



Issue No. 4
June 13, 2009

SOULMAN

GOthic MAGAZINE

Dark Poetry

by various artists

Death

by Sophie

Hands of Kali

A Feature Interview

Resident Evil

Apocalypse Review
Gearing up for Afterlife

Fiction Bites:

- ◆ That Time of the Month (3)
- ◆ Beyond the Doors of Daylight (3)
- ◆ Victoria's Asylum of Maggots (1)

A Big Thanks to

Helene Hawthorne Fashions

...accidentally
discover something
fabulous!



SerendipityLicious

Modern and gothic inspired handmade jewelry
at an affordable price!

email: serendipitylicious@live.com
website: www.serendipitylicious.com

Letters From the Editor

Dear Readers,

Welcome to our fourth issue. We're expanding very quickly and we're about to start pouring gasoline on this beautiful flame. We're drowning in sweet beautiful success and it's all thanks to you: our readers and our staff. Thank you all so much for making this possible, and don't forget to keep spreading the word about Sorean. Near the back of this issue (since it's still in its pdf days) there is a flyer that you can print to help explain what Sorean is all about.

Now, I'm keeping this short because I want to turn it over to our two new Executive Editors, Amber and Johnathan. Welcome to the team, you guys.

Love and Peace,

Sophie

Hello, readers. I'm Amber Forbes, Executive Editor of Sorean, and I'm fairly new to this delicious magazine. I stumbled upon this as I was wandering Gaia's forums and I found someone boasting about a piece she had gotten published. After checking out the magazine, I was pleasantly surprised with the potential, and I at once filled out an application.

Now I'm here editing the wonderful pieces I hope you enjoy in this issue. You'll find two pieces written by me, an article on Gothic literature, and a fiction bite that came to mind after I had been listening to Emilie Autumn for a while. (She's a wonderful lady. You should give her music a chance.) I'll continue editing and writing for Sorean for future issues, and I also hope to be able to host a photo shoot here in humble Georgia.

Sorean is growing beautifully, and I believe it will keep growing. This wouldn't be possible, however, without Sophie's brilliance and inventive genius, and the rest of the staff for putting their time and effort into making this issue the best it can be. If we keep going at the rate we're going now, while making a few improvements along the way, it's very possible that we'll see Sorean on the shelves of bookstores in the near future.

All the best,

Amber

Good Evening Readers,

I am Johnathan Preshaw, one of the Lead Editors and also book reviewer. I take great pride in my work, and nothing that bears my name hasn't been gone over at least twice. Sorean is a place for macabre fascinations and fashions to come together, the perfect place for me to ply my trade and express my personality. I hope you all enjoy reading our magazine as much as I enjoyed helping to create it.

Until Another Time,

Johnathan Preshaw



Link to our social networking pages from our website:
www.sorean.net

Check out my friend Tahlea Moonwater
(and her awesome pagan podcast) at
www.geekwitch.org



Alyson's Cookbook

Gourmet Marshmallow Treats



Ingredients:

- ♦ 3 tbsp margarine/butter
- ♦ 1 package (10 oz / 40) regular marshmallows, 4 cups mini-marshmallows, or 12 massive campfire marshmallows
- ♦ 6 cups puffed rice cereal (We used Kellogg's Rice Krispies, because honestly, who wouldn't?)



Directions:

Melt margarine or butter in a large saucepan over low heat (the pan has to be large because you'll be mixing everything in it)

Add the marshmallows and stir until completely melted.

Remove from heat.

Using a buttered spatula or waxed paper, press evenly into 13x9x2 pan, cupcake tray, or other pan, after spraying your pan of choice with cooking spray. You could also use the waxed paper to make "bubble treats" ... If you used a flat pan, you can cut them into shapes once they've cooled.

Allow to cool.

Eat them plain or decorate to taste.

Tips:

I used a little chocolate frosting and some almonds, but the topping possibilities are endless. You could use peanut butter, chocolate chips, more marshmallows, jelly, ice cream, frozen yogurt, chocolate syrup, fresh fruit, and the list goes on and on.

You can also mix extra ingredients into them while they're still on the stove. Things like chocolate chips, nuts, and fruit, etc are great for this. It'd almost be like making your own granola bar.

Alyson's cookbook isn't all desserts and sweets. In our next issue, keep an eye out for some good summer barbeque ideas.

Contents

Cover Photography:

Model: Arie

Photographer: Erik

Hair & Makeup: Pam Grieco

Fashion: Helene Hawthorne Fashions

New Cover Layout Design:

A collaborative effort of Ari and Sophie.

- 3 Letters From the Editor
- 6 Fiction Bites: Victoria's Asylum of Maggots (1)
- 10 Reviews (Movies, Music, Books, and Video Games)
- 22 Fiction Bites: Beyond the Doors of Daylight (3)
- 28 Hands of Kali: Feature Interview
- 32 Issue 4 Photo Shoot
- 34 A Perspective on Gothic Literature
- 40 Fiction Bites: That Time of the Month (3)
- 50 Slathering Yourself in Food for Beauty & Science
- 55 Death
- 63 Meet the Staff



Soreen's Official Sponsor, 2010



Ebony Tara Scurry
The Career Architect

Eidolon Career Solutions helps people like us (goths, nerds, and other “weirdo’s” as dubbed by the general population) succeed in a corporate setting and find (and land) our dream career/job. (See the ad on the back cover) Check them out at www.eidoloncareersolutions.com

Victoria's Asylum of Maggots

Installment 1

By Amber Skye Forbes

Part One

Unwanted wife, suicidal, prone to hysterics, abnormal--that is what my chart reads. My mind says otherwise. I am an unwanted wife who never wanted to be one. My husband is abusive, so of course I'm going to be hysterical. And who wouldn't be suicidal with a husband that beats a wife for forgetting to put out his tie? As for my abnormality, I see nothing wrong with pouring boiling tea on my husband's crotch.

That's not what Bethlehem Royal Hospital, or Bedlam as we victims call it, would have me believe. If I'm considered mad now, I'd like to see just how mad I am when someone decides to let me out.

Four gray walls stare down at me. An eave sits above my head to keep me down. There is no window, no light. The floor is marred wood. A layer of dust sits like a quilt, tucked neatly into the cracks of the floor. Moss creeps across neglected walls and grows through fissures. Unknown creatures twist and turn in the walls, as well as my nightmares.

I have been staring at these walls for the past two weeks. I have not seen the light in four months. I don't know what the sun feels like, or what the flowers smell like, or what the sky looks like anymore. Wetness devours my body in the form of bodily fluids, and ice strips away my skin, replacing it so that I am forever shivering. My hair is a pile of brambles. My bed sheets haven't been changed in weeks. Chains hold me down.

Why am I in chains? The scenario happens as such:

'Victoria Wilson. Age fourteen. New arrival,' the nurse says, 'Attacked her husband. He couldn't handle her anymore.'

'What should we do?' the other nurse asks. I am on my bed, staring out the window. I

used to be in a room with a window.

'The only thing we can do.'

'Leeches?'

'Yes. Fetch them for me.'

One can imagine what happens afterwards. I lacerated those beasts, and they removed my fingernails for it, a procedure that turned me into a twitching fiend. My nail beds are dried pieces of bloody skin.

I am a rose that has lost its thorns.

I can't be insane, though. The insane ones are outside of Bedlam. They choose to ignore the fog infecting London, the dark creatures slithering through their minds. They ignore it by gambling, drinking, and buying prostitutes and children for themselves.

I should have lost my sanity by now. I should be grazing the air with my stubby fingers. I should be mutilating the slimy creatures in me. I should be screaming, writhing, moaning, panting. Yet, I haven't felt the urge to. If I did, I wouldn't hesitate to unleash the black worms from my mind, let them glide across my body, wrap their slickness around my limbs and take control of me like a puppet.

Instead I stare up at the eave, thinking too much, waiting for sleep to consume me. Present thoughts are comforting. Memories are despairing. I purged myself of my memories when I heard my husband was sending me to Bedlam. I let all my insanity out at home before I came here.

But I believe maggots clogging my veins are **delaying this inevitable lunacy. Soon they'll** turn to flies, and begin to buzz within me. It won't be long before I find these chains too tight.

A girl screams in the cell next to mine. Startling me, jolting my eyes wide open. The walls are hollow arteries, so sounds are never

muffled. I should be used to these screams; this one is just too near. Thudding emerges behind my head. Like everyone else, she just wants to pull her brains out and ooze away her memories.

Thud, thud, thud. A steady, hollow rhythm. No one answers her cries. She's a banshee in a hollowed-out body. Two black coals for eyes. No heart. No soul. Every girl here is a banshee. Some day, I'll be one as well.

It must be nighttime, which is why no one comes for her. One can never tell if it's night or day in here. The darkness is eternal.

The thudding stops, but the screaming doesn't. A simple word follows the screaming.

"Why?" Her voice is hoarse and cracks as she draws it out.

That's the simplest question, the word with the most impact. Why is she here? Why is she subjected to this? Why does no one care? Why is she alone? Why isn't anyone coming for her? I could ask that same question, too.

"Why indeed," I whisper.

Footsteps resound down the hall. Must be daytime then.

The footsteps stop at her cell. A lock clicks open. The screams crescendo, then die down.

"Tabitha," a female voice says.

She lets out a string of incoherent words. Only the mad ones understand her.

"Tabitha," the woman says again.

"Get out of here!" Tabitha says.

"Wot's she 'ere for?" a rough, masculine voice asks, one devoid of sympathy.

"She's here after attacking her husband. No **reason given.**" **No reason asked. They talk** about her as though she isn't in that cell, as though she isn't human. We are rats and not patients. "Her father wants her here until she is wholly sedate. Then he wants custody of her. She's twenty-three."

Not a girl, but a woman old enough to care for herself. A woman is never a woman, though, no matter what age. She'll forever be a girl.

"We'll have to act fast with this one."

"Should we try the leeches?"

"Yes."

"Wot if those don't work."

"Cliterodectomy."

For a moment all the suffering in the world makes itself known to me. There's a torture somewhere, a woman getting raped. A babe is dying in its mother's arms. Men are killing each other faster than rabbits reproduce. Someone commits suicide. Slaves are whipped, girls molested, boys abused, mothers killed, animals tortured.

Maim, rape, torture, kill, abuse. Repeat. Living is impossible if one is not doing any of those things.

"Come on, Tabitha," the woman says.

The screaming starts up again. It sounds like Tabitha's now clawing the wall as though she can create a hole, crawl through it, and run away. Someone slams the door to the side.

"You'll have to get her arms," the nurse says in a hurry.

Tabitha screams louder. The sound of two bodies colliding meets my ears. One of the bodies hits the floor. The sound of tussling mixed with screaming ensues. I imagine Tabitha's a tiger clawing at a gazelle, rending its flesh with sharp claws.

"Nurse Hayes, grab 'er legs!"

The screaming stops. The struggling ceases. There is only the sound of whimpering.

"I've got 'er from 'ere."

"Are you certain, Carlisle?"

There are no words. I assume Carlisle replies with a nod.

Carlisle grunts. He must be hoisting her over his shoulder. Boots scuff across the floor. Heels click. The door shuts.

The boots scuff down the hall. The heels click in my direction.

The lock clicks on my door.

"Time for your medicine, Victoria," Nurse Hayes says.

No. Not the medicine. Please not the medicine.

My heart swells to the size of a boulder and drops through the earth, taking my stomach with it. I soil my bed.

When Nurse Hayes comes into my room, I scream.

Zone *A Poem By Sara Kuehn*

Huddled in the corner,
hugging myself
in an upright fetal position.
Picking the treads off
itchy grey socks--
the issued attire,
the Desyrel
just adding fuel
to an already—

The ceiling decided it to take its first breath . . .
A slow deep one,
gradually picking up speed,
cracking plaster in small jagged chips.

Then the ants came. God the ants!
Pushing through the plaster,
raising the loose chips like flaps and
using them like trap doors.
In a straight line they marched
weaving in and out, up-down,

The room was alive.
Its aura emerged,
it fizzled and sputtered its yellow-green sparks,
zagging and whirling like points of pinwheels.
And the ants fed on that glow—
sipping its color like a fountain.
Communion.
And all I could do was watch.

Model: Katie
Photographer: Winged Creations

W I N G E D C R E A T I O N S P H O T O G R A P H Y



Movie Reviews



Resident Evil: Apocalypse

(Notes-format Review by Sophie)

Released: September 10, 2004

Director: Alexander Witt

94 minutes of sheer awesomeness. I cannot get over how much I love this movie and, for that matter, the rest of the series. The movie starts with a pleasant suburbia above and ravenous zombies below. That has to be the most dead-on (pun intended) indicative metaphor of society ever. The stupidity of those in charge, assuming they can handle things and then only caring for their own **when they realize they can't**, is also a very telling insight into politics.

Our Lesson of the day: Friends don't let friends get bit by a zombie and still hang out. I love you, but you have to stay in a cage for a while.

Question: Angela's classmates, do they know she's there and think she's one of them, or did hiding behind the blackboard really work?

Alice's part starts with a continuance of the last movie's ending, granting us a couple of random snippets and details while sparing most of the things we already saw. This lets us know how the timeline plays out. It tells us that the happy suburbia was three weeks prior.

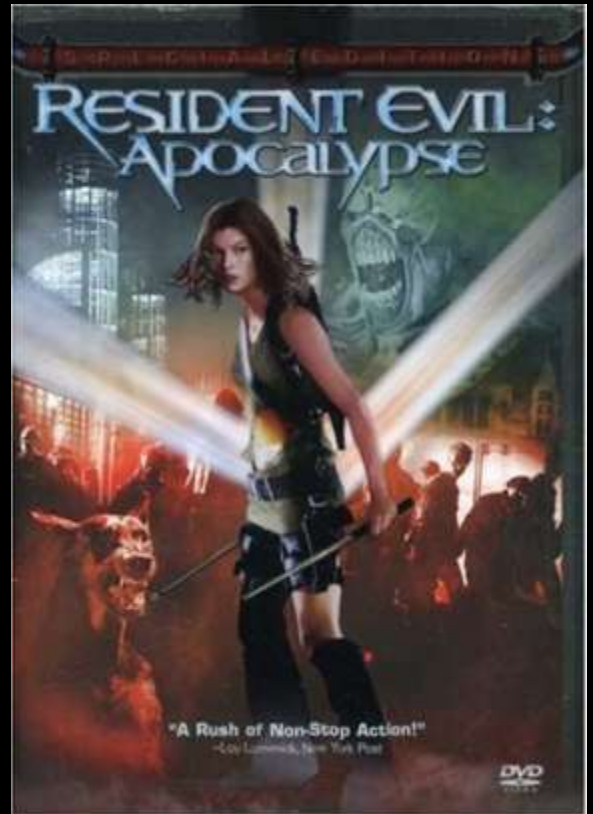
Carlos Olivera (Oded Fehr... Yum) ... his introduction is exactly like his character, the cowboy-hero type, **rushing into danger without a second thought to save someone he doesn't even know.**

Nicholai is too pretty for what happens to him later, and that accent, oh, I could go on for days about Russian accents.

Ravens Gate Church is ominous-sounding enough without zombies running around.

Despite how hot Matt was, in the first movie, Alice and Carlos are perfect for each other. **They both love a flashy entrance and with Alice's new-found ability to sense those infected by the T-virus, she can easily anticipate where the baddies are hiding, how many there are, and maybe even if they're salivating.**

LJ's lesson of the day: If you're going to play GTA with the zombies, don't get distracted by the zombie-hookers. In my experience, you kill the prostitutes in GTA to get your money back, **you don't stare at them and not watch the road in front of you, especially when that road is filled with flaming cars, debris, and - oh yeah - zombies!**



Second installment of 3 leading up to the new movie, Resident Evil: Afterlife, in theaters September 10, 2010 (Look for the review in our October 2010 issue)

Valentine is more than a little odd. Drop a dead body next to her and she's no little-miss muffet, not so much as a whimper. Definitely a bad idea to mess with her. A human hand, however, covering her mouth, and she squeaks like a frightened little mouse.

Shortcuts through the cemetery are lovely, unless you just happen to be in the middle of something in which you're fighting off zombies. How did they not think of that? It's horror-movie-etiquette 101. Which also begs the question, how does Valentine know so much about Zombies?

Yes, Peyton, keep hitting that zombie in the shoulder with your empty gun so that the girls' speed and accuracy looks even more awesome, as if that were possible. You took out one? Good job. Valentine got two or three and I'm fairly certain Alice got more than five.

Fave: Fence-hopping when your almost-ex is trying to kill you, then using a trash chute in a creative way. Speaking of which, you'd think a missile would melt a plastic trash can.

Fave: We all love the Zombie-Dogs, how can you not? Nicholai shoots one, which is sad, but he says "stay" afterward, which is adorable.

Somehow "lightly guarded" means a dozen guys and a sniper? Oh, Dr Ashford, you really do know how to manipulate people, don't you? Also, repelling down a wall is supposed to be a slow and safe process. Do not try Alice's method at home. That said, it was one of the most awesome stunts/effects in the movie.

Strange that Zombies always seem to know to go for the neck. Michelle Rodriguez's character (in the first movie) had them jumping up and down for a little blood. Are we sure they're not part zombie part vampire? Then again, they like to go for the fleshy parts of the arms and legs too.

Fave: Pretty CG effects of the "Precision Tactical Nuclear Device"

Every single time that the screen blacks out before the waterfall scene, my computer or blu-ray player freezes. I think it's part of the movie, but it just doesn't come back, so I have to take out the disc and navigate back to it. This is the only movie that does this on my computer / blu-ray player. The disc also got boiling hot in my laptop this time around.

Fave: "My name is Alice..." ...and I has a pen!

Given that she's herself again, it's a little scary how well she's healing. The average human uses somewhere around 10% of their brain. The rest gets all gross and sad from lack of exercise. That said, Alice's gross-and-sad brain is healing and advancing. Her body is too, including her pain tolerance. She goes from fixing her own broken finger and stifling her whimper to ripping tazer-darts out of her soaking wet skin and throwing them at the assailant's face. I'm sorry, but anyone getting tazed in the face by their own weapon is just too funny.

Fave: Super-powers taking control of the security cameras and then taking out the security guard. A little messy and not necessarily required, but cool nonetheless.

If you haven't seen this movie/series yet, see it.

Easily Five out of Five skulls.

Movie Reviews



Alice in Wonderland

(Review by Sophie)

Released: March 5, 2010

Director: Tim Burton

Apparently the reviews I'm writing for this issue are somehow "Alice" themed...

I'd heard mixed opinions about this movie so I was skeptical when I saw it, but I absolutely loved it. I'd heard someone complain about the moral of the story but I find it much more empowering to today's youth than any other story I've seen that takes place in that era.

We all already know that Tim Burton is a genius, but this is taking it to a whole new level. Watching the CG segment of the bonus features, I'd had no idea that so much was from green-screen.

The people who put their effort and talent into this movie really shined through.

Johnny Depp's performance was brilliant. When an actor hangs up their own soul to embody that of someone else, it's a mark of true talent. Some actors are easily recognizable when they step into a role, but if I hadn't already known that Johnny Depp was portraying the Mad Hatter, I don't think I'd have known it was him. No longer himself, he *is* the hatter. That's where the merging of makeup and acting talent create absolute magic.

I've always been a fan of Anne Hathaway and I absolutely must mention how amazing her makeup was in this movie. Black lipstick and nail polish, she was utterly goth-tastic and it made the paleness of her skin, dress, and hair "pop" to create an absolute harmonic melody that made her character come alive. She pulled it off beautifully, as not many could. Perhaps she was born to be goth? We can only hope.

Helena Bonham Carter has become a household name. Most in my generation know her from her role as Bellatrix on Harry Potter, which she portrays amazingly, making Bellatrix my favorite character in the franchise. I however, adored her in Sweeney Todd, another stroke of Tim-Burton-brilliance that included Johnny Depp. The red queen was not a role that "just anybody" could've pulled off and she did a magnificent job.



Mia Wasikowska, the adorable Aussie who is only 2 years younger than I am, had me puffing up in envy from the get-go. The role she portrayed was a tricky one and she mastered it. The clothes looked like immense fun and all the physically intensive stunts and requirements of the role proved just how capable and talented this young star is.

The movie is less about Alice's aversion to reality and more about finding herself and deciding her own path. The road laid before her, paved by her family and the rules of society, is that of a rich marriage to a ridiculous man and the loss of herself. She feels that she's not yet ready to settle for what the rest of the world has picked out for her and she "takes a moment" to decide exactly how she wants to approach the situation. Back in Wonderland, Alice is told that she's not the right Alice. She doesn't know who she is, so she can't defend herself against these accusations. If she, herself, doesn't believe she's the right Alice, so how could she convince others?

A little chaos and effort later, Alice is confronted directly about not knowing who she is. She claims that she does know who she is and starts rattling off names of family members until she realizes that it's not who your family is, it's who you are. She realizes then that she is her father's daughter in more than a biological sense. She finds herself. It's then time to face the Jabberwocky, which could be a metaphor for conformity, and decides to take fate into her own hands. I'm not sure how many women in the 1860's had jobs, but Lord Ascot was definitely ahead of the curve for even listening to her initial plans.

This movie was amazing. I'm still reeling over the visual effects and the lesson it's teaching children is immensely better than most of the Disney classics. Instead of a prince charming to rescue you, you can make your own destiny and not be content with the status and money that comes from a "prince charming" who is not always so charming.

And another side-note, why is Lady Ascot explaining the boy's dietary needs to Alice? They say he's a lord, so why would his wife be doing any of the cooking or serving? Just an observation.

Four and a Half out of Five Skulls

Movie Reviews

Hellboy

(Review by Oren Ashkenazi)

When I was asked to review a film for Soreen, *Hellboy* was first on my list. It has a beautifully dark aesthetic that never feels forced. Even better is the internal conflict of Hellboy himself; a man struggling not only with rejection from the very people he protects, but an internal rejection as well. It is a **magnificent film, and if by some chance you haven't already seen it, please do. If you have seen it, see it again.**

Hellboy's plot is not overly complex, and that's a good thing. When the story is about a six foot five red devil from space, it's a good idea to keep the story relatively straight forward so that the audience will be better able to suspend their disbelief.

The film uses a lot of iconic names and images that immediately resonate with the audience. Who are the bad guys? Nazis. We all know Nazis are bad; the film does not have to convince or show us why. Who is the main scary villain? Rasputin. Most people also know that Rasputin was supposedly a creepy son of a bitch who just wouldn't die. Instant villain.

All these elements create an environment ripe for emotional investment. The audience is emotionally invested in seeing the villains stopped because we all hate Nazis, and at the same time they are invested in being afraid of the villains because Rasputin is scary. And all this happens in the first ten minutes of the film. After that the film makers can throw all kinds of magic and ancient evil gods into the movie and no one will get lost because they have a solid core of evil Nazis and a creepy Russian man to hold onto.

Like any fantasy movie, *Hellboy* depends a lot on the strength of its visual effects, and they are a mixed bag. The makeup for Hellboy and Abe is decent, but where I really have to give props is Kroenen when he isn't wearing the mask. Damn that guy is disturbing. With the gas mask and uniform he's just terrifying.

Since *Hellboy* is also an action movie, there's also a lot of fighting going on. The choreography and explosions are good, but I have some trouble with the slow and jerky way Hellboy moves through the air when he gets thrown, almost like he was hooked up to some kind of wire harness. By far the best fight scene is Abe swimming away from the Hound. The Hound's snapping jaws and distorted screeches really give you an idea of how powerful it is.

The visual effects really shine in the New York subway and sewer sets. I'm not sure how much is actual set and how much is CGI, but they look really good. Darkness and dripping water are classic ways to add tension to a scene, and it works especially well when the FBI agents are hunting the Hound.



My two main visual issues with the film are Abe in a jar and the theme clash between Hellboy and the Jahad. Abe in a jar refers to the scenes after Abe has been injured and is floating in a tank. It is clearly a dummy. Was Doug Jones not available to film those scenes? The problem I have with Hellboy vs the Jahad is that they supposedly come from the same place, but they aren't even remotely similar looking. Hellboy is a red devil style demon, while the Jahad are squid like beings right out of Lovecraft.

The Jahad's look was another attempt to score an automatic emotional reaction from the audience, because most people have at least a vague idea that Lovecraftian monsters are scary. But in this case it falls flat since Hellboy is supposed to be wrestling with his demonic nature that makes him the same as the Jahad, except he's clearly nothing like them.

Where *Hellboy* really excels is the strength of its characters, something I did not expect from trailers that focused almost exclusively on action sequences. The first thing that absolutely blew me away was that *Hellboy* made me care about the Red Shirt FBI agents. The fear and determination displayed by agents Quarry and Moss as they try to get their anti demon gun working actually had me on the edge of my seat, and I felt a sense of loss when they died. Even more so when agent Clay confronted Kroenen. I wanted Clay to survive, and I felt Hellboy's grief when he died. What gives these three deaths further meaning is that they aren't forgotten in the next scene. **Mannings reams Hellboy out for letting three men die, and Hellboy's line, "I knew those men better than you did," has such subtle poignancy to it that I nearly cried.**

The character I don't really get is John Myers. I don't understand why he is in the movie. It seems like his main job, providing emotional support to Hellboy and Liz, could have been done better by Abe. I suppose the filmmakers felt they needed a fish-out-of-water character, but there are other ways to work in exposition.

I would like to have seen Myers cut from the script because that would have left more time for Abe and Liz. Both are interesting characters, but neither get as much screen time as they should have. Abe's primary role is to deliver character insights, which is why I think he could have easily replaced Myers.

Finally there is Hellboy, and he drives this movie forward. *Hellboy* the movie is basically a representation of what is going on inside Hellboy the character: Humans in the form of the Bureau for Paranormal Research and Defense struggling against demonic forces. Professor Broom and Liz represent aspects of Hellboy's humanity. When Rasputin threatens Liz, he is using Hellboy's humanity against him, but in the end it is that same humanity that allows Hellboy to resist his demonic side and seal the Jahad away. At the same time, Mannings represents another aspect of Hellboy's humanity, the part that rejects the rest of him for being different. When Mannings and Hellboy reconcile, it represents Hellboy accepting himself.

At the end of the film, it is Hellboy's personal journey that really matters. The rest of the film shows us insights into that journey. Hellboy has saved the world and made peace with himself. He has grown to be more than he was.

Music Reviews



Tapping the Vein
Review by Lisa

<http://www.myspace.com/tappingthevein>

I haven't listened to Tapping the Vein for years; when I was in sophomore year of high school I heard their most popular song, "Beautiful," on my friend's car stereo, and listened to them only a bit, and was even then ambivalent about them, since they seem to combine kind of embarrassing garage-band elements with beautiful vocals and intensity; but recently I've taken them up again and finally got their two albums, *The Damage* and *Another Day Down*.

Tapping the Vein is a little-known dark rock band from Pennsylvania with influences from alternative rock, pop, metal, industrial, and electronic music. Years ago I thought they were very angsty, with less-than-superb lyrics, and the singing, though it was piercingly sincere and intensely visceral, was almost silly in parts due to Heather's intensity and vocal quirks; but they still interested me and touched me, and I've remembered them since.

I've come to see Heather's singing as endearing. Apart from being somewhat juvenile, the lyrics and thematic content are kind of endearing, too. This is probably the bottom line: Heather is an incredible singer. Doubtless I wouldn't like it as much if she was singing other stuff, and listening to TTV songs is definitely a enjoyable experience, don't get me wrong, the music is good, too, but she is still incredible in and of herself. Heather's voice is both the strongest part and saving grace of Tapping the Vein. With a kind of small, "cutesy," baby voice, she goes from a crooning whisper to a torn, ferocious, raging scream; her range is incredible; the power and beauty of her voice compel you when the songwriting doesn't interfere with it too much. I consider Heather Thompson, frontwoman, vocalist, and songwriter of Tapping the Vein, to be one of the best singers around, along with Amanda Palmer, Amy Lee, Holly Brewer, Siouxsie Sioux, Jessicka Fodera-now-Addams, Bjork, kaRIN, etc. Her voice is unique, it has its own personality, and extraordinary power, which I guess is what distinguishes singers that are considered technically excellent, like Sarah Brightman, for example, from those I think are actually great.

I think *Another Day Down*, their first album in seven years since *The Damage*, is a good complement to their first record. I wouldn't say I like it as much as *Damage*, but I find myself listening to it more, maybe just because it's newer and a little different. Some customers have complained that Heather hasn't "matured psychologically" (whatever that means), but what does that matter? Besides, I do



think this album is a little less angsty than their first one, which takes some of the fun out of it, of course. It has less of the edge of *The Damage*. This album has a cleaner, more polished, also toned-down sound (some of this probably has to do with production quality), and a slightly different feel, which you can probably tell from the title and album artwork alone. The choruses are much quieter. You might be missing some of the raw power of *The Damage* here, as I did.

Heather's voice is a little bit softer, clearer, and sweeter on this one, and it's generally not as driving and forceful as on the first album. But it also gives you a few different singing elements that weren't present on *The Damage*; this is hard to explain unless you've listened to them, but examples are the trailing ends of the lyric "But the skies are gray" on "Razor Blades" and "Say it's a lie" on "All My Heart"; it just seems that Heather has evolved her vocal style a little bit since their first album.

On the down side, I don't think there are as many standout tracks as on *The Damage*; also, some of the non-remarkable songs tend to get tiring and meld together in their mediocrity, so I skip them over. But the album is definitely still worth listening to, and a solid piece. It's not the same as *The Damage* (I'm not sure that's possible with a seven-year break). Nor is it some drastically radical breakthrough. It's just something worth a listen, with amazing vocals and sounds that interest my little twisted ear.

Like I said, Heather has a phenomenal voice. For this reason alone, *Tapping the Vein* is a worthy experience. If you're a newcomer, I suggest you start out with *The Damage*, but listen to both, to get their full body of sound, or because once you're a fan, you will of course want to. The emotional intensity of *Tapping the Vein* sets them apart from many, many other bands, and Heather's voice shines through like a piercing ray of light.

I give it 4 out of 5 skulls



Book Reviews



Pewter, Murder, and Loaded Dice, by Nick Sconce (Review by Johnathan)

Murder is a violent, gruesome, and inevitably putrid business. Death and the macabre are often glorified in our culture, and the true mechanics glossed over in favor of dramatic showmanship, or irreverent, dismissal of the fact a life has ended.

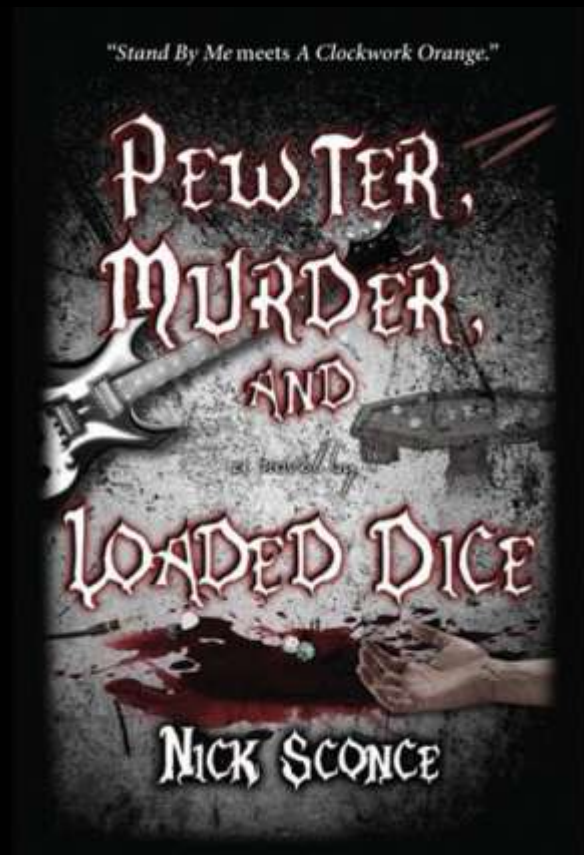
Pewter, Murder, and Loaded Dice, by Nick Sconce, does an excellent job of telling a brutal story without sheltering the reader from the true cruelty behind each act. The story revolves around an eighth grade boy by the name of Devin Predire, and how he and his cadre of fellows deal with the mind crushing boredom of a small town with nothing to offer but their own bloody imagination. Central to the plot is the political dynamic of the heavy metal band the group is also centered around. As Devin attempts to enter the band, someone must be pushed out, creating dangerous feelings of hurt and betrayal. The novel **starts off with a graphic murder on the porch of the gang's hang out, and then travels back** in time to show how these young boys ended up with a corpse at their front door.

Inside the first story is a second. Devin and his fellows are Role Players, enjoying games of all styles from *Dungeon and Dragons*, to *Star Wars*. The style of play, however, is more akin to *Lord of the Flies* than any of the *Star Wars* movies. Their characters constantly act out against each other, using imaginary skills and weapons to brutalize and demean their fellow players.

This parallel of a game world alongside the real one is a fantastic tool for showing the reader the extent of the frustration within these young men. All of their pent up sexual aggression and feelings of oppression are exposed in the game, and slowly, they bleed into **the real world. Violence that once was only a game, finds it's way in to Devin's interactions** at school and with his fellows. Fighting and humiliation permeates their interactions with both schoolmates and each other, poisoning almost every situation. The introduction of hyper violence in the game, and then the transition to reality is remarkably well done, and leaves you wondering just where the line, if any, will be drawn.

The internal struggle of Devin is exceptional, making this a true coming-of-age story for the gaming generation. The tale, however, is a cautionary one. The violence is abhorrent and sometimes uncomfortable to read. The lesson to be taken away is to not emulate these characters, for while Devin is sympathetic, and you can understand his plight, he is not a hero.

I give this novel four out of five skulls. It bears a powerful message, and I believe an important one. The only thing holding it back from the fifth skull is the characterization of Devin and his friends as intelligent. It is referenced many times that they are much smarter than all the authority figures and peers, but the only thing that ever sets them apart is word choice. I felt that I was being told they were smart, instead of being shown how intelligent they were.





Burned (House of Night, Book 7) by PC Cast & Kristin Cast

(Review by Sophie)

*** Note: Contains Some Spoilers ***

Despite a whole lot of nothing happening in this book, a whole lot happened. I find myself more interested in Stevie Rae's story (and love-life) than in Zoey's. I find myself unable to care that Zoey is unconscious and wondering why Rephaim has a bird-beak when it's so blatantly obvious that they should've given him a human face like his father. And why? Because he's absolutely delicious, other than the beak. Now Stevie Rae will have to find a way around it. I'm sure that, in the typical style of these adorable co-authors, we'll see something relating to the human reflection that Stevie Rae and Rephaim saw when they were in that weird trance. I'm still not exactly sure what was happening there.

My biggest qualm relates to the situation with Dallas. What was she thinking? And beyond that, why does she surround herself with insecure pansies like Dallas, constantly begging for her attention while he gladly lets her lead him on. Rephaim is definitely the stronger character and that was made evident by Dallas's transformation and stupidity. Thanks to Stevie Rae's inability to make a choice and take responsibility for it, she's given the bad red-fledglings a means of survival.

Funny, though, how this book distracted from the issue of Zoey and Stevie Rae's friendship. Stevie Rae lost Zoey's trust because Stevie Rae doesn't worship the ground Zoey walks on and tell her every little detail about her life and her fledglings. Somehow that makes Zoey look less like the star of the books and more like the insecure part-fledgling that she really is. How will we tell when Zoey finally "grows up" and will that somehow be the end of the series?

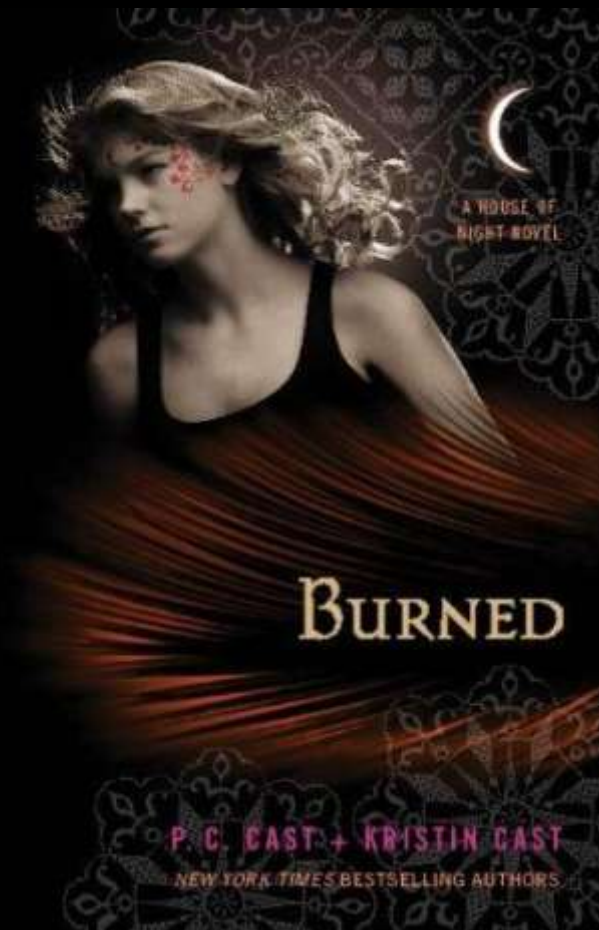
While a highly addictive and vastly amusing read, this series is almost a little too twilight-esque with its heroine. Zoey is a vampire fledgling, just like anyone else, but for some reason, she was chosen specifically, by the goddess herself, to be a high priestess and have superior elemental powers stronger than anyone else. Her friends and roommate are gifted with specific elements because she is their friend and their high priestess. This hadn't-been-a-fledgling-for-more-than-a-day noob with a religious-nut-job stepfather and a docile obedient mother is suddenly the most important vampire in the world. Of course, that's why we love it, isn't it? Because it's so random that it could happen to anybody, even you.

The book becomes relatable from the beginning because we're all learning about the world of vampires from this perspective as Zoey is. We're all learning about the other characters with their changing personalities because of Zoey's perspective. Neferet goes from the ultimate mentor mother-figure to the most evil arch-nemesis she could ask for. Aphrodite goes from evil queen-bee miss popular to "one of the gang" who just happens to be snarky and rude. Erik goes from "the perfect vampire boyfriend" to the jealous possessive jerk of an ex boyfriend.

Stark is the kicker, though. He comes in, literally out of nowhere, and Zoey is instantly in love with him, oh sorry, "connected" was something like the word they used. Of course he chooses Zoey over Neferet and tries to kill himself to save her, that's what an unrealistic obedient puppy would do for a Mary Sue.

I don't mean to bash the series — I own all 7, after all, most of which are in hardback — but there are some days that I just wonder why some parts of it feel so impractical. It's an entertaining series, and this book in particular gives a lot to us Stevie Rae fans. And honestly, I wasn't much of a Stevie Rae fan before she turned Red.

I give it 3 out of five skulls.



Video Game Reviews



Game Title (Review by Sophie)

Moderately Addictive

The story revolves around Zack's nerd-love for the katana-sporting goth-chick, Carrie. Every time he's about to spout the words "I love you" the universe slaps him in the face. How does this rag-tag group of misfits end up together? Well, the obvious. Zack and Carrie are studying together because nobody cares more about grades than a goth and a nerd. Andy is Zack's friend, come to hang out, and Jennifer is paying Zack to do her homework and comes to collect. The next interruption at the door is — you guessed it — zombies. Carrie and Jennifer have tastes so similar to mine and my sisters, respectively, that it was eerie playing through together for the first time. Put my nephew as Andy and my cousin as Zack and you've got a typical afternoon at my house, minus the zombie-attack.

The great thing about Carrie is that most of the zombies think she's already one of them. The Jamaican "boss" spends half his time flirting with her, until he realizes she's alive.

Zombie-killing weapons are either found or made out of random tools and items. You should never trust a creepy guy in an RV who is willing to make and sell weapons for you, even if you do run into him all over town and the zombies are encroaching. Carrie is the smartest of the group because her weapon-of-choice is always

something awesome, like a Katana sword... Swords don't need ammunition. We know who will be left standing after the zombie-apocalypse, and it's not the people trained with guns and in ranged combat. It'll be those trained in close hand-to-hand combat and with bladed weapons.

Another thing: If you are ever fighting zombies and use a knife, go and get it when you make the kill. It's not spent like a bullet, you can re-use it.

I give it 3 out of five skulls.



Model: Wynter
Photographer: Winged Creations

WINGED CREATIONS PHOTOGRAPHY

Beyond the Doors of Daylight

By William H. Nelson

Installment 3

The Tokyo-Narita Airport is packed. We have to move slowly because of Mike's deteriorating physiology: the G.E.O. pod the Corporation stung him with is accelerating beyond even my control. And, after the exhaustion of our escape and the unprecedented confrontation with Vintor Nambulous during my short nap on the plane, I am beginning to show more than my fair share of fatigue. As we limp along dressed in the inappropriate airport clothing I obtained at the Sea-Tac terminal, I think about what I've learned from my astral visit to the facility that, until just recently, once bore my name. The remembrance of all those pairs of milky-white eyes gazing out at me from the thousands of drug-controlled faces makes me shudder.

Vintor has really put my research to 'good' use. I snort at my whimsical humor. The man who's stolen my dreams, the foul, twisted creature who's usurped all my life-long research, is now forming himself an army. An army of street people and orphans that he plans to control with the help of my training serum and the Deep-Sleep Facility that my associates and I have built for the benefit of all mankind. I pat the lump of disks that I've carried in my pocket since the harrowing flight from the lab and all through our narrow escape from the recovery agents. Smiling inwardly, I relive the moment of triumph when I broke the barriers of the sub-conscious and tapped into the hidden talents that lay beyond the doors of daylight. That moment was short-lived, I remind myself as I think of what I saw in the center of the complex through the eyes of my astral form. Vintor, apparently, has also conquered the threshold. He was magnificent and deadly. I don't know if I can confront such power again.

We push forward, becoming part of a group heading towards the scanner that marks the start of the customs check, eventually leading us to the streets of Tokyo and on towards Mitchell Laboratories. Ms. Jenny Lee Mitchell will have to see us after I explain the circumstances of our unannounced visit. With her help, maybe we can still beat Vintor at his own game.

I look at Mike. His face is ashen, and there's a strange look about his eyes. He's started sweating again, a brownish fluid that seems unwholesome in the fluorescent lighting. I hope we can make it through customs without any attention--already he seems to be pulling inward at odd angles. It's a queer sight, and I glance on ahead to make sure that we're not attracting any attention.

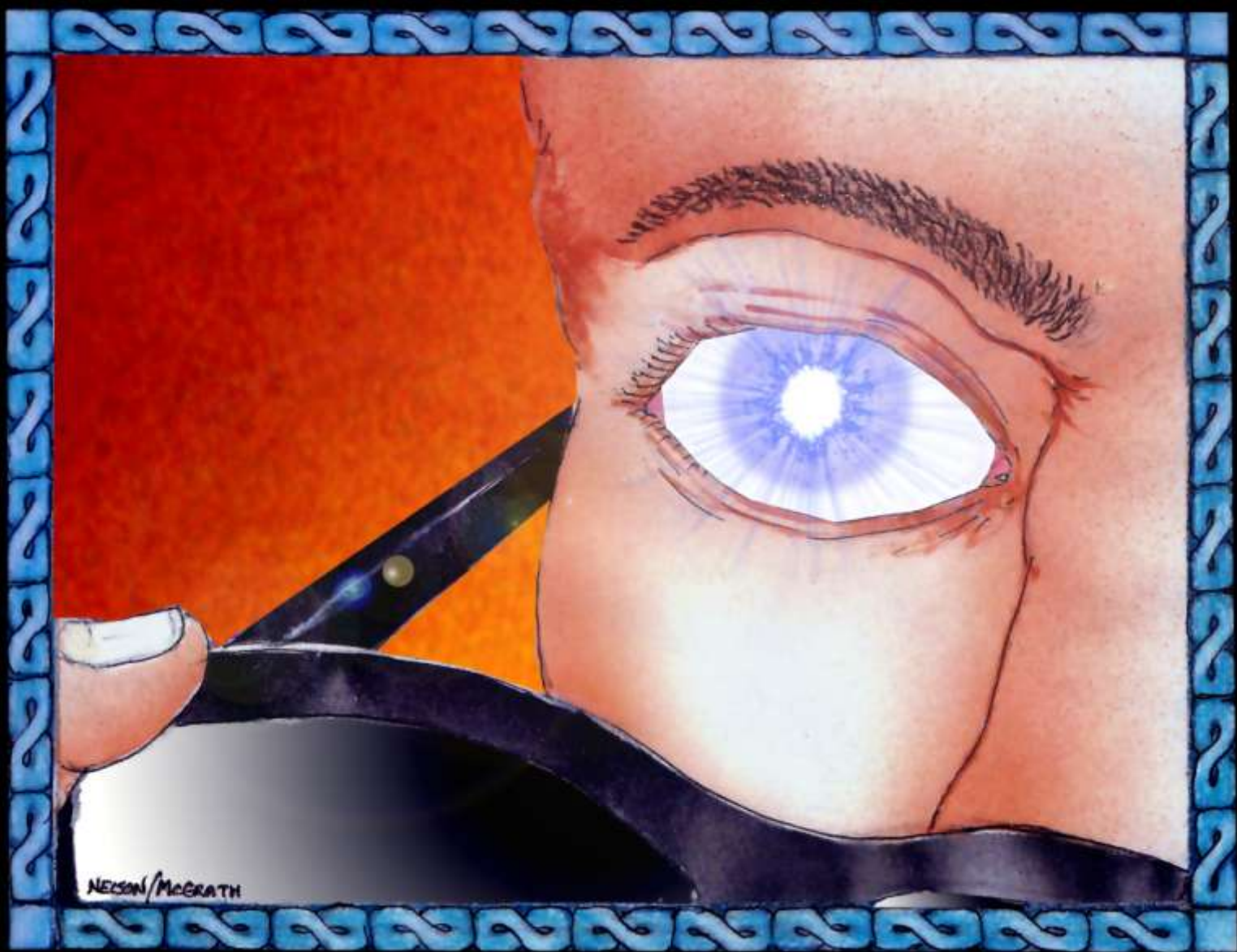
I gasp.

I pull Mike to the side by some trees growing near a row of benches. Standing on the other side of the check point is a group of richly dressed men. They couldn't have found us already. The Corporation can't be everywhere at once, can they? I look around, trying to seem inconspicuous as I search for a place to hide. Too late: the man in the front has spotted us. He pulls off his sunglasses, motioning the others to fan out to the sides. I can see the milky glow of his eyes. I groan, looking around for a means of escape.

"Bill," Mike whispers, pulling at my sleeve, "how could have they gotten here so fast? We only left the states ten hours ago."

"I don't know! Quickly! That door over there."

Already moving, we edge closer to the sealed doors. There's a sign tacked to the outside paneling. It warns against entry in several languages. The airport, it seems, is undergoing construction in



these areas. Looking back once, we push through the doors and begin to stumble down the dimly lit corridor. At the far end of the unfinished section are glass partitions that lead to the other parts of the new terminal. If we can just make it outside, we can get away. Just then, the doors behind us slam open, allowing the recovery agents to advance forward and spread out on either side. Mike shudders as I grab his arm for support. His flesh writhes under my touch. It won't be long until his control is lost. I must do something immediately, or we lose our only chance of escape.

"Dr. Teiresias, you cannot evade us. You are completely surrounded," the agent says.

I look at him through narrowed eyes. They don't, in fact, have us completely surrounded. The others have yet to move to the opposite ends of the corridor. I glance around me, gauging our opponents' strengths. The agent continues, his speech broken by a thinly veiled Japanese accent.

"We know of you and the trouble you've caused. You will give me the disks and come with us now, or we will recover them by force. And don't assume that we will fall before your simple powers. We are well-versed in the technology you possess."

With that, he throws his suit jacket to the ground, stepping forward as a golden nimbus springs up around his body.



His control gone, Mike has rapidly changed into a form of life that is as horrifying as it is unexpected. His body, a blur of dark brown and gold, lashes out at the agents that surround us, tearing through them faster than I can blink. The agents aren't stupid, however, as violet bursts of energy crackle across my hastily raised shields. I turn towards my assailants, feeling an all-consuming rage within me. Raising my arms, I slap my hands together in front of my body, forming the nexus for my energy flux. Then, screaming, I send forth stream after stream of anger-influenced energy, enveloping all before me in a hazy radiance. The men disintegrate along with most of the surrounding hallway. Looking back, I see Mike, howling like a banshee, blurring down the corridor, leaping over and through all obstacles in his path. Forming a bubble of force around my floating body, I follow, reaching out to ensnare all those who oppose me. They are like puppets to me, flying in and out of my anger reddened vision, bursting like distorted bags of water against my shields. I have no mercy on them. These are the people who would turn my gifts to weapons as they have forced me to do in the defense of my own life. I shall crush them one-by-one until I regain what they have stolen. In the end, it will be Vintor Nambulous who will feel my final revenge. And his end will not be a quick one.

I gasp. How can these men possess secrets recently discovered by my own research team? Furthermore, how can we combat something we have yet to fully control ourselves? But Mike is already moving.

I had no idea the effects of the Genetic Engineering Osmoregulator pod would be so dramatic. I meant only to design something that would help mankind to survive in extreme climates and to live comfortably in water as well as on land.

The agents are behind us now. Most of them are either torn or spread across the walls and ceiling. The remaining few continue to send forth bolts of purple energy, hounding our heels like small yapping dogs. I laugh at their miserable attempts. Again, they have underestimated me, although even I myself had no idea I could become so formidable. It must have something to do with the extreme emotions I'm experiencing.

I glance to the side where the yammering thing that was once Mike continues to blur down the hall. It is a bafflement to me. The G.E.O. pod, although never tested beforehand, should not have had this effect--my design was far simpler. Could Vintor have altered the formulas before administrating it to Mike? Before I have more time to speculate, we reach the first set of glass doors. Mike gleefully smashes through them as I, in a far more volatile condition, phase through them, my body like a ghost in the wind. It is an interesting feeling to be doing the things that man can only achieve in dreams. If only I had more time to study the possibilities, more time to train. But the Corporation took care of that, the filthy thieves! I must find a way to stop them.

I marvel at the ease of my travel as I phase through another set of glass doors, nonchalantly moving my right hand from its position by my heart to form a backward turning arc. Then, the energy already leaping down the corridor behind me, I return it to its original position, centering it next to my left. I smile as I hear the tortured screams of our pursuers. That should take care of the rest of our 'opposition.' Up ahead, the light of the sun flashes through the remaining sets of doors, dazzling in its brilliance and reminding me of the task that lies before us. Mike's condition must be reversed, and we have to reach the laboratories of Miss Jenny Lee Mitchell, so I can begin to analyze the data to help his condition. Also, I must make sure that the disks are put to good use.

Passing through the remaining doors of the incomplete terminal section, Mike is hurled backward against one of the concrete pylons that frame the opening. His rapidly changing form lies stunned at my feet, and I watch with wide eyes as the golden-brown epidermal layers of his flesh swim in and out of focus like the chaotic blending of a thousand single-celled life forms fighting for dominance. Before I can react, a plasma discharge hits me with such ferocity that I'm hard to put keep from over-balancing myself as I counter the attack. What could possibly be going on? I glimpse around myself, searching for the source of this unexpected

onslaught.

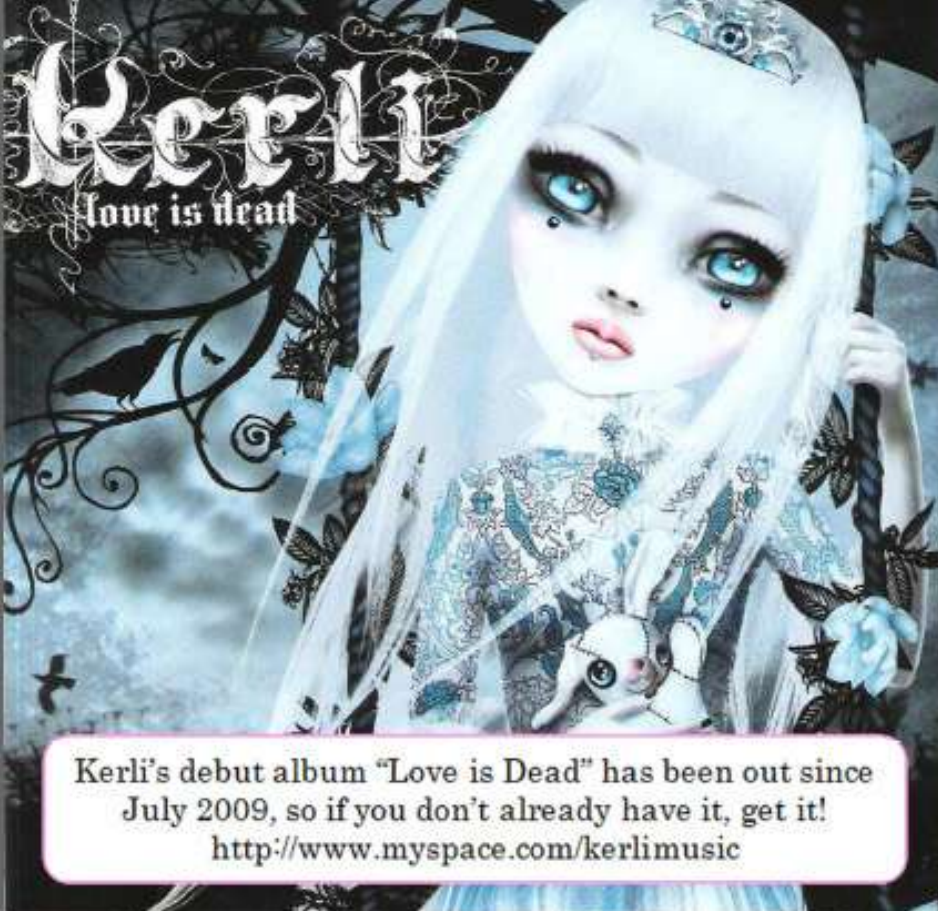
"Well, little man!" a voice booms out over my consciousness. "It looks as if you and I have something in common."

The source of the resonate voice is a man larger than I've ever seen. He stands across from us, leaning against the concrete wall of the upper-level loading expressway, his tanned, well-muscled frame accentuated by the backdrop of the sun-filled sky. Power seems to radiate from him, even though the waves of force aren't visible ones. A slight breeze ruffles through his short, titanium-white hair as he stands up straight, pulling his white tank top down and tucking it into his orange surfer pants. He's huge, at least seven feet tall. I begin to panic.

"So, I see that you've defeated my group of trainees," he begins, a generous smile spreading across his sculpted face. Tucking his thumbs into his waistband, he steps forward, casually glancing around us and taking in a deep breath. "Well, that's all right. You see, there's plenty more where they came from, and this will only make the others work that much harder when they learn of this failure. Yep, these boys do tend to take their honor quite seriously. Curious friend you got there. Is that what Mr. Nambulous meant by the 'osmoregulation' of genetic make-up?" He glances towards Mike, stroking a gigantic hand across his jaw. "Well, no matter. I'm in charge of operations here, and you will come with me."

Placing his arms wide, he takes a traditional karate stance, his face darkening like storm clouds boiling across the surface of the sky and his smile turning to a determined grimace. I sense the destructive power, even before his skin begins to ripple with inner intensity. What has Vintor created, and, more importantly, how will I fight such a monster?

(To be Continued)



Kerli's debut album "Love is Dead" has been out since July 2009, so if you don't already have it, get it!
<http://www.myspace.com/kerlimusic>



Estonian Musical Genius,
Kerli
Pictures by
Vespertine



A close-up, high-contrast portrait of a woman with short, vibrant pink hair. She has dark, dramatic eye makeup, including thick black eyeliner and mascara. Her expression is somber as she looks slightly away from the camera. She holds a lit cigarette between her lips, with a small amount of ash visible. The lighting is moody, with strong highlights on her face and hair, and deep shadows elsewhere. The overall aesthetic is gritty and cinematic.

Smali

Hands of Kali

A Feature Interview By Ooky Spooky

Hands of Kali are **Seattle's own** deliciously dark, tribal fusion belly dance troupe, who have been writhing their way through the goth scene since 2003. Sorean caught up with them on their way to rock northern California with their experimental sensual dance, and scored a quick interview with this gothic sensation.

Do you consider yourself gothic and what does that mean to you?

Yes, we definitely identify ourselves as goth, but I'd say we think of Hands of Kali as a group of fearless avant-garde artists first. We always lean to the dark, dramatic side of dance, music and life in general – goth is one of two of three ways that manifests. Our other big stylistic influence these days is film noir and the culture surrounding that. I think of noir's heavy hitters (Rita Hayworth, Humphrey Bogart and so on) as precursors to today's goth scene. We're kind of like their dark children.

What are your upcoming projects?

There are so many! We're always interested in trying new things. Right now, we're filming a video that focuses on our double-sword dance. Bellydancers who perform with swords are somewhat rare, and groups of bellydancers who perform with two swords per person are almost non-existent. But we're from the dark side, so of course we love the sharp-n-shiny things. Our double-sword video should be out by year-end. It's called "Sharp."

We're also touring the West Coast with Sullen Serenade this fall. It's such an honor to work with that band. They're just awesome. Here's a link: <http://www.lowlandstour.com/>

And I'm working on a follow-up to my book "Stomping Ground." You can find "Stomping Ground" on Amazon.com. My new book is going to be a fun little action-packed fictional tome about a coven of bellydancing witches – keep an eye out for it.

What do you see in your future, any plans for big changes or advancements or are you happy with where you are now?

Though we love what we're doing now, no artist should ever sit still. For the next year or two, we'll be working on moving beyond the West Coast, performing more in other parts of the country. We hope to get on the workshop teaching circuit at big national bellydance festivals, so we can continue to spread the gospel of scary, dark, mystical bellydance. From there, we'll see where our plans for world domination carry us, heh...

How did you get in to dance?

When I first moved to Seattle in the mid-90s, I saw a group of about 40 bellydancers dancing together in our city's annual Summer Solstice Parade. I'd never seen a large group of women doing anything like that before. Have you ever seen something that was so beautiful it made you cry? That's how I felt when I saw those bellydancers – they were so sensual and so powerful, and they clearly had a lot of love and respect for each other. I stood there on the sidewalk watching, with tears smearing my eyeliner, and I thought: "I have to learn to do that." It really did change my life.

Name a favorite band or music to dance to you don't think anyone would expect from you.

Well, we've performed to Nine Inch Nails, White Zombie, Rasputina, Massive Attack, The Knife, Nick Cave, Danny Elfman, Puscifer, AC/DC, Rage Against the Machine and a few others that most bellydancers would never choose, but our audience has probably come to expect that sort of weirdness from us. In terms of something unexpected, I'd say (and I'm just speaking for myself here, as I'm sure my troupe mates would give other answers): Los Lobos. I adore them – their music is wonderful, very inspirational, but the real reason I admire them is their work ethic. They've been together with the same lineup for over 30 years, they've made beaucoup records, they've toured the world, and many many bands cite them as an influence. And yet, most people know Los Lobos only for their cover of "La Bamba." But they don't care: Their passion for their work and their commitment to excellence keeps them going year after year, never mind that they've been denied worldwide fame and "rock star" status. That's real art and real love; that's what it's about. Go listen to Los Lobos' record "The City and the Town" – I guarantee it'll make you cry. Or go listen to their cover of "I Wanna Be Like You" from the Disney movie "The Jungle Book" – that one will make you laugh your ass off. J

What is bellydance tarot?

"Belly Tarot" is what we call our signature system for giving tarot readings using bellydance. I've been a tarot reader for longer than I've been a bellydancer, actually – tarot and bellydance have both been deeply influential on my spiritual life (I'm pagan), so it seemed natural to combine the two passions. We let audience members pick the cards from our giant-sized tarot deck, and then we create

improv bellydance routines on the spot, to represent the cards selected. It's always a magical experience, to let the spirit world direct our dancing via the tarot cards.

The look of tribal fusion is unique in the bellydance and gothic scenes respectively. Where does it come from? What are its biggest influences?

Tribal bellydance developed in San Francisco in the 70s. At the time, bellydance had gotten very glitzy – lots of sequins and rhinestones and pastel-colored costumes, the sort of thing you'd see in a Vegas show. Most of us now refer to that glitzy style of bellydance as "cabaret," to distinguish it from tribal. The ladies who developed tribal bellydance wanted to explore the more earthy, gypsy-style side of the dance, and to reconnect with the nomadic tribal peoples who originally created the dance thousands of years ago. In Hands of Kali, we think of ourselves as tribal bellydancers, but we also love to watch cabaret bellydance – there's room for every style of expression in the dance world.

How do the music and movements differ from traditional bellydance?

Our bellydance moves are pretty much the same as any bellydance moves; every past and present member of HoK has been fully trained in classic, traditional bellydance techniques. We're dedicated to technical bellydance prowess, in fact. It's our musical choices, costumes, and visual presence that differ from traditional bellydancers. We do include moves from tango, hip hop and gothic club-style dancing, though – hence the "fusion" label.

Is tribal bellydance influenced by the gothic club scene?

Absolutely. Just as the gothic club scene is influenced by tribal bellydance. I know tribal bellydancers who'd never step foot in a goth club, and I know goths who think bellydance is just the dumbest thing ever. But I move regularly between the two worlds, and I see bellydancers wearing black PVC belts with studs and spikes on them, and then I see goth girls in the clubs with tribal tassels hanging off their belts – so there's no doubt in my mind that lots of cross-over is occurring. I think it's great. Mixing and mingling the scenes just means that all of our lives will be richer and more exciting.

Who inspires and influences you as a group?

Certainly we've been influenced by the dancers, musicians and artists who have gone before us. We are nothing but grateful for what they've given us. Bless them for pointing the way, for fuck's sake. Tom Waits, Gloria Swanson, Michael Jackson, Prince, Charlton Heston, Jack Nicholson, Katharine Hepburn, Kurt Vonnegut, Cyndi Lauper, Gloria Steinem, Kathleen Hanna, Jill Tracy, Lucy Lawless – I wouldn't want to live in a world without them. In the end, though, you have to dig inside yourself for real inspiration. If you want to find true beauty in this universe, look at your own heart. When your soul is laid bare, naked before the whole bitch-ass world, and you have nothing to lose and no reason to hide anymore – that's when the really amazing art happens. Talk to your spirit guides, spend time alone in nature, talk to yourself, write in your journal late on weekend nights when no one else is around: That's where you find real truth. The best choreographies I've created happened when I was just messing around in the studio by myself, with no plan in mind, and just let

the spirit move me.

How is your style received by other bellydancers?

Some love us, some hate us. The ones who hate us think we're disrespectful because we don't stick to bellydance tradition. But we think of dance as art, so while we love and respect the traditions of bellydance, we also know that the nature of art is to evolve. Being a good artist means being daring, trying new things, creating whole new experiences for the audience to enjoy – that's respecting the traditions of art as a whole.

What's the story behind the name Hands of Kali?

Kali is the Hindu goddess of birth and death. She represents both creation and destruction. In appearance, she's very scary and threatening; she wears a necklace of skulls, she has these crazy eyes, and her hair is always wild and matted. She has four arms: One hand holds a flower, one hand makes a gesture of blessing, one hand holds a bloody sword, and one hand holds the demon's head she has just cut off with that sword. Kali is a demon slayer – she kills the demons of ignorance, laziness, fear, ego, all the things that hold us back from leading a life of wholeness. Basically, the thing about Kali is that she kills off the bad stuff to make room for newer, better things to grow. Her message is that death and destruction are necessary, in order for rebirth to occur. That's the same message that we in Hands of Kali want to bring to the world: Darkness is your friend, if that makes sense, and I really hope it does. ;)

-- Kendra Hayes, 5/15/10
kendra@handsofkali.com
www.handsofkali.com

HappyGoth Productions

Freelance Graphic Design, Writing, & Modeling

Benefits



*Personal attention and emphasis on customized results
Specialized diversity and alternative content experience
Knowledge of a writer recognized for excellence in writing
by the University of Kansas
Advertising experience in the literary magazine market
Quick, high quality project turnaround*

Services

*Ad Copy, Brochure Writing, Press Releases
Ad Design, Logo Design, Web Graphics
Article Writing, Column Writing
Editing, Type-setting
Illustration
Modeling
Other projects as negotiated*



<http://www.happygothproductions.com>

Anyone looking for a reliable, professional, and diversity-focused writer will find this and more in Melissa. Her unwavering reliability, natural creativity, solid understanding of diversity and alternative lifestyles makes her an invaluable member of the Eidolon Career Solutions team!

~ Ebony Tara Scurry, PHR, Eidolon Career Solutions

Issue 4 Photo Shoot

Thank you so much to all those who participated in the shoot, and to those who wanted to but couldn't be there. A special thanks to Helene Hawthorne Fashions for the beautiful clothing our models wore at the shoot and to Erik for lending us his talented lens and his space. Also to Pam for her creative talent with hair and makeup.



Model: Bria & Arie
Photographer: Erik
Hair/Makeup: Pam
Fashion: Helene Hawthorne Fashions

Sorean considers its models part of a family. They are our face, as our writers are our voice. Thank you so much, Arie and Bria, for lending us your talent and beauty once again. And thank you to Wynter, SixxxxUgly, and Katie for joining us for this issue.



Model: Bria & Arie
Photographer: Erik
Hair/Makeup: Pam
Fashion: Helene Hawthorne Fashions

A Perspective on Gothic Literature

By Amber Skye Forbes

There is an old church in an abandoned town **composed of gray, crumbling bricks, it's stained** -glass windows marred from age. Inside, the church smells musty and feels damp. As rats scurry underneath the floorboards, a spider builds its web at the top in one of the coffers. The wood paneling, pews, and flooring are all rotten and eaten away by termites. It is mostly dark, save for one candle that burns on a cobweb-covered organ.

Ann B. Tracey, in her novel *The Gothic Novel 1790-1830 Plot Summaries and Index to Motifs*, writes that setting is the most important factor in classic Gothic literature. A dying setting implies that the church was once alive and rife with activity; now it's an empty shell of what it used to be. This is what Gothic literature does: it attempts to re-define people's perceptions of reality to show the darker aspects of life that most are afraid to explore. Gothic literature gives its readers a safe view of a sinister world without the threat of danger.

Common characteristics of a Gothic novel are generally eerie settings classified by decay, darkness, and horror. There is a sense of moral decay in the world as well, where nothing is black and white. The main character is usually haunted in some way, and voluntarily or involuntarily thrust into a situation of isolation. The antagonist possesses an ultimate evil fueled by a concrete motivation. The plot itself also contains a lot of macabre elements, and the main character almost never has a pleasing ending, though it can sometimes be bittersweet. Lastly, although Gothic novels came out mainly in the 19th century, they do not have to take place during that time period--*Tithe*, by Holly Black, is one example of a novel that takes place in the 21st century. Holly

Black's novel contains both gritty descriptions of dark settings with morally corrupt and sinister characters, as well as explorations into the human psyche. Because of these attributes one can argue that it is Gothic despite being set in the 21st century.

There are plenty of examples of authors who write Gothic works, such as Mary Shelly, Bram Stoker, and Jane Austen. To name them all and explain how their styles differ would take an entire tome. There are two authors, however, one of classic Gothic and one of modern, whose works greatly embody what it means to be a Gothic novel.

Edgar Allen Poe is one such author. One of his most notable works, "The Tell-Tale Heart," tells the story of a man who goes insane by degrees after having murdered someone and burying him underneath a floorboard. It is neither the murder nor the time period alone that completely establish this novel as Gothic. It is rather the exploration of the dark side of the human psyche that makes it so. Throughout the entire story, the protagonist is trying to convince the reader he is not insane, while conveying actions that are blatantly just that. First he murders an old man simply because he has an unsettling eye. Then he actually believes the man's heart is beating underneath the floorboards.

A more modern author of Gothic novels is Libba Bray. Though her newest novel, *Going Bovine*, is not Gothic, her entire Gemma Doyle Trilogy most certainly is. The main character--Gemma, of course--is haunted by visions and must deal with the suicide of her mother, who killed herself after realizing that the only way to prevent a dark creature from taking her into a

hellish world was to take her own life. Gemma goes to Spence Academy, a finishing school for girls, whose setting is picturesque on the outside, but macabre on the inside. Her room has an eave that could crack her skull, and the entire inside looks as though it hasn't been cleaned in years. Throughout the entire trilogy, she must deal with her mother's demons and moral corruptness both within others, and inside herself. And the ending, without spoiling it, is bittersweet. To complete the Gothic effect, the tale itself is beautifully drawn and set in the Victorian era.

Now that Gothic literature has been explained, how does one go about writing such stories? The best way to get a sense of how to write such fiction is to read plenty of Gothic works. Pay attention to: the moods invoked, the descriptions used, the way the writer uses diction, some of the themes, and the characterizations of certain characters. By constantly reading Gothic works, writing one will eventually come naturally, just as reading all the time drastically improves vocabulary, structure, and sentence variation.

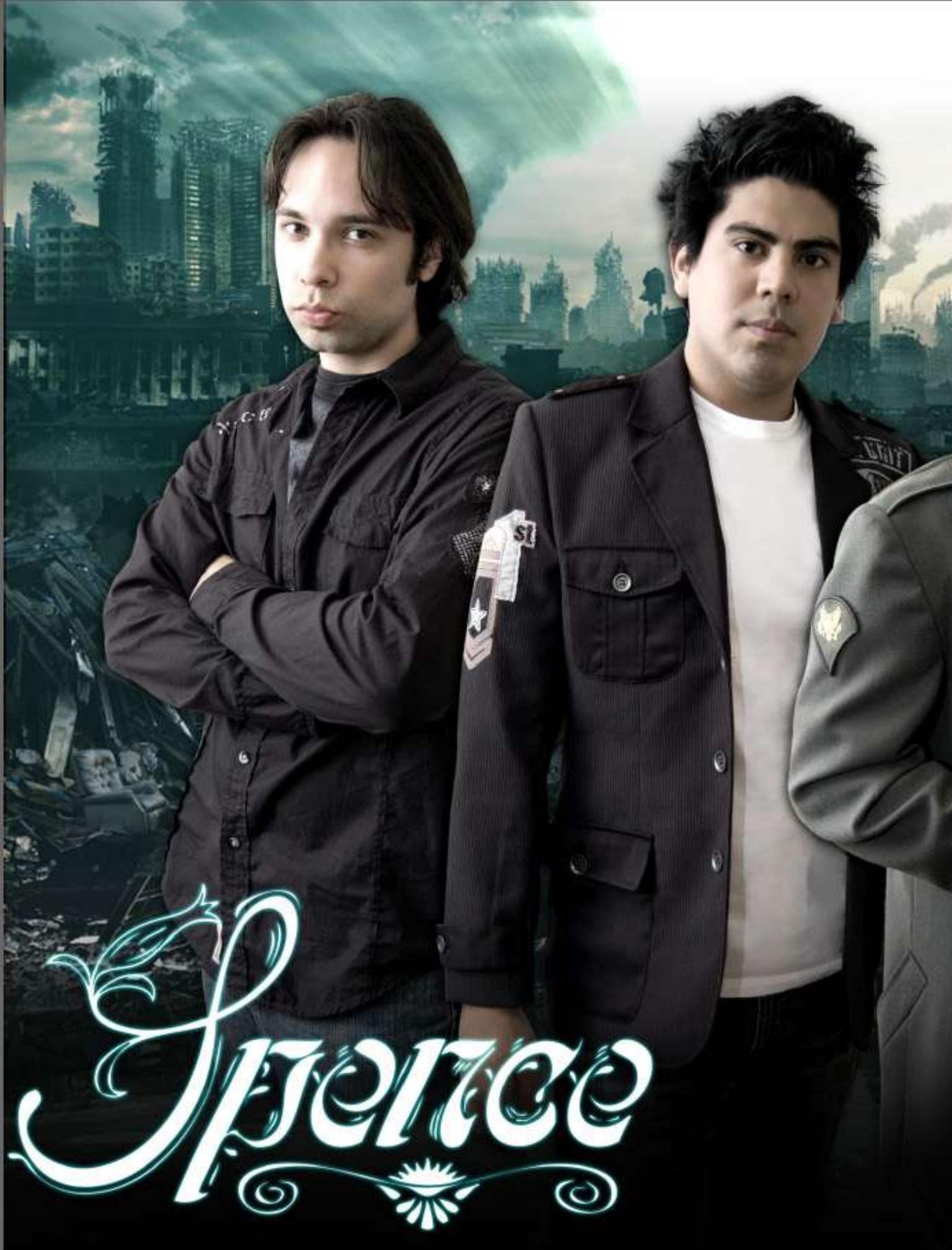
After getting a sense of what Gothic fiction is, and before writing a story of your own, one needs to consider setting before anything else. A setting often determines whether or not a piece of fiction is Gothic, because settings in these types of novels normally reflect the mood of the main character. Ruins, stark villages, or gray skies are great at portraying the desired mood. Of course, the setting in a Gothic novel does not always have to be dreary. In *A Great and Terrible Beauty*, the novel opens up with Gemma Doyle in the hot, sunny skies of Bombay, India. Yet, what the author does with this sunny setting is throw in supernatural danger. After all, why would danger be lurking in broad daylight? Play with contradictions such as this. Use setting in a Gothic novel as a way to create urgency and psychological terror within the readers.

Equally important as the setting are the characters. A character that is consistently happy is going to ruin a Gothic novel, even if the setting is Gothic in nature. Main characters in Gothic novels typically show traits of vulnerability, either with isolation, a troubling past, or an undesired future. In *The Forest of Hands and Teeth* by Carrie Ryan, Mary feels isolated in her village. This feeling of isolation stems from her belief that there is more beyond her small world than constantly trying to survive from being infected by the Unconsecrated--basic zombies. So when her village gets attacked, she sees it as the perfect opportunity to find out what's beyond.

Not only should attention be paid to main characters, but attention needs to be paid to antagonists as well. Antagonists in Gothic novels represent an ultimate evil, and they should have a motive for doing what they do. That motive can stem from an abusive past, to a mental illness that causes bouts of insanity. Regardless of how the characters are created, protagonist or antagonist, there must be a darkness within them that gets explored. Do not be shy to let out the inner demons of these characters.

Lastly, incorporate the supernatural. Not all works of Gothic fiction have this, such as several of Jane Austen's novels, but most modern Gothic fiction includes the supernatural. The supernatural contains such creatures as vampires, zombies, ghosts, witches, werewolves, and a whole slew of other beings. They can even be made-up creatures not labeled with a specific name, but mysterious, nonetheless. The supernatural does not comprise just creatures, but also powers such as visions, mind reading, and seer sight. Get creative with supernatural elements.

For more information on Gothic novels, read Ann B. Tracey's *The Gothic Novel 1790-1830 Plot Summaries and Index to Motifs* and Robert Miles' *Gothic Writing 1750-1820 A Genealogy*.



Spelzee



<http://www.myspace.com/spencetheband>



Model: Sad Charlotte
Hair/makeup: Pamela Grieco

Helene Hawthorne Clothing

<http://www.etsy.com/shop/hhfashions>



Burning Ants

A Poem By Catherine Zickgraf

I was *immoral*. You used to rod my soft legs. I'm older now.

My eyes at your door this morning: you locked me out with the other strays,
the don't-belongs without homes. Your face shaded and turned up the stairs.

You once splayed my hand over your olive stove so I'd choose Heaven,
dragged me outside, squeezing radius toward ulna—

uncurled and broke back two fingers. I oozed sweat in my blistered palm
when the sun fizzed through your parental salve.

Thus, God's great eye blinks through a magnifying glass
at the charred bones of His meager creation

until the clouds unroll into a quilted sky, masking black
its bearded keeper.

That Time of the Month

By CS Anderson

Installment 3

CHAPTER THREE:

Annabelle washed out her brushes wearily. The painting that she had been working on was not turning out the way that she had hoped it would. Soft jazz played quietly from a CD player on the counter and her friend Mish sat on the battered couch that was just about the only piece of furniture in her art studio.

“These are amazing.” Mish commented as she leafed through a large sketchpad containing drawings that Annabelle had done of Lana.

Annabelle turned to smile at her friend. She had known Mish for years now, they had even spent a night or two together when they had first met. Mish was built like a fire hydrant, short and solid and her short hair was dyed in various colors, most quite unfound in nature. She had more tattoos and piercings than anyone else she knew. All that aside, she was the most down to earth and practical person that Annabelle knew.

“Thanks, I haven’t done any of her for awhile. It’s hard to get her to sit still long enough.”

“She’s gone again isn’t she?” Mish asked quietly, in a tone that made it really not a question.

“Hey, some people’s girlfriends go on the rag and turn into complete bitches. Mine just leaves town once a month with no explanations.” Annabelle tried to keep her voice light but a thin note of pain colored it.

“Want me to kick her ass?” Mish asked deadpan.

They both laughed. That was one of the reasons that she loved having Mish around. She always knew what to say to make her lighten up a little.

“Not that I would really want to try it

though, she’s kind of scary. I mean, she never poses, never tries to act tough or anything. You just sort of know that she would be a bad bet if you pushed her.” Mish said in a more serious tone.

Annabelle nodded in agreement and went to the corner of the studio that served as a makeshift kitchen of sorts and pulled a couple of wine coolers out of a dingy and scuffed up Styrofoam cooler. She opened them both and handed one to her friend.

“Enough about my dysfunctional screwed up love life, Mish. Tell me, how is your dysfunctional screwed up love life going?”

“No thanks, sister. It is way more fun to talk about yours instead of the comedy of errors that I pass off as my love life. Like I said, these drawings are really cool but why did you sketch in an animal of some kind in all of them?”

“What are you talking about?”

“In all of these drawings you’ve worked in this weird, shadowy sort of beastly thing. See? In this one it’s woven into the shadow of the stool that she is sitting on and in this one here there’s like this snarling face worked into the folds of her leather jacket.”

Annabelle snatched the sketchpad away from her startled friend and began to look at the pictures. Goosebumps rose up on her flesh as she saw that Mish was right. The thing was in every single drawing, even in the early ones that she had done after meeting Lana for the first time. What scared the hell out of her was that she had absolutely no memory of drawing the thing in any of them. It was like her fingers had done it somehow without her mind being aware of it. Like the artist part of her saw something there that the

lover part had not. Her mouth was dry and her head hurt as she looked at drawing after drawing.

“Hey, take it easy sister. So you subconsciously think of Lana as a monster or something. No big deal. Hell, I think that way about all of my ex’s and I ain’t all that sure about my current squeeze.” Mish joked.

Drawing after damn drawing, each one with a half formed snarling bestial visage staring from somewhere in the background. She stared at each in turn trying to figure out what I meant. A small cold knot of fear formed in her stomach as she leafed through them one more time.

What had her artist’s eye captured that she had not wanted to see?

“This is just too damn weird.” She muttered.

“Yeah, ain’t love grand?” Mish asked in a long exaggerated drawl. She gave her friend’s shoulder an affectionate squeeze as she finished her wine cooler and hooked the bottle smoothly into the trash can in the corner of the room.

“Listen babe, gotta motor. Places to go and people to do, or something like that anyway. Try not to freak out too bad all about all this crap. I’ll be home around midnight if you need to talk or something, ok?”

“Yeah, all right Mish. Thanks.” Annabelle said distractedly. After her friend left she sat there for awhile just staring at the sketchpad. The drawings varied, in some the shadowy beast was scarcely noticeable, in others it dominated the page so strongly that she could not understand how she **hadn’t seen them before.** Crazy thoughts chased around in her mind. She got up and began to pace around the room. It was all too nuts, too damn much to deal with.

Finally she couldn’t stand it anymore, the walls were closing in on her and he had to get out. She grabbed her coat off the back of the couch and walked out of her studio and into the night.

“Talk to me.” Trevor’s voice was grim and terse. It had been a very long night. He had interrogated the bartender, relentlessly prodding

him to remember word for damn word what Jasper had said on the phone. After he had wrung every scrap of information that he could from the man, including that Jasper had said what sounded like the word wolf before the connection had been lost, he had sent him back to work with orders to keep his mouth firmly shut about the whole thing.

“We got lucky at the chopshop. We found parts that Leroy swears were from Hank’s bike. They came up together as prospects so he should know. I persuaded Mexican Dave to share information with us about how he came to have said parts. It seems that a short chick with dark hair has been bringing him bikes on a steady basis for a little over a year now. Further persuasion brought out that he sort of had a thing for her so once when she got a little careless about leaving her bag out while she used the head he copped a look at her ID. **Our girls name is Lana Chaney, he couldn’t for the life of him remember her address but he thinks that she lives a few towns over.”**

“Listen up Hammer. A brother named Jasper called last night and talked to that numbnuts bartender. Didn’t say where he was but he did say some crazy shit about a chick that he picked up somewhere turning into an animal and trying to kill him. I am spreading the word to all members that someone is setting up bikers to rip off their bikes and that they are using the bitch as bait. If they run into anyone who even might be her they are to back off and bail. I’m telling them that she has AIDS to book so no one gets tempted.”

“Do you want us to wait here for her? Before he left us our pal Dave said that she was due to show up sometime in the next few days.” If Hammer was freaked out by what his President was telling him there was no sign of it in his voice.

“Yes, but forget what I said about taking her alive. Whack her. Jasper was probably all screwed up on something and hallucinating the animal part but I do believe she or whoever she works with or for was trying to kill him. Find out if you can who she is with and then kill her.”

“Understood. We will hang out here for a

couple of days. If she doesn't show I might have Geek see if her can drum up an address for her and we will make a house call."

"Good. I've sent a couple of brothers out to look for Jasper. I don't have a warm fuzzy good feeling about finding him in one piece though. I will keep you posted."

"Understood."

Trevor sat in his darkened office for a couple of minutes after the phone call staring into space. Then he picked up the phone and dialed and spoke a long string of numbers into the receiver. Then he hung up. The person that he had called would understand the code and contact him in the usual way.

Satisfied that he had done everything that he could for the moment he lay down on a cot in the corner of the office to grab some much needed sleep. **He didn't expect that his dreams would be very pleasant and as it turned out he was correct.** He dreamed of a large hungry wolf.

When I woke up I hurt everywhere. I didn't have to open my eyes to know that I had added several new scars to my collection. I opened my eyes and found myself lying nude in a small leaf choked gully. My head was pounding and I felt like **throwing up, I wasn't usually in this bad of shape** after a change but I had taken a hell of a lot of physical damage this time. In addition to six bullet wounds I seemed to have endured some nasty stab wounds on my chest and stomach. Nothing that **won't heal but painful as hell.**

Images from my time as a wolf flash randomly through my mind, a spinning collage of savagery and blood. I sit quietly for a few minutes trying to sort them into some semblance of sense. Slowly a fractured picture begins to emerge.

He almost got away from me. I caught him at the end of the lane and pulled him from his bike. Lashing out with steel-toed boots and a wicked hunting knife he had driven me back long enough for him to get back on the bike. I had a quick flash of memory of him screaming into a cell phone that I

wincing at. This was not good, not good at all. I had gotten careless and there would be a price to pay.

The first installment of that price would be the cabin. It was useless to me as a lair now. The time had come to move on.

More images, the second time that I had knocked him off of his bike had been dangerously close to a main road. I had finally killed him and **tore the body to shreds but since the beast's** memories gave me no idea where that body might be right now there was no way for me to dispose of it. It would be found, questions would be asked. The time had come to move on.

I forced myself to stand up with a groan and used a tree to hold myself steady. Gradually my head stopped spinning and my blurry vision cleared. Even as I stood here my body was healing itself at an incredible rate. Unbidden Annabelle popped into mind bringing another painful groan.

The time had come to move on.

Maybe if Aunt Betsy's cure worked I could come back and try to make some kind of life with her, if she would still have me. **I couldn't keep her** in my life the way that it had to be now. I needed to backtrack to the cabin and find some clothes. Fortunately I kept a stash of clothing, money and weapons hidden there.

Before I left I would have to burn the place to the ground to destroy and all evidence of what had been going on there. I kept a small dirt bike under a tarp behind the cabin. It was a piece of crap but it would serve to get me to a bus station somewhere. I would grab the few things I wanted from my apartment and then I would vanish like I have so many times in the past.

My heart feels dangerously close to breaking and that was something that my preternatural **healing powers just couldn't do a damn thing about.** But I am nothing if I am not a survivor so I pushed my heartache to the back of my mind and began to concentrate on the business at hand.

I began to move carefully through the woods in the direction that my senses told me that the **cabin might be. I really didn't feel up to explaining**

to anyone that I might encounter why I was wandering the forest stark naked except for a few mostly dried bloodstains.

It is a fairly long story with nothing resembling a happy ending in sight just yet.

Hammer stood in front of his President's desk looking even grimmer than usual. Trevor sat behind his desk looking even grimmer yet. A lot of news had come their way and none of it had been good.

"Local keystone cops found Jasper's body, what was left of it anyway. The poor bastard was torn to shreds. Shit is all over the news. They found his bike too, saddlebags had coke and meth in it, just personal use amounts but adds juiciness to the story just the same." Trevor told his second in command flatly.

"Bitch never showed at the chopshop. I've got Geek trying to shake an address for us out of the DMV files that he swears he can hack into. Trevor, what the hell do you think is going on?" Hammer asked carefully, his boss was so not in a good mood.

"Hell, man, I don't know. Maybe the bitch isn't working with anyone else. Maybe she trained some sort of attack dog to kill bikers like Jasper. She lures them someplace quiet by waving her ass at them and then the dog kills them. She sells the bikes to that asshole at the chopshop and then it all starts over again." Trevor's voice lacked conviction.

"That's one theory."

"Come on, Hammer. I know that this crap is weird, really twilight zone level weird but do you truly think that a werewolf or some such thing is tearing our people up?"

"Both the bartender at Haskills and Mexican Dave said there was something strange about the bitch. All of our guys vanished around the full moon. Jasper said that she turned into an animal right in front of him and then he is found torn into kibbles and bits. I've talked to brothers who knew Jasper and they said that he liked to do a lot of coke and meth but he wasn't into anything that would

make him see shit like that."

Neither man spoke for a few minutes. They just looked at each other in silence. Finally Trevor waved his lieutenant into a chair and pulled a bottle of whiskey out of his desk. He poured them each a large shot and sighed heavily as he handed the other man his.

"Then here's to being out of my god damned mind because that's what I think to. This is horror movie bullshit man, but it is the only answer that makes any sense. Drink that down and lets go."

"Where?"

"To see a man about some silver bullets."

The bartender picked up the phone on the first ring, wincing a little and hoping that it wasn't more weird shit to deal with. He let out a mental sigh of relief when it turned out to just be that lame drip Geek looking for Hammer.

"They just left man, got a message for them? Yeah numbnuts, I've got a pen." He jotted down the address that the man gave him carefully and then hung up the phone. Now he was expected to play social secretary to these jerk offs. He was really starting to not like this job all that much.

Annabelle sat in her darkened studio drinking wine and talking to her friend Mish on the phone.

"Sorry that I was so freaked out the last time that we talked. I don't know what's up with me. I've got a lot of crazy stuff in my head."

"Hey babe, don't sweat it. It was a full moon, we all go a little nuts around the full moon you know."

"Yeah, maybe that's it. Anyway I've gotta go. When Lana comes back her and I have some words to exchange."

"I hear that my sister, take it easy and call me if you need me."

"Thanks, you're the best."

"Yeah, do me a favor and write that on the bathroom wall at Foxies would you? It might spice up my love life."

"You are crazy, I love you and goodbye."

Anabelle hung up with a fond giggle. She sat quietly for a minute with her eyes closed, humming along with the soft jazz playing lowly in the background.

Suddenly her eyes flew wide open. A crazy thought had just crossed her mind. She got up slowly and crossed the room to where a calendar was taped to the wall. Ever since she had been a little girl she had loved calendars. To this day she collected them. It was a hobby that she had never **successfully explained to anyone, she wasn't quite** sure herself just what the attraction was.

One calendar was always 'The Calendar'. The one that more or less contained her life. On it she wrote down birthdays, anniversaries, phone **numbers she didn't want to use, things to do lists,** appointments and a thousand and one other details. Lana laughed at her for putting little hearts on the days that they made love. There were a hell of a lot of little hearts in any given month, an embarrassing amount really. She also put little sad faces on the days that Lana was gone.

What Mish had just said had popped into her head. The remark about the full moon making everyone a little crazy.

She flipped the pages of the calendar back month by month and looked for the tell tale little sad faces. Nodding slightly to herself she and sat back down and poured herself another glass of wine and drank it down in a single gulp. Then she poured herself another.

Each and every time that Lana had left town since they had met had been just around the time of the full moon.

Two conflicting voices spoke at once in her mind. The loudest one was the shrill voice of reason telling her not to be crazy, telling her that it was all just a weird coincidence. A softer, yet more insistent voice whispered to her to add it all up and believe in what the answer was no matter how fantastically strange that answer was. A cold knot of fear settled deep in her belly and added its voice to the chorus.

Lana was just too odd for what she suspected

not to be true. All the time that they had been lovers she had turned a blind eye to that oddness, deliberately not seeing all the little things that said **that she wasn't what she was pretending to be. She** had lay in bed with her staring into those strange glittery eyes that sometimes actually seemed to glow a little in the darkness. She had seen Lana lift things that a woman her size should not have been able to lift. Lana moved so gracefully, there was something other than human about the way she moved. She had touched the scars that covered her **lover's wonderful body and no, she did not believe** Lana when she told her that she had cut herself shaving.

Allergic to silver, leaving town every full moon, the thing in the drawings that she had made, the book on wolves in her apartment. The strange animal charisma that had attracted her in the first place all added up to the one answer that made the least rational sense but what her heart seemed to know was true if even her mind was having trouble accepting it.

She was in love with a werewolf.

Even yet one part of her stood back and scoffed at the idea, it all sounded like one of those ridiculous stories in the supermarket tabloids. Everyone knew that there was no such damn thing as werewolves. They were nothing but myths, legends, the stuff of B movies not real life. The fact that she was even entertaining the idea qualified her for some serious couch time. She was tripping, **that's all that there was to it. Straight up tripping.**

She drank more wine. The other part of her, the not so rational artist part of her knew the truth. The truth was what she had captured in the sketches of Lana that she had done even if she had been unaware at the time that she was capturing it.

Her glass was empty again, that would not do. She had to sit here now and try and figure out what to do with this bizarre curve ball that life had **decided to throw at but she didn't have to do it** sober.

She took what comfort she could from that.

They met him in an old warehouse in an industrial area of town. The meeting place would be used just this one time and the meeting had only been arranged moments ago. The man that they were meeting was very cautious and for that reason had been in business for a long time now.

“Always a pleasure, Brujo.” Trevor greeted the man that they had come to see with a small bow of respect.

Brujo bowed back with a slightly mocking smile. He was a short, thinly built man. Story was that he was from Columbia and had done some time with the death squads. That might or might not be true but what Trevor knew for a fact was that the old gentleman made the best custom weapons and ammo that anyone knew of. The graying Hispanic man in front of him was something of a legend in criminal circles and his wares were both expensive and much sought after.

“We have something for you, do you have something for us?” Hammer asked mildly as he handed the much smaller man a large manila envelope full of cash.

“Of course.” Brujo said with a dazzling smile. He opened his briefcase and handed Hammer two boxes of bullets.

“One box nine millimeter hollow points. One box forty four magnum hollow points. May I ask who carries the elephant gun?”

“That would be me.” Hammer answered.

“Yes, I rather thought that it might be. The bullets, as you so strenuously requested are silver.”

“It’s a long story.” Trevor said flatly.

“And not one that I asked you to share, my friend. Did it not occur to you that I was able to fill your order rather quickly?”

“You are the best.” Trevor pointed out.

“True. But in this case I was able to fill your order so quickly because I already had the items in stock. I remember my grandfather telling me stories that his grandfather had told him about the old days in my country and some of the strange things that went on in some of the more remote

villages. He once told me of a local shaman of sorts who went quite mad. He slaughtered about half the people in the village before they managed to kill him. Not that they knew that they were killing him, they all thought that they were fighting a huge jaguar.” **Brujo’s voice was deliberate and matter of fact but his face had an odd expression on it.**

Hammer carefully took out his gun from his shoulder holster and dumped the bullets from it. He reloaded from the box of silver bullets and replaced the gun in its holster. Trevor did the same with his Glock.

“So, I know what manner of target you may have in mind for my wares, gentlemen. I wish you happy hunting. I even have a parting gift for you, gratis, with my compliments.” He handed Hammer a small wooden case with brass fittings.

“This I think I like.” Hammer said appreciatively as he opened the case to reveal a small pistol sized crossbow. Three quarrels with cruelly barbed tips rested next to it.

“Yes, I rather thought that you might. The arrowheads are coated with pure silver that has been blessed by a priest. Now, my friends are business is finished and I must be off.”

“Why are giving this to us?” Trevor asked as the man started to walk away from them.

“Because, amigos, in my line of work I am not often presented with the opportunity to help remove evil from the world. Whatever it is that you hunt it has no place for it here on God’s earth.”

Hammer stared after him for a moment and then he looked down at the crossbow.

“Amen brother.” He said softly.

Before I even enter my apartment I know that Annabelle has been here. There are few things in this world that I am more aware of and tune with than her scent. I push thoughts of her away as I open the door with my key. I am in survival mode now and there is no place for love in it. Once again it is time to cut and run.

I see the note that she has left me and even though I know that I should not spare it a glance I

am drawn irresistibly to it. It will hurt to read it but it seems dishonest and cowardly to spare myself the pain when I know how much I will be hurting her by my sudden disappearance. I brush away the key setting on top of the note as meaningless as the sound it makes bouncing away across the floor. I have eyes only for what she has written.

I am sorry about my sneakiness in making this key. It was wrong and I try to live my life more honestly than that. Especially when it comes to the people that I love. And God knows that I love you. Call me after you have read this, we need to talk.

Love Annabelle

There is a sharp pain twisting in my heart that has nothing to do with any of my wounds. The words on the page sting my eyes, she deserves so much better than I can give her. I feel like I am choking to death on my sorrow. I am not sure how much more of this that I can take.

Part of me knows that my soul is all but exhausted, my recent carelessness is part of a thinly veiled growing death wish. Only the small glimmer of hope that I can someday leave all of this sick shit behind keeps me going. My life is unbearably lonely, the brief time I got to share it with Annabelle has only underscored this sad fact. Now, I have to leave her behind and that just plain old sucks boys and girls.

But enough of this maudlin bullshit. I don't have time for it. I read in the paper all about the shredded body found on the edge of the woods and even though I have covered my tracks as best I can I am not suicidal enough to hang around and see what happens next. The cabin is a charred ruin now but there may just be people around there who can describe the woman associated with it. My last hunt was very loud and very messy and I have no way of knowing if anyone witnessed any of it.

It doesn't take me long to get my things together, like I said, I travel light. I still haven't decided if I will keep this name, I have been Lana Chaney for a long time but it may be time to spend the money on a whole brand new identity. Fake ID cards are cheap but a whole new identity is not, you

need the driver's license, social security card, the whole bit. I still know of some people in the business through Aunt Betsy's connections.

I pick up my stuffed backpack and take a last look at the place, making sure that I haven't left anything revealing behind. As I head towards the door it opens and Annabelle walks in.

Crap.



THE GOTHIC CRUISE

& MASQUERADE BALL

2010

WITH

COVENANT

AND

THE

CRUXSHADOWS

ALSO FEATURING

funkervogt

!PANZER AG!

PROGNOSIS

with DJ performances by

DJ JET, DJ ANNABELLEVL, MAMA C, DJ XERXES & DJ HALON

of VampireFreaks

ALL GENRE TRAVEL PRESENTS

THE 2010 GOTH CRUISE & MASQUERADE BALL SEPTEMBER 25TH, 2010
7 NIGHT WESTERN CARIBBEAN CRUISE WITH STOPS IN COZUMEL, GRAND CAYMAN & JAMAICA
ROUND TRIP FROM MIAMI, FL ONBOARD THE CARNIVAL LIBERTY

Carnival. Liberty

Ship Registry: Panama

Gothic Beauty

Magazine



BOOK THIS ONCE IN A LIFETIME ADVENTURE NOW AT:
WWW.GOTHICCUISE.COM OR CALL 813-325-7435

Model: Bria
Photographer: Erik
Hair/Makeup: Pam
Fashion: Helene Hawthorne Fashions



Dead Valentines Make for a Polite Butchery

A Poem By April Kurtz

Children come home, the skies scrape to overhang black
canaries.

They bleed their black over the cities,
and their opened beaks spin lockets—the world under attack
is spilling dead valentines to drape over eyes.

So where is love now?

Underground voices:

*And roses are reddest when golden love disguises piss-guzzling
cysts!*

The militia men that exhume from me
are cancerous yellow ghosts
to engross invisible murder in camouflage.

Or maybe . . .

you can't pump life back in this white room.

Because they march from my delusioned, pumped belly

So where is love now?

Underground voices:

In your head! Your skin was slathered in gold for a mind fix!

So, children come home.

They say that I will make it out alright
as long as I shake like a revolution to keep distilling through
eternity.

And as long as gold skin is good for incisions to keep beat to the
butchery.

Slathering Yourself in Food for Beauty and Science!

By Ooky Spooky

First let me assure you that no gothlings were harmed in this making of this article. Now on to the recipes that both your skin and your pocketbook will enjoy. Sugar scrubs, body moisturizers, and the other concoctions we use to make our skin as soft as the velvet lining of a **coffin are, well... they're spendy, and can often** harm those with sensitive skin. So I have decided to brave the unknown and try some of the natural, sometimes odd and home made versions of these essentials.

At Home Sugar Scrub

Ingredients:

- Olive oil
- Sugar

To begin, mix the two together to form a paste. Then simply scrub down after your normal soap shower. Towel off the water after the shower, leaving the oil to soak into your skin. This one works wonders and believe it or not, does not clog your shower. The sugar does a great job of sloughing off dead skin while the olive oil is a fantastic moisturizer and sinks into the skin quite quickly. This same mix can even be used to remove motor oil from skin, just in case you do something really dirty.

Yogurt Moisturizing Treatment

Ingredients:

- Full fat organic Greek yogurt

Slather the yogurt over the desired area then let it sit until it dries out a bit and begins to form a skin. Rinse and apply as many times as you would like. I once read that this was supposed to cure your sunburn and I had had gotten one so bad that I was willing to try anything. Though this did not cure the sunburn, I think it went a long way to helping **it heal faster. I couldn't find plain full fat Greek** yogurt but I did find honey flavored and it

worked extraordinarily well on me; as an added bonus I smelled divine all day. It is hard to apply to your back in an even coat so I employed the aid of a frosting spatula. The spatula works well enough, but I would recommend a friend. This is almost too much fun to do by yourself.

Vinegar Hair Treatment

Ingredients:

- Plain white vinegar

Wash your hair with shampoo only, not that the vinegar will react poorly with the conditioner, but the point of this treatment is to **strip your hair of any buildup so it's just and** unneeded step. After the shampoo pour the vinegar over your hair, making sure to avoid your eyes, and then rinse. Now, when I did this. I rinsed my hair no more than 4 times and afterwards my hair looked great; it was shiny and moved like the hair all those annoying commercials. The downside of this treatment is the smell. You will smell like vinaigrette **dressing for at lest a day. I wouldn't** recommend this for right before that big date, unless your intended has a thing for salads. **Now you might ask yourself, "Can this react badly with hair dye?"** Well, I did a little research and found out two things about this hair treatment. The first is; yes it can lighten hair that has been dyed. It may lighten the color but will not remove it. The second thing I learned was that the way I did it was a little unconventional. The recommended way to treat your hair is ½ a tablespoon in a cup of water if you have long hair.

Model: Bria & Arie
Photographer: Erik
Hair/Makeup: Pam
Fashion: Helene Hawthorne Fashions





WINGED CREATIONS PHOTOGRAPHY

Model: SixxxUgly
Photographer: Winged Creations

Wendigo

A Poem By Lisa

There is nothing in the world so fragile as your heartbeat

There's nothing so destructive as your whirlwind temper

You met me in mid-August like a zephyr, lulling

My sensibilities and sharp edges to sleep

And left my heart like the site of a hurricane

When you wound up, you tore to shreds my dignity

Shattered my bones, shot out

Razor-wire tendrils that wrapped around my veins

And lacerated, lacerated, my dear

And left me forever shaking

Like a lone leaf on a charred tree

You destroyed me, destroyed me

You killed me with your love

When the love was too much

For a merely human (and, after all, flawed) soul to bear

Your rage was so unbeautiful,

so unholy,

that it shook me to the deepest marrow of my bones and

I've been shaking ever since.

I'm still shaking.

You sank slowly into my bloodstream, like poison,

And brought your many incarnations out to haunt me

You flayed my pink skin,

My newborn vulnerable flesh,

Tore apart my bones, and laid waste my heart.

You ripped apart the bone cage that kept it firmly contained,

That kept it from jumping out

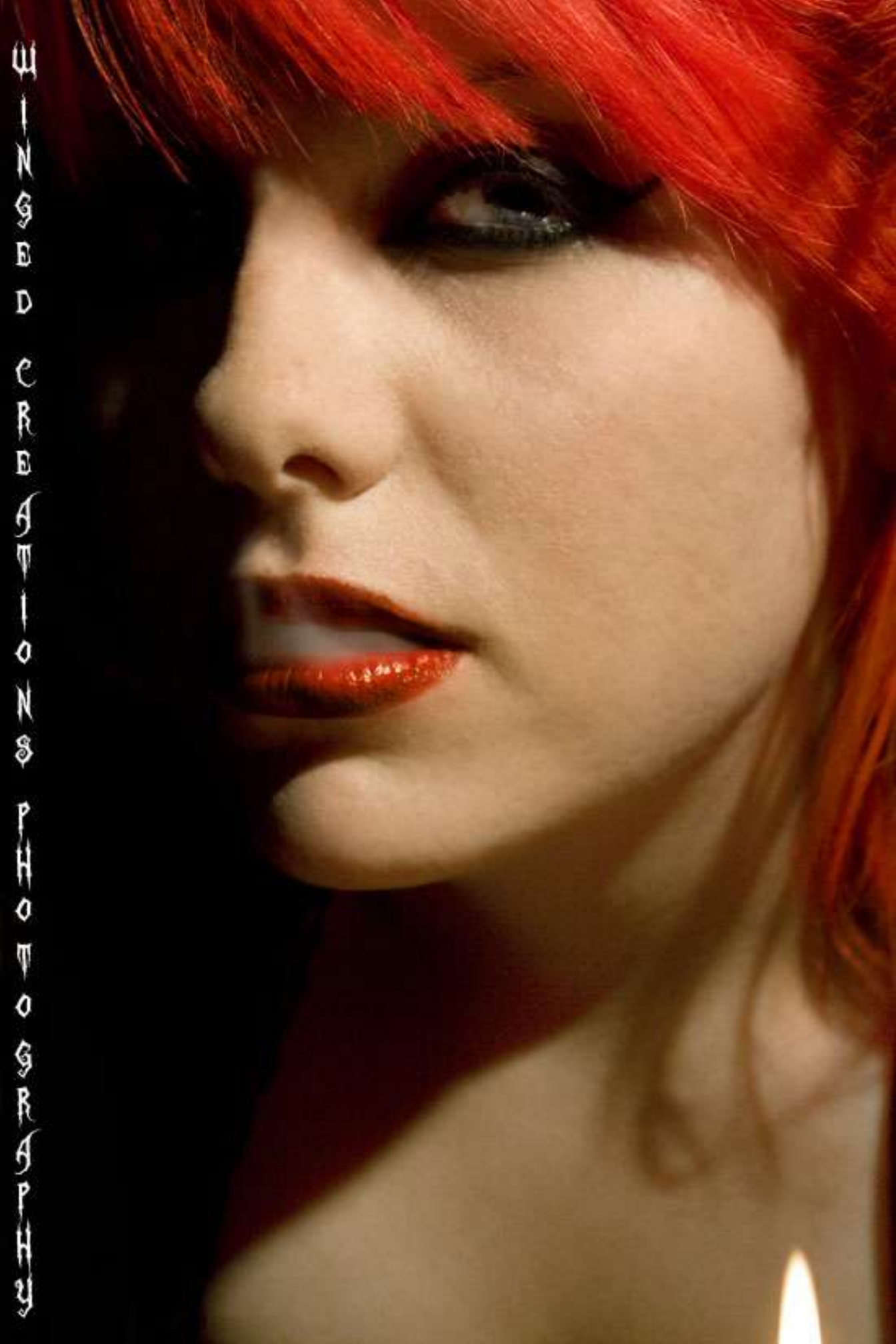
And - shocked at being outside - dying.

You loved me with your blood, bones, and soul

And writ your decrees upon me in kisses of red

You buried me, my love,

You buried me.



WINGED CREATIONS PHOTOGRAPHY

Model: Wynter
Photographer: Winged Creations

Death

By Sophie

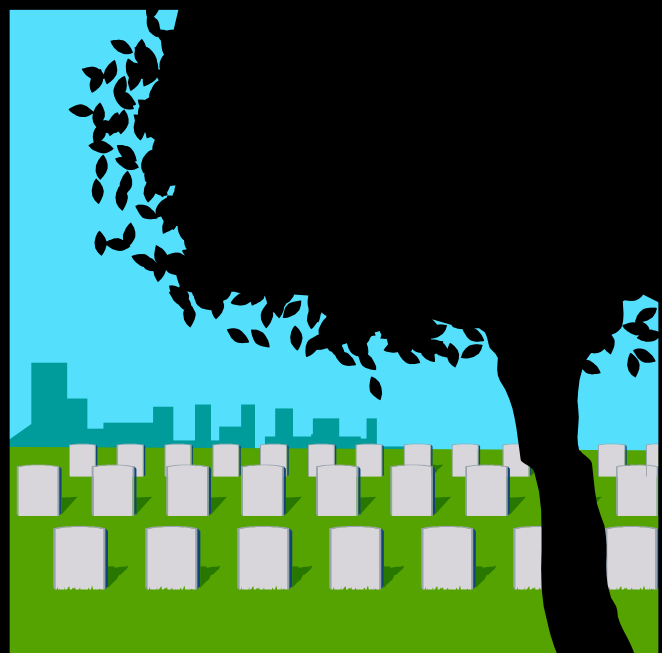
Let's discuss something "goths" seem to do very well. Death. Many goths are fascinated by it, others are desensitized to it from past events. Either way, it's something that's often associated with us because it doesn't usually affect us the same way it does most other people. It's one thing to look good when you look dead, but quite another when death becomes more than a fashion statement. We've all lost someone, even if we don't know it yet. People die around us all the time — over a hundred people per minute. Most of the time, be honest, we

don't really care. If a tree falls in the woods and no living animal is around, does anyone — other than the forest — mourn? If you don't know that it happened, you can't really react. To most of us, most of these deaths are merely statistics. They mean nothing except to measure our own mortality.

It's a whole different ball game when it happens to someone you know.

The first thing to consider is that this is nothing new. When someone you care about dies, it's painful, horrible, and the grief wracks you like the sea beats against the cliffs. It might be the first time that you've experienced this, but you're not as alone as you feel.

Grief comes in waves. The initial blow is



MS Clip-Art



the rock dropped in the pond. There's a big splash but the shock subsides and you may be a little numb or at least more coherent. Then "it hits you" again but it's not as strong as before. Your period of coherence will last a little longer and either someone or something will remind you or your thoughts will just wander back there and another wave will strike you. Each wave is fewer and further between than the last until the next thing you know, you can talk about them without crying. It's not forgetting them or "getting over them" but merely getting used to the idea of them being out of reach.

Goths tend to be fascinated, intrigued, curious, or even obsessed when it comes to death. There are some who know it all too well and others who know it as an inevitable concept or idea. Death happens to everyone, eventually. All things die; it's the nature of the world. Argue as you might, but there is nothing worse than the death of a child. Even if it isn't your own child, if it's a child you know and care about, it's much more horrifying than losing someone older. My family knows this. It's hard, but we have memories and pictures to help us cope. We also have each other.

Death, in and of itself, is a beautiful

thing. Being separated from those we care about, however, is the torture that drives most away from the concept and makes most fear it. The most important thing is that the concept of death, and being intrigued or interested in it, is just further proof of how much **we value life**. That's one of the most common misconceptions, I think, that "other people" make about those with an interest in death. **We're not obsessed with death because we're suicidal or because we want to die. We're obsessed with it because it's fascinating and because life is so precious and important, yet so volatile.**

The problem then is those who don't see the value in life or death. If you don't see the value in death, do you really value life? If you don't see the value in life, then you blatantly mock death. The two are yin and yang. Balance is the way of the world. There are people all over the world who consider life to have little, if any, value. These people kill others or themselves. Look at the aftermath of this. There are people left behind, **mourning**. It's not "cool" or "fun" when people are hurting and it's not something that can be fixed with a band-aid. These are wounds that never fully heal.



Beyond the value of life, there is also the quality of life. When **you're done here, what do you want to have accomplished?** What legacy will you leave? If **you can't come up with an answer for yourself to these questions**, maybe you need to consider what you want to have accomplished and what legacy you want to leave. Dream big, reach for the stars, and never give up, no matter how impossible everyone else tells you it is. Then, when **you really are done here, you'll have more to show for it.**

"Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever." (Mahatma Gandhi)



MS Clip-Art



WINGED CREATIONS PHOTOGRAPHY

Model: Katie
Photographer: Winged Creations

SOREAN

GOthic MAGAZINE

SPREAD THE WORD!

SOREAN:

(SOAR • EE • IN)

AN ALTERNATIVE LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE CENTRALIZED AROUND GOTHIC CULTURE;

"GOTH IS ABOUT MORE THAN THE SHOCK FACTOR"

WWW.SOREAN.NET



SOREAN IS AN ALTERNATIVE LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE THAT CATERS SPECIFICALLY TO GOTHIC INDIVIDUALS OR PEOPLE WITH AN INTEREST IN THE GOTHIC SUBCULTURE. WE ALSO SMASH STEREOTYPES AND BOUNDARIES; WE ARE ABOUT THE GRASS-ROOTS BASICS OF WHAT IT MEANS TO BE GOTH — RATHER THAN ABOUT FREAKING OUT “EVERYONE ELSE” — WHICH IS A CURIOSITY AND FASCINATION ASSOCIATED WITH DEATH AND/OR THE MORBID.

WE RELEASE AN ISSUE ON THE IDES OF EVERY OTHER MONTH. THE IDES OF THE MONTH ARE THE 15TH OF MARCH, MAY, JULY, AND OCTOBER AND THE 13TH OF THE REST. AS SUCH, EVERY EVEN NUMBERED MONTH (FEB, APR, JUN, AUG, OCT, DEC) SHOULD PRODUCE A NEW ISSUE.

SOREAN IS ALSO A GREAT PLACE TO ADVERTISE YOUR BUSINESS AND A GREAT COMPANY TO WORK FOR. VISIT SOREAN.NET/CAREERS FOR MORE INFORMATION.



what's your color?

www.medusasmakeup.com

Join our Team

Do you want to work for Sorean and be a part of the magazine? We're always accepting applications and eager to see fresh faces. Sorean is a great place to work! Go to sorean.net/careers to find out more!

Advertise with us

Do you want to run an ad in Sorean's next issue? What about an ad on Sorean's website? Email us (through the contact form on the website) and start the dialogue that could get the word out to potential customers for your business!

How to Subscribe

Right now the only way to subscribe is to contact us (via our website) and sign up for updates to receive an email when a new issue comes out. Don't forget to use a valid email address otherwise we won't be able to reach you.

We plan to go to print in 2011, at which point physical magazine subscriptions will be available and the .pdf versions will no longer be available.



Link to our social networking pages from our website:
www.sorean.net

Meet the Staff

Editors:

- ♦ Sophie (Editor-In-Chief)
- ♦ Johnathan Preshaw (Executive Editor)
- ♦ Amber Forbes (Executive Editor)
- ♦ Catherine Zickgraf (Poetry Editor)

Segment Hosts:

- ♦ Alyson (Alyson's Cookbook)

"Official Photo Shoot" Participants:

- ♦ Erik (Photographer)
- ♦ Helene Hawthorne Fashions
- ♦ Pam (Hair/Makeup)
- ♦ Bria (Model)
- ♦ Arie (Model)

Writers & Contributors:

- ♦ William H Nelson
- ♦ CS Anderson
- ♦ OokySpooky
- ♦ Lisa



Sorean's Website

Sorean's website has undergone a lot of changes since our last issue. We now have our own domain and a brand new site design.

Visit us at our website — <http://www.sorean.net>

From there you can link to our:



Twitter



Facebook



Myspace



RSS Feed



DO YOU FEEL
LIKE YOU'RE BEING
EVALUATED ON YOUR
APPEARANCE
AND NOT YOUR
PERFORMANCE?

THE
WASHINGTON
CITY PAPER

DECLARED EIDOLON CAREER
SOLUTIONS AS "AN EXPERT IN THE
JOB WOES OF THE DARKER SET" WHEN
IT COMES TO GROUPS WITHIN THE DARK
ALTERNATIVE SCENE.

AS AN AUTHORITY IN "GOTHS, GEEKS, AND
FREAKS", EIDOLON HAS TRAINED NUMEROUS
COACHING, COUNSELING, AND CONSULTING
PROFESSIONALS ON HOW TO BETTER SERVE AND
UNDERSTAND THEIR ALTERNATIVE LIFESTYLE
CLIENTS. EIDOLON ALSO REGULARLY SPONSORS
WORKSHOPS AND PANELS AT ANIME/VIDEO
GAME/ALTERNATIVE CONVENTIONS
AND CONFERENCES.

MAKE MONEY AND ENJOY
MORE FREEDOM
WITH A CAREER THAT
FITS YOUR UNIQUE
LIFESTYLE!

EIDOLON  N
CAREER SOLUTIONS

CAREER MANAGEMENT FOR ALTERNATIVE LIFESTYLES

FOR FREE CAREER ENHANCING GIFTS VISIT
EIDOLONCAREERSOLUTIONS.COM/GIFTS.ASP

EIDOLONCAREERSOLUTIONS.COM

ON TWITTER: EIDOLONCS

TEL: 301-328-7712

MODEL: GEEK-STOCK AT DEVIANART
DESIGN: KALLISTIDESIGN.COM

Sorean's Official Sponsor, 2010