

THE OVERCOAT

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EDITORIAL

Dear Readers,

If you've collected this magazine you've made a decision.

A good one.

The reasons are that, in this issue alone (21?! — so old!) there are:

Poems
Personal Essays
Essays of the other sort
Other poems (different, like)
Drawings
Film Reviews (FIRST TIME!)
Opportunities for students including competitions (bring your A game)
Paintings
Stories

That's quite a few reasons and merely in the form of contours: wait til you discover the substance.

If you spill your tea all over your newest Overcoat, come to the library — that's where the spare copies are.

Christ is Risen.

Happy Easter!

The Overcoat Team

PS This edition has submissions from Year 8s, Year 8s, 9s, 10s, 11s and 12s. If you see any Year 7s.... please invite them to our 22nd birthday party.

THE OVERCOAT

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Perhaps it's Madness

BY THOMAS BELL

"The madman is not the man who has lost his reason. The madman is the man who has lost everything except his reason" GK Chesterton

It's true. Madness is the result of obtaining too much reason; not a lack of it. See, those who have an overflow of reason often overlook the simplicity of ideas, and thus fall into the depths of an interpretive frenzy that is drowning - they become mad; crazy. Yet, amidst all this, perhaps the mind of overthinking that clings to madness is beautiful. Being able to see the mind that thinks to such great extremities champions its truthfulness in wonder and splendour. Perhaps this is a metaphor for life? Oftentimes, the human condition turns a blind eye to the mind's capability; its awe in its seeking. Let's look at a human, for example. A man sees another man full of madness, and yet their initial thoughts are; 'What's wrong with them?' 'Why are they acting in such an unpleasant manner?' Rather, we, as humans, should appreciate what the mind can achieve; its nature of diverse creativity. Perhaps, we are the crazy ones, driven by an accumulation of madness, that we think it's ok to judge the creation of the Creator. Perhaps, we need to remove the plank in our own eye instead of poking at the speck of dust in another. Perhaps, we should not doubt like Thomas - or perhaps we should, and rather acknowledge the beauty of having something to doubt. And perhaps only when we become fools, shall we be granted the wisdom of a dunce (1 Corinthians 3:18 adapted) . Perhaps, I am the mad one – too much damning, madness-ridden reason, perhaps.



Artwork by Montana Pollard

The Circle of Life

By Eliza Kumnick

Every child dreams of growing up, ready for the future so full of hope,
We admire adults in our lives, waiting for the day we get there too,
Sooner than we realise the years slip by, and we learn to cope,
With all the responsibilities we must face, all the things we need to do.

Our young hearts are so full of life, and carefree and minds so bright,
Yet so innocent we don't see the world as it is, the burdens that await,
Times move on, so do the years fly, and our childhood is no longer in sight,
Our big dreams become out of reach, and we begin to navigate our fate.

Our older selves wish to return to when all we did was play, laugh and roam.
Work starts for us all, and soon begins to overshadow what we first had dreamed,
The real world isn't like our dreams, the world is not our childhood home,
As reality seeps in, we realise our lives are harder than it originally seemed.

In this new-found life, we all work so hard, and for some, the riches shine so bright,
Yet for others no matter the effort nor how hard they try, there is hunger, pain and fears,
We want the dreams we once had to be a reality, so we chase success with all our might,
No matter how rich or how poor, we all still long for it to go back to the simpler years.

Though some may rise and others may fall, we all still find ourselves in the face of strife,
Because no matter who we are or what we do, we are all still bound by time's cruel flow,
Regardless of who we have become, the rich or poor, the strong or weak all share this life,
A life with love and hope, and equally of loss and fear, in this world both good and bad grow,

As we grow older the years seem shorter, and we begin to feel as if the years speed on by,
Life has flown in the blink of an eye, all that we did when we were young feels like yesterday.
We look back at our youth, wishing we'd savoured more moments before time said goodbye,
So let's live with intention, love deeply, and laugh often, before what we have slips away.

Film Review: David Lynch's "The Elephant Man"

By Dane Nolan

The Elephant Man

1980, 2hr 4min

Directed by David Lynch, based on the non-fiction of Sir Frederick Treves

As someone who can be emotionally inexpressive as a result of a culmination of mental health and emotional detachment, *Elephant Man* made me feel. It presented me with emotions of simultaneous melancholia and joy; it felt hard to not feel pensive sadness due to empathy, but it also felt hard not to feel a sense of happiness for him.

As a monochromatic black-and-white film, it utilised language to effectively express its story, John Merrick's story. In this, it caused the film's monochromatism to become even stronger in essence. As a biopic, it raises several ethical and moral questions, ethical and moral questions that are still important within our modern-day society. As a collective, we have a predisposition to judge; we judge appearance, judge speech, and judge idiosyncrasies of our fellow man – we judge what we can't change. This susceptibility to judgement causes us to treat people differently. In the film, John was treated as if he was a freak, being placed in freak shows and receiving canings from the showman. Contemporarily, we treat people differently, even if subconsciously, such as how we treat the neurodiverse, and how we (as the opportune) treat people of lower socioeconomic status, people who aren't privy to the same opportunities we are.



For me, it conceptualised humanity in such a dissimilar lens to my own, that it caused me to re-conceptualise my personal perception of humanity. In this, David Lynch is excellent, across all the media of his I have consumed, he shifts the viewer's perception and confuses the static.

Moreover, this film's tender dance upon its themes, including romance, were so well executed. For me, certain quotes are just purely fantastic and so engulfing to my mind. My personal favourites are:

- 'People are frightened by what they do not understand.'
- 'My life is full because I know I am loved.'
- 'I am not an elephant. I am not an animal. I am a human being. I am a man.'
- 'Never. Oh, never. Nothing will die. The stream flows, the wind blows, the cloud fleets, the heart beats. Nothing will die.'

This movie will stick with me for years to come and flaunts a spot upon my favourite films.



Flinders Street, by Ciara Feeney

The Rise and Fall of the Soviet Union

BY NIKHITA PAULL



The 20th century was a time of profound change and transformation, with the rise and fall of the Soviet Union playing a central role in shaping global history. From the significant events of the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917 to the intense political rivalry of the Cold War and the eventual dissolution of the USSR, these pivotal moments left a mark on the world. In this essay, I will address the rise and fall of the Soviet Union as well as some of the key events and the long-term impact that they left on the world, some of which we can still see in our society today.

The Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 marked a significant turning point in Russian history, as it brought about the establishment of the Soviet Union. The revolution, driven by widespread dissatisfaction with the Tsarist regime and further exacerbated by the hardships of World War I, saw the emergence of key leaders such as Vladimir Lenin who in 1917 began advocating for a shift towards a communist government, famously stating that "Without Revolutionary theory, there can be no Revolutionary Movement" (Vladimir Lenin 1902). This event led to the establishment of a one-party state and laid the foundation for Soviet ideology. Subsequently, the Soviet government (under Joseph Stalin) initiated ambitious Five-Year Plans aimed at rapid and large-scale industrialisation. The first Five-Year Plan implemented collectivisation policies to consolidate individual landholdings into collective

farms, profoundly impacting agriculture and rural communities. One historian remarks that due to these collectivisation policies, "the Soviet Union experienced one of the worst famines in its history". While these policies contributed to industrial growth, they also resulted in widespread hardship, particularly in rural areas, revealing the tensions inherent in the planned economy. Additionally, the USSR's pivotal role in World War II, exemplified by its victory at the Battle of Stalingrad, positioned it as a superpower and allowed it to exert influence over Eastern Europe, ultimately sowing the seeds for the Cold War.

The Cold War was a defining period in 20th-century history, characterised by the intense political rivalry between the Soviet Union (USSR) and the United States of America (USA). This ideological, political, and military struggle led to the development of massive nuclear arsenals and significant military build-up, creating an atmosphere of fear and suspicion on a global scale. Pivotal events such as the Berlin Blockade (1948-1949), the Korean War (1950-1953), and the Cuban Missile Crisis (October 1962) highlighted the tensions between the superpowers and the far-reaching consequences of their competition, with Winston Churchill famously stating that "From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic an iron curtain has descended across the Continent" (Winston Churchill, 1946). Not only did

these events underscore the global stakes involved, but they also turned countries around the world into battlegrounds for competing ideologies.

The impact of the Cold War was profound both domestically and in foreign policy. Within the Soviet Union, the rivalry necessitated increased military spending, fostering a culture of surveillance and repression. Author Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn famously reflects that “human beings are born with different capacities. If they are free, they are not equal. And if they are equal, they are not free”, summarising the harsh reality of the Soviet Union. Internationally, the USSR supported revolutionary movements in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, aiming to counter Western influence and promote the spread of communism. The arms race strained the Soviet economy, diverting resources from consumer needs and contributing to public discontent. The Cold War era fundamentally shaped the policies and actions of the Soviet Union, leaving a lasting impact on both domestic and international affairs.

The fall of the Soviet Union was influenced by a combination of economic challenges, political changes, and nationalist movements. Economically, the Soviet Union faced a standstill in the 1970s and 1980s, characterised by inefficiencies in central planning and a focus on military and industrial areas at the expense of consumer needs. This led to widespread disillusionment among citizens and protests against economic hardships, as Vladimir Bukovsky said: “The people’s patience is running out. They are tired of the empty promises and want to see real improvements in their lives”. Additionally, the political landscape shifted with Mikhail Gorbachev’s rise to power, bringing about reforms such as glasnost and perestroika. As Gorbachev himself stated, “We have to start doing things differently,” which reflected his vision for revitalising the Soviet Union. While these reforms aimed to rejuvenate the economy and encourage political discourse, they also unintentionally weakened central authority, providing the grounds for oppositional movements to gain traction. In unison, nationalist sentiments surged across various Soviet republics, leading to calls for greater autonomy and independence. The failed August coup in 1991, which aimed to restore hardline communist rule, ultimately accelerated the republics’ movements towards independence and culminated in the dissolution of the USSR.

The rise and fall of the Soviet Union encapsulate the complex historical events that have profoundly shaped not only Russia but the rest of the world. The Bolshevik Revolution ignited a revolutionary spirit that transformed Russia into a superpower, driven by a blend of ideological passion and authoritarian governance. The Cold War further intensified global tensions, as the ideological clash between communism and capitalism impacted international relations and influenced various global conflicts. The legacy of this period is marked by both the achievements and failures of the Soviet system, revealing the inherent struggles within a centralised economy and the impact of oppressive governance on individual freedoms. The eventual dissolution of the USSR in 1991 serves as a critical lesson in the glass-like fragility of political power and the indisputable force of national identity and self-determination. The long-term ramifications of these historical events will continue to influence geopolitics, reminding us of the enduring complexities of freedom, power, and ideology in our ever-evolving world.

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Violet Horn

BY NYLAH HOLBROOK



Willow had walked through places of danger millions of times before.

It was what she was trained to do - breathing steady, walking fast, think of it as any other place, but with high alert on at all times. She had taken down snipers, stopped muggings, all in the uniform of a Warden.

But she never felt as nervous in those places as she did here, on a dirty street at night, in her own clothes.

I want my uniform back. I want my badge back.

Neon signs made the puddles shine, and she dodged a drunk guy being thrown out of a bar with ease, those cockroach legs of hers quick as light. The people here had just as many mutations as they did in the upper areas of Nilto - horns, wings, rainbow skin or seventeen eyes. Willow was just as strange as they were, with her antenna and white eyes, knees that bent backwards. In fact, almost everyone looked interesting in some odd way, in this odd city, so much so it truly wasn't odd at all.

But there was just a tingle of something cold down her back whenever she thought she saw something lung for her, when it was just a tail, or someone glaring at her, but it's just glowing spots on their cheeks. For the first time in her life, Willow truly saw those normal features to be just as terrifying as everyone outside this city did.

The mission, Willow. Think about the mission.

Think about Sadar.

It wasn't even truly a mission, quite honestly. In fact, it wasn't at all. She had chosen to do this by herself, sought down where to find this man in her own time, and driven to the lowest alleys in her own car, for her own cause that no one else knew about. But her training was all she knew, meaning that all she knew was fatalism.

It also wasn't a mission because she didn't have her job anymore.

A bright pink sign finally spotted her eye, reading: The Glowing Palace. Willow could smell something sickeningly sweet when she reached the door, and the electro-pop was sending any and all stimulants into hyperdrive.

I shouldn't be here.

The thought didn't stop her from showing her ID to the four-legged bouncer, though. The choking sensation of being horrendously overstimulated the second she walked in didn't make her turn back, either. The Palace was all strobing lights, bouncing bodies in tune with deafening bass and the smell of smoke, and she had no idea what to do. She had never needed to know what to do in a place like this.

What Willow did know was how to carry out a task.

Carefully, she danced through the crowd before finding a girl in uniform - a black jacket with a massive heart on the back, and her matching pink eyes turned to her. Willow wasn't too certain if her eyes were that color naturally, or if it was something else.

"Excuse me," Willow had to almost yell to make sure she was audible, and she still wasn't certain if that was going to do it. "But do you know if Toshiro Yamazaki is here?"

The girl nodded, pointing to the open second floor above, which was decorated with magenta couches and shelves of fruity drinks. "Up there - bright purple horn, can't miss him."

"Thank you!" Willow grinned. A bit enthusiastic on her part, but she had been searching for this guy for over a month - she felt entitled to a little excitement.

After a few minutes of trying to find the stairs - and another few minutes of actually walking up them, with all the people in the way - Willow was finally on the second floor, searching for Yamazaki. But the girl was right - a bright, almost glowing violet horn caught her eye quickly, and she was stalking towards him without hesitation.

Toshiro was lazing on a small sofa, giggling with a tall cyclops. That stunning horn of his sprouted from his forehead, and was the same height as his head itself. A long, thin tail curled around one leg, and had a curled fluff of long hair at the end of it, swirling on the floor, the same raven black as the hair on his head. His fingertips and eyes were the same magnificent purple as his horn, and his sleeveless shirt exposed pale arms, covered in glitter paint. Thin, sparkly bits of jewellery covered every part of him.

This was, without a doubt, who she had been looking for.

Willow cleared her throat softly, and those violet eyes glanced at her with curiosity.

"...Do I know you?"

It wasn't rude, not at all, and almost unheard over the music, but Willow could already feel her stomach drop with worry. She hadn't actually thought this far ahead - it was hard enough to find this man, it hadn't even crossed her stupid, silly mind as to how she would start this conversation.

"No, I - sorry, I wanted to talk to you, if that's ok."

Really good, really assertive, very strong. Great job. Hey, how far down is the first floor again?

"It is ok," Yamazaki said, setting his drink on a tiny table beside him as the cyclops walked off, and he shuffled to the side of the sofa. Willow simply stood there, rather uncomfortably, playing with the antenna on her head.

He smiled slightly, raising a brow. "You can sit, love, the fabric isn't sticky anymore - they washed it this morning, I was told. Lucky us." He looked up with those stunning eyes of his. "What's your name, by the way?"

"Willow."

She lowered herself beside him slowly, straightening her posture as Yamazaki slouched gracefully on the armchair.

"What did you want to talk about, Willow?"

He was so welcoming, in such an untouchable way, that it almost made Willow forget about how strange this place made her feel, with how surprising it was to find such a friendly person in this place - or, a genuinely friendly person, that was.

Now, she felt genuinely guilty for asking at all - and she hadn't even done it yet.

"I...I heard that you, your horn that is, can, like...track people?"

Not all mutations gave abilities - those were quite rare, actually, and often not very interesting. But sometimes, in lucky situations, those things that the rest of the world despised could turn someone into something slightly more than human - if the people in Nilto counted as human, anyway. A gift or a curse, it singled those out from birth. And here Willow was, exploiting it from someone kind, who she had never met before, for what? To get her stupid Warden job back?

She really *should* have just stayed home - it would've saved her dignity.

Yamazaki's shoulders tensed, and something in his eyes hardened. Maybe it was the bright lights, but something in his

face seemed to get sharper.

"Tracking is a strong word ...I can sense people with my horn. Like ribbon, tied to everyone around me."

"...What do you sense?"

"Vague emotions, where someone's moving to, and some physical things like their heart rate." It was so faint, but Willow swore that she saw that horn pulsing with glowing violet. And it took a moment of staring at his gaze, sharp as knives and the sound of his tail slowly thumping the ground, that Willow realised - that was exactly what he was doing to her, in this very moment.

Willow had walked through places of danger millions of times before. But right now, she just felt sick.

His voice cut through his thoughts.

"Why?"

She looked at her hands like a child being scolded in school. "...I know what you're doing. And that makes me think that you already know why."

Yamazaki sighed, rubbing his hand dangerously close to the glitter on his eyes, shining in the moving colors. "I don't track people, love. I don't offer any services in that area - I never have, and never will. And I can't be making any exceptions."

"Why?" She echoed that word from earlier, with a layer of desperation she was too tired to hide. "I spent so long looking for you, for this, and you don't even consider it? I feel awful asking you in the first place, but you have to understand, I did it anyway because I just, I really...I really need to find him." Willow closed her eyes. Her head was throbbing. "...I'm sorry."

A moment passed, not a word between the two. Willow's antennae were vibrating with the bass of the music. She wanted to cry, she wanted to hold her head up high and demand his help, she wanted to get her not-mother to give her a hug. She wanted to be a Warden again, she wanted to get her job back, get her not-mother to hand her her badge back, she wanted to tell Sadar that this was all his fault and she wanted to tell him that she missed him.

She felt a silky soft hand on her shoulder, fingertips on her arm, and soft hair on her ankles.

Tentatively, she turned to see Yamazaki gazing at her with nothing but concern. His horn was glowing even brighter, now.

"You don't need to apologize."

"I'm exploiting you."

"You're asking me for help."

Willow sighed, tugging at her antenna as Yamazaki picked up his fruit drink and held it in front of her, the orange liquid shining rainbow with the atmosphere.

"You can have some, if you like - it's vaguely alcoholic and tastes like shampoo, but if you want it?"

Willow shook her head. He put it back, and simply kept his hand on her shoulder. His tail was still thumping on the ground, almost matching the rhythm of the music.

"I don't know if I like that you know how I feel," she admitted softly.

"I don't know if I like it, either."

She raised a brow softly, watching people dance in the corner of her eye. She didn't expect the night to go this way, and she truly didn't know what she was meant to do.

Yamazaki was untouchable, in a way she had never seen. But he was also kind, open, and honest, and that kind of combination was rare. Yamazaki felt like a unicorn - something rare, and beautiful, and softly stunning. But he wasn't actually a mythical creature, he was a real person. Willow felt like she kept forgetting that.

"Is it tiring?" she eventually asked. "Having everyone's emotions in your head, all the time?"

Maybe Willow borrowed his horn for a second, because the way he deflated, in a sad way, she felt in her bones.

"Why do you think I spend almost every night here?" His laugh wasn't funny. "In a place where everyone's either euphoric, or numb? It's not to have fun, I must admit."

He smiled slightly.

"But you're not here to hear me talk about myself, hm?"

"Nice segway," Willow said. Saved her the awkward conversation turn around. But it meant that all that guilt, shame, exhaustion, it hit her like a truck all over again. It meant that she had to think about Sadar again, and how the chances of finding

him felt even smaller.

What would not-mother say?

She would tell her to focus on the mission.

"I'm sorry I bothered you, Yamazaki." Willow said, going to stand. "...Have a great rest of your night." She would just have to find another way to find Sadar. Her heart felt like a lead, and the weight made her feet slow.

"I'll help, Willow."

It was quite embarrassing, the speed in which her head turned.

"But, I thought you said-"

"I wasn't lying," Yamazaki said, sipping from his drink. "I can't track who you're looking for, especially not from just anywhere. But, if you give me more information, his name, a photo, any suspicions about where he might be...I can make the search a lot quicker. Find a street, or a suburb. It's not much, I know, but I never do things like th-"

Willow did not hug people. It was unprofessional, and childish, and quite rude. But her arms were around Yamazaki before he could finish talking, and she couldn't quite tell if the noises she was making were exhausted laughter or dry sobs. Anyone walking by would have thought she was absolutely wasted, and she didn't even care.

"Thank you, thank you, I'll pay you whatever amount you want, I can't express, I - thank you!"

The boy just laughed, a laugh that sounded like wind chimes, hugging her back just as tight. "You're very sweet," he said, like a mother who just saw their baby yawn. When Willow let go, she was grinning like a maniac, and wringing her hands with joy.

"What made you change your mind?"

"You did," Yamazaki smiled. "I felt...you felt, I should say, desperate. Sad. When people ask for this -" he tapped his horn, purple light reflecting on his finger. "-They're usually asking for reasons much less wholesome than yours. It's why I usually don't do this, as a rule. But it also helps that you're a sweetheart. I do expect pay though! Can't let the word get out I've gone soft."

"I won't let that happen," Willow swore, almost raising a hand to salute. "You can lounge around this...place, like nothing ever happened, and your bank account will be twice as full."

"Honestly, love, you could pay me in paint," he said, gesturing to the glitter on his arms. "It's expensive to look this beautiful."

Willow tilted her head to the side, antenna falling in her face. "Are you serious?"

"About being paid in paint? Absolutely not. About paint prices? Dead."

Maybe it was the smell of candy, maybe it was the sound of joy below, maybe it was that, for the first time since Sadar left, someone was being *kind* to her, someone was helping her - or maybe just because she was ready to pass-out exhausted... but Willow started laughing, and in less than five seconds, that laughter had turned into tears, spilling down her cheeks from her white eyes, her heart exploding at the sight of some tiny glimmer of hope.

Yamazaki had her hands on her cheeks instantly, wiping the tears away softly, murmuring comforts of, *hey, it's alright, it's ok*. Willow vaguely noticed his horn glow, his tail thump, and before she knew it, his eyes were tearing up, too.

"Oh my word, don't you *dare* make me cry, this makeup will *sting* if it gets in my eyes, love, you better calm down right now...,"

Willow laughed a wet, cry laugh, her eyes slowly drying. And by the tiny smile on Yamazaki's face, it looked like that was the goal.

A moment passed, of heavy breathing and cheek-wiping, the occasional sound of whoaaaaa down below as fog filled the dance floor.

"Thankyou, Yamazaki." She meant it, from the bottom of her heart.

The unicorn-boy smiled, his violet eyes crinkling.

"Willow, thank *you*."

Countless Hours

By Evelyn Hendropurnomo

It was a hot day with the cicadas tonelessly filling the air with their music, and the sun baking the earth beneath your feet. That's how days were in Indonesia. Hot, and loud. But it was never boring when you had four siblings. Kirana lived with her Ibu and Ayah her little sister and her three younger brothers. Kirana was 17 years old and had recently begun working as a hairdresser at *Tukang Cukur Mewah*. Santoso was the oldest of the boys and was 14 years old with straight black hair and deep coffee-coloured eyes, he looked similar to Kirana and was the closest in age to her. Rimba was the adventurer of the brothers, he led most of the hunts through the restaurant and was always getting into a new mischief of some sort. He looked like Ayah with his mop of curly brown hair and mischievous smile. Abyasa was the dreamer of the brothers. He would often follow Rimba and get into mischief with him, but never quite know what was going on. Amisha was the youngest with bright eyes and a wild imagination. She would often play with Kirana and make up games where she was the tragic heroine and Kirana was her sympathetic friend.

Kirana and her family lived in the town of Malang, across from an abandoned restaurant. Her brothers loved exploring the restaurant and often came home scratched and sweaty. Her sister Amisha played with Kirana in the kitchen, pretending to be a chef and serving delicious food, while barking orders at imaginary waiters.

"Now would you like Pandan or Vanilla flavour for your Martabak?" Chef Amisha asked.

"I would like-"

"KIRANA!" Rimba came running into the kitchen.

"Rimba what is it?" Kirana asked.

"Abyasa-So we were exploring Kirana like usual and-and he fell through the floor! Bricks fall-Santoso try to move bricks Abyasa trapped!" Rimba panted.

"Where?" Kirana asked urgency in her tone.

Rimba pointed. Kirana darted in that direction and found Santoso on the floor, pulling as hard as he could at the floor. Kirana rushed to her brother's side and started straining at the bricks. Santoso tugged at a loose brick and managed to wiggle it out of its place.

"Oi Kirana!"

To be continued....

Fishing

By Alexandria Cardona

You went fishing for the Loch Ness monster
In the innocent little fishing boat you made your own

You cast out the line even though you had no experience on how to do so
and everyone watched

You waited and waited
only to reel the line in and find that the bait had been eaten

You casted out the line even though you had little experience on how to do so
and everyone talked

You waited and waited again
only to find that it had been consumed again
eaten but not caught

Finally after multiple attempts a monster leaps from the depths and soaks you and your boat
you open your eyes and the monster is suddenly gone and you are left with the soaked boat
you had

made your own

You went fishing for a fish cause there are many in the sea
in that little boat to cast a new line but no one was there to see.

The Tanker

By Luke Faure

A clang, a flash, a loud boom, then a whistle
"Reload!", metal on metal, "Fire!"
A clang, a flash, a loud boom, then a whistle

"Tank! East! Thirty-six hundred yards!"
"Reverse!", "Brace!"
Metal on metal, shrapnel bouncing around
Darkness.

"Is everyone alright?"
A chorus of replies, a damage assessment, then repairs
A clang, two more clangs, the roaring engine
"Reload!", metal on metal, "Move forward!"
"Fire!"
A clang, a flash, a loud boom, then a whistle;

A louder whistle, a louder boom, "Artillery!"
"Reverse eighty yards towards the tree!"
The roaring engine, the thundering tracks
Safety under the tree,

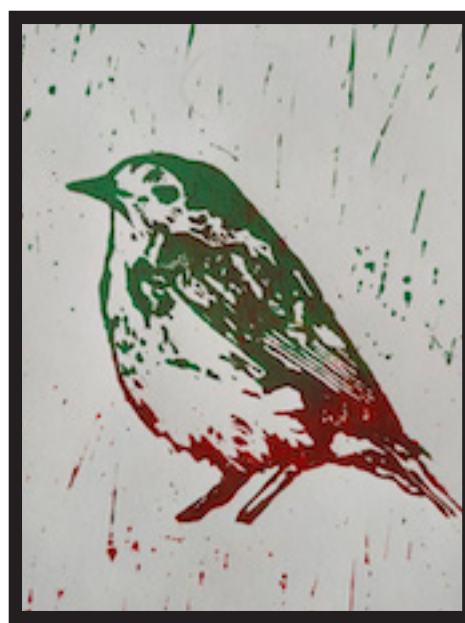
"Armoured car! Twenty-four hundred yards!"
"Fire!"
A clang, a flash, a loud boom, then a whistle
"Reload!"
Metal on metal,

"Target Destroyed!", "Write it down!"
"Infantry! East! Three hundred yards!"
"Machine gun!"
The bursting of a machine gun, the rattling of empty shells against the roof
"They're retreating!"

A loud clang, "We've been hit!"
"Return fire!"
A clang, a flash, a loud boom, then a whistle
"Target hit!"
"Reload!"
Metal on metal,

"Driver!", "Advance!"
roaring engine, thundering tracks
"Enemy tank!", "South East! Twenty-eight hundred yards!"
"Fire!"
A clang, a flash, a loud boom, then a whistle
"Target destroyed!"
"Reload!"

"Planes!", "They're friendly!"
A whistle, a thud, then a boom
A hoorah, a sigh of relief, then the roaring engine
The thundering tracks, screaming planes, the retreating enemies
A fading engine, receding screaming planes,
Silence.



Artworks by Montana Pollard

Opportunities!

AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN TEEN WRITER AWARD

<https://sparklit.org/actwa/>



Don't stop writing!

SparkLit encourages writing that points Australians to Jesus. The Australian Christian Teen Writer Award discovers and celebrates budding authors and creatives.

Award criteria

A \$1,000 prize is given for the best unpublished manuscript by an Australian citizen under 18 years of age. Supplementary awards may be given. The winning work will explore a Christian perspective or theme and incorporate, explain or encourage Christian life and values.

Entries close May 31.

A small bird has been pilfering chips and other savouries in the Year 9 locker area. If you know this bird please have stern words with it.

ARTS LEARNING FESTIVAL: STUDENT POETRY COMPETITION 2025

<https://artslearningfestival.com.au/news/student-poetry-competition-2025-entries-are-now-open/>

Calling all young poets – Independent Schools Victoria's Student Poetry Competition is back for 2025 and young people from across Victoria are invited to express themselves in our annual celebration of poetic creativity.

Students can enter a written poem or make a video of themselves speaking or performing their words, bringing energy and conviction to their work.

Poets can choose their own topic or explore our optional theme of Gratitude. Gratitude can be seen as a simple yet powerful emotion that signifies feeling thankful and appreciative for the positive and beneficial things in one's life. It is about acknowledging and appreciating the kindness, help or positive experiences you have received from others or from life itself. The amazing thing about gratitude is that it can lift your mood, intensify relationships and boost your total wellbeing.

Entries close August 29.

Mr Waldron is looking for a student or two to write something on 'God and Grandparents'. If that is you please email Mr Waldron @ sam.waldron@baysidecc.vic.edu.au

You don't have to be a grandparent to write.

NEXT ISSUE:
WINTER 2025



SUBMIT YOUR WRITING/ARTWORK TO:
THEOVERCOATZINE@GMAIL.COM