

HARINGEY UNCHAINED

VOLUME THREE • 2018

A collection of creative pieces from
Haringey Sixth Form College and Middlesex University

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In partnership with Middlesex University

Haringey Unchained is a collective of students aiming to showcase the creative talent of Haringey Sixth Form College in Tottenham, London. Through this creative platform we are giving space to those whose work might otherwise not be seen or read.

Our local community outside of the college has had a challenging year, where tensions have led to tragedies. Amidst this, Haringey Sixth Form College students and staff have continued to promote a more cohesive and safe community through the power of artistic expression. In this magazine, we aim to bring out the critical and creative consciousness of a vibrant college that represents an incredible borough in our great city of London.

This year, we were privileged to work alongside Middlesex University in London, whose editorial team brought together an exciting range of submissions. We had editorial meetings together during which we collaborated on the concepts for the magazine and blog.

Submissions were produced by current members of Haringey Unchained, Haringey Unchained alumni, Middlesex University English and Creative Writing students and Haringey Sixth Form College students and staff.

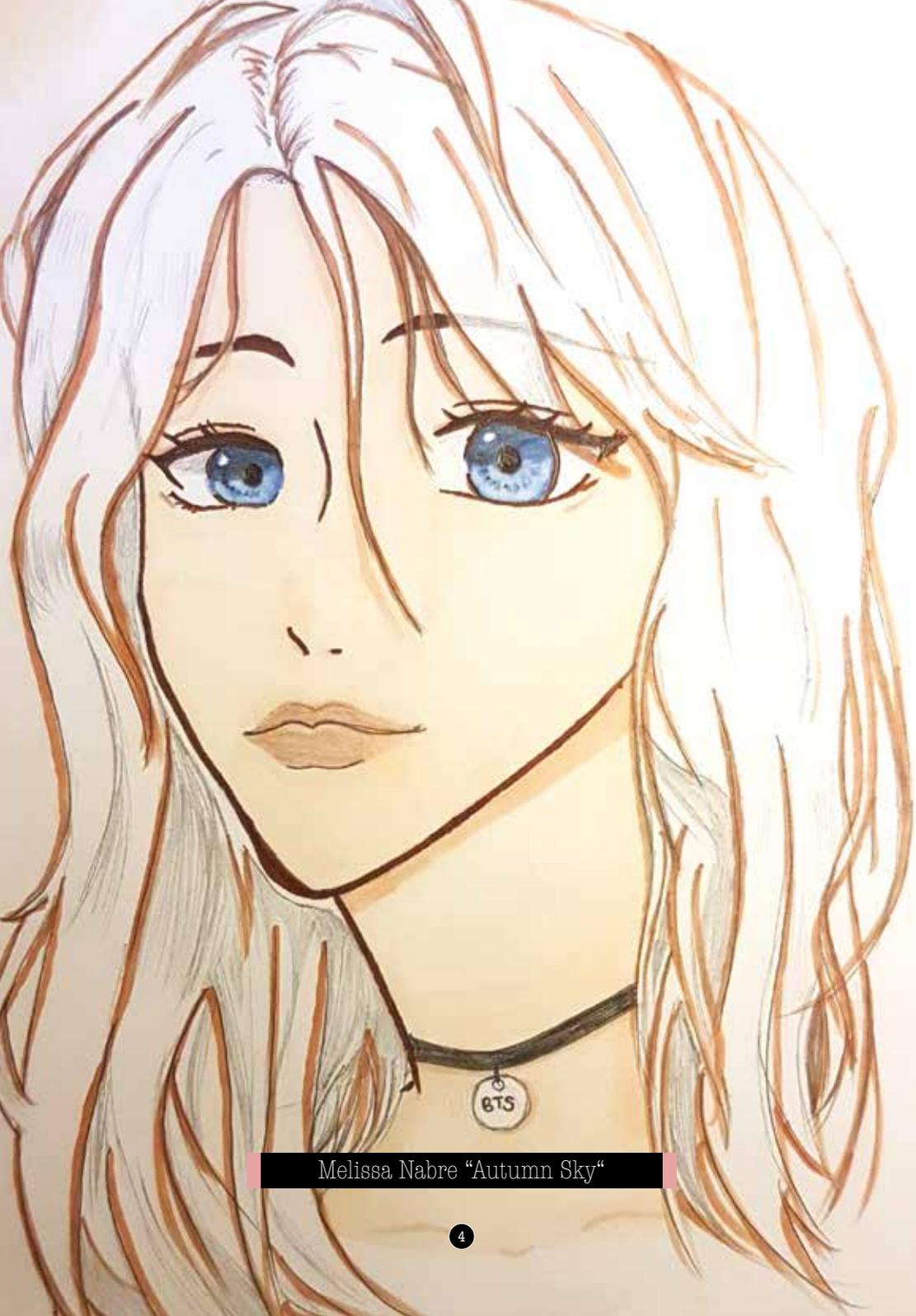
Any pieces marked have been extracted and can be read in full on our blog:
www.haringeyunchained.com*

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Melissa Nabre "Autumn Sky"

flowers grew
from under the
concrete –

the ends we represent

we are
standing
on
a
cracked
foundation
and
we
expect
not
to
fall
fall
– how?

Lina Charki

EPIPHANY

My seven-year-old daughter and I were travelling in a taxi in Bombay. The heat felt like it was melting us to the bone, and the traffic was pretty much stationary. The windows were rolled down all the way, and my daughter was sitting on my lap fanning herself with a fan she had made from a scrap piece of paper.

A man with a basket of oranges knocked on the frame of our door, startling us both and resulting in my daughter dropping her fan. Neither of us bothered to pick it up. The man begged us to make a purchase, picking oranges out of the basket to show us the brightness of each, and their potent citrus smell. We both could use some refreshment. So I reached into my handbag to pay the man for two oranges. Coincidentally, as we were receiving our oranges, a beggar child, no older than thirteen years, was holding a baby on her hip: "Please help," she wept.

The man with the oranges left after having made his sale, yet the beggar child and the baby were still staring at us. The young girl's eyes were tearing up, her lips quivering. The baby she held onto didn't just look like he was asleep. I looked down at my own daughter, and we both shared a knowing look. She reached over to the edge of the window and stretched her little arms out, holding the two oranges for the child and the baby. The child took it gracefully, her eyes lighting up and her lips forming a smile, an expression that looked unfamiliar to her face. We exchanged smiles and she went away holding tight onto the fruit.

Just then the traffic cleared, and our cab moved on.

Felek Yetik

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Mereme Miftari "Fracture"

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LOVE OR?

Love is a birth right, no? We feel love,
we learn to love, we give love.

Throughout life, we encounter various classifications
of love. As a child, we understand one type of love. As
adults we question whether or not we are in love.

Can we be in love with more than one at the same
time? Can love last a lifetime?

Love is a symptom, a disease. It's contagious and
signals an emotional roller-coaster through seasons of
psychological interference. Love channels reactions
to different situations and people.

Love determines. Love plans. Love loves.
Love hates. Love is.



Yvonne Alexander-Taylor

Takudzwa Edwards "Classic"

STOP THE WAR IN VIETNAM! *

I feel as though I have woken up running; I feel as though I was born running.
But I don't want to do it anymore; I want to stop, to turn around and to fight!

My father used to say, "Yen, your name means peace, so you must bring peace
wherever you go. You must make people happy."

He repeated it when I left for the war too; he had his hand on my shoulder as if
I were a man, a son to be proud of, and not his daughter. Mother was sobbing,
holding onto my younger brother. I could see father was fighting the tears, but
he never cried. Only when my older brother died in the war did he cry, and
even then, he hid himself in his room so no one could see. I heard him from the
hallway. From then, I was Hung's replacement.

Father spoke to me as if I were Hung, but Hung was dead and there was nothing
we could do about it.

The Americans were coming, charging, just like they had charged into the
country that had finally become ours, a place that wasn't theirs. The Americans
knew nothing of this labyrinth we called home; we knew this place like the veins
on the backs of our hands. We were in the jungle, and the men were coming. I
could hear their boots punching the ground, muffled by the leaves that had fallen
to the earthly floor. We were scattered amongst those leaves, because their guns
were better and their numbers were greater than ours. But this was our jungle
and they knew that.

The soldiers dispersed to chase us.

One man was behind me.

"Hey!" he shouted.

I ran faster, and I heard his boots smash into the ground in response. All I knew
is that I didn't want him to catch me, and I wasn't going to be his prey; he was
going to be mine.

I ran as fast as my small legs would take me, but my gun was weighing me down.
He and I had the same gun, but he was a soldier, trained in resilience in wearing
weighted luggage, and I was not. When he caught up to me, he grabbed my arm
and I screamed. Flinging myself around, I hit him in the face, a face of a man

from a country I had never touched before. I slipped and fell down a large slope, him following me, bringing leaves and twigs that wanted to join in with the fall. We rolled to the bottom.

On all fours, we looked at each other. In the silence of that stare, I wondered if I could escape, and I knew I would have to kill him. It was him or me, and I knew that I wasn't going to die, not like Hung. I fucking refused. And so, I examined my prey. He was a lot bigger than me, but he looked young, and his helmet spelt "war is hell." We learnt English at school so that would be "chiến tranh là địa ngục." It was agreeable.

In the single moment after, we lunged at each other like animals, like two tigers in a turf war, fighting for the soil not one of his ancestors had ever stepped foot on. But that all of mine had.

As our bodies hit, his strength pushed me to the floor. Even with all my force I could not tackle him; my body was now the battle ground, and my arms were struggling to push him away. I knew our strength didn't match, but I was going to fight for my country, even if it meant I was going to die for it.

I managed to hold him away, far enough that I could pull my leg up to put my foot on his chest, and with that I threw him back. His weight surprised me; he was so light, nothing like my brothers. He flew up in the air and plummeted to the floor like a plane that someone had shot down from the sky.

He looked at me amazed.

"Wow, Yen, you're getting pretty strong!" Hung treated me more like a brother than a sister. I don't think my father liked that very much.

"She is getting older now. You can't be playing with her like that. It's too rough; she's not a boy!"

When I got older, father would say, "That's not how a lady should act! She needs to focus on her studies! We must find her a husband soon!"

I resented those words, and so did Hung. He didn't believe I should get married and stay at home with children; he didn't want that for me. Father would shout at him, "She is not your brother!" And Hung would stand there looking at the floor avoiding father's eye contact.

Later, when we were alone, Hung would tell me, "You can do and be whatever you want. You want to be strong, you be strong. Okay, Yen?" When Hung died, I had no one to tell me to be strong anymore. I had to do it all on my own, because Hung wasn't there to defend me from father. Or from the soldiers.

We stared at each other apprehensively for a few moments. I pulled my AK-47 from around my back, and pointed it at him.

"Woah, woah, woah!" He put his hand up, almost as if he could stop the bullet with his simple, human, soft flesh. The bullet would rip right through, tear him open, and then it would hit his body, ripping his insides apart. Especially from this close range.

One of us was going to have to die. This was the equation of this war: one American + one Viet Cong guerrilla = one man standing. He almost seemed to accept his fate. He laid down, closed his eyes and I lowered my gun.

'What would Hung do?' I found myself asking that question a lot lately. Hung may have killed this man; he may have not. I knew my brother well, but not well enough to know how far he would go in times like these. And yet, I didn't want to be Hung - I wanted to be Yen. So I'd do what Yen would do... even if I didn't know what that was...



Lanny Ruiz "Saints"

ELECTRICAL SYSTEM

Blood rushes through my pulmonary veins
and continues through my heart.
My love for you fades as my blood
moves up my aorta.

Funny.

My love for you does not feel potent anymore
and I know the real reason now.

The heart's an electrical system,
its nodes spreading electricity
to make our hearts beat.

And now my heart no longer beats for you, my love.

It beats for me.

Amina Yussuf

ANXIETY

She rips me to shreds when I can't escape my bed,
holds my hands and shouts "Get up!"
Because I can't miss "this"...

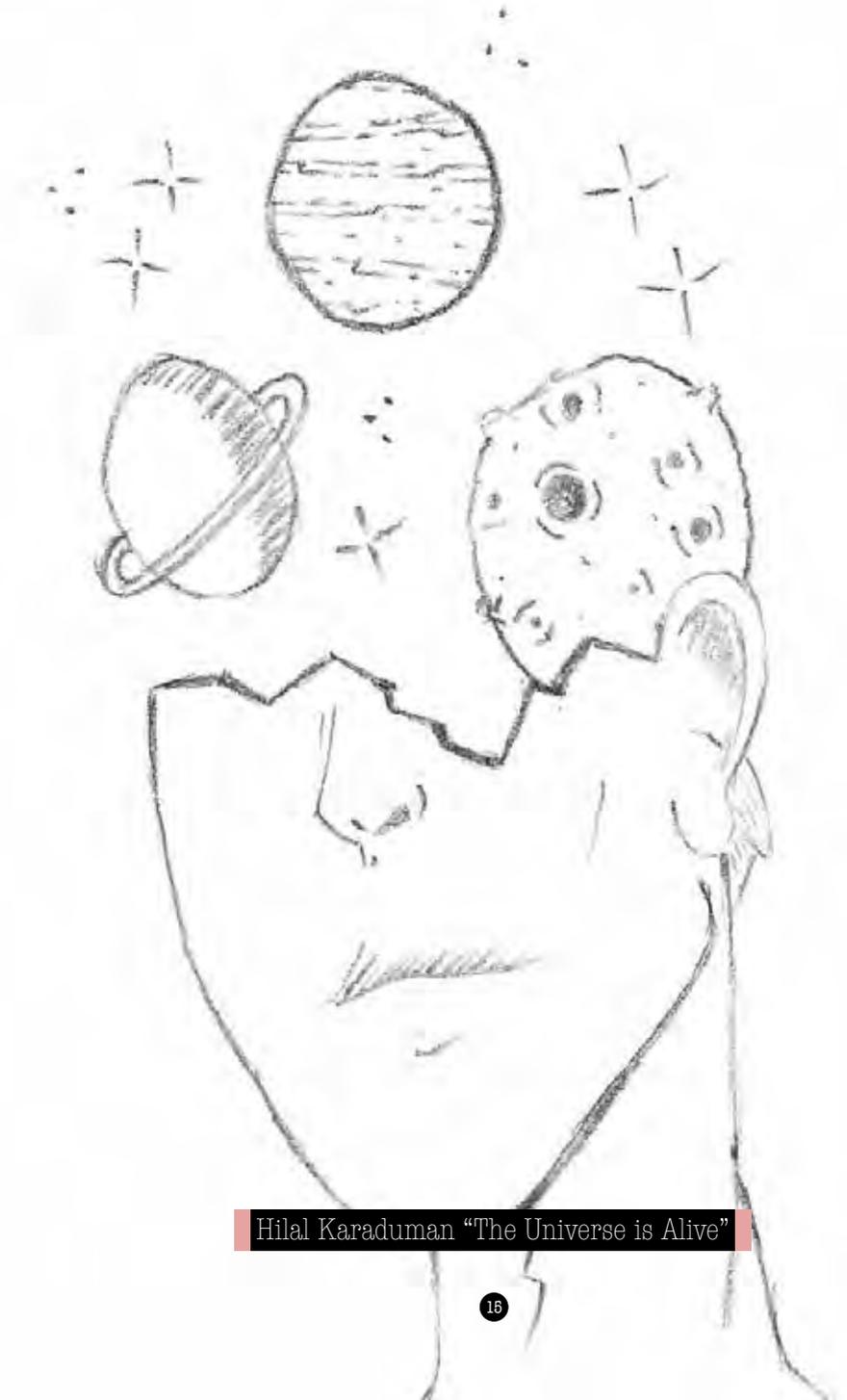
And "this?"

Something I will never know
when she drops her grip on my hands,
attaching instead to my lungs and heart.
My ribcage feels like it could burst if I even think of
opening my mouth.

So I stay silent and hope that the bell
inside my head doesn't ring,
because I can't stomach another blackout
crawling on the floor trying to rip out of my skin,
desperately grasping her hands
so that I'm back in her arms again and she
can continue to rip into my already bleeding wounds.

Zubeyde Sezgin

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Hilal Karaduman "The Universe is Alive"

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UPON REFLECTION IN THE ABYSS

The fire, the flames, the pain, the crying, the gnashing of teeth. Or the happiness, the joy, the laughter and the peace. Which side will be my destiny?

Imagine you are in a huge room confined to four intimidating walls that stare at you, with nothing, I mean ABSOLUTELY NOTHING, apart from light. Well folks, that's the predicament I'm in at this very moment. I'm dead, but my soul has been awakened; my body has disintegrated in that claustrophobic long box, which people call a coffin. You know, I didn't think that death would have befriended me this early, but I guess it was inevitable. Death was always tracking my every move, lurking in the distance, camouflaging with the shadows and writing its name in the sky with the clouds.

Everyone made it their mission to wipe me off of the face of the earth, but in the end I did the bloody job myself. I didn't want those pests who call themselves the 'government' to be able to claim that they killed me; I wanted to die with pride. And I knew they didn't want to destroy me for running a multi-billion-dollar cocaine trafficking business; they simply wanted to take it over, and make billions themselves. Could I blame them? Suppose I would have done the same thing.

The drug war between the fucking government and I, along with other drug traffickers, was quite gruesome, but a man has got to go to great lengths to keep his business afloat and his family safe from the opposition. Sometimes, I would go out and meet a battlefield, where all I could hear were explosions from bombs, the impact from gun shots and helpless screams. "AAAAAAHHH!" With every bomb it sent a tremor across the whole area and left a black blanket of smoke across the innocent sky.

All that chaos was partly my doing, but it had to be done for the destruction of my enemies. Although I clearly hated the government and to some extent the police, there were many times they helped me by me helping them. Do you get it? I would bribe them when I was a much younger businessman, way before my empire began.

I was involved in a gang; we stole cars and committed what I consider to be petty crimes. I carried on bribing the police and government as long as I could until it just wasn't enough anymore. I know you would have never expected this, but I even managed to become a member of the government. And this was despite the tabloids shouting about my past 'crimes', my business and the investigations held against me.

It didn't last long.

When I was a little boy, I didn't just aspire to be rich. Oh no – that was too pedestrian for me. I wanted to become president, and this is why I felt so passionate about my position in parliament as a congressman. El coño connivente (the conniving cunt), Lara Bonilla, the cabinet minister at the time, dismantled my chances of ever becoming president. He couldn't keep his do-gooder mouth zipped. "It was only when Representative Escobar joined our movement that all kinds of suspicions were thrown on the sources of his wealth." He even joined forces with a newspaper company called El Espectador, esos hijos de puta (those sons of bitches), to try and gather evidence to destroy me. After that, I was arrested, and those past crimes kept tip toeing behind me. Because of my best friend Lara, I quit, and brushed my dream under the carpet.

IT WAS OVER!

Shortly after, Lara was (rather fortunately) assassinated. Ese pequeño bastardo (That little bastard) had it coming; he earned that certificate of death. (Huh. It occurs to me to wonder which place he ended up in after his little stint in purgatory).

I know what you're thinking – you probably think it was me who ordered his assassination, don't you? Well....it was.... No, it wasn't me. Sorry to disappoint you. But I received the blame. What a shocker! The people of Colombia, and that pest of a government, forgot that I wasn't the only drug trafficker and criminal mastermind around. But because of my celebrity status, or perhaps because of their jealousy, they had it in for me. And yet, just because I had done it before, didn't mean I would it again.

Lara's assassination led to a storm, and President Richard Nixon declared war on all drug traffickers. You see, that right there is what I believe triggered this insufferable war. Following that, hell heavily struck Colombia like a meteor shower. It was a real war zone out there. The pests kept trying to track me down, but they always failed – miserably.

After months of hiding, I surrendered. Why? Because it was advantageous to do so. The president and the government gave me one condition: serve a sentence in prison in Envigado. Yet, they sent troops to try and take me to Bogotá; so they broke their promise. When they broke this promise, I simply had to escape.

POINT, BLANK, PERIOD.

The deal was off.

I was the reigning King of Escape Acts anyway; I suppose my behaviour might have been anticipated. But I would soon find out that my luck wouldn't last.

A phone call with my son Juan lasted longer than the planned five minutes. This was my biggest mistake and the cause of my downfall. But I didn't know right away. Eventually, the government tracked me down in Medellín, with hired marksmen to shoot me. They shot my leg and my back, but those weren't the shots that killed me. The winning shot was the one I lodged into my own body, just above my ear. That was when I fell to the ground. "Es Pablo! Es Pablo! Viva Colombia! Él está muerto!" (It's Pablo! It's Pablo! Hooray for Colombia! He's dead!)

And that was the ending to the great story of Pablo Escobar.

So what will be my legacy? Probably not the good things I did to help those who were less fortunate than me. I gave money to the poor; I even used my money to build schools and homes for them too. God knows what I did for all those people. And perhaps this is why I'm so confused as to why I'm here. In purgatory. I thought God knew...

You probably didn't know this, but I grew up in a brutal civil war. Our family was even warned to leave or else risk having our 'body parts re-assembled into art'. Hahahaha! That is hilarious, only an imbécil (imbecile) would make such a threat.

We didn't listen...

When I was seven, a gang called the 'guerillas' invaded our village. What a horrendous name. They tried hacking at the front door with machetes and there were threats of murder. I clung to my mother who was crying and praying. They eventually gave up trying to break in, because the door was so strong. I thank the Lord Jesus for that fucking door. Without it, I wouldn't be alive today...actually I'm dead, but you know what I mean.

Violence seemed to haunt me in my later life.

And God only knows what's become of my family. I hope they're safe from harm, protected. Ah! This is what the pressures of trying to make something for my family in an environment ripe with crime leads to. If you were in my shoes, what would you have done? The same. I bet.

Can you hear that too? The roaring sound, the trumpets? Can you see angels and demons? The room is shaking as if an earthquake has hit and a blinding light has engulfed the entire room.

I guess it's time – see you on the other side...

LA DOULEUR EXQUISE

They asked me what I worshipped –
I screamed your name.
They grabbed me by my hair,
shattered my wrists and ankles,
and they bound me to a chair.

They asked me who I worshipped –
I said your name.
Knives and matches pressed into my skin,
'God' was carved into my heart.
Could you not see?
They were tearing me apart.

They asked me how I worshipped –
I whispered your name.
With that, a gun was pulled to my head.
A smirk remained plastered because

the game had come to an end.

Translation from French: Excruciating pain of wanting someone you can't have



Hilal Karaduman "Embracing Lovers"

Ozge Erdur

THE HEREDITY OF MEMORY

She hasn't known me for years; instead of throwing hugs she just casts spears, her careworn face now lined with meanness.

It's hard believing things mother once told me: 'I'll love you evermore.'

It started with the bears she saw supping in the gloaming. 'Four of them, as real as day, with teacups of bone china.'

She speaks of them with a faraway look in her eyes as if she sees the memory playing across the eroded silver screen of her wasted mind.

I wish she'd play the memory of me: the holidays in Cornwall, that thunderstorm in Fiesole when we dashed back to the caravan, even when I failed my GCSEs, and shamed her.

It's hard to remember. 'It's me, mother...' But the waters of the womb aren't strong enough to stop her fatal amnesia; a fugue that lasts a lifetime brought on by father's death, but the signs were there before he left, when she spoke of bears in their Sunday best.

'Take me to the woods! Take me when the trees are bleeding, you'll see them, too, you'll see I'm right.'

And so we search countless forests, because despite the raining punches she showers on me, demanding, 'Who are you?' she is my mother.

A copse in Wiltshire overlooking August wheat was our last trip together. Whilst golden stems with heavy ears bowed awaiting harvest, she passed in the car home, staring out the window. It wasn't till a bumpy rhythm started - her head on tempered glass - I realised she'd gone.

So here I stand on a hill in Fiesole, dusk turning Il Duomo red, denying my grief, admitting something else, instead.

A Tuscan sunset turns the olive trees to bleeding Roman pillars.
And at my feet a child's teddy bear set, forgotten, left and faded.

Christopher Bean

THE FIRST LIGHT

At first light we begin anew,

Only to repeat the deeds of yesterday.

Caged in as animals are at a zoo

Awaiting validation from strangers,

Without a care in the world

Of the smoke rising behind us.

At every light, we wilt a little more

With every beat of the drum.

Fading away, an hour, a day and evermore.

Khadija Ahmed

WHY I DID IT

Oh God, I feel so alive! I've had these thoughts circling my head for the longest time, but I never thought today would be the day I would go through with them and gain justice. I guess I simply couldn't handle it anymore. I just couldn't handle knowing what they did to the people I cared the most about. I couldn't let them think they got away with what they did, the pain they put my loved ones through. So I made them pay the same way they made the people that gave everything to me had to pay.

I can't even begin to explain how good it felt to finally release all the pain and hurt they caused me to take it out on them. A punch to the eye, a blow to the head, knocking out a few teeth. I felt cleansed as I was beating the shit out of them. I felt as though everything they put me through was worth these moments of control and power, worth those countless lonely nights looking back on the few photos I have of fond memories from when I was a child.

Once I was satisfied with the beating, I brought out the axe. I made sure they didn't have too much blood around their faces so that they could watch what I was about to do to the pair of them. I slowly raised the axe to the sound of screaming and slammed it down on her hand, blood splattering everywhere and screams intensifying. It was only fair then that I did the same to him, and as expected, I got a similar reaction. I did the same to the other hands and the feet too. Nothing in the world could beat the feeling of lifting the axe up and hearing them scream out in pain, getting everything they deserved.

Once I had enough of the screaming and wanted my grand moment, I turned them both on their stomachs, so their backs were facing me. Looking down at them one last time I whispered, "This is for my parents" and stabbed them both in the back like they had done to me.

Claire Emily Cusack

CRIME SCENE

You are slowly killing me from the inside out...

Regurgitating all the lies laced with poison
that you fed me disguised as honey-eyed hope.
Exfoliating my skin that has now become a crime scene
from the fingerprints that you recklessly left.
Resuscitating the heart that you violently stabbed
multiple times that mislaid unfixable voids.

Yet I am still powerlessly drawn to you ...

Fatouma Ayeh

YOU

Among all these ugly things that trap me
I believe that there is you
When I'm sleepy and my head hurts
I believe that there is you
When I'm drunk on cheap wine
And the only one in the room
My dear darling
I can feel
That somewhere out there,
Waiting just for me
There is you.

Teodora Matković



Alexeen Fernandez



“The Twilight of Our Lives”

IT'S NOT MY FAULT

Here, could you finish this for me? It's her milk, but she's finally cried herself to sleep and it would be a waste so just drink the rest, will you?

No! Don't try to take her from me, I'm finally able to hold her without wanting to throw her into a wall so I want to hold her for a little longer.

She's so cute, now that she's quiet. I never realised how much I loved her until now.

Even just moments ago, I hated her to the very bone, even though she was my own daughter.

No matter what I did, she just wouldn't stop *crying*.

I gave her milk, I changed her diaper, I threw her, I played with her, I slapped her, I even tried to use my pillow to shut her up but she just wouldn't stop *crying*.

I hated it. I was so sick of it.

Sick of the tears dripping down her sweet, chubby cheeks. Sick of the wails coming out of her small pink lips stretched wide open at all hours of the night.

Sick of the lack of sleep. Sick of not being able to get away from her. Sick of not being able to rest for just one *minute*.

Sick of the fear that she would wake up again and start it all over.

Don't look at me like that, you should drink more to stop your coughing.

You know how I felt about her. But it's alright now. I don't hate my beautiful daughter anymore; *I've never felt so in love with anyone's sleeping figure before.*

...

This is what you wanted to show me before, wasn't it? When you used to hold me back from her tiny crying figure in her cot, locking me in our room, you were protecting our adorable child for the day when I finally realised I did actually love her.

Well, don't worry now. *You won't lock me away anymore.* Or ever again.

Alright, I'm finished holding her, you can take her now. Come on, don't just lay there, you're spilling the last little bit of her milk!

Here, take her and pass me your cup.

Wrap your arms around her properly now, we wouldn't want her to wake up again after all my effort to get her to sleep.

I ended up finishing my new bottle of sleeping pills, the full fifty tablets, *and* her powdered milk.

You don't need to buy anymore, it's fine. I won't need it anyway.

Careful now, I know your arms are limp and you're tired from finishing her milk but you need to hold her properly or you'll drop your daughter.

You two look so cute together.

She looks just like you, doesn't she? Her nose, eyes, hair, all of it comes from you, you know. She doesn't look one bit like me.

She's the female version of you, my dear kidnapper.

Yes, you are my kidnapper, though maybe other girls would call you their prince in shining armour.

Whisking me away from my mother and father who would lock me away from anyone and anything they didn't like in their overbearing overprotectiveness, you brought me here and let me live with you. I still remember when you broke through the glass in my window and carried me out like a prince rescuing his princess from the evil clutches of the demon king and queen.

You're no prince though.

Rescuing your princess, and then refusing her the choice of being able to be free like she wanted to is not something a kind prince would do. A kind prince wouldn't lock his princess up like the demon king and queen did. He wouldn't hit her for trying to get her baby to be quiet for just a little longer. He wouldn't force his princess to give birth to her baby at home with only a wet nurse to help her.

That's why you're not my prince, but my kidnapper.

You know, if you were going to be so possessive of me then you might as well have left me with mother and father.

But that's alright, it's not like I knew any other lifestyle other than being kept inside a house all day every day, only looking out into the dangerous world behind the protection of our windows. Mother and father always told me that the world outside was corrupted and evil, and that they only locked me up for my own good, for the sake of my purity and 'innocent ignorance'. I wonder if that was why you kept me hidden away too.

I wonder if you would have kept our daughter hidden away with me.

Oh dear, you've fallen asleep too, haven't you?

How rude, falling asleep while I'm still talking. You could have waited until I was finished at least, now I feel silly for talking to myself all that time.

...

Oh my. I'm so bored, both of you have fallen asleep and I'm the only one left awake.

I wonder if you're both having sweet dreams... Would you like me to close your eyes for you?

You know, my dear kidnapper, it's your fault that I'm like this.

You made me like this. My mother and father would kill you if they found out that their baby girl has lost everything they were trying to 'protect'. Haha.

Finally, some peace and quiet.

It's been a long time since the house was this quiet, don't you think? No crying from our sweet baby, no need for any more frustrated tears. No more shouting and screaming and banging and breaking.

It's all your fault. You were the one who made this house so loud, it all started from you.

You took me away, you locked me up. You took away my freedom, you protected me from the evil outside. You made me have a child, you kept me from killing her. You were my prince, and then my kidnapper. You left our baby with me, who hated her.

Well, I don't care. It's your turn to take care of her now. Wait for me, okay? I'll be with you both soon.

Melissa Nabre



Mya Gomez "Untitled"

I'VE GROWN FROM THE PAST

I've grown from the past
So every time I look into the glass
I see myself, funny how when I need
Help I've got none but myself
Love my girl to the point where I'd risk my health
But it's ok – I never stood a chance
Dance with the devil when I never should've danced
16-year-old black boy with braces
Who won't ever be defined by these racists
How could you hate me for being me?
14 years old I saw myself with no future
So I decided to stop acting and take my mask off
Time passed on and I realised all the fake people
Around still had their masks on
I struggled to speak my mind, but
I wanted us to start getting along
I wanted God to break me from these chains
And crush all these devilish bonds
But I'm not James
Imagine a beautiful girl who could take you to hell
Just for lusting after her
I call that a Jezebel but you should know me well
I don't plan on it but
I already know I've taken my L

Christ'Adoni Sessegnon

ONE DAY

One day you just appeared
With sweet words and a sweet smile
That came together as a foolish hope of love.

You made everything beautiful.
You made a message the highlight of the day
And then made me so desperate for it
When you wouldn't send it.

Then you started to get cold.
You went further away from my clingy grasp
And from a simple message to needing you whole
Until I was tired of trying to reach, or just of trying at all.

Now what we are feels wrong.
We are as far apart as if on the ends of an axis
And now you awake and pretend,
Pretend and make up rules, afraid I might do something "wrong".

So now,
I don't like listening to rules –
Not when they're yours.

Andreea Pavel



Martine Skaret

“Leaving St. Kilda Beach for the Last Time”

SHIPWRECKED

Black clouds loomed over the skies, blocking out the last remnants of sunlight for the sailors. Heavy rain began to fall, never ending. As the sky darkened to a pitch black, the wind howled with a heart-wrenching squeal, as if vengeful spirits that hated all mortal life were manifested in the air and brought death to those in their way.

“Hurry! Hurry!” came an explosive shout from the vessel trapped within the raging storm. Many of the sailors rushed to and fro from the cabin onto the deck, securing the sails as they braced themselves for the impending waves. As the sailors hurried about trying to prepare themselves, yellow light flashed above in the raven-coloured clouds. Golden light began to congeal as lightning formed at a ferocious speed, bearing the might of Gods as it began to fall down with all its fury towards the port side of the vessel below.

Silence permeated in the air with the strike of lightning, as if time had stopped.

“Lightn-” When one of the sailors recognised the danger and began to call out, a loud bellow reverberated throughout the entire ocean as thunder fell down, drowning his voice. It was too late.

Time seemed to drag on as every sailor stood dumbfounded looking at the splendour and might of the storm around their ship. Moments later, the rumbling of thunder and lightning came with the explosion of the port side of the vessel, leaving a blasted hole, destroying the cargo within, alongside the charred remains of dead sailors behind.

On the deck, the captain, a pale faced middle-aged man stood with a pure-white, frightened face.

Streaks of light crackled throughout the pitch-black night sky, shrouding it with its blinding incandescence, emanating the might of a furious God. Jagged bolts of lightning endlessly protruded, filling the sky with undying flashes of radiance before striking down onto the vessel again.

The storm raged on, ravaging the vessel trapped within it, claiming the lives of most of the sailors, dragging their bodies to the abyss of the ocean. It would be their eternal resting place.

The ferocity of lightning claimed more lives than the sea, as it struck down onto the vessel like a divine lance hungry for human life. With each strike it battered and punctured the vessel, along the way burning and destroying the sailors who were too slow to get away. Left behind? Nothing but charred corpses.

Upon the first ray of sunlight emerged the few remaining sailors who laid battered and powerless on the deck, or what remained of it. They mourned the loss of many friends and comrades lost in the storm. As the survivors laid down on the tattered wood of the deck with lifeless eyes and withered skin, they looked upwards at the azure sky. They laid there wondering why God had done this, or whether they had been abandoned by God to be condemned to this hell, whilst they drifted towards an enticing shore...

GIVE ME A MESSAGE

Give me a message ... just a message
to tell me you are still thinking about me,
to tell me you are in the same train with me,
a train that is taking us to the same place.

Please, mind the gap between love and hurt.
This is not Acton Town station anymore,
This is, "I have been hurt before" station.
This is not the Piccadilly line service to Uxbridge.
This is the line which you can't cross that goes to my heart -

And the door's closing.

Please mind the door.
Once it's closed, you can't open it again.
There is no key for it.

This train is moving fast and
won't wait for you.
So if it's no, wait for the next one.
The next train is coming in ...

<Messages not received>

"HEIDI PARKER" THE FIGHTER

The fledgling scholar Heidi Parker was a rare child. A firefly that desired to spread her wings out. "Steady as a little preacher, free as weed," said the mama. Grasping for air, she scaled above the lofty, sycamore trees, looking at her divided homeland. Smelling the leaves again, and again, then bearing it again; the rage she had for the town's people stretched to great heights, but the fragrance of the wall-lining sage bushes, and the rose-scented breeze distracted her mind.

Suddenly, her face drowned in a sea of grief, the passion for equal acceptance from the town's people. Roaring with castigatory remarks against innocent Heidi and her mama, the town's people battled it out amongst themselves - what to do with the girl. Kill her or banish her? She stood in front of that large crowd that observed her as if she were an evil curse, a wretch who needed to be destroyed. They liked her vulnerability; they liked her being feeble.

Can we blame the girl? What is her mistake that she was different, that she held empathetic powers, that she was unlike them?

Not withstanding the negative energy neighbouring her, it was as if darkness had taken her surroundings and she was locked in a dungeon. An air of melancholy surrounded her, yet she ignored the thoughts, and paraded down the pebbles away from the people. For being inversely inimitable, intelligent, and full of life, she was certainly a strong bird. The segregation in this town had swirled the acts of unkindness in the levels of intolerable discomfort.

Another day, another night gone, Heidi came back from school and entered her home. To her horror, her family had been wiped out. And suddenly sirens after sirens playing in her head. She stood spread-eagle until it shrank to fit her, shuddered at the creepy sensation of life-like silk caressing her skin. In a frenzy, she fell to the ground, hitting her head. It was all too much – the shocking revelation of her family's murder.

That night, the clouds dispersed into distinct sections, motioning to be wary of a storm heading its way. The gust of wind eloquently made the foliage interchange side to side. The roads moved almost as if an earthquake had come to seek a home. The hurricane-like wind made the town's civilians' eyes unbolted to be greatly mindful of calamity. The unforgivable mistake of theirs. Punishment was looming over their heads; they would not see the dawn again.

With the thunderous lightening reaching its peak, and hitting anything in its way, a fuming, heated Heidi walked along the pavement. A young girl who was fifteen years old, who looked as delicate as a bug. Today she was riding with the wind, riding with the lightening, riding with the clouds. She came in front of the town's people, and began mechanically smiling in the most eerie of faces. Her eyes turned bloodshot red; black vapour came out of her ears. Fire was encircling her in a sphere. She looked them in the eyes, and began to raise her hands much higher than her. And then, without a moment of delay, she shouted, "You will pay now for your crimes" and boom. The sounds of everything being demolished, the smell of sweet revenge made victory, and she had definitely killed them. The entire town – wiped out.

That's our Heidi Parker, the girl who could play with fire.



TAKE MY HAND AND RUN

I am standing in the middle of a room
without lights and windows
I try to light a candle to break the dark away
but then I see all over shadows

Reading my magazines trying to forget memories
my mind don't wanna keep

Revening my enemies
the ones who killed families
but I ain't gonna start to kill

Take my hand and run
away from the sun before we will be found
and burn us in the ground

Lying on the floor try to fall asleep
but my body shivers from the cold
I should have gotten up to that ship
and never...never let you go

But I made a mistake
I let you walk away
and I can't find you now

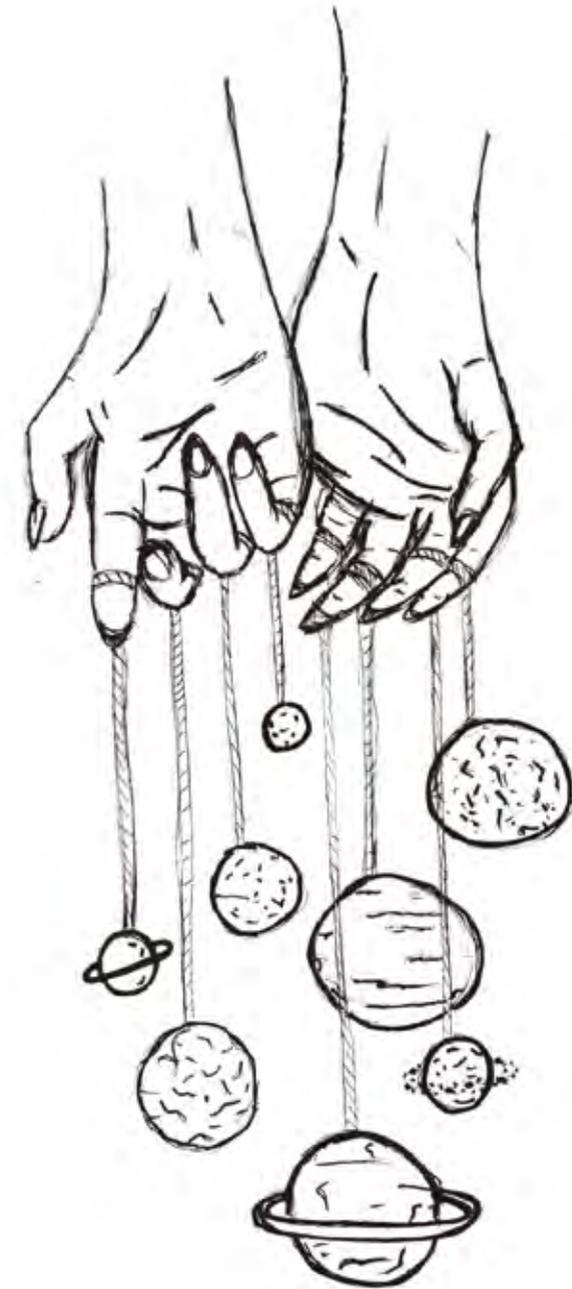
I let my feelings down
I shouldn't have turned around
and now I wonder where you are.

Take my hand and run
away from the sun before we will be found
and be burned in the ground

Take my hand and run and don't you ever come back
try to avoid the sun
before you get all burned up

Just take my hand and run away.

Anastasia Protopapa



Samiha Chowdhury "The World in Your Hands"

THE KEY

Hurting became breathing,
the toxic lies led me believing,
played with my trust in exchange for temporary lust,
every touch, every kiss marked a bruise and
I became indistinguishable behind all the abuse.

Enough is enough - say no to the pain,
what is the point if it's all loss and no gain?
Overcome the hurt and stand up to your fears,
stand up to your sadness and overcome the tears.
The pursuit of happiness is not from another,
another can even hurt one's own brother.

The pursuit of happiness lies within,
so before you say I love you, question yourself: do I love me?
When you find your answer, you'll find your key -

The key to happiness...
just watch and see.

Nawida Nazari



Melissa Nabre "Helen"

LUCIFER MORNINGSTAR

Sipping his cognac, Lucifer waited, waited and waited for something to happen as the golden elixir pooled out of the lifeless body. This was the third angel he had killed today, and yet his father had done nothing. No sending his Godly forces, no banishing him. He didn't even send Lucifer's long-suffering goody-two shoes brother Gabriel to try and reign him in.

With a sigh, Lucifer pushed his thick, heavy boot into the being's shoulder blade. He almost wished he were back in Hell, almost. At least in Hell he was respected; in Hell he was number one. Everyone worked their asses off to please him. Heck even in Hell his brothers had visited every so often.

His father had officially cut him off. Lucifer rammed his shoe forcefully over and over again till he heard the sweet pop of dislodging the being's wings from its shoulders.

His father truly did not care anymore; as per usual, he had abandoned him. The thought caused a throbbing in his head, creating that insufferable emotion he detested. As Lucifer's anger grew, his grip on the glass grew tighter and tighter till it exploded in his hand, shards cutting deep into his skin, amber liquid combining with the silver blood seeping through the cuts. Lucifer grumbled, trust his Dad to find a way to take the fun out of killing and torturing, the one thing that he was good at.

There once was a time his father actually loved him. His brother might have said that Lucifer was the favourite, but of course if his father loved him so much, he wouldn't have banished him from Heaven and made him the ruler of Hell.

Digging the shards out of his hand, he thought, so what if he had been rebellious? What teenager isn't? Besides, he needed an escape from his father's ongoing rules and the pressures that came with being an archangel. He needed a way to cope and there's something therapeutic about killing a lesser being, something therapeutic about plucking their wings, removing their power, taking their immortality and making them beneath you.

Lucifer absentmindedly rubbed his shoulder blades. Slowly and slowly, one by one with each wing he plucked from their withering bodies, he felt the tension leave him, allowing the calmness to seep back in and control to return to his body. But now that he was out of the watchful eye of his father, nothing he did mattered anymore, not even the one thing that calmed him could help anymore.

It had been two months since Lucifer had last seen his father. Since his father had requested a meeting in his big cushioned cloud. Since his father told him that he would no longer indulge in Lucifer's actions.

Two months since, Lucifer had resigned from ruling Hell. If his father didn't bother with him anymore, why should he still do the job that was forced upon him? When his father gave up on him, Lucifer decided that he would find a new family, living among those disgusting humans who would surely realise his great potential and fawn over his mighty presence. And he must admit even though the people were insufferable, he was really enjoying the earthly liquor.

Everyone portrayed his father as this great man, all loving, all powerful, forgiving, caring but they don't know the real man behind the myths. The only thing his dad was was a workaholic who put on a facade to everyone, who put his job above everyone else, including his family. Behind closed doors he was nothing like what you'd read in the dreaded book, which he wrote himself. How conceited.

Okay so maybe in reality his father could be loving, cherishing and forgiving – to everyone else other than his children, the ones who truly needed it. Lucifer and his brothers often worked night and day, doing his bidding, anything he asked, in order to get some form of attention, even if it was just a pat on the back. Lucifer craved any type of gratification from his father. And the more Lucifer strived to please him, the more rules his dad put in place.

Don't embarrass me. Don't go to the Garden. Don't socialise with the humans. Don't answer back.

No more, Lucifer thought. He had to stop letting his father control him. Adjusting his cuffs and fixing his tailor-made designer suit, Lucifer regained his posture. He let the depressed feeling that always emerged when he thought about his dad pass. This was his time to shine. His father would rue the day he ever decided to cut him off.

Walking over to the chair and picking up his coat, he prepared to leave. Lucifer gazed at the bruised and battered corpse on the floor. Giving the angel one last kick, he left. After all, he was still the Prince of Darkness, wasn't he?

THE INNOCENT BUNNY

My grandmother was the crazy person in the family, always thinking that someone was out to get her. While she was in the nursing home she began to claim there were ‘monsters’ outside her window, under her bed and in the closet. She had some days of normalcy where she would sit in her arm chair reading a book or just staring out of the window and beyond the vast garden. Before she went in to a care home, Grandma had passed an old toy bunny down in hopes it would live through the family for generations. I didn’t care for the old dust collector, so I stored the thing away in the attic.

It was a quiet Sunday when the doorbell rang. Nothing seemed to be wrong at the time. The sun was shining down on the green garden as I stood at the sink, wishing the summer would never end. I had just finished washing the plates when the knocking got persistent and louder. I hurried to the door and opened it, frustrated and displeased.

Black boots, black jeans, black jacket. The guy stood tall without emotion on his pale face. His hair was a dark ash-white, much like his eyes. I shrugged it off and put it down to something that went wrong with his DNA, but there was something off with him from the start. He just had this darkness about him. He entered my house without an invitation and looked around the hallway.

“May I help you?” I asked, agitated.

“Where is it?” The tall man’s mouth didn’t move, but I heard it clearly in my ear. The voice was deep and rough like a strangled growl.

He didn’t wait for an answer; he marched his way up the stairs and stood underneath the attic door. I couldn’t do anything; I wouldn’t stand a chance against the tall man. My best hopes were to let him take my possessions in the attic and watch him leave.

The attic door fell open as the ladder unfolded itself and allowed the man to climb up. I had to follow him – it felt wrong to leave the man alone with my dust collection. I needed to know what this was all about.

He stood in the centre of everything slowly turning around in a circle, looking for something particular. As he stood still, facing the west side of the attic, I noticed his eyes were a solid black. He slowly stepped towards a lonely box, dragging out each step like a clock slowly dying.

I held my breath in case it was my last. He had picked up the rabbit and turned it back and forth, judging it. The rabbit was no smaller than an adult’s hand. It was a pure white colour with a bright pink nose and black eyes when my grandmother gave it to me, but since then it had collected particles of filth and cobwebs; the colour was now an off grey. It lay limp and lifeless in the demon’s large grasp.

“Yes,” he said, as a menacingly a grin slowly formed on his face. “I have found you.” Each word he spoke echoed in my ear without him moving a muscle.

The rabbit began to bubble and hiss as if it had hot water boiling inside of it. The seams broke as the toy began to inflate and swell like a balloon. A black gunk-like substance oozed out of the rabbit’s stomach and dripped in clumps on to the floor. The dark substance began to move by itself till it stacked on top of each other and moulded into a disfigured person with long legs, long arms and a lopsided face.

As I had slowly taken in the sight of the monster before me I began to realise my grandmother wasn’t crazy like we had thought...

SPRING

I am in the kitchen now, the phone on speaker as I get myself a drink. There's a can of beer and week-old takeout in the fridge. I crack open the can, hoping the satisfying pop-then-hiss goes unnoticed. It does. She talks and I drink.

"Are you listening to me?"

I allow myself the satisfaction of two heavy gulps. They echo loud enough in my ears so that I don't hear the annoying shrill her voice has adopted. The beer is cold and bitter and tastes like victory.

"I'm listening, Jess," I tell her. I'm not. I fish a word out of her prattle.

"Your coworker is a bitch. You won't believe what she did the other day. No, really—" and off she goes again.

I log onto Facebook. The first post on my timeline is a video of a sneezing cat. It has twelve thousand likes. Why am I on Facebook? I hit refresh. I have a friend request, bright and red and juicy. It's the girl I met on the train. I'd helped her with her bags and made a rubbish joke about luggage. She'd laughed. God knows why. I remember liking the sound. I told her my name and she curled her foreign tongue around it. I stared at her mouth after that, till she bounded off at her stop.

"Tom." A distant call, muffled. "Tom."

Shit. I've been silent for too long.

"You know what I think, Tom? I think you're not listening to a word I've said."

"Jess," I go. The girl, Claudia, is pretty. A warm kind of pretty that you want to wake up next to and indulge in before your alarm clock blares. She is smiling with her eyes in her profile photo. "I'm tired. Don't start this."

It's the wrong thing to say. I don't think I care. Claudia likes The Strokes. She posts statuses in French that I paste into Google translate. She curses in them a lot. Merde. Merde. I think I'm smiling.

"What does that mean?" She starts this.

"Nothing," I tell her.

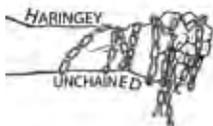
"Do you love me? Tom, do you hear me? Tell me. Tom. Do you love me?"

"I love you," I go, but it lacks conviction. It sounds tired. I'm tired. I'm met with silence and say, "I love you, Jess."

There. The trick is to sound breathless, sincere. I can tell she believes me. I believe me. I accept Claudia's request.



Chloe De Silva "Huddled Together"



www.haringeyunchained.com

