

# TARTAN TIMES

OCTOBER EDITION 2023





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## Editor's Note

Nick Mrazek

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The views and opinions expressed in this journal may not be representative of the students and staff of Campbell Collegiate. Authors are encouraged to express themselves as they see fit, in an appropriate manner.





# Concept of Currency Swaps

Annapoorni Sanjeev

Currency swaps are a mutual agreement between two countries in order to get better interest rates. It is when one country gives a loan to the other in its own currency and vice versa.



from America and America would borrow one million euros at 9% from France.

In this case, both companies have to pay an interest at a rate higher than their local rates. This may not be efficient. This is where currency swaps are useful.

Instead of each company borrowing from the other country, Each company will borrow money from their respective countries and then lend it out to the other company at a lower interest rate. Meaning, "French Culture®" will borrow one million euros from France at 7% (local interest rate) and lend it out to "US Heritage™" at the same rate. "US Heritage™" will do the same (borrow from US at local interest rate and lend it to "French Culture®"), thereby allowing each country to obtain the money at the other country's local interest rate.



Let us read an example to understand the concept better: Private companies from two countries, France and America have made a deal. The french company called "French Culture®" wants to set up a model Eiffel Tower in Las Vegas. This will cost a hundred thousand dollars. The American company called "US Heritage™" wants to set up an Abraham Lincoln museum in Lyon. This will cost one million euros.

Both companies require loans. Let us assume that the local rate of interest in France is 7% and that in America is 8%. However, if a foreign country wants to borrow, the rates are 9% and 10% for France and America respectively. Without using currency swaps, France would borrow hundred thousand dollars at the rate of 10%



# The Future is Feathered

Ivy Lisitza

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Picture a quintessential being, skilled in limitless areas. Allow your imagination to be graced with the image of its patterned, artistic, aerodynamic figure gleaming in the sunlight of a

picturesque day.

You haven't a clue of what astonishing mission it sets out to complete, and such little time to infer as it soars overhead with impressive speed.

Has it set out to deliver life-saving messages? Complete the vital task of analyzing radiology scans? Perhaps it finds itself commuting to analyze the works of a future creative legend. Now, carefully take hold of this delightful thought, say your farewells, and set it aflame before catapulting it into the unforgiving depths of the underworld. Sound familiar? I'll spare your inconsiderate human conscience the task of evaluation. You have just thought of a pigeon.

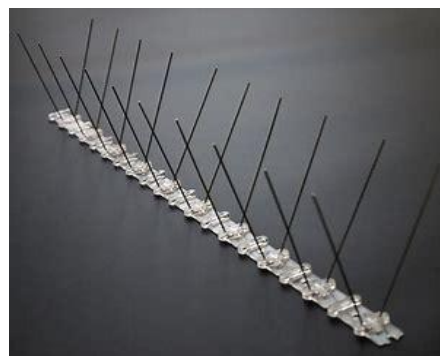
Confused? I figured, so here's some background.

You may be familiar with some more mainstream historical timelines through the wide selection of social studies courses provided for students. However, one important aspect of our coming-to-be I have yet to see covered by any teacher, is that of pigeons. Thought to be the first

domesticated animal, almost ten thousand years ago, I believe not only that they deserve the title of "man's best friend", but also that of humanity's greatest donor. Within their graceful skulls lies an underestimated neural network of

vast potential, which only within the past few decades we have begun to discredit. The 20th century marked the peak of pigeon utility. These underappreciated avian companions were used as messengers during the Second World War and as navy researchers identifying lost shipwreck victims throughout the 70s, but this was only a glimpse into their full potential. Through research and experimentation, pigeons have proven themselves able to interpret patient radiology scans and classify potentially cancerous masses, recognize all letters of the English alphabet and predict the grades received by first grade students on art assignments.

All this, and all we offer in return to their heroism is anti-pigeon spikes and



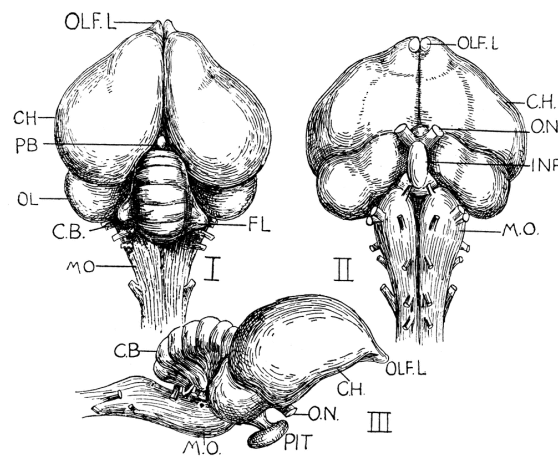




vulgar words? Although it is understandable that one may not appreciate their scattered, unpredictable droppings, it is inhumane to offer such horrid punishments for the crime of incontinence. Do you know who else is incontinent? The elderly. I don't see anyone putting up "granny spikes" throughout urban areas. Instead, we lovingly wrap their pruned bottoms in fine fabrics. Being equally intelligent as dogs, pigeons could surely learn to be more considerate of where they dispose of bodily waste, but humans being far lazier and more despicable creatures, don't take the time to provide them with such teachings. Furthermore, pigeons are very loyal companions. It's acceptable for one to own a genetic nightmare of a dog named "Princess Teratoma the 3rd", but the minute they lay eyes upon my hypothetical pigeon I'm the crazy one? What has this world come to?



I demand a revolution. We have but a glimpse into pigeon-potential. By rendering this amazing animal a common household pet, imagine what further discoveries could be made? If not out of the kindness of your heart, do it for their utility to our species. I encourage all to delve further into an informational journey regarding this magnificent species. The future is feathered, and we must spread the word.





# The Unfolding Genocide of the Indigenous People of Palestine

Meshah Aqeel



Palestinians have endured unimaginable suffering and heartache at the hands of Israel for decades. An extensive timeline of loss, devastation, brutalization, and violence embedded within Palestinian history since the Nakba in 1948. The Nakba, also known as the “Great Catastrophe”, was the mass dispossession and destruction of

destroyed more than 530 villages and massacred 15,000 Palestinians in the process, leading to the beginning of a genocide.

On October 7th, 2023, Israel’s crime of genocide against the Palestinian people unfolded. There are over 2.2 million Palestinians caged and trapped inside Gaza who are living through the continuous infliction of violence, war crimes, bombing,

massacres, and destruction by Israeli forces. As we witness this genocide in the comfort of our homes, we must avoid phrases such as war or conflict when referring to the ethnic cleansing of the Palestinian people. This is not a war when Israel is one of the strongest



**5 million Palestinians are classified as refugees by the UN**

Palestinian society in 1948. Out of the 1.9 million Palestinians at the time, 750,000 were made refugees in their homeland or outside of their very own borders. Zionist forces had seized more than 78% of Palestine and ethnically cleansed and

military forces in the world with billions of equipment funded by the US whereas Gaza is a small, 25-mile strip of Palestinian land, with no official regime or a militant group. This is not a conflict when Gaza is purposely placed in a position where they



are unable to defend themselves due to Israel's brutal siege. This cannot be a conflict or a war when there is a lack of equivalence in any aspect. Since 2007, Israel has restricted Gaza's electricity, water, and medicine and has secluded them from the world for decades. Israel has trapped Palestinians in Gaza, hardly letting anyone leave, even in critical conditions. The UN has called Gaza unlivable for years due to Israel's violent siege but Israel has not stopped oppressing Gaza's residents. It is imperative to mention that Gaza is a small strip of Palestinian land, smaller than Banff, with over 2 million Palestinians living in Gaza, more than half of whom are children. Despite this, Israel has made their intentions very clear from the air strikes and bombing of hospitals, churches, mosques, and schools in Gaza that their intent is to purposely kill civilians, resulting in many casualties and the death of innocent children and women. In doing this, Israel has violated twenty-eight resolutions of the U.N Charter. Article 2(4) and 51 is violated by Israel under international law by the illegal occupation of Palestinian land by force. The illegal Israeli settlements on occupied land also violated Geneva Conventions IV, Article 49(6). Geneva Conventions IV, Articles 45, 46, and 49 and UN resolutions 194 (III) and 237, are violated by Israel's practice of ethnic cleansing. Moreover, Israel's oppressive and discriminatory system of governing Palestinians has constituted a state of apartheid, which under legal UN definition is considered a crime against humanity. On October 13 2023, Israel cut off electricity, any means of water, food, or fuel supplies,

and denied any humanitarian aid to enter the Gaza Strip for civilians. This is a war crime known as collective punishment. To add, the use of white phosphorus, a chemical with lethal effects, such as organ failure and deep burns that can penetrate through the bones, is a war crime. The deliberate massacres and killing of civilians is also considered a war crime, violating international humanitarian law. Additionally, Israel's order to evacuate more than one million Palestinians had also violated international law as they bombed the safe evacuation routes sent out to civilians and over 423,000 Palestinians in Gaza have been displaced as their ancestors once were.

We as humans must express our grief for the millions of Palestinians in Gaza who have been forced to live under oppression, a system of apartheid, and in the world's largest open-air prison. Children are 56% of the population who are considered prisoners by Israeli Zionist forces and who have been slaughtered and exterminated regularly by Israeli strikes and attacks. We as humans must hold the Israeli apartheid regime entirely responsible for the violence that is unfolding. We as humans must not stay silent or neutral and turn a blind eye to the Israeli occupation, war crimes committed, and bloodshed of Palestinians due to our privilege, ignorance, and comfort. We, as humanity, should take the side of Palestine and preach for its freedom and justice as we would for any other. Today, we are witnessing a genocide and tomorrow we must continue to use our voices against injustice before the indigenous population of Palestinians living in Gaza are exterminated completely.



## Year 2020: Blessing in Disguise

Ruhaanee Singh

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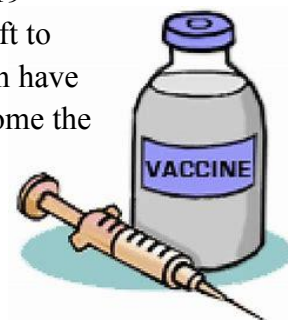
**“We shall overcome this.”** A famous saying that motivates me in the thick and thin of life. The year 2020 has taught us many lessons. To some extent, it was a blessing in disguise. I learned so many different things I would not have otherwise. At the time, it did not seem like a blessing when we were stuck at home during the Pandemic year when learning about the deaths and cases of people being diagnosed with COVID-19, and when we were unable to attend school physically, though still able to learn in the online classes. In hindsight, we were fortunate to have devices to communicate with which made it a blessing in disguise (in fact, the popularity of Zoom continues still, in terms of online tutoring classes from country to country). I was pretty happy to interact in my school's online classes, though I was sad that I couldn't meet my friends and hang out with them during breaks. Additionally, since we had curfews around this time, I was unable to socialize with people because we had to be mindful of social distance. I was grateful to stay safe at home, to my parents for taking care of me, and for how I was provided with the hot and scrumptious food at home.

Despite that, I still felt very bored and cranky as I sat idly on my couch, unable to do anything. However, I had started doing activities like reading,

drawing, painting, and most importantly, joining Zoom meetings, and talking with my friends after school! My dad and I would sing songs and post them on social media too. Even to this day, I get trapped in my own little world where everything is musical with amazing songs that I cannot resist singing.

During that year, I liked to share my doubts or difficulties at school with my family, and some joyous things about my life with friends. Often, I helped my mother by performing chores, such as dusting and cleaning. It gave me a sense of satisfaction, a sense that I had accomplished something during the day. From my memory, I do not really remember if I had a proper daily routine, as I was not the task-oriented kind of person I am now, a person who likes being organized. Those days, I was occupied with work from school and enjoyed the tasks as they kept me from being idle and restless.

I thank the doctors who have worked on research and treatment for COVID-19. Though it still goes on, back then my mom used to always tell me about the cases, well not anymore. That's because, “Overall, the severity of Covid is much lower than it was a year ago and two years ago” (Dr. Dan Barouch on *nbcnews.com*. Article published on Sep 16, 2023). I remember that in an article, I wrote, “The year 2021 is arriving within a few days. I pray that the COVID -19 vaccine should be the New Year gift to mankind.” With the vaccines which have already been found, we will overcome the virus.







## Bob

Vicky Yang

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Bob the Builder, can you be him?  
Bob the Builder, yes you can! Don't know what to do for Halloween this year? Be Bob the Builder, the most legendary character to ever exist. You might be wondering why Bob? Well...why not? To start, Bob is such a funny name, if anyone asked what you were, you could just say "I'm Bob." It's short, to the point and leaves no room for discussion.

Secondly, Bob isn't scary. Perhaps you have little siblings and they cry every year when they see your costume; whether it be because of how bad it is (you're not Bob) or because it's just that scary. Thankfully, being Bob would fix that issue immediately. He looks just like any other construction worker, with his kind smile, his plaid shirt and his comfy blue overalls. Nothing about that is scary and unlike previous years, your little sibling won't shed a single tear this Halloween. On the other hand, you might potentially want to be the scariest kid on the block. Well look no further because Bob is here to the rescue. If you really, really think about it, Bob is terrifying; he only has four fingers,

he has this blank stare and he's got a belt full of dangerous tools. That alone, could send a grown man to tears and no one in your community will be stealing candy from you ever again.



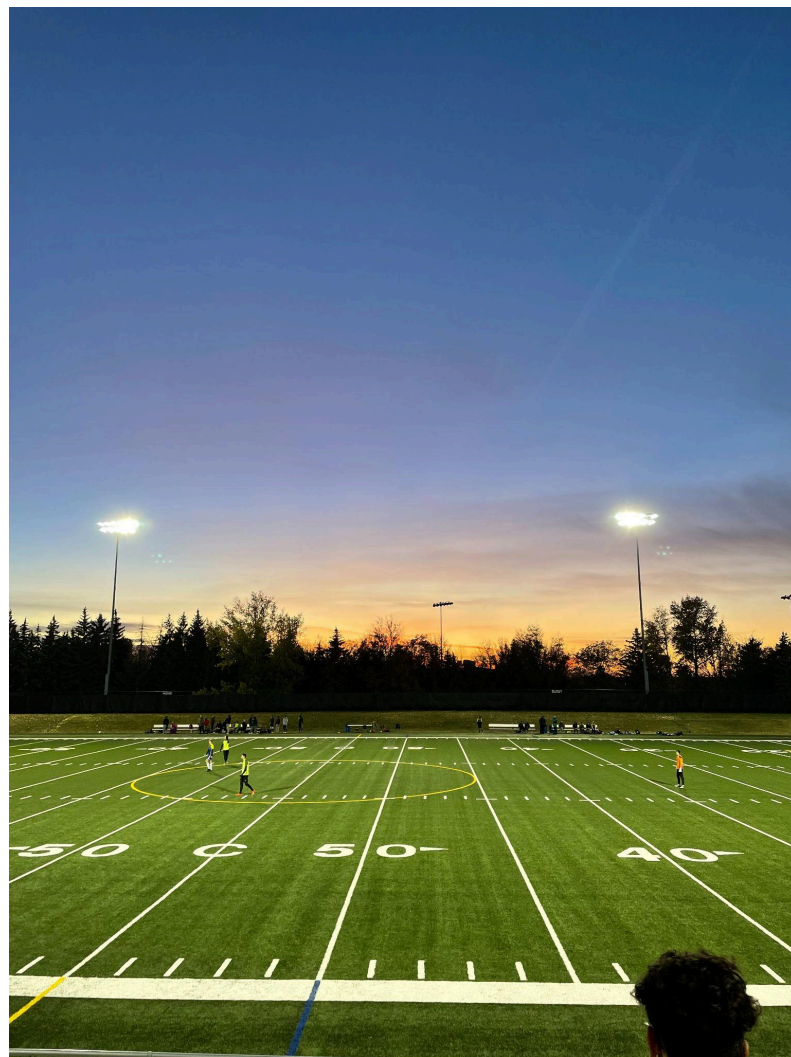
In addition, have you ever seen anyone else be *Bob the Builder* for Halloween? I think not. So not only would you be wearing the best costume ever, you would simultaneously be starting a new trend. Lastly, to answer the lifelong question: can it be a group costume? Of course Bob the Builder can be a group Halloween costume! You and your friends can be Bob and some of Bob's many accomplices in the show. Somebody could be Wendy, another could be Farmer Pickles and don't forget about the iconic machines: Muck, Scoop, Dizzy, Lofty and Roley. With all that being said, go out and get your Bob costume before it's too late and make your dreams come true because according to Bob, yes you can!

## SLC Update October Edition

Vi Nagel

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As October 2023 came to a close, the SLC made sure to end off on a high note. The club started the month off with a pumpkin pie eating contest. This took place in McTavish's over the lunch hour on October 6th. Six contestants competed to win the prize of Campbell Winter Merch; amazing considering the snowfall Regina just got. In the end the winner was a Campbell intern Mr. Orobko, who really gobbled up that pie. It was a great event to put the students into a Thanksgiving mood. Lastly, the SLC hosted a fabulous Pep Rally that was the best one that Campbell has seen in a while. Planned by Athletics directors Leann Huang and Marika Falconer, they went for a glow in the dark theme. Covering the gym and the crowd with glow sticks. We saw many fun activities for the students to participate in like Crossbar kick, football toss and many more. And to close the rally, each fall sports team got to compete for an amazing trophy that was made by SLC's Arts team. To finish off October, the team held a pumpkin carving contest, a black and orange day and a costume day to celebrate Halloween! We are very excited to see what November holds!





## Untitled

Elizabeth H. Besaw

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Applying a little fake blood to my face, I complete the look of Enid. Annie comes out of the bathroom, does a little spin and asks, "How do I look?"

"Almost exactly like the picture," is my earnest reply.

"Perfect," she smiles, giving me an energetic thumbs up.

Looking back in the mirror, I decide I look good enough and turn back to Annie. Before I can say anything, the doorbell rings and Annie basically flies down the stairs screaming, "That's them, that's them!" Walking over to the stairs, I see the door open to reveal three boys.

"Hey," I say as they walk in, "Nice costumes."

We decided to be characters from *The Walking Dead* this Halloween, and it turned out nice.

"Same for you guys," says Theo, dressed up as Ezekiel. "I see you went with Michonne," he says to Annie, who smiles.

"Let's go," says Oliver, dressed up as Carl, "We're going to be late."

Walking to Dexter's car, Dexter grins, does a little spin and complains that nobody complimented his costume yet.

"You look very nice as Jesus," says Annie.

"What? Are you saying I don't look nice all the time?" Dexter teases Annie.

She shoots him a look that makes him fake pout. The theater is a little out of town, but we arrive with enough time to see the last few commercials. There are a

few couples that sit at the back of the theater, but otherwise it's empty.

"I guess everyone's trick-or-treating," I say.

The horror movie starts and gets really creepy, I have to cover my eyes and plug my ears to avoid screaming. Suspense builds and I scream before I can stop myself. I look back to see if anyone heard, surprisingly there is nobody with us. *Maybe they got bored*, I think to myself as I turn back to the movie. As we leave, we all feel uneasy.

"That was really creepy," Theo says.

"Hey, where are the workers? There isn't anybody here," I say.

It's dark out, and the bright lights of the car calm us down, but there is no one in sight. Driving into town should mean more people, but there isn't anyone. The car slows down.

"Why are we stopping?" Annie asks.

"Something's wrong," Dexter says, "The car just completely shut down." Getting out of the car, we huddle together in the darkness and start walking to my house. The streetlights start to flicker and the one shining down on us goes out, submerging us in darkness and silence. We all listen, standing frozen in place. A hand with long fingers wraps itself around my arm.

Screaming, I grab Annie and start running. I can hear the heavy footsteps of Oliver, Theo, and Dexter falling into place behind us.

"There," I shout back, pointing at the little shed-like barn we hang out in.

Piling in, I shut the door, lock it, and stick a chair underneath the handle.

"Why are we running?" pants Dexter, out of breath.

"Something grabbed me," I say, pulling my shirt where I was grabbed. Something sticky meets my fingers, looking down, I see dark red blood in the shape of a hand printed on my shirt.



"Look," I tell them.

"It's probably just a prank," says Annie.

"A really really bad one," says Theo, turning on the dim lights that we hung at the ceiling. "Let's just sit down and wait a little, if it is a prank then they will go away eventually."

Bright light hits my eyes as they flutter open. "Guys, wake up, we fell asleep," I shake Theo, "Wake up."

A loud, heavy knock pounds at the door. Going to the window, I see my neighbor standing at the entrance. "We fell asleep, my parents are going to kill me," I mutter.

Oliver sits up. "Who's at the door?" Moving the chair and unlocking the door, I tell Oliver to wake up the others.

There are a few grumbles when they are shaken awake, but when reality sets in, they are attentive.

"I'm going to open the door now, it's just Mr. Malady."

"Good morning, Mr. Malady," I say, hoping to avoid getting in trouble. "How are you?" He looks at me blankly which sends a shiver down my spine, but the relief of seeing another person is stronger.

"Your parents are looking for you everywhere. They are very concerned about your whereabouts," he says in a slightly monotone voice. "You should all get home now," that's not as bad as it could be.

"Yes, we will right now," I say. "Goodbye, Mr. Malady," I closed the door.

Looking at my sleeve, the handprint disappeared, I probably dreamed it. I decided that last night wasn't real, it was probably just a silly prank that seemed really scary because we just watched a horror movie.

Walking home alone, the cool autumn air wakes me up as I try to make an explanation for my parents. Maybe if I had been outside in the cool air earlier, I would have noticed that Mr. Malady did not blink when talking, that his fingernails were long and dirty, or that there was drool at the side of his mouth and eerie blankness behind his eyes.





## Camp Chronicles: The Art of Dress Up

Maddy Clincke

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Haiku - here again to tell you another camp story. As a camp counsellor I do a lot of silly things for the entertainment of my campers. At meals we will often dress up for a theme like lumberjack, jungle, or superhero. For such occasions, I go through immense planning before camp to make sure I have the perfect outfit. Let's say it's going to be a lumberjack meal, I'll need jean overalls, a classic red plaid shirt, some kind of toque or hat, boots, a log or axe in hand and of course a beard. I experimented to perfect my beard technique. Now I can do a beard on anyone with just one shade of eye shadow. My kids loved my beard so much that they wanted me to leave it on for our evening activities. *Lumberjack* is my favourite, and my outfit is always a staple.



*Superhero* is another classic, where everyone grabs their towel or blanket and ties it around their neck, but I have many superhero costumes at home.

So I bring them all to camp and wear them all at once, Superman's abs,

Batman's mask, Catwoman ears, a Spider-Man cape (I know he doesn't actually have a cape, but I do). With this mish-mash of outfits, I become the ultimate superhero. Finally for *Jungle*, I sport a monkey hanging around my neck and wear a lot of brown khaki to say I'm a jungle explorer.



Here's the crazy part of the story. I don't always get to pick my own outfit. Some days we have the campers dress us up. One time, I brought a nice, big bag of bird themed things. The whole camp week was bird themed so I just had to bring "bird" dress up. I brought a bird tie, bird socks, fun hats, and a lot of feather boas. 10 feather bows, which left feathers everywhere. So I announced to my girls

that it was time to dress me up for lunch. I brought out the bag of goodies and they immediately started



putting feather boas everywhere. I had a boa around my neck, my waist, sticking out of my pants like a tail. They even had feather boas tied to my wrists and sticking up my t-shirt sleeves to act like wings. They fell out repeatedly. They didn't even notice the tie. So when I pointed out the tie the girls took off the boa from my neck, put the pre-tied tie over my neck, did not tighten it, then put the feather boa over top again. My coworkers that week got feather boas as well. Salsa, the other counselor in my group (who was dressed up by the boys), had his feather boa around his neck, it was quite damaged by the end of the meal. The other counselor in my cabin, Violin, had one feather boa around her waist and was tied on as a tail. With the feather boas ready, it was time to go to lunch and show everyone my girls' beautiful creation. The crazy thing is even with feather boas falling out of my armpits, I still had to pour water into my kids' glasses and serve them salad without

getting feathers in the food. All my campers wanted a feather boa for themselves, but I didn't have enough for everyone so I said they were a part of me, I was a bird and my feathers could not be plucked.

Regardless of the costume, we always have fun at dress up meals. I may not have many pictures or a horror story about my costume falling off, but I will when the time is right, walk backwards so my clothes seem to be walking forwards, and talk "*meal the for backwards*", to master the art of committing to my costume.



\*Do you have fun camp stories? Send us a DM @thetartantimes to join the google classroom and have your work featured!



# Deceit

Anonymous

---



There is an unusual phenomenon that  
 generates from my soul.  
 A torrid phenomenon.  
 The truth by the tongue,  
*It really is a lie.*  
 An act that leaves one deranged.  
 A lie that paints a sculpture.  
 An artifact that must be contained.  
*My delicate, fragile, broken heart.*  
 The phenomenon blinds the eye from its  
 lethal effect.  
 It begins with a flood that washes over the  
 skin.  
 From the eyes,  
 To the mouth,  
 Traveling and leaving a trail.  
 A corrosive reaction, leaving me liquified.  
 My veins begin to corrode from the  
 collection of dust simply lying over my  
 body.  
 No trace of a touch,  
 A worry,  
 Or regard.  
*I remain untouched.*  
 I am the one to blame for this misery.  
 I let the burning sensation control me.  
 Let it simmer and ignite a light within the  
 midnight darkness.  
 I allow the dust to cover my wounds.  
 I am masking a century's worth of  
 calamities.  
 I am a poser of love, life, and truth.  
 Because I am not okay.  
 I lied.

*Sincerely, your liar.*

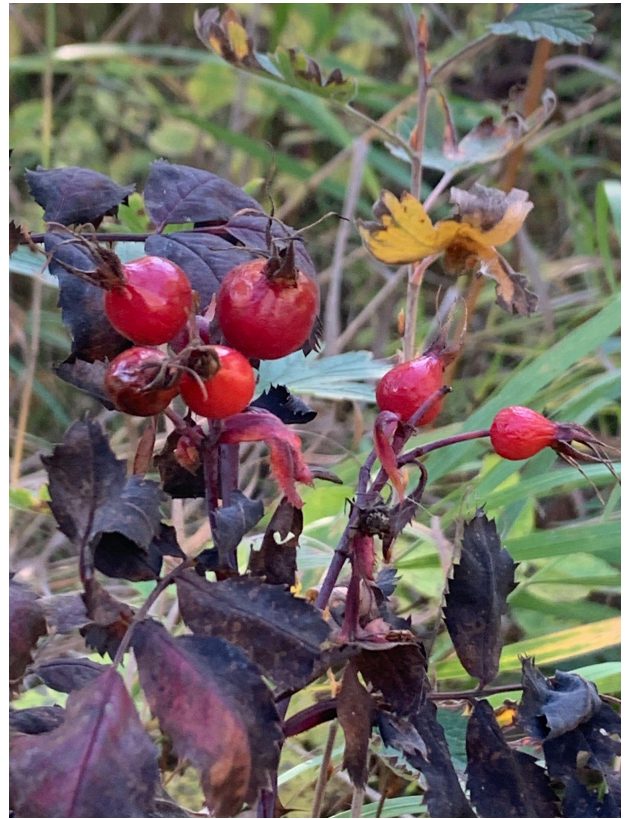


Photo Credit: Linzy Zheng

## A Death Untold

Runyao (Angela) Xue



September 5th, 1935

It was a warm and balmy day. My lovely Victoria, still in her dirty sculpting clothes, as always, hadn't changed for the party yet and I could see by my watch that she was running extremely late.

Soon after, I heard the sound of car wheels rumbling on the driveway cobblestones. Then I heard footsteps creaking and the dresses rustling. I greeted the first guests and dashed into the kitchen to prepare them drinks.

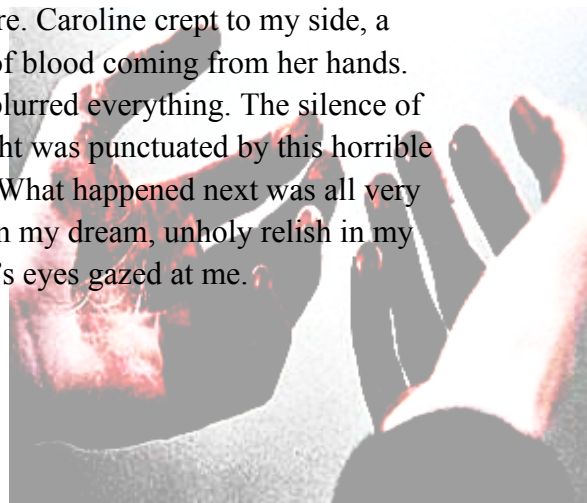
The buzz of conversation suddenly stopped when Tom Acklin was making his way into the house. He was boastfully dressed in a black suit and striped pants. Immediately, Lucy and Tom exchanged a glance. I sipped some sherry in my left hand, odorless and colorless. Other ladies in the room shot Tom a sideways glance at the same moment. He gave a dazzling smile back to them. I quickly cleared my throat to welcome everyone cheerfully. Tom seemed to have won the hearts of all the ladies including Lucy, my wife, although he was married to Jane. Lucy had a sweet relationship with John. My own marriage had gone stale when the wedding vows had turned grimy yellow. I had wished for the get-together to rekindle a peaceful family relationship. On my way back to the kitchen, the perfumed smell wafted in the air but gradually turned foul-smelling.

My neighbor Ava came over to borrow matches but declined to have

dinner with us. I saw her out and went back to the kitchen again. Just then, a dim figure flashed by the kitchen window. A hissing sound hushed into the backyard. I peeped out of the window. Another indistinct shape, holding something in its hands sneaked out of the backyard.

The crystal lights crackled down harshly onto the marble floor with a loud bang. The house went black. The candles on the dinner table shook and shivered with glints and gleams, rustling and swirling. A second shot was fired. Screams aroused from corners of the house. Somebody fell down with a heavy dead thud. Oh Jesus, is this hell? I was so frightened that two cups of sherry dropped from my hands down to the floor. A deathly hush fell over the room afterwards. I crawled to the living room with my heart thumping uncontrollably, and mouth dry. In the moonlight, a body lay next to the sofa in the living room. I bellowed — Tom's dead! Piercing shrieks arose again along with a howl that would rend almost any heart. The dogs in the neighborhood started to whine.

I lit two candles with my shivering hands. Under the faint candlelight, I caught Lucy flicking Jane a nervous glance. Jane's face was pale and glistened with sweat. Victoria stared at Fred angrily. Suddenly, a strange gurgling crackled from nowhere. Caroline crept to my side, a smell of blood coming from her hands. Tears blurred everything. The silence of the night was punctuated by this horrible death. What happened next was all very hazy. In my dream, unholy relish in my family's eyes gazed at me.





# Alone

Abby Wright

---

It's dark. That is all I know. Dark and Cold and Frightening. I know I am Alone. Alone with the trees, who whisper in hushed voices to come closer and be drawn in by their branches. Alone with the wind, who speaks softly of dreams of soaring with the currents through the clouds. Alone with my thoughts. And for all that I know I am missing something rather vital. Who am I? Why am I here cradled in empty promises made by beings who can not keep them? How did I get here on this forest floor covered in leaves, and how will I leave?

All I can do is stand, dust myself off and start walking. I check my pockets and my search yields little. A phone long dead and a paper with only the word "RUN" on it. But I do not heed its advice for how would I know if it was me

Who wrote it and not someone else? Then, I see red. It drips from the leaves and is absorbed by the moss. I know somehow it is blood. I know that it is not mine. How, you ask? For there are bodies. Four from what I can see. Cold to the touch when I muster up the courage to check.

Out of the corner of my eyes I see a blur. One I know is not of the forest. For I had spent so long here that I had grown accustomed to its soft whispers and shuffling. Then I see It. I knew I should have heeded my own advice.



## Red Stained Glass

Ivy Lisitza

I walk through the door, stepping over months worth of takeout boxes, wrappers and long forgotten receipts, stumbling through the dark to find the light switch. After a few seconds I feel my hand graze the raised panel and run my palm upwards until fluorescent white fills my



vision. Carefully plotting each step, I slowly find my way to the comfort of my worn down sofa and fall into

the deflated cushions. What to watch? Something on the news, or perhaps a classic sitcom would fit the mood, however I've never been great with decisions. I turn my head to the left to meet his sunken grey eyes.

"What are you feeling today?"

If only he'd actually tell me his name. Months of sharing with me his thoughts, not through words but through... well who knows, perhaps it's best described as telepathy? Even without spoken language, I still believe it's a little strange to be living alongside one for so long and not share your name.

He chose Seinfeld. Again. I could probably recite almost every episode by memory by now, but it always seems to bring a slight shimmer to his otherwise lifeless complexion, so again I enter the channel number into the remote and settle in to relax and eventually doze off.

I find it almost funny that only a few months ago, if I had seen myself now, I could only provide a worried frightened stare, or at least that's what I imagine, that's what everyone else does. Who can blame them? I too was frightened at first, in fact probably the most. 24 years spent living what most would consider a completely normal life, then suddenly seeing him, his ghastly pale self, in every reflective surface. I'd scream, cry and plead to him to please just leave me be, only to be met with his regular expressionless stare, maybe just with an almost imperceivable hint of sadness. Doctor after doctor, each having a different fancy word to describe my unusual experience, tried to treat me with medications I cannot even imagine how to pronounce. Hospital stays and broken mirrors week after week, begging staff and almost anyone in hearing proximity to believe me, to simply entertain the thought that maybe I wasn't insane. Eventually, I simply gave up. I told them I was fine, that their drugs and treatments had worked, that I had simply been a confused and sickly girl.

I returned home with a sense of loss and defeat, to again be met with his familiar gaze, only this time one that I could finally begin to understand. The next few weeks were rough, I felt only resentment towards him, but no matter how many times I lashed out and screamed vulgar words to his





drained and hopeless face, he remained always unfazed. I finally accepted that no anger could turn him away and tried my best to ignore him. This lasted only a matter of days until my pity got the best of me. I couldn't help but feel bad as he stood alone, always in my presence but never receiving my attention. I began to take glances here and there, only the more I looked the more familiar it became. Never have I felt so close to someone without sharing with them a single word, but it almost seemed like we had some sense of understanding to each other, a connection I cannot begin to explain. Ever since then I've grown much more tolerant of him, perhaps even fond. No matter how chaotic life gets, how the waters rise and fall, he always remains there. It's almost comforting to see him faintly in the window that lies just left of my sofa.

I awake to my alarm early the next morning and mindlessly begin my regular routine. Uniform on and coffee in hand, I give him a customary nod and begin my walk to work. I can't say I enjoy washing dishes all day, but then again, not many people are willing to hire the crazy lady, and I've got bills to pay. The time flies by quite quickly as I scrub the grease from endless pots and pans, he occasionally glances at me through the rippled steaming water and through my phone screen when I longingly check the time. Before I know it, it's time to go home. I finish up by unloading the industrial sized dishwasher before dragging my aching legs to my doorstep.

Another day gone, I journey to the couch, the whole regular nightly agenda.

Barely able to focus on the jokes I've heard a million times and pre-recorded laugh tracks, I turn my attention to him. At first, I'm met only with his regular sight, but he proceeds to do something out of the ordinary. His hand usually perched limply at his side, reaches up to touch the glass. I give him a confused look,

"What do you want?" I ask, genuinely confused.

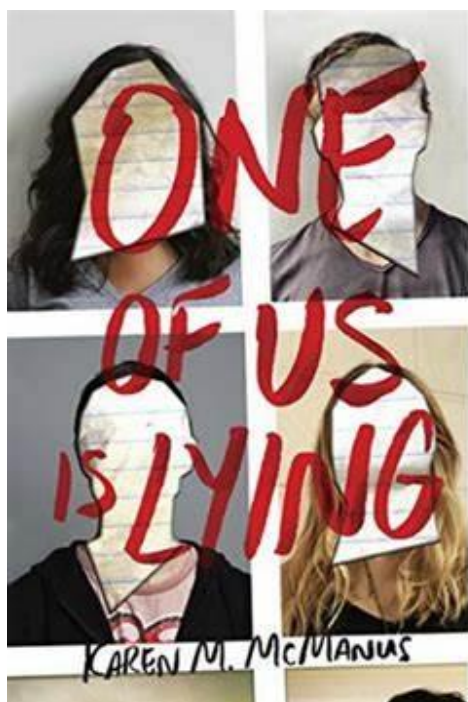
He answers only by changing his expression to a lonelier, longing, almost desperate look. Without really thinking, I pull myself up from the couch and slowly venture to his direction. Now almost in touching distance, the air feels slightly chilled. Not in an alarming way, almost as it would on a windy day near the end of autumn, when one would stand in the crisp breeze admiring the fallen coloured leaves, which also serve as a reminder of the harsh cold soon to come. Ever so slightly, he presses his hand more firmly to the glass, I am now almost certain of what he wants. My arm begins to extend, I can't help but feel frightened as I feel I am almost drawn towards another realm. Finally, our fingertips meet and I watch my body fall limp to the ground. My flesh lays cold, a knife in hand, in front of the now red stained glass, and him, my closest friend by my side.



## One of Us is Lying: Review

Alexander McMurchy

Often, a product comes along that is praised beyond belief. People rave about it online, comments are nothing but positive, and more and more 10/10 reviews appear everyday. Curiosity overtakes you so you decide to see the product for yourself. As you analyze it more, you begin to realize that the successes people were ranting about are exaggerated and flaws that were hidden reveal themselves quickly. Disappointment comes after. This was my experience with One of us is Lying.



One of us is Lying is a YA Mystery novel written by Karen M. McManus and follows four characters, Bronwyn, Addy, Cooper, and Nate. They, along with Simon, all happened to be in detention

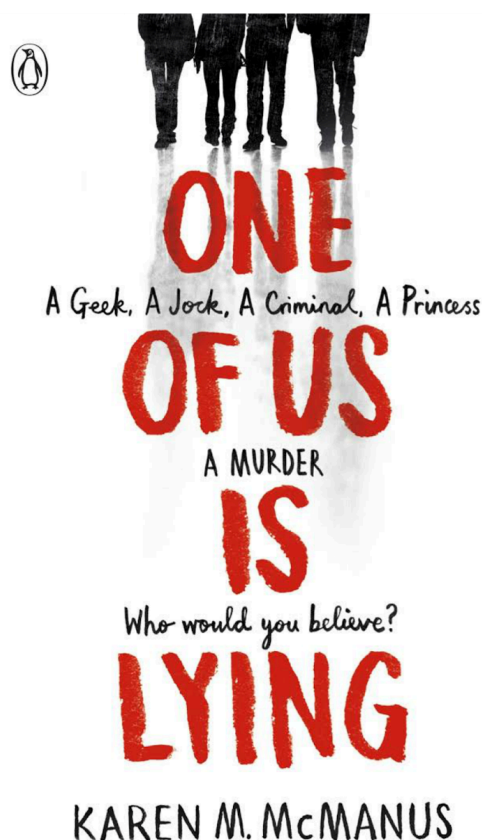
together. However, Simon had a severe allergic reaction in detention, dying on the way to the hospital. It's revealed he died due to peanut oil having been put into his water, as if someone had put it in there deliberately to kill him. Soon after, it is revealed that Simon was about to release secrets on the four of them that could possibly ruin their lives. This leaves the four high school students as suspects of his murder. I read this novel a while back, and I'm here to lay out all of the good and bad aspects of this book in a way that is spoiler free.

Something I'll admit about it's that the book kept my attention. I finished it in about four days, and whether it be because it was for school or because I was genuinely intrigued by the plot, I'm not sure. The book is from the perspective of all four of the main characters, switching between them throughout the book. It keeps you guessing, wondering, "Who, out of all these characters we are growing to love, is the murderer?" I preferred the perspectives of Cooper and Addy to the other two characters. They were written in depth and their perspectives are more interesting than the other characters. The two who fall in love during the story have decent chemistry with one another and it actually feels like you are reading their journey to falling in love. The final praise I will give this book is about how it makes you ask questions. We are given vague thoughts from the characters that makes us wonder if they are the killer. It creates a sense of suspense that leaves you wondering what will happen next. Even with all these good aspects, it doesn't mean



it's exempt from its mediocre or even bad aspects being pointed out.

This book had many flaws, arguably more than successes. To start off, the characters. The nerd, the pretty girl, the jock, the bad boy. These character archetypes have become overused clichés at this point, and the book attempts to justify this by making a joke out of it in a throwaway line. The book *tries* to have a unique take on all of these tropes by adding details to them that you wouldn't normally see, but *they don't fix it*. I have very little to complain about Cooper and Addy, other than their genericity, but this applies *especially* to Nate and Bronwyn. These characters have hardly any depth to them, especially Bronwyn. If it just followed Addy or Cooper, it would have made the book better, as well as the ending less predictable. I cannot go into depth, but the ending was a let-down at its very definition. Moving on to the writing. I cannot count the amount of times the way things were phrased made me physically react, where I audibly sighed or said aloud, "How did this make it past editing?" In quite literally the first chapter, there was a line that said Bronwyn was "trying a sexy-nerd type of thing" which I'm sure made any rational reader uncomfortable. My final complaint in this book is about the romantic subplot. At a certain point in the novel, it almost completely takes over most of the plot, leaving the murder mystery to become the subplot. Not to mention that the relationship itself is *yet another* overdone cliché. If I had to describe this book in a single word, I would say, "generic." Because that is all



this book is. It's truly sad that this novel didn't not have as much effort put into it as it could have, and should have.

Even with all the negative things about it, it still isn't a bad book. Sure, it's a 5/10 book I hate like a 2/10 book, but it's not as bad as I make it out to be. It's simply average. It's average in almost every regard and it doesn't do anything unique. To sum it up, it's just *a* book. You will forget about it in due time, unless you are me who hates it. I personally cannot recommend this book at all. However, my recommendation to you, the person reading this review, is to do whatever you want. If you like (mediocre) mystery novels, read this one. In the end, it's your choice. And my choice is to never read this book, or any other books like it, for the rest of my life.

## Will It Novel?

Maddy Clincke, Caden Mooney

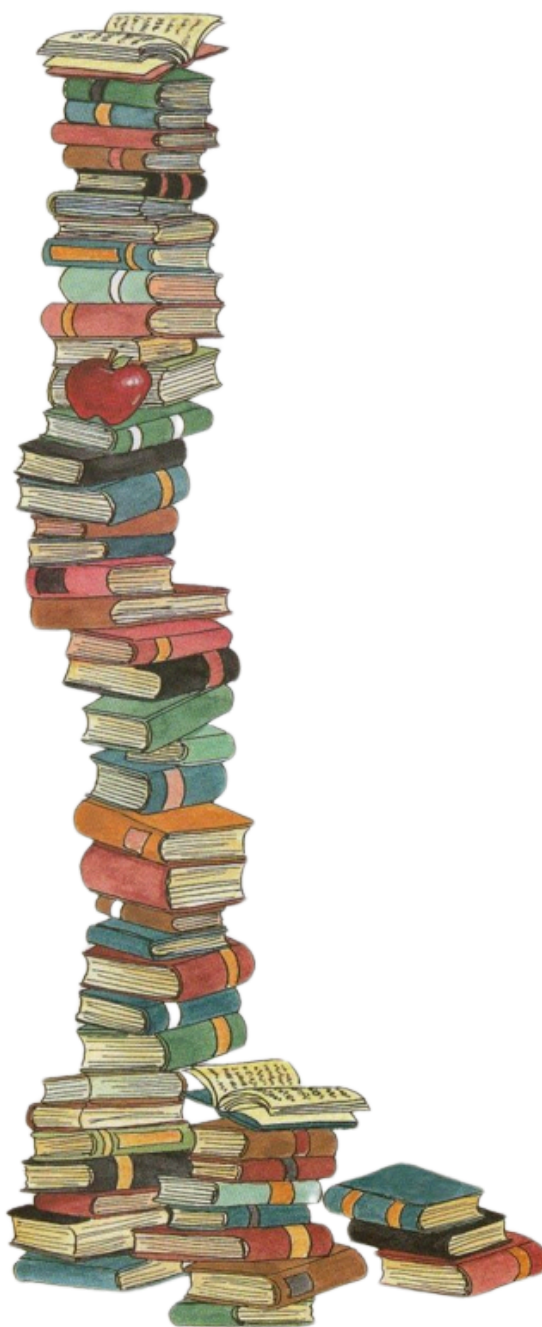
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Welcome to Will It Novel! A Tartans Times special where every month an aspiring author pitches an original novel idea. They may choose to share the hook and first page, a summarized plot, or even deliver it like a back cover. After reading the pitch, you, the reader, can vote on the Tartan Times instagram polls whether you would read this novel or not.

Today's pitch is from aspiring author, Caden Mooney, pitching his novel "You are a Killer."

The concept is a psychological thriller; written as if you, the reader, are a narcissistic, psychopathic, serial killer, with the help of descriptions of how you are witnessing the world around you. You read thoughts and feelings of the main character as they commit murders and destroy the lives of people around them with little to no remorse.

Now readers, when the poll is put up on the Instagram page, vote for whether you would read this novel or not. If you would like to submit your own novel pitch to the Tartan Times, simply email us with your name, the title of your book, and a 100-150 word pitch of your novel.



# HALLOWEEN WORD SEARCH



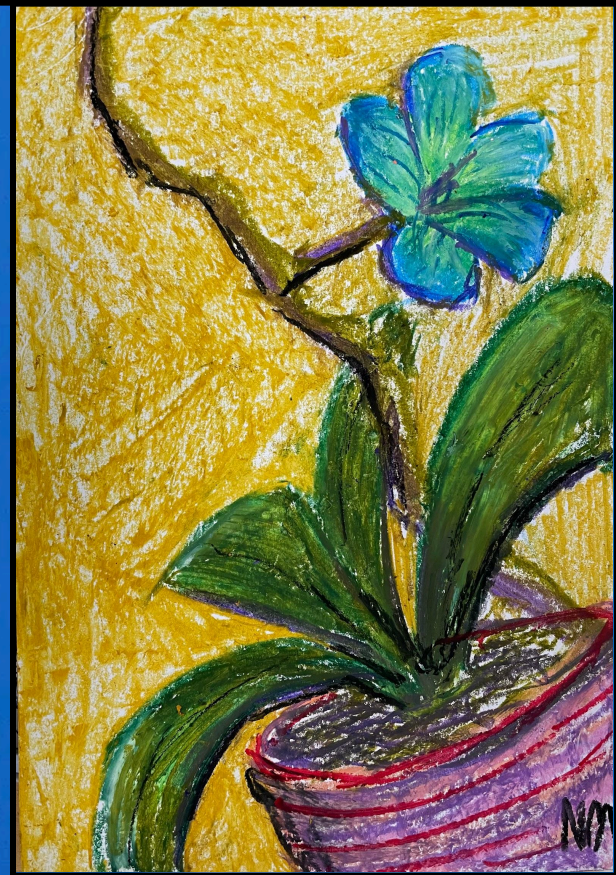
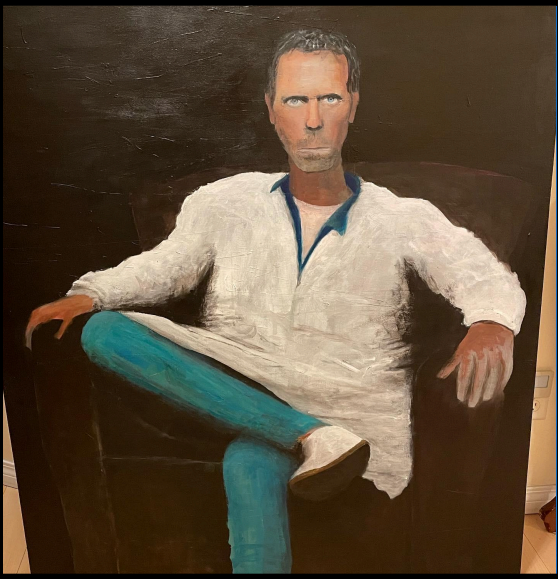
pumpkin  
ghost  
halloween  
trick

vampire  
treat  
bat  
magic

witch  
costume  
dracula  
zombie



Artist: Nick Mrazek



Artist: Ruhaanee Singh

Artist: Gage Davis





2023, Issue 2



Your School, Your Voice,  
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