

# THE EAGLES' NEST

A PAGE OUT OF OUR JOURNEY



A SHOWCASE FOR STUDENT WRITING

CREATED, COMPILED AND EDITED BY:  
SJPII CREATIVE WRITING CLASS

OVERSEEN BY: CINDY WEDDING



ST. JOHN PAUL II ACADEMY

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# Letter from the Editors

Dear Readers:

The first year Editorial Committee of The Eagles' Nest would like to welcome you to the SJPII Literary Magazine, where creativity knows no bounds. The Eagles' Nest gives students the opportunity to grow and develop their writing. This collection of work was produced to demonstrate creativity and originality in emphasizing the school's principles of peace, justice, and responsibility. Every piece enclosed was written, edited, and published by students. In short, The Eagles' Nest is a vessel through which we have learned to be more vocally us, and encourage you to likewise - find a vessel through which you can be you.

Thank you for reading our work, stories we hope will live on forever in your hearts and minds. Enjoy The Eagles' Nest!

Sincerely,

Giuliana Barioli, Max Burgan, Dylan Combs,  
Janie Kate Knowles, Jude St. Lot, Andrew Sarafian,  
Jucker Sheehan, Emily Strlekar,  
and Aidan Watson,





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POEMS



# Book of Rhymes



Claiborne, Barron. Notorious B.I.G. 1997. Art and Object, <https://www.artandobject.com/news/legendary-biggie-smalls-crown-leads>



# VIEWS

A COLLECTIVE

*Random*

*Rhymes*

Honestly, straight from the dome. This is a tome from a head as shiny as chrome. Let your mind roam and enjoy this cause I got in my zone.

By Jude

## Morning Views

I made a racket,  
Took my paintings down, when  
they fell they went crack  
Refused to clean my room,  
I was excelling in my slack  
step on that banana peel and go  
zoom  
I washed my clothes but the water  
was too hot and it snugged them  
My momma saw them  
Incredulously, her eyes toggled  
between me and the clothes  
It boggled her mind that I would  
be so slow  
She hadn't realized my goal  
She said "that's it- the door"  
Developed an intense feeling of zeal  
hopped in the front of my cousin's  
car, him behind the wheel.  
AC blowing, my face glowing in the  
sun.

## Afternoon Views

I see people party and talk,  
As others throw and lob  
plastic over a waterfall.  
Ruining the beautiful ocean  
blue  
Killing its animals and  
beautiful hue  
I wish I could stop it  
The water's getting toxic  
That's why we all have filters  
Leftovers from candlelit  
dinners  
Thrown into the ocean,  
polluting  
All the animals dying and  
waste intruding  
I think of making them listen  
and needing a team  
But this is all a simple dream.



# ©VERTAKEN

WRITTEN BY: ANDREW SARAFIAN





Why would this feeling well up inside me?  
It's like a small flare that never extinguishes.  
But that small flare tends to grow and engulf  
everything around it.

The flare becomes a series of large flames,  
and the smoke clouds my vision.

It makes me say things I don't want to say.

It makes me do things I don't want to do.

I want it to go away.

All it seems to do is hurt people.

The pressure continuously builds up behind  
my eyes, but never gets released.

I can not pinpoint one specific cause.

But instead, hundreds.

But instead of coming out, it hides behind a  
mask.

And the feeling inside is that of a poison.

It eats away until nothing is left.

I can not even begin to imagine how it would  
affect people if it were to get out.

Why does this have to happen?

Everything was going fine.

But I guess that fine isn't enough.



## Reflections

I looked in the mirror,  
What I saw just couldn't be  
A different person there, staring back at me  
Where did I go? Who is here now?  
My reflection had changed and I didn't know how

The person I saw in the mirror looked lost  
Willing to change for whatever the cost  
Allowing others to steal their light,  
Hiding and clouding their own true sight

This is not who I am, this is not who I know  
The real me was refusing to reflect and to show  
Nobody else seemed to notice this change  
But for me it was apparent and all too strange

I searched in the mirror, I was nowhere in sight  
I realized I needed to give up this fight  
I looked in my heart and to my eyes I did see,  
My true self was standing there, waiting for me..

**Giuliana Barioli**

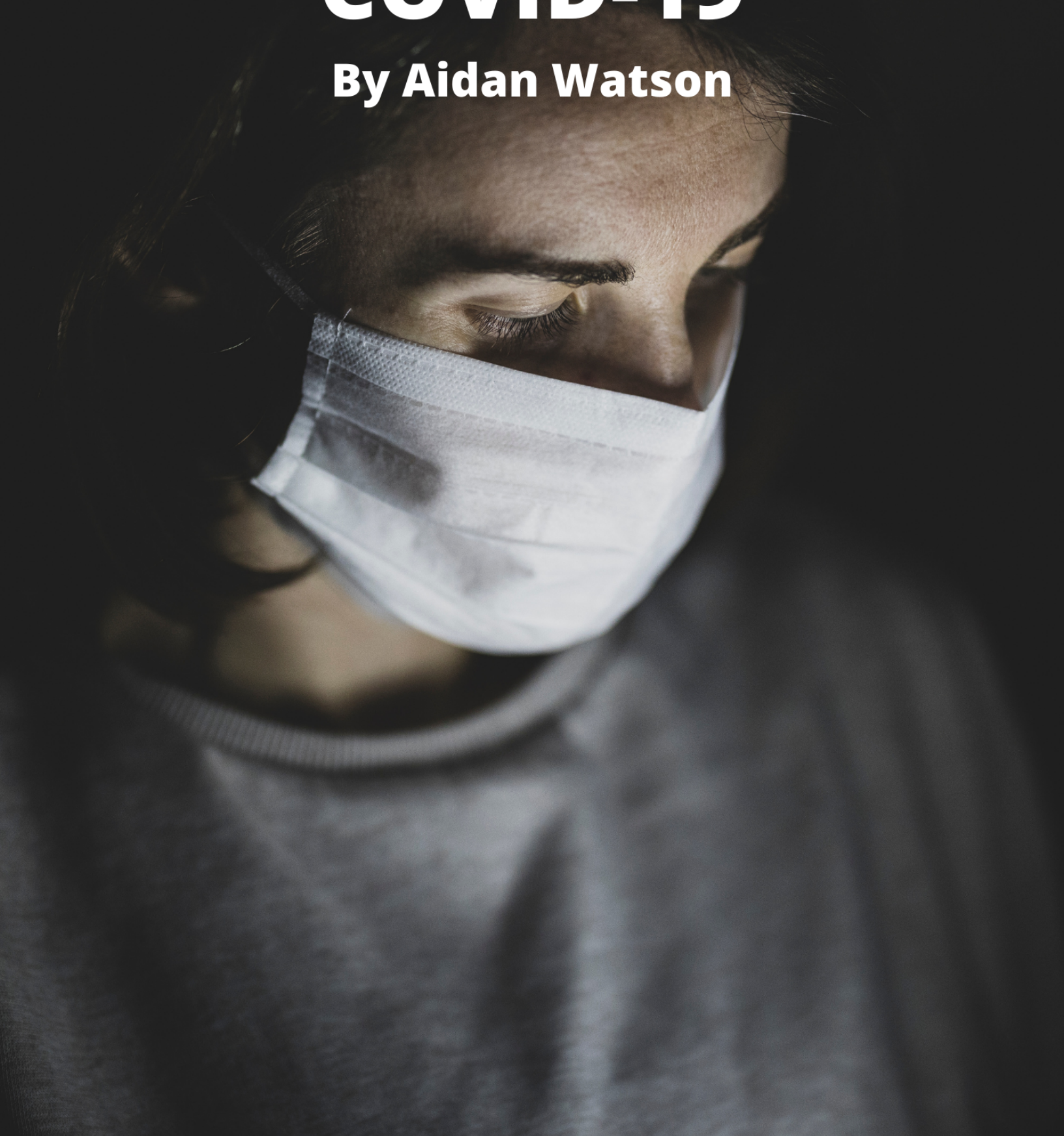


# JOURNAL ENTRIES



# **My Experience with COVID-19**

**By Aidan Watson**





## Week 1: Unique Situation

This week was an interesting week to say the least. The Monday after spring break was tiring, fun to see everybody again. I was glad that my friends enjoyed their spring break. Vacations are always hard, but the pandemic just made it even harder. I had a tennis match on Tuesday and won my match. Tuesday was also my girlfriend's birthday, we went to dinner at her favorite restaurant to celebrate. On Wednesday, I had tennis practice and I had lots of fun and had some good laughs with my fellow teammates. Thursday was like any other day, I played some tennis after school and had some fun. Friday is where things got interesting to say the least, I stayed home from school since I woke up at 7:30. Later that day, my mom got a call about her COVID-19 test results and she tested positive. That was a surprise. She was showing mild symptoms at the time and is still showing some symptoms, but I can notice she is getting a bit better. So my mom and I have been quarantining since Friday. My test results came back negative since we have been separated by rooms. At least that's what the CDC says to do. On the bright side, I have been catching up on some video games I have been wanting to check out. It has kept me entertained to say the least. My dog has been going crazy since we haven't taken her out in a while. I have mainly been taking her outside the community to limit my exposure to people and of course to continue social distancing. I have to begin online school on Monday, which is not the worst thing, but it will certainly be a challenge to focus, that's for sure.



## Week 2: Test Results Came Back Positive

This week has been crazy. My test results came back and I tested positive for COVID-19. I have to quarantine for another week, but Mr. Bernot said I can come back on Monday. Things have been very boring around the house, at least after school. It is very hard to stay focused in online classes, but I have been doing my very best to stay on task and have my work turned in on time. In my opinion, in some classes it is very difficult to learn since some classrooms cannot hear the online students so we have to use the chat. AP English and Creative Writing in my opinion are easy to get accustomed to when forced to go online. It always makes the whole process less stressful when the teacher makes sure that the online students are heard and always checked in with. I had two tennis matches that I had to miss this week. Hopefully my team won, but we have districts on Monday and Tuesday which I am cleared to go to so I will be able to at least play some tennis. This whole process has been pretty stressful since I have to be at home for twice as long since my mom tested positive a week before me and I tested negative at that time. I tested again since I was planning on going back to school and I tested positive for COVID-19. I've been taking walks, but whenever I see anybody I stay as far away from them as possible so I don't infect them. This whole pandemic has affected everybody in different ways, we need to start coming together and loving each other instead of being so divided on political issues that do not affect our way of life drastically. Hopefully this whole pandemic is over soon.



## Week 3: End of Quarantine

This week has been awesome so far, I finished my quarantine on Monday and I got to go to tennis districts on Tuesday. I won my first match by a long shot, but lost my second match. It was a very hot day on Tuesday, especially since we were there since 7:15. Many of my fellow teammates lost their second match as well as I did.

Oxbridge Academy was very good and they were simply better than us. I had a great season and I'm glad I did it this year. On

Wednesday, I got to have my first day back to school since my quarantine which was very fun and it was nice to see everybody. I had not seen them in a while since some of them came back to school from online during my quarantine. At lunch, we all played uno which apparently I'm not so good at. I have only played a few times and I could not remember all of the rules and how to play, but my friends gave me a rundown of what to do. I was upset that we all could not sit together due to the five people per table, but the next day we went to a table outdoors so we could all sit together. The day I came back I had a chemistry test and a math quiz. I did well on both of them. I think it is easier to take tests in school than at home.

I'm glad I'm back at school, it is a lot easier to focus and not to get distracted. There are so many distractions at home, it is very hard to concentrate. I got to finish my presentation for the rhetorical device of alliteration with my fellow classmates Alex and Jonathon. We all put a lot of effort into it as we wanted it to be a good presentation so everybody could understand what alliteration is and how to identify it. We did well on our presentation and we got a good grade.

Overall it was a great week so far and being at home really makes you appreciate the things we take for granted at school or at work.



SHORT  
STORIES  
&  
RE-TELLINGS



# A BOY TURNED INTO A PIG BY NIGHT

BY DYLAN COMBS





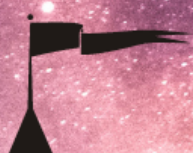
One glorious night with the stars shining bright. A young princess set for a walk into the forest by her castle. She was playing with her lacrosse stick which she did every night on her walk. It was her favorite thing to do in the evening. The stick was as bright as a rainbow. The stick was blue with rainbow strings. As she walked down the path her stick slipped out of her hands and landed in the pond below. She tried with everything to stop it from rolling.

All of a sudden she hears a noise and looks over and sees a pig. The pig says Princess why are you so upset? Princess points down to her stick and says it fell. The pig tries to make his way over to help the Princess and she says, STOP stay away you dirty pig. The pig stops and says I'm not here to hurt you or to take anything I want to help. The Princess looks over at him, how am I sure you won't hurt me? The pig walks close to her and says see I'm as gentle as a kitten. Now stop being silly and let me help you.

The pig walks over and lays down and says now climb on my back and I will take you to the rock where your stick is stuck. With some hesitation the Princess climbs on his back and grabs the stick. The pig gets the Princess back on the bank and she is so thankful for his help. The Princess runs with joy.

The next evening, the Princess thought to herself I never said thank you to the pig for his help last night. So she grabs her stick and heads out to the bank to see if she can spot the pig again. As he stands there she's calling out to him. Just as she is ready to walk away she hears a noise. It's him. Once around the tree he said I thought you'd never come back. The princess said I'm sorry I was so excited with joy I never said thank you. The pig said not a problem. I'm thankful you came back.

So the Princess and the pig sat on the bank and talked until she began to fall in love. She said how it is possible to fall in love with a pig. He said well maybe that's because I am a boy. You see, one day I was walking in the forest and I came across a witch. She casted a spell on me. So one night before my eyes I turned into a pig. The princess asked how do we get rid of the spell, he said I need a hug from a Princess under the stars. So as nightfall came and the stars came out the Princess leaned over and gave him a hug and before her eyes I turned back into the knight and the Princess and Knight lived happily ever after.





# BIG RED

By  
Tucker  
Sheehan

"...Then I socked him in the eye and he fell like a pile of bricks."

Papa Jim always told his fight stories at the table. He was really full of himself. Papa Jim had been staying at Tyler's house while his house was getting redone after the big flood.

"Then his buddy came up behind me." croaked Grandpa Jim.

Tyler, feeling exhausted from his grandpa's antics, excused himself and went to his room. Tyler closed the door, turned out the lights and laid down on his bed. The boy had a nice room for a 14 year old. He lay on his bed and looked at his phone for a while, dozing in and out of consciousness. Right before he was about to hit the sack he was interrupted by his door being opened. Tyler shot up and saw his grandpa in the doorway.

"Hey buddy, can I read you a story before bed?" piped Papa Jim in a worn out, raspy voice.

"Uh....yeah sure." responded Tyler in a dazed and confused tone.

As soon as Tyler responded Papa Jim pulled a small paperback story book from behind his back. You could tell it was worn out from the tears and uneven pages.

"I wrote this when I was young. It's a parody story of the Little Red Riding Hood. I call it Big Red Riding Hood." Papa Jim belted in excitement with his bright blue eyes gleaming. "There was once a tough huge maid, much feared by everyone..." Papa Jim began reading.

"I'll have the chicken sandwich, thanks"

Standing at six foot two and weighing two-hundred pounds, people were usually scared of Big Red. She was twenty four turning twenty five next month. People began to call her Big Red in eighth grade when the redheaded girl hit five foot eleven inches, tall as hell for an eighth grade girl. Before that she was called Taylor by her classmates. Taylor had one person who treated her the same no matter what: her grandmother, Ruby. After her parents died in a car accident two years prior to graduating high school, her grandmother treated her like one of her own children. Taylor loved her grandmother more than anything in the world. Taylor would do anything for her.

"Ring Ring...Ring Ring...Ring Ri—" Taylor put down her chicken sandwich and picked up the phone. The sound of the phone reminded her of her time in the military. She had spent some of her life saving people in Afghanistan after a nuclear terrorism attack was committed and decimated a small city and was being guarded heavily by troops of a terrorist group that committed the act. The name of the terrorist group was La Shay'



which translated to “nothing over God” in Arabic. She had been injured and even shot multiple times during her service. Once in the arm and once in her shoulder. Big Red was well known by the members of La Shay' Ealaa Allah. The terrorist group knew her as hirasat eimlaqa which was “giant vigilante” in Arabic. Taylor was an American hero and was very skilled in firearms and martial arts.

“Is this Taylor?” spoke an unknown voice with a choppy, almost forced, middle eastern accent from the other line.

“Hello, yes, this is Taylor. Who am I speaking to?”

“That does not matter hirasat eimlaqa, I have your grandmother.”

“What are you talking about? What do you mean you have my grandmother?” Taylor was confused, but then the voice spoke again.

“La Shay' Ealaa Allah”

Then it hit her: it's the terrorist group. She got up, spilling her drink and causing her sandwich to fall on the ground. Taylor tossed a few crumbled bills on the table and sprinted out of the restaurant. She got in her car and sped back home. She knew she had many weapons at her home, but she had a pistol and didn't know whether to waste time and go home or rely on her puny pistol. She debated to herself for a moment. Taylor knew they'd have heavy weaponry, then she thought for a moment.

“There's no way they got through TSA with weapons... ah, screw it!”

Taylor floored it and sped to her house. She swerved in and out of traffic, nearly hitting a few cars and even a deer crossing the road. She had to slam on her brakes. The deer passed her and gave her a dirty look. Taylor tilted her head, ignored it and sped off. As Taylor neared her house she thought of the horrid things they were doing to her grandmother. She finally arrived. She burst through the front door and ran to her room. She pulled a vest out from under her bed. Then she took a rifle and three magazines out of a safe in her closet.

“Hold on, hold on!” yelled Tyler.

“She had this big gun just in her house all the time?”

“Well, yeah.” responded Papa Jim.

“That's awesome.”

“I know right!”

Papa Jim continued reading...

She began driving to her grandmother's house. She was pushing a hundred in a sixty five. Taylor got angrier and angrier the more she thought about La Shay' Ealaa Allah.

Taylor was there within five minutes. She grabbed the gun and slowly snuck to the front door. She went into the house prepared to kill every person that ever harmed her grandmother. When Taylor opened the door and saw her grandmother peacefully drinking a hot cup of tea.

“Are you ok, i-i-is everything okay?” Taylor lowered her rifle.



"Yes, what are you doing with that big gun?!" Taylor's grandmother replied in a shocked tone.

"Well I just got a call and someone said that they had you."

"Had me!? No one has me hon-" Taylor's grandmother didn't even finish her sentence when a grenade rolled out from in between Taylor's legs. Taylor kicked the grenade outside and covered her grandmother with her body. The explosion caused Taylor's car to blow up and burst in flames. A figure came out of the darkness of the wood. Taylor raised her weapon.

"Who are you? What do you want?" the beast smirked and then let out a chuckle.

"Now why would I tell you that when I can just take it!" The beast ran into the woods. Taylor fired but was unsuccessful at hitting her target.

...

This beast was a werewolf, that had been initiated into La Shay' Ealaa Allah. They believed that the werewolf was some type of prophet sent by Allah himself. There was an extremist belief in their religion that a giant wolf would come down from the heavens and save all of the members of the ancient La Shay' Ealaa Allah members. They found the werewolf as a baby in a desert oasis close to their headquarters. He was immediately given the name "bialdhiyb" and trained in the ways of their group. He was used as a weapon because of his size and the way he struck fear into all his opponents.

...

The beast then reappeared from another entrance closer to Taylor and tackled Taylor to the ground. The beast was bialdhiyb. It's claws were larger than pencils and the teeth were like mini razor blades. Taylor had heard of this beast but had never seen it in person. The werewolf lunged at Taylor's face but she moved her head and he ate a clump of dirt. Taylor kned the beast in the stomach and they both got up.

"You know I would've thought werewolves would be stronger." joked Taylor as the two got up from the ground.

"Shut up, girl!"

"You wanna go old school, I'll go old school." Taylor took off her vest and dropped her gun.

Taylor hooked the beast in the head. The punch was square in the temple and made him put his head down. This opened a knee opportunity which Taylor took right away. The beast shook it off and took Taylor off her feet with a leg sweep. She fell on her back and assumed a ground position from her mma training. The beast leaped unto her and bit her arm. Taylor screamed in pain. She glanced over and saw the gun she had dropped before the fight. She grabbed the gun from the ground and butted the werewolf's head. He unlatched and fell to the floor. She got off the ground and check his pulse. There was still a slight beat.



**"Lucky" she muttered.**

**His body laid there bloody and bruised. Taylor was bleeding a lot from the bite. She called the military and had the branch she fought for come from a nearby base. The werewolf was strapped down with iron bars on an industrial metal stretcher.**

**"Thank you so much, we've been trying to find this guy forever." The Sargent thanked Taylor.**

**"No problem. You mess with my family, you mess with me." replied Taylor  
Papa Jim closed the book.**

**"That's all!?"**

**"Well....yeah." Papa Jim muttered.**

**"Oh, well it was really good Papa!" responded Tyler in a burst of excitement.**

**"You really liked it?"**

**"Yeah, so much!"**

**Tyler wanted his grandfather to write more. They agreed after that night that Papa Jim would continue writing. Tyler thought hard that night about his grandfather.**

**"There's no way someone that bad can be that talented at writing. Maybe Papa Jim ain't so crazy after all." Tyler announced to himself with a smile.**



THE LEGEND OF THE

# Jersey Angel





It was safe to say: The Leeds family was struggling.

The days were eternal. Mr. Joseph Leeds and the eldest of his children were out in the fields as long as the sun was in the sky, which produced two effects due to the shortness of the days in December. One was fortunate, because there was only so much stamina in each child; so the limited number of hours allowed them time to play and attend an hour or two of schooling from their nanny. The second was unfortunate, in that, since their hours were reduced, the amount of work they could do was reduced. Add to that that their home was experiencing a terrible drought. They could barely harvest enough crops to feed the two adults of the family, never mind their twelve growing children.

The nights were frigid. When buying their home, Joseph and his wife, Felicity, thought they had hit a jackpot when they found a small farm in Pine Barrens just a few miles from the Atlantic Ocean. But they quickly learned that the ocean air always provided a cool breeze. In the summertime, it was pleasant, making the brutal heat more manageable to withstand, and therefore continue work in the fields. But in the winter, it only added upon the harsh conditions and freezing temperatures. Thankfully though, living next to the woods gave the family access to a seemingly unlimited supply of firewood to keep their family warm.





But perhaps, maybe their struggle would ease a little bit if it weren't for the damned drought. Felicity Leeds had spoken with many of her friends during their walks home from church each Sunday, and they have all discussed how their husbands struggle to cultivate any crops at all - not nearly enough to sell and save for themselves. So each week, the men have to decide: sell the harvest and earn some money, or save it all to provide food to their families. It was hard to do both with the reduced products, as it would result in limited funds and limited food.

It was Wednesday afternoon when the doctor left the Mister and Missus Leed's bedroom and approached Joseph who was pacing outside. Felicity had been feeling ill for a few weeks now, and it had reached a point where it felt necessary to use some of their funds to call for the doctor. Felicity had a sneaking suspicion of what she may be plagued with, but felt she should wait for doctor confirmation before telling her husband, for fear of stressing him out even more than he was.

Unfortunately, she was right.

"Mr. Leeds," the doctor caught his attention, placing a small vial back into the bag that hung from the crook of his elbow, "Congratulations are in order."

Joseph stared at the man, "What do you mean?"





"Your wife is with child," He told the stunned man, sticking out his free hand, which Joseph limply shook. He politely thanked the doctor, who showed himself out while Mr. Leeds stared at the wall, a myriad of emotions washing over him at once.

A thirteenth child. Was this a blessing, or a curse?

Joseph Leeds had never been a very religious man, but he knew his wife was. He knew the meaning behind the number thirteen. Why people feared it. But he also knew what thirteen meant to him. It meant an increase in expense. How could they afford another child?

However, he swallowed his initial doubt and allowed himself to be filled with excitement at the thought of another bundle of joy entering the world. He and his wife would have another kid. Wasn't that the purpose of life?

A smile crept onto his face as he quickly opened the door to his bedroom and saw, lying on the bed, his wife - his pregnant wife, and he was practically bursting to tell her the news.

\*\*\*

Felicity was overjoyed when Joseph told her her diagnosis. Naturally, the concerns that hounded her husband crossed her mind as well, but her approach to the matter was much laxer than that of her husband. Her mindset was just, why worry about the inevitable. They had another child on the way, and so they would find a way to continue supporting their growing family. They had already done it twelve times over.





But even she knew that, with the worsening drought and the consequential declining economy, this time may be slightly more difficult.

That night, Felicity remained awake long after Joseph had fallen into a deep slumber. The hurricane of thoughts in her head found every nook of her brain to drown, the thunderous noise overpowering the sweet sound of crickets outside that usually lulled her to sleep.

There was no particular topic in mind that she could pinpoint back to her inability to fall asleep, it was just the perfect combination of everything. On top of her sheets, she rested her hands on her stomach, where she knew her child would be - although it still felt a bit unnatural, since there were no physical signs that she was pregnant. She had called the midwife just a few hours prior, who would arrive tomorrow to find out more, hopefully including how far along she would be.

Felicity dipped her head, and silently under her breath she prayed, "Oh, in these hard times, we could really use an angel."

She needed someone who wouldn't complain or whine when asked to help their father in the fields. Or sulk when the amount on their plates got smaller each day. She knew it wasn't any of her children's faults that they behaved this way. They were only children. And all of them had been born before this forsaken drought, and had become accustomed to more substantial meals, and the ability to attend school in the morning and play in the evening.

Maybe this child would be the blessing this family needed to make it through the drought.





\*\*\*

## 6 Months Later

Much like he did when they found out about Felicity's thirteenth pregnancy, Joseph was pacing outside the door to the two's bedroom. He learned quickly after the birth of their third child that he would be the most helpful if he stays out of the room, leaving his wife in the hands of the multiple midwives they've acquired over the years.

But this time felt different. Not in the expected way. Never once did Joseph's mind wander to the unspeakable thought that Felicity's or the baby's life may be at risk. The same thoughts that played in his mind each night like clockwork, the moment he closed his eyes. Quite the opposite, actually. This birth was almost . . . peaceful. There were no screams of agony heard from behind the door, no vulgar language - from Joseph or his wife - and fewer instances of the midwives emerging to assure the husband that everything is okay, everything will be alright.

*Something just felt unnatural.*

In fact, the first time the door opened since Felicity's water broke was barely an hour later, when their eldest midwife informed him that he could come in.

His feet moved before he could even begin to think. The midwife stepped back into the room and Joseph followed close behind, practically stepping on the train of her skirt.



The scene he expected to walk into was one of three that haunted his dreams for the past six months: (1) The midwife handing him his child, wrapped in white cloth, without a cry to be heard. And when he peeled back the cloth to look at the newborn's face, he would be met with a deathly pale baby with a bluish tint to its skin. (2) Looking over to the corner of his bedroom and watching one midwife care for the wailing newborn, while another tentatively looks over his wife, a soft sigh escaping her lips as she turns to Joseph, a mournful lament donning her face. Or worst of all, (3) Both scenarios proving true.

What Joseph Leeds did see was Felicity sat upright in their bed, hardly a bead of sweat could be seen on her worried face. Her eyes bore into the backs of the midwives, who were huddled together in the corner of the bedroom, where the Leeds had placed the same bassinet they had placed their last four children in.

However, unlike the nightmare that this was dangerously resembling, rather than a heavy silence filling the room, with the only sound being the faint murmurs of the midwives - from that bassinet, Joseph could hear the angelic coos of a baby's laugh. Like hearing a band play your favorite song, a smile painted over Joseph's face. It was music to his ears.

*Then why does Felicity seem so distraught?* The man thought as he glanced back over at his wife. He took note of her tired eyes and labored breathing, the way her fingers fidgeted and her legs slowly shifted off of the bed, seemingly not wanting to alert the nearby women of her movement. He could see from the way her jaw moved ever so slightly and the twitch in her right





eye every now and then that she was chewing on the inside of her cheek - a habit she had had for as long as they had been married, and one she only fell back on while in a deep state of nerves.

The smile dropped ever so slightly at the sight of his tormented wife. He slowly made his way over, gently sitting on the edge of the bed, so as not to alarm Felicity, who he's convinced still has no idea that he's entered the room. The bed sank under his weight, and he reached down and grabbed Felicity's legs, lifting them back up onto the sheets.

Leaning forwards, Joseph leaned forwards and pushed a piece of hair from Felicity's face, speaking quietly as he did so, "Everything seems to be fine, Lissy," He comforted. "I can hear the baby."

"I've had so many nightmares," Felicity told him, her voice barely above a whisper. But the way her voice trembled nearly made Joseph burst into tears himself.

"As have I," Joseph continued to brush her hair out of her face, something he knew comforted her. "Let me go see what's going on."

Attempting to not disturb Felicity, he slowly rose from the bed and made his way over to the gaggle of midwives, who blocked the baby from his sightline. But like the Red Sea, the midwives parted and gave him a straight path to the bassinet.

The first thing he saw was blue.





But unlike the deathly blue undertones that he had seen during his restless sleep of the past few months, this was only the pale blue of a onesie that the midwives had clothed the baby in. Nearly identical to the same one each of his sons have worn moments after they were born. His son.

He leaned down slowly and gently cradled his arms around the baby, lifting it out of the bassinet and into his care. Whether it was his first baby, his thirteenth, or his twenty-first, he felt that same burst of joy the first time he held his newest family member. Giddy washed over him as violently as the waves of the ocean crash onto the shore.

The baby was . . . perfect. He had ten little fingers and ten little toes, the brightest blue eyes staring up at him, and his tongue sticking out of the corner of his mouth for as long as Joseph had been holding him. His fair complexion was practically glowing, in a way none of his siblings had done before him.

But like the tide ebbs back into the large body of water, so did the giddiness as Joseph remembered the panic-stricken face of his wife.

Rocking the baby as he did so, he peered over his shoulder to observe at his wife, whose gaze was dead set on him and their son, although a distant look glazed over her eyes. Softly, Joseph turned his body around completely and made his way over to Felicity, standing next to her side of the bed as he maneuvered ever so slightly to present the baby to her.





The moment her eyes landed on her son, almost visibly, a weight lifted from her chest. She let out a relieved breath, and the far-out look in her eyes was replaced by one of love. And when the baby looked at his mother, he cooed, and Joseph could see Felicity practically melt.

"He needs a name," Joseph whispered, glancing down at his wife.

"Samuel," Felicity responded without removing her stare from the boy in his arms.

Chuckling quietly, Joseph asked, "What does that mean?" For he knew how important it was to Felicity that their children's names have a specific meaning.

"God heard," She told him, a small smile creeping onto her face as she reached up to take the baby from her husband, who graciously helped transfer him to her arms.

Taking a small step away from the bed, Joseph thanked the midwives and bid them goodbye as they began to file from the bedroom. Giving Felicity a moment of privacy with Samuel, Joseph wandered around the room, before ending up at the window. From across their barren fields, the sun had begun its own farewell to the world and it set from out of sight, making the sky a brilliant golden color that met the incoming inky black night.

But the sight was interrupted as clouds floated across the sky. An almost unrecognizable dark grey, as opposed to the picturesque white they had grown accustomed to. And in an instant, the





peaceful silence of the room was broken by a heavy splutter of water hitting the glass in front of him.

And for the first time in nearly a year, it rained.

\*\*\*

Rumors of an angel born in Pine Barrens, New Jersey spread like wildfire.

A baby so perfect, God wept tears of joy.

The day Samuel Leeds was born, the worst drought the Northeast had ever seen officially ended. That day marked the beginning of a week-long thunderstorm and a return to the normal cycle of rain. From that day, crops began to flourish - and not just the Leed's, but the entire state. "The Garden State" was born the same day as Samuel.

He was dubbed the Jersey Angel. Not to his face, many didn't even know he was the baby that brought the rain. It wasn't figured out until many generations had passed. But everyone knew of the Jersey Angel. He was the subject of stories and legends, often depicted as a legitimate angel. There would be sightings of a baby with wings in the trees, blessing any struggling crops, and the next day there would be a plentiful harvest.

And whether or not these sightings were lies for attention, little tricks of the mind genuinely thought to be true, or just fun and games to egg the fable along through the year, there was no doubt that the Jersey Angel was a legend. And a blessing to the state - if one so chooses to believe the fairy tale.

But whether or not Samuel was truly a gift sent from God or just purely a coincidence, Felicity and Joseph would always regard their thirteenth son as the blessing that saved the family.



# NOVEL EXCERPTS



A photograph of a multi-lane highway shrouded in thick fog. The road stretches into the distance, with white lane markings visible. A few vehicles are visible: a car in the distance on the left, a large truck on the right, and a smaller car further ahead on the right. A blue overhead sign on the right side of the road reads "Ausfahrt" (Exit). The overall atmosphere is misty and ethereal.

# THE INVISIBLE

BY  
JANIE KATE KNOWLES



## CHAPTER 1

THERE I WAS, IN THE PARKING LOT IN MY CAR, MINDING MY OWN BUSINESS WHILE I WAITED FOR MY MOM TO COME OUT OF THE HOSPITAL, WHERE SHE WORKED, TO TAKE HER OUT ON OUR WEEKLY GIRLS' NIGHT. THE DUSKY SKY WAS BEGINNING TO DARKEN, FOR THE SUN HAD JUST FULLY SET UNDERNEATH THE HORIZON. THE PARKING LOT WAS PACKED WITH CARS OF ALL SHAPES AND SIZES, WHICH FORCED ME BACK TO THE END OF THE LOT IN THE PARKING SPOT FARTHEST FROM THE DOORS. I GLANCED AT MY PHONE FROM TIME TO TIME, SO THAT WHEN SHE WAS READY TO WALK OUTSIDE, I WOULD BE ABLE TO DRIVE UP AND MEET HER WITHOUT HER HAVING TO WALK TOO FAR.

MY PHONE VIBRATED IN MY HAND AND I SWIFTLY TURNED MY EYES TO FACE THE SCREEN. INSTEAD OF A MESSAGE FROM MY MOM, AS I HAD ORIGINALLY EXPECTED, IT WAS A MESSAGE FROM AN UNKNOWN NUMBER WITH AN AREA CODE THAT I DID NOT RECOGNIZE. THE MESSAGE READ, "TURN AROUND". AUTOMATICALLY, WITHOUT TURNING MY HEAD, MY EYES SEARCHED THE TINTED WINDSHIELD OF MY CAR, ATTEMPTING TO SEE WHAT WAS FRONT OF ME. THERE WAS NO SIGN OF MOVEMENT AND NOTHING SEEMED OUT OF PLACE. THERE WAS NO NOISE. IN FACT, FOR IT BEING SUCH A BUSY NIGHT, THERE WAS NOT A SINGLE SOUND. THE WORLD WAS QUIET. TOO QUIET. I TOOK A DEEP BREATH, FEELING SOMEONE'S EYES ON ME, BUT I DIDN'T MOVE. I STAYED COMPLETELY STILL AS IF NOTHING HAD HAPPENED. I GRABBED MY WATER BOTTLE AND TOOK A SIP, PRETENDING THAT I DIDN'T RECEIVE A TEXT FROM AN UNKNOWN NUMBER. I PLAYED THE PART OF AN UNACKNOWLEDGED TEENAGER IN A CROWDED HOSPITAL PARKING LOT.

AFTER A MOMENT OF COMPLETE SILENCE, MY PHONE VIBRATED AGAIN. MY BREATH CAUGHT IN MY THROAT AS I TURNED THE PHONE OVER TO SEE ANOTHER MESSAGE FROM THE SAME MYSTERIOUS NUMBER, "I KNOW YOU, BUT YOU PROBABLY DON'T KNOW ME". I RAISED MY EYEBROW IN SUSPICION OF WHO THIS COULD BE, BUT, OF COURSE, I DIDN'T HAVE AN ANSWER. NATURALLY, I OPENED MY MESSAGES AND WAS ABOUT TO BLOCK THE NUMBER WHEN MY PHONE VIBRATED AGAIN. "DON'T EVEN THINK ABOUT BLOCKING ME". I BLINKED IN CONFUSION, MY EYEBROWS FURROWING TOGETHER, KNOWING THAT THIS PERSON WAS EITHER A REALLY GOOD GUESSER OR THIS PERSON WAS WATCHING ME. I PULLED UP MY MOM'S CONTACT AND CALLED HER, BUT THE LINE WENT STRAIGHT TO VOICEMAIL. MY PHONE VIBRATED AGAIN. "ALL TIES ARE CUT. WIFI'S OUT". I SLOWLY LOOKED AROUND, NOT NOTICING MUCH IN THE SHADOWY PARKING LOT. I MADE SURE THAT MY CAR WAS LOCKED AND LOOKED IN MY REARVIEW MIRROR. I DECIDED, AGAINST MY BETTER JUDGEMENT, TO CONFRONT THIS RANDOM NUMBER, SO I REPLIED. "WHO ARE YOU? WHY ARE YOU TEXTING ME? WHAT DO YOU WANT?" MY PHONE VIBRATED, SENDING AN UNSETTLING CHILL DOWN MY SPINE. "GET OUT OF YOUR CAR AND I'LL SHOW YOU".

WHO DOES THIS PERSON THINK I AM? I ASK MYSELF. I'M NOT THAT STUPID TO FALL FOR SOMETHING AS DANGEROUS AS THAT JUST TO FIND OUT THE IDENTITY OF SOMEONE I DON'T EVEN KNOW.



JUST AS THE THOUGHT CROSSED MY MIND, A MINUSCULE AMOUNT OF CURIOSITY MELTED MY COMMON SENSE INTO A PILE OF NOTHINGNESS. WITHOUT A SECOND THOUGHT, I STEPPED OUT OF MY CAR, COMPLETELY UNAWARE OF THE DANGER I HAD PUT MYSELF IN.

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NO ONE WAS THERE. NOT A SINGLE PERSON IN THE PARKING LOT OF CROWDED CARS. I THOUGHT THIS MIGHT HAVE BEEN A PRANK BY SOME RANDOM PERSON WHO WAS BORED AND WANTED TO STIR UP SOME EXCITEMENT, UNAWARE OF ME OR MY WHEREABOUTS. MY SENSES TOOK COMPLETE CONTROL AS I LOOKED AROUND THE DARKENED PARKING LOT, THE SHADOWS OF THE PARKED CARS COLORED THE LOT LIKE THICK, BLACK OIL AS IT'S DUMPED CARELESSLY INTO THE OCEAN. WITH THE SUN UNDER THE HORIZON, THE STREET LAMPS THAT WERE SCATTERED AROUND THE PARKING LOT ILLUMINATED THE AREA IN A DULL, YELLOW LIGHT THAT ONLY MANAGED TO MAKE IT EVEN MORE HARROWING THAN IT ORIGINALLY WAS. THE LIGHTS FLICKERED SOFTLY, CREATING A HARSH BUZZING SOUND THAT WAS FOLLOWED BY A CREEPY GLOW.

MY PHONE VIBRATED IN MY HAND ONCE AGAIN AND I LOOKED AT IT TO SEE ANOTHER TEXT FROM THE SAME UNKNOWN NUMBER. "YOU HAVE DONE WHAT MOST WOULD NOT DARE TO DO". I RAISED AN EYEBROW AT THIS AND CAUTIOUSLY LOOKED AROUND. I LOOKED TOWARDS THE HOSPITAL WHERE I KNEW MY MOTHER WAS ALONG WITH MANY OTHER CAPABLE PEOPLE WHO WOULD BE WILLING TO HELP ME IF I WERE IN NEED. WITH ONE LAST LOOK AROUND THE PARKING LOT, I TOOK A BREATH AND LOOKED DOWN AT MY PHONE, HOPING TO DISTRACT WHOEVER WAS WATCHING ME. AN EERIE SILENCE FILLED THE PARKING LOT, NOT EVEN THE DISTANT HONKING OF A HORN SOUNDED FROM THE STREETS BEYOND THE PARKING LOT. I LISTENED CAREFULLY, BUT NOT A SINGLE SOUND EMERGED.

COMPLETE SILENCE.

I BOLTED TOWARDS THE HOSPITAL ON QUICK FEET WITH MY PHONE IN HAND. I DID NOT LOOK BACK AT MY CAR, I DID NOT LOOK AROUND, I IGNORED THE INCESSANT VIBRATING OF MY PHONE IN MY HAND. I RAN AS FAST AS MY LEGS WOULD GO, BUT I STOPPED AT HOSPITAL DOORS, REMEMBERING THAT THE DOORS AUTOMATICALLY LOCK. I PANICKED FOR A SPLIT SECOND BEFORE PULLING OUT MY WALLET AND TAKING OUT THE EMERGENCY KEY CARD MY MOTHER GAVE ME IN CASE I EVER NEEDED TO GET INTO THE HOSPITAL IF SHE WAS ALREADY HARD AT WORK ON A PATIENT. I QUICKLY HELD THE KEY CARD UP IN FRONT OF THE RED SCANNER AND WAITED NERVOUSLY UNTIL THE DOOR CLICKED TO SIGNAL IT HAD UNLOCKED. I RAN INSIDE, CLOSED THE DOOR TO AUTOMATICALLY LOCK IT, AND RAN DOWN THE HALL, OPENING ANOTHER SET OF DOORS ON THE WAY. I HADN'T BEEN TO THIS HOSPITAL SINCE I WAS A LITTLE GIRL WHEN MY MOTHER WOULD BRING ME HERE ON THE OCCASIONAL "BRING YOUR CHILD TO WORK DAY". I REMEMBERED BITS AND PIECES OF WHERE A FEW OF THE THINGS WERE AND TRIED MY BEST TO PICTURE THE REST OF THE AREA. THE FIRST THING I TRIED TO DO WAS CALL MY MOTHER. I KNEW THAT SHE WAS PROBABLY BUSY, BUT THIS WAS AN EMERGENCY. SHE DIDN'T ANSWER. I RAN DOWN ANOTHER HALLWAY, HOPING TO RUN INTO SOMEONE, ANYONE AT ALL.

NOW, I SAID THAT I WAS HOPING TO SEE SOMEONE. THE COMMON EXPRESSION IS "RUNNING INTO SOMEONE" OR EVEN "BUMPING INTO SOMEONE", BUT I DIDN'T MEAN THAT LITERALLY.

A LITTLE WAYS DOWN THE HALL, I HAD LOOKED BACK, HOPING THAT THE PERSON WASN'T A WORKER HERE AND KNEW HOW TO GET IN AND WHERE TO FIND ME. IN FACT, I HOPED THAT THE PERSON TAUNTING ME WASN'T IN THE AREA AT ALL.



"WATCH OUT!" I HEARD A VOICE SAY FROM IN FRONT OF ME. I TURNED MY HEAD TO SEE A FIGURE IN FRONT OF ME, BUT DIDN'T HAVE ENOUGH TIME TO STOP MYSELF. I BUMPED INTO THE FIGURE AND BOTH OF US CRASHED TO THE GROUND.

I QUICKLY SAT UP, MY VEINS PUMPING FULL OF ADRENALINE. I LOOKED DOWN TO SEE THE FIGURE OF A MAN I HAD BUMPED INTO AND I IMMEDIATELY STOOD UP. "I AM SO SORRY," I HUFFED, KNEES SHAKING FROM THE INTERNAL EXCITEMENT OF MY RUN. HE GOT TO HIS FEET WITHOUT MUCH TROUBLE AND BRUSHED OFF HIS LAB COAT. "THAT IS QUITE ALRIGHT," HE LOOKED DOWN AT ME WITH CONCERNED EYES. "ARE YOU OKAY, MISS?"

STILL OUT OF BREATH, I GAVE HIM A SERIOUS LOOK. "ARE YOU A DOCTOR HERE?"

"YES, I AM. DOCTOR BETTERMAN. CAN I HELP YOU, MISS?"

"THERE IS SOMEONE WATCHING ME OR FOLLOWING ME," I EXPLAINED. "I KEEP RECEIVING TEXT MESSAGES FROM AN UNKNOWN NUMBER. THE MESSENGER KEEPS TAUNTING ME," I SHOWED HIM MY PHONE AND HE TOOK A LOOK AT IT, SCROLLING THROUGH THE MESSAGES.

"I SEE," HE STATED. "DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA OF WHO THIS PERSON COULD BE?"

"NOT AT ALL," I RESPONDED. "THE AREA CODE IS NOT FAMILIAR TO ME," HE HANDS ME MY PHONE.

"DOES ANYONE KNOW OF YOUR WHEREABOUTS AS OF RIGHT NOW?"

"ONLY MY CLOSE FRIENDS. I AM HERE TO PICK UP MY MOTHER. WE HAD PLANNED AN EVENING TOGETHER,"

"YOUR MOTHER IS A DOCTOR HERE?" HE LOOKED AT ME.

"YES, A GENERAL SURGEON," I REPLIED, LOOKING UP AT HIM.

"WHO IS YOUR MOTHER? I CAN TAKE YOU TO HER, ALTHOUGH SHE MIGHT BE BUSY WITH A PATIENT,"

"EMILIA DAVIS,"

HE PULLED HIS PAGER OUT OF HIS POCKET AND CLICKED A BUTTON, PAGING MY MOTHER BEFORE SPRINGING TO ACTION. "OR 2," HE SAID. "I'LL TAKE YOU TO HER,"

"THANK YOU, DOCTOR," I SAID, FOLLOWING HIS QUICK STEPS THROUGH THE HOSPITAL. THE LONG HALLS OF THE HOSPITAL REEKED OF RUBBING ALCOHOL AND OTHER CLEANING SUPPLIES, NUMBING MY NOSE. I ANXIOUSLY GLANCED AT MY PHONE, SEEING A LINE OF UNREAD MESSAGES FROM THE UNKNOWN NUMBER. I STUCK MY PHONE IN MY POCKET AND FOCUSED ON FINDING MY MOTHER TO TELL HER WHAT HAPPENED.

DOCTOR BETTERMAN LED ME DOWN A FEW HALLS, PASSING A FEW OTHER DOCTORS AND NURSES ON THE WAY. MY FRANTIC HEART SPED AS I ANTICIPATED THE WORRIED FACE OF MY MOTHER, WISHING TO SEE HER. I WANTED NOTHING MORE THAN TO GO HOME AND LOCK MYSELF SAFELY AWAY FROM THE OUTSIDE WORLD. I WANTED TO BE INVISIBLE.

DOCTOR BETTERMAN BROUGHT ME TO A PAIR OF WHITE DOUBLE DOORS THAT LED TO FIVE LEVELS OF STAIRS. THE TWO OF US TROTTED UP THE STAIRS TO ANOTHER DOOR. HE OPENED IT, REVEALING A GLASS WINDOW THAT OVERLOOKED A SURGERY. A FEW DOCTORS SAT IN THE CHAIRS PROVIDED TO QUIETLY INSPECT THE SURGERY. I LOOKED DOWN AND SAW MY MOTHER IN A PAIR OF BLUE SCRUBS AND WHITE GLOVES AS SHE LEANED OVER A PALE PATIENT COVERED WITH A BLUE SHEET. HER HANDS, CAREFUL AND QUICK, PERFORMED INTRICATELY ON THE PATIENT.

"HERE, YOU CAN TALK TO HER," DOCTOR BETTERMAN WALKED UP BEHIND ME AND PRESSED A BUTTON ON THE SMALL INTERCOM AGAINST THE WALL. "DOCTOR DAVIS," HE BEGINS. "YOUR DAUGHTER IS HERE,"

MY MOTHER LOOKED UP FROM THE PATIENT AT THE WINDOW AND SAW ME UP AGAINST THE GLASS. "MOM!"



"HONEY?" SHE LOOKED AT ME QUESTIONINGLY, PASSING OFF THE TOOLS IN HER HANDS TO A NEARBY SURGEON. "IS SOMETHING WRONG?"

BEFORE I COULD ANSWER, THE LIGHTS FLICKERED AND SHUT OFF. THE CONFUSED OUTCRIES OF THE OTHER DOCTORS FILLED THE SMALL ROOM, ECHOING OFF THE WALLS. MY HEART POUNDED LOUDLY INSIDE MY CHEST AS I ATTEMPTED TO SEE IN FRONT OF ME. MY PHONE VIBRATED IN MY POCKET. I IGNORED IT, CALMING MYSELF THE BEST I COULD, BUT IT PROVED TO BE INEFFECTIVE WHEN MY PHONE VIBRATED AGAIN. I REACHED TO TAKE IT OUT OF MY POCKET, HESITATION INCREASING THE LEVEL OF ADRENALINE. I LOOKED AT MY PHONE AND READ THE MESSAGE, MY BREATH CATCHING IN MY THROAT. "LET'S SEE HOW WELL YOU CAN RUN FROM ME IN THE DARK".

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ONCE THE HOSPITAL MEMBERS SCATTERED TO LOCATE ENOUGH FLASHLIGHTS AND LANTERNS TO SATISFY THEM, THE STAFF WERE CALLED DOWN TO THE MAIN FLOOR OF THE HOSPITAL. I UNITED WITH MY MOTHER AND DID NOT LEAVE HER SIDE, THOUGH I INSPECTED WHAT I COULD WITH ANXIOUS EYES, WONDERING IF THE MESSENGER HAD FOUND A WAY INTO THE HOSPITAL.

"WHEN WILL THE LIGHTS TURN BACK ON?" ONE SURGEON ASKED.

"I HAVE PATIENTS TO CARE FOR," A NURSE SAID.

"WITHOUT POWER, WE WON'T BE ABLE TO KEEP THESE PATIENTS ALIVE," A DOCTOR EXPLAINED.

A BOMBARDMENT OUT OF INDISTINGUISHABLE QUESTIONS AND SHOUTS FLOWED UNEVENLY THROUGHOUT THE CONCERNED HOARD OF MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS. DOCTOR BETTERMAN STOOD UP IN FRONT OF THE CROWD, HIS ARMS WAVING IN THE AIR. "CALM DOWN, EVERYONE!" HE SHOUTED FOR EVERYONE TO HEAR. "EVERYTHING WILL BE ALRIGHT. A VERY CAPABLE TEAM OF ELECTRICIANS ARE WORKING ON THE POWER AS WE SPEAK,"

"WHEN DO YOU THINK THE POWER WILL TURN BACK ON?" A NURSE ASKED.

"AS OF RIGHT NOW, THE POWER MAY NOT BE FIXED FOR ANOTHER FEW HOURS,"

"CHIEF, I HAVE A PATIENT OPEN ON THE TABLE. IF THE POWER IS NOT REPAIRED SOON, IT WILL BE COMPLICATED TO KEEP THIS PATIENT ALIVE," MY MOTHER EXPLAINED.

"WE WILL NEED GENERATORS AND WE MAY HAVE TO RELOCATE TO HAMPTON MEDICAL,"

HAMPTON MEDICAL WAS THE HOSPITAL ABOUT TEN MILES FROM THIS HOSPITAL. I GUESSED THAT MY MOTHER NEEDED TO CONTINUE WITH HER PATIENT AND RELOCATE BECAUSE SHE WAS SKILLED ENOUGH FOR THE JOB. BUT IF THIS MESSENGER KNEW THAT I WAS HERE AND KNEW WHERE I WAS, THEY COULD BE ABLE TO FOLLOW ME TO ANOTHER HOSPITAL. I COULD NOT GO HOME AND I COULD NOT RELOCATE. I COULD ONLY STAY HERE TO PREVENT THIS MESSENGER FROM FOLLOWING ME AND PUTTING OTHERS IN POSSIBLE DANGER.

"DOCTOR FOUNDERS, YOUR PATIENT WILL BE RELOCATED TO HAMPTON MEDICAL. AN AMBULANCE IS READY TO GO IN THE BACK," CHIEF BETTERMAN STATED.

"YES, SIR," DOCTOR FOUNDERS, A TALL MAN WITH BLONDE HAIR AND BLUE SCRUBS, REPLIED EAGERLY AS HE TROTTED DOWN THE HALL WITH HIS TEAM OF SURGEONS CLOSE BEHIND HIM.

"DOCTOR DAVIS, YOUR PATIENT WILL ALSO BE RELOCATED TO HAMPTON MEDICAL. ANOTHER AMBULANCE IS BEING PREPARED IN THE BACK AS WELL,"

MY MOTHER TURNED TOWARDS ME. "DO YOU WANT TO COME WITH ME?"



I SHOOK MY HEAD. "IF THE MESSENGER IS HERE, THEY COULD FOLLOW ME, WHICH MIGHT PUT PEOPLE IN DANGER,"

SHE SIGHED AS CHIEF BETTERMAN WALKED UP TO US. "THE POLICE ARE ON THEIR WAY TO DEAL WITH THIS MESSENGER. I'M SURE THEY WILL BE FOUND AND TAKEN CARE OF,"

I NODDED MY HEAD AND LOOKED BACK AT MY MOTHER. "ALRIGHT, THEN," SHE SAID. "I HAVE TO GO, HONEY, BUT I NEED YOU TO CALL ME IF ANYTHING HAPPENS. THE WIFI WILL PROBABLY BE OUT FOR A WHILE, SO INFORM THE POLICE WHEN THEY ARRIVE IF YOU NEED TO, YOU UNDERSTAND?" SHE GAVE ME A SERIOUS LOOK, HER DARK EYES PIERCING INTO MINE.

"I WILL,"

"I WILL MAKE SURE THIS HOSPITAL STAYS SAFE AND I WILL PAGE YOU WHEN THE POWER TURNS BACK ON," CHIEF BETTERMAN STATED IN A SOOTHING VOICE TO CALM BOTH MY MOTHER AND I.

SHE THANKED HIM, HUGGED ME TIGHTLY, AND RAN DOWN THE MAIN HALL OF THE FLOOR AND OUT THE TRANSPARENT DOORS TO THE BACKLOT WHERE THE AMBULANCES WERE.

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THERE ARE SOME THINGS PARENTS TELL THEIR CHILDREN TO KEEP THEM SAFE FROM HARM. I DID NOT LISTEN AND WOUND UP PUTTING THOSE I LOVED IN DANGER WITHOUT THINKING OF THE CONSEQUENCES.



# CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

**All Work for the 2021-2022 Edition of *The Eagles' Nest* must be submitted by February 1, 2022**

You are invited to submit a critical paper, manuscript, journal entry or poem for consideration for inclusion in the second edition of *The Eagles' Nest*.

This literary magazine is sponsored by the Department of English at Saint John Paul II Academy, and overseen by the Creative Writing faculty. The magazine welcomes original and cited research papers in proper MLA format, critical literary work in proper MLA format, book reviews, journal entries, and written creative work of all genres, in keeping with editorial policy as set out in founding documents and submission guidelines.

## **Submission Guidelines:**

All submissions should be directed to [cwedding@sjpii.net](mailto:cwedding@sjpii.net) with "Submission: Title of your manuscript or paper" in the subject line. For research and critical papers, please cc the teacher for whom you initially submitted the paper.

In the body of your email, please include a 3 sentence biography about the author, written in third person. Please attach your submission to the email as a google doc.

**Following are specific guidelines for your submission (rules on length may be relaxed for final drafts).**

- Short stories and novel excerpts should be between 500-1500 words in length.
- Poems must be properly formatted upon submission.
- All work must be authored by a named SJPII student.
- All work must be original (plagiarized work is a breach of the code of ethics laid out in the SJPII handbook).
- All work must be submitted in accordance with *The Eagles' Nest* guidelines.
- All work will undergo a peer review, and faculty approval process.
- Any work that includes racist, biased, or hate-filled language towards any person, culture, ethnic group, or country or goes against the doctrine, dogma, or precepts of the Catholic Church or is slanted against any one faith tradition will be ineligible for consideration in the publication.
- Work may not include representations of other students or faculty members without their consent, regardless of whether or not the "names are changed to protect the innocent".
- Any storylines that are explicitly sexual or violent in nature, or include vulgar language of any kind will be ineligible for publication.

**Short stories and novel excerpts should demonstrate evidence of:**

- Character development
- A completed story arc (or an intentional cliffhanger)
- Grammatical clarity
- Dialogue or monologue
- Descriptive language attached to actions and setting

**Critical papers and research papers should demonstrate evidence of:**

- A clear and appropriately placed position statement (thesis)
- Logical and transitioning organization (both between and within paragraphs)
- Cited evidence
- A clear narrative that includes reasoning or analysis
- Context required to understand the circumstances surrounding this position
- A call to action or memorable thought in the conclusion.



# A Note from the Faculty

Thank you for viewing the work enclosed in our first edition of The Eagles' Nest, a virtual lit magazine which showcases work written and formatted by students. This is their accomplishment, and it could not have been completed without the trust and support of Mrs. Rachel Tomko, English Department Chair, and Mr. Ed Bernot, Principal, at SJPII.

Over the course of this year, Creative Writing Students at SJPII have used Children's and Young Adult Literature as a text to learn craft. They have worked diligently to improve their writing skills, applying lessons on character development, imagery, and plot structure to their manuscripts as they have progressed. What you will find herein are the original stories and poems that they have chosen to share. This is but a sampling of the journals, poems, short stories, novel excerpts, and re-tellings that they have submitted in our time together. Now, these pages will preserve their voices, during this most unusual and challenging of school years.

As we hit "publish" and send this into the ether, it is the prayer of this class that their work will be received in the same spirit of bravery and ingenuity with which it was conceived. Creating something, allowing criticism to shape it, and then sending it into a public sphere is an act of courage, one I'm proud my students were willing and excited to participate in.

To the contributors herein: "go forth and conquer the world - and if that doesn't work - rewrite the script." To everyone else, I ask: "what will you publish next year?". I can't wait to see.

Sincerely,



Instructor, Creative Writing 2020-2021



*JUNE 2021*