madhouse; people are scattering all around the floors, and telephones are ringing super loudly. It was like a musical of the noises you least want to hear. T.V. screens were showing static and blips. A huge hologram of the world showed every U.S. Military Base in the world. It also showed all of the military's submarines and battleships, which were positioned in strategic locations for any outbreak of war.

Then, someone took a microphone and controlled the crowd. He stood on the second floor of the underground base. He gave a speech and asked some questions about what information that had been gathered, which was very little.

"Everyone settle down! Now let's get to work. What information do we have on the disappearance of the USS Lincoln, and choppers 014598-014601?" Then the head intelligence analyst stood up and let the man with the microphone know what was going on.

"General Wolfe, the last radio call we re-

ceived from the USS Lincoln was at 2200 hours and reported that they had docked at an unknown island. About three-quarters of the sailors went on the island and decided to have a look. The rest of the sailors stayed on the boat. At 2350 hours we lost full communications with the ship."

"Full communications Colonel Watson?"

"Everything General, radio, GPS, we tried everything sir. We even sent choppers to the scene where we lost communications with them, as you already know."

"Are you sure this island isn't within the Bermuda Triangle?"

"No sir, in fact here are the coordinates: -56. 30 degrees longitude, 27.80 degrees latitude. It is north of the island that goes by the codename A8IN8."

"A8IN8?"

"It is a very small island in the mid-Atlantic. It is mainly used for meteorological testing, and experiments. But, that island is not of importance. It is an island 35 miles north of it."

"So

that's the island where we lost full communications with the ship."

"Well, all I know is that it's around that area where we lost communications, so the island has to be around there somewhere."

"Alright then, just one last question. Which country were the scientists that were conducting the testing on that island from?"

"It was actually used by a couple of countries, but the most recent one was China."

"Okay then, here's the plan everyone. I'm only going to say it once so everyone listen up. Admiral Johnson, you will choose the amount of ships and troops you think will be necessary based on the information you've heard. General Brown, you will set up and prepare the air force's finest aircrafts in case we have to 'make it rain.' I have a feeling the Chinese are up to something. 250 troops and 12 choppers just don't disappear in the dark. Now everyone, get to work. I want operation Rescue the Fallen carried out in 0300 hours. And one last thing, keep your mouths shut; we can't let the me-

dia find out about this."

On that final note, people started scrambling to their offices, as if to prepare for a play. But, on this perfect planet, we don't have perfect people. Apparently, a First Lieutenant in the Marine Corp. didn't hear the last thing General Wolfe had said. He decided to tell a friend who happened to be in China at the time about all that went on. The word about the island started to spread, but not fast enough. The United States already had a small armada heading toward the island, but they did not know what they were heading into.

"EVERYONE SETTLE DOWN! NOW LET'S GET TO WORK. WHAT INFORMATION DO WE HAVE ON THE DISAPPEARANCE OF THE USS LINCOLN, AND CHOPPERS 014598-014601?"

In the Shadows of the Moon-Chapter 1: Head's On by Eduardo Ramirez (9-5)



I STOPPED AND HOPED SHE WOULD NOT START WITH THE SAME ADVICE SHE ALWAYS GAVE ME. AS USUAL, SHE STARTED TO SAY, “DON’T TALK TO PEOPLE YOU DON’T KNOW, DON’T LOOK AT THEM. DON’T EVEN STOP AND LISTEN TO THEIR NONSENSE.”

My name is Lucy Foster. I’m 15, and I live with my grandparents right now. My parents disappeared after I was born. I never understood why my parents left. My grandparents said that they left because someone was following them, and they had to get away. It was always a mystery to me. They acted as if my parents were from some other planet. Of course, I was in my own. I just started my summer vacation. I live in Rockville, Maryland. I just moved here for high school. It’s a small town and is also very quiet. As I look out my window, I see my grandfather. My grandfather is a 75-year-old man. He is not tall but is the same height as me. He is very smart. He does not like it when people do stuff for him. I open my window and call him. “Grandpa!” He turns around, looking for the person that has called him. He sees me and puts on an outstanding smile. I ask, “where’s grandma?”

“She is in the kitchen waiting for you,” he said, looking like a million dollars. As I walk towards the kitchen, I see my grandmother sitting, eating breakfast. “Good morning grandma! How’s your

morning?”

“My morning has been going great sweetie,” she replied, with a weird smile on her face. Her smile did not amuse me much that morning. I finished eating my breakfast and got up to leave the table. I told my grandma that I was going to the mall and left stop at my room first. As I get ready to change, I look out the window. I see a man talking to my grandfather. He was tall and also had gray hair but did not look old either. He was also taller than my grandfather. He was wearing a black jacket and black jeans- he was dressed in all black. I did not understand why since it was so hot outside. I was guessing he was just welcoming him into the neighborhood. After I finished changing, I headed downstairs. I told my grandma that I was leaving. Before I walked out the door, she stopped me. I stopped and hoped she would not start with the same advice she always gave me. As usual, she started to say, “Don’t talk to people you don’t know, don’t look at them. Don’t even stop and listen to their nonsense.” I might as well just not go outside and live in cave for crying out loud,” I

said.

“Lucy I just care about you and I don’t want you to get hurt.”

“I know grandma, I know” I said. There was a silence, as if death was in the air. “Anyways grandma, I need to go. There are a lot of things I want to do before the day ends.”

“Okay sweetie, take care.” We hugged, and then I started to head out. I notice that the man in black is still talking to my grandfather. They start to walk toward the kitchen, probably so I could not hear the conversation, so I went to the mall.

It did not take me a long time to get there. I meet my best friend. We were best friends since 1st grade. Her name was Jade. Jade was an outgoing girl. She was tall, a few inches taller than me, and was my trusted pal. “Hi Lucy,” she said, her voice sounding like a gentle little girl’s voice. She was actually older than me by one year. “Hey,” I said, with a voice of wonder. The day passed by quickly and quietly. Before we left, I told Jade of the man in black. “Does he look mean or weird in a way?” she asked. I was shocked by how much she had been paying at-

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tention since she barely paid attention in school or any conversation. “No ...well yes he looks creepy.” Then she said, “He’s probably a ...a... killer, trying to see how many people live in your house.” I rolled my eyes at her suggestion. Then, I noticed that it was getting late. “Let’s finish this conversation tomorrow,” I said, running away without waiting for her to respond.

As I am walking toward my house, wondering if that man was still there, I see them outside. I can hear them arguing about something. I went ahead and stood right next to my grandpa. The man in black was surprised, seeing me. He just stood there as if I was not there. He did not even move to ask who I was. I introduce myself. “My name is Lucy Foster.”

“I know who you are.”

“You do?” I ask in shock.

“STOP! You have no right to be saying anything!” my grandfather screamed at the man. “Leave now and never come back or else you’re going to get hurt. We will tell her at the right time. Now is not it!” my grandfather said to the man. I have

never seen my grandfather so mad. He had a look in his eyes that suggested that he wanted to kill the man in black. It was like two lions fighting for territory. “Grandfather, calm down!” I pleaded.

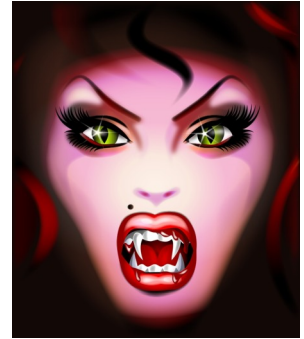
“I need to kill you all for defying me!!” My face turned as fast as lightning toward the man in black. “What!?” I asked. “Enough!” exclaimed my grandfather as he grabbed the man and sent him flying across the field of our big yard. I was in total shock about what had just happened. I was trying to explain it to myself, and I thought that I was dreaming. I must have been day-dreaming. No ... no I am not dreaming at all. This is reality! As I look at my grandfather, I see his eyes have changed into a hazel-like color. It looked as if his strength changed and doubled in a few seconds.

“Grandfather what’s going on, what is happening!?” I questioned him. He said that this guy is here to kill me. I was standing there in total shock. Why me? What have I ever done? I asked my grandfather, “why?”

“It’s because you’re next in line for

the throne.”

“Throne!?” I asked. He said “yes, you’re next in line because you’re a ... vampire.” I felt nothing.



I WAS IN TOTAL SHOCK ABOUT WHAT HAD JUST HAPPENED. I WAS TRYING TO EXPLAIN IT TO MYSELF, AND I THOUGHT THAT I WAS DREAMING. I MUST HAVE BEEN DAY-DREAMING. NO ... NO I AM NOT DREAMING AT ALL. THIS IS REALITY!

In the Shadows of the Moon-Chapter 2: Tension by Eduardo Ramirez (9-5)

The air around me felt more pleasant than the news I had just been told. “Yes you are ... I know it is really hard to believe that you are,” my grandpa tells me as he searches for the man in black.

“But how am I one?”

“You just...,” he began, and before he could finish saying the word, the man in black grabbed him and threw him to the other side of the yard. I was in total shock. “GRAND PA!!! NO!!!” I screamed as he crashed into the fence of our backyard. I saw the man in black. He was facing me with the eyes of the dead. It looked as if he had found his prey and was getting ready to kill it. It seemed like he knew that his journey had ended, and he was getting ready to leave. He saw me there on the green grass. I closed my eyes for just a second, and I saw him in front of me. He was looking down at me, as if I was some kind of dog, and he was my owner. “Why are you doing this to us? What have I ever done to you?” I asked, crying at the same time. “You want to know why? Why I am trying to kill you? Why I am hurting you?” the man in black asked. He looked as if he was 16, which was

weird because he had white hair. I could somehow feel a tension in my body, and I started to feel weak.

“Yes, I want to know why you are doing this to me and to my family.”

“Get away from her now!” I heard as I saw him getting punched right in the face. He flew, hitting the grassy ground, and was stopped by a kick.

“Grand mother? You knew it too?”

“Yes. I did not want you to find out until you were a little older, but I think the moment has come.”

“Death rose!”
“Get away!”
shouted my grandmother as she pushed me aside. Then, I saw my grandmother on the ground, unconscious. My grandfather was still on the ground too. It looked like they were dead. The man in black was taking his time now, walking as though the world had stopped spinning. There was only me and him left. I tried to run away. Before I could take the first step, I was already being thrown in the air. I was in shock because of how fast he was. He was about 100 feet away from me. How quickly he got to me was a shock. As I crashed on the ground like a

thrown pebble, I looked up to see if he was coming. He was. I was trying to drag myself up and get away. There was no way. I could not even lift my hand to pull the grass. Finally, he reached me. I was already down. His eyes were full of hatred toward me. “Stay away from me! Stay away,” I was screaming to him as he was trying to get a hold of my face. “Shut up! It’s your turn to die,” he said. I did not know whether to scream for help, to cry, to fight back, or not. “It over,” he said. “Now, I am done for,” I thought. Suddenly, I saw a flashing light. “What? No!!!” The man in black went flying beyond the yard and through two cars. It looked like it injured him badly. “Are you ok?” a girl appeared. She was wearing a purple and black dress.

She looked like she knew what she was doing. She turned her head and said to me “For a vampire princess, you’re not even that strong.” I was in shock of what she had told me. It’s not my fault. I did not even know that I was one. I told her “I did not know I was one in the first place Miss Teenage vampire. If you haven’t noticed, I just found out today and, by the way, if I had known I was, I

would have finished him already.”

“Well , well at least you have some attitude and, by the way, you are also going to have to get up and help me fight this creep! That last attack won’t hold him off for long, and he will come back stronger.” She looked as if she was serious, but I couldn’t fight. In gym class I could barley run a mile when I wanted to. Gosh! I was too lazy to do anything. Anything I did was like a total drag for me. I asked myself, “Why me...? This is so much work.” Then, I realized what I had forgotten. “What about my grandparents? Are they okay? Are they going to survive what just happened to them?” I asked. “They are going to be fine,” she replied. “Before I came here to rescue you, I passed them and helped them out. I used almost all my energy trying to help them.” “But they are going to be okay, right?” I asked like a little kid asking their parents to promise to take them to the park. “I said yes, now get ready to fight- aghhh!!” I saw her get punched in the face and fly across the field. But before she fell down to the ground, she did a super-awesome back flip. I could not even do a cart wheel. “Are you okay?” I

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questioned. She said that she was fine. Then, she was hit once more, but this time, she got hit in the stomach. She started to cough very hard. Then I felt something, almost like she was some part of me. “You should have not come,” the man in black said. She replied, “Do you think I would leave my little sister to you? I don’t think so.” There was yet another surprise. A sister? When was this? If I have a sister, that means that my parents are alive and that she knows where they are and how I can get to them! “Well, you’re not going to say anything anymore.”

“Why is that?”

“Because you are dead...take this!!”

I stared to wonder what I should do and, out of nowhere, I started to run toward the man in black. I did not even know how I got there so fast. I did not think of that at the moment I just thought about my new sister. Like a flashing light, I jumped up and kicked him in the face. He did not even notice that I was right behind him.

“Are you okay?”

“Yeah, I am fine.”

“For my big sister, you’re not that strong.”

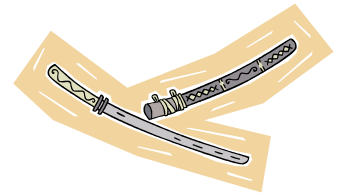
She smiled and looked at

me. The man in black got up and saw me standing there again. He was mad. He threw a punch at me that was like a bull charging. I managed to get out of the way in time, pushing myself backwards. My sister was getting up slowly and was only 5 inches from the man in black. I got behind her. I asked her again if she was okay. She said, “You think I am that weak? I have battled tougher opponents than this creep. One thing is for sure. He is faster than I am, and I can’t calculate his next move.” While we were talking, I didn’t even notice when he got up and then, all of a sudden, he appeared right next to us. I was shocked. It was as if I had been caught stealing money from my grandma, and I knew what was next after she caught me. He separated us. He grabbed my sister by the neck and was grabbing her tightly. I didn’t know what to do. My grandparents were down, and my sister is being choked by the man. I was unable to do anything. “I can’t move- why can’t I move, why?” I thought. “Let her go!!! Now!!! Let her go, please!!!!” I was crying but still not moving.

“What happened I thought the princess was supposed to be strong!?”

Huh!! What happened”? I wished I could help her. I have to help her, and I am going to help her now! I am going to do that!

“Leave her alone,” I said as I ran up to him, not knowing what I was going to do. Suddenly, he just said, “pulse,” and I was stopped and flew backward, landing on the grass behind me. “What just happened?” I asked myself as I was struggling to look up. “Please,” I begged, “leave her alone!!” I could see my sister’s eyes starting to close slowly. Then, I could only hear someone shout, “MEND!!” and my sister was falling and the man in black’s arm was cut off. The man that cut off the arm caught my sister and leapt towards me. He put her down next to me. “What’s your name,” I asked him. He turned around and said, “My name is... Yamashita, Takeru, second degree student from the kendo team in the defenses area of the palace.



“GRAND MOTHER? YOU KNEW IT TOO?”

“YES. I DID NOT WANT YOU TO FIND OUT UNTIL YOU WERE A LITTLE OLDER, BUT I THINK THE MOMENT HAS COME.”

“DEATH ROSE!”

“GET AWAY!”

SHOUTED MY GRANDMOTHER AS SHE PUSHED ME ASIDE.

Diaries of... by Justin Joyce (9-1)

RoF

The following is excerpted from the popular, bestselling book, “The Diaries of...” The following has been approved for this publication by the family of the man who wrote the journal, during the Second American Revolution.

Entry #14: Wednesday, September 10, 2036,

When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

These brave words were written by the men who founded this country. This states the law of revolution. This law states that when the government of the people is failing, the people are allowed to rebel against the government and instate their own. From 1776-1793, the people managed to instate a government and it was known as Democracy. It was 20 years ago that we saw that the government was going to fail, no matter what was done. Plans of rebellion have been stirring for years. All were crushed and tried as acts of treason. Last year, a man appeared going only by the name of JEFFERSON. He began to publish newsletters everyday about why the people should break away from the government,

calling them “Common Ignorance” and “Uncommon Bliss”. 6 months have passed since the start of his campaign. This is the first entry I’ve written since JEFFERSON showed up. I moved to Alabama, so I could get away from the problems in the big city. I wished to settle down with the love of my life and hope everything would breeze by. She got swept up in this backlash and went to New York, where the first of many marches began. Last month, 5 different states seceded: New York, California, Idaho, Texas, and Florida. This will be the last entry I write for a few weeks. I’m getting up and moving to Arizona, the only state that is refusing to be a part of this. I will add any new developments to this entry... after I call my wife.

She agreed with me. She plans to skip out on the last major march to Capitol Hill and will meet me at the airport. **EDIT:** New development... the last march to the borders of Washington, D.C. was supposed to be where my wife separated. The government’s soldiers opened fire on the protesters. There were no survivors. JEFFERSON says he will not retaliate...yet. My flight for Arizona is still set for tomorrow. I’ll mourn when I land. Another state seceded tonight, 1 hour after the Peaceful Massacre: Mississippi. I can live with being dirt poor. I can live with a revolution. I can live with a new government. I can even live in the hellhole of a country I am left with. I can’t live without Karilyn. The next entry will be in Arizona. To whoever is left after this war: burn this journal after you read it.