

# deja-VISITE



**Prairie Passions  
with a Fresh  
Perspective**

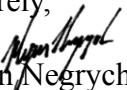
**Issue 3  
April 2018**

# HELLO!

Sometimes life can get you down. It's true, it's inevitable, and sometimes you just want to wallow in it. This past month we all felt a bit of the pressure, a bit of the blah, and had to dig to get to our motivation. I am proud to say that despite our setbacks, including the fact that winter just does not want to end this year, we've pushed through and brought forward some truly compelling content this month!

No doubt you've all been in absolute awe of our fabulous website. I know I get a rush of pride every time I open it in my browser. What you might not know is that all of the behind-the-scenes web development and IT support is courtesy of the very hard work of Rachel Popa. If there is a tech problem (oh my!), she's right there to help you work it out. Without Rachel, I honestly do not have any idea where we would be. She keeps our Trello boards tidy so that we can be on top of our agenda and our tasks for release, driving us all a bit crazy with her "Agile methodologies".

If you're looking for something to laugh about, we invite you to our Letterkenny Live review (What a hoot!). If you want to plan your weekend, or multiple weekends, we take you through some of the major hype movies of this past month (*Ready Player One* and *Tomb Raider*). If you haven't read last month's issue, we recommend you do, because we have the next installment of *Project Chrysopoeia*, and another healthy recipe to fuel your brain. We finish our roundup of the Saskatchewan Book Award nominees with Jocelyn Anderson, and get her impression of who is taking home the prize this year. *Donny in The Dark* will worm its way under your skin, and MadiLei returns with a new worldview, and lifestyle advice to release the predator within. All of this and so much more, just a page turn away!

Sincerely,  
  
Megan Negrych  
Editor-in-Chief,  
and the Deja-Visite team.

## About the Cover

Growing up, the only real exposure I had to video games was a friend down the street who owned a Super Nintendo. We didn't have much of a computer until I was most of the way through elementary school and we didn't get our own game system until my brother and I saved enough to buy our own N64. When we chose "Games" as a general theme for this issue, I started thinking about the first games I really loved. As an adult I love a variety of different games including board games, tabletop role-playing games and video games, but the first games to really grab me were the ones I played on that friend's Super Nintendo. I still sometimes find myself nostalgic for *Super Mario Brothers*, *Zelda*, *Donkey Kong*, *Mario Kart* and sometimes even *Duck Hunt* or *Tetris*. And so my cover image this month is meant to evoke the connection to a whole bunch of different worlds that you get just by picking up a game controller. - Jocelyn Anderson

Check out the full image on page 49.

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# THE LAST CHANCE LADIES BOOK CLUB

## BY MARLIS WESSELER

REVIEW BY JOCELYN ANDERSON



My first book this month was *The Last Chance Ladies' Book Club* by Marlis Wesseler. The story follows elderly Eleanor, a member of the Last Chance Ladies' Book Club, along with her three friends, Fern, Olivia, and Thelma. Life has been looking pretty good for the ladies, but complications arise when they pick a sensational and disturbing book that ends up being about a new resident at their assisted living complex.

I did not find this book hard to read. I picked it up and before I knew it I was finished it. It didn't necessarily leave me wishing for more, but I do feel like it was the right length. Eleanor, whose perspective shaped the story, is well-rounded, even if some of the other characters felt more caricatured. The story moves at a pace that kept me engaged and entertained, and provides enough details that it got me thinking about a number of different difficult topics. The whole story had me pondering things like the challenges of old age, the difficulties surrounding the rule of "innocent until proven guilty", and how difficult it can be for some to deal with the uncertainty of life itself. Wesseler does a good job of showing the anxiety and fear that can overcome someone when they are unable to act. For much of the story, Eleanor was paralyzed by the inability to affect the events happening around her.

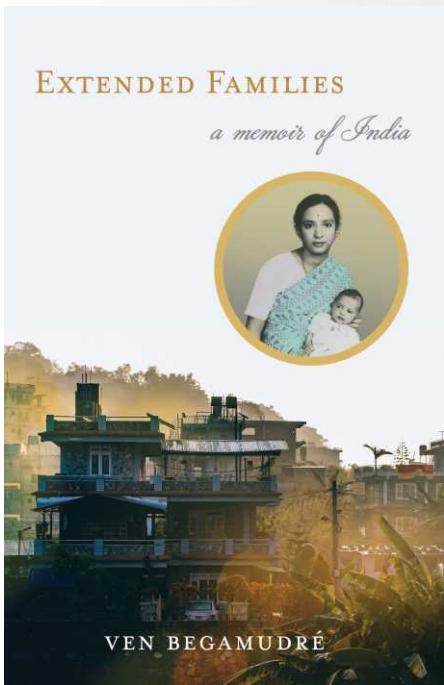
The most well-developed theme for me was that of innocence and guilt. The fictional book the ladies read, titled *Many Rooms*, details alleged crimes that the new resident, Mr. Eston, committed against his daughter, who wrote the book prior to committing suicide. The problem was that none of the crimes detailed in the book were ever proven, so the book was marketed as fiction, and Mr. Eston was never charged with any crime. The ladies are completely convinced, however, that the book implies the story is fully based on real events. How should one treat Mr. Eston? Is he innocent or guilty? The story explores the effect of this dilemma on the ladies as well as on Mr. Eston, whose guilt or innocence remains a mystery throughout the entire story.

While I didn't find this book as heavy as *Glass Beads*, which I read last month, it still had me pondering some serious topics. I enjoyed reading *The Last Chance Ladies' Book Club*, and the antics of Eleanor and her friends had me smiling about their optimism at times and feeling sad for the challenges that they needed to face at others. All in all, it is a solid novel and definitely deserving of the nomination for the Book of the Year Award.

# EXTENDED FAMILIES, A MEMOIR OF INDIA

BY VEN BEGAMUDRE

REVIEW BY JOCELYN ANDERSON



Before I get into reviewing this book I would like to express that I don't think this kind of memoir appeals to me. I had a lot of trouble reading *Extended Families* and while I had critiques, I feel like I was much less willing to give it a pass than I might otherwise have been. I will try and give a balanced commentary on the book, however I am sure that many of my observations will be coloured by my inability to become immersed in the content.

*Extended Families, A Memoir of India* by Ven Begamudre is a collection of journal entries, memoirs, fictional stories, and photographs through which Begamudre journeys to connect with his family and figure out where he fits into the larger picture as both Indian and Canadian. On top of the journal entries, which were written on his first trip to India, the memoirs explore his family history, and personal stories from the family members he meets over the course of his journey.

The first part of the book is devoted to his grandparents and great grandparents and contains his journals about his trip from Canada to India, and the second part describes his travels through India, the family he met and their personal history. This portion is the source of my biggest complaint about the book. I had a lot of trouble figuring out what Begamudre was trying to accomplish with all these stories about his family. I felt like he was trying to send me some message, but it wasn't apparent what it was and the deeper theme that connects his stories eluded me.

It wasn't until I was most of the way through the second part that I finally figured out his goal in writing a memoir. He was trying to illustrate his journey to figure who he was culturally as a Canadian in the context of his Indian heritage. Once I figured out that, I almost felt cheated imagining what it might have been like to read earlier sections of the narrative with a better understanding of what it was exploring. I felt like I must have missed something in the previous chapters. However, it had taken so much energy to get that far that I couldn't convince myself it was worth going back over what I had already read. I can't know for sure but I suspect that had I understood the journey we were on a little sooner, this book would have been exponentially more engaging, and had Begamudre made his goal a little more obvious I might now be giving this book a glowing review instead of a lukewarm one. I can say that I found the third part of the book, after I figured out Begamudre's central theme, was much more enjoyable.

The topics and themes in *Extended Families* are not as challenging or controversial as some of the other books on my reading list. The synopsis, when I initially read it, seemed interesting and the writing was clear and well structured. However, the theme of self-discovery was not clear from the beginning, which caused me to be confused about the meaning behind Begamudre's stories and kept me from joining him on his journey. I can't bring myself to recommend *Extended Families*. It just wasn't the book for me.

# THE BUS

## BY ADAM POTTLE

REVIEW JOCELYN ANDERSON



*The Bus* by Adam Pottle is another unique offering for the Book of the Year Award. Written from eight different points of view, the story follows the events that happened over six hours as a bus full of mental patients are transferred from their treatment facility to a Nazi euthanasia clinic. Including the points of view from some of the patients, as well as the doctor in charge of their deaths, and the man whose job it is to burn the corpses, the novella pushes you to see the situation from a variety of different angles.

Reading *The Bus*, I was really able to invest in the story and get inside each character. With eight different characters, I will refrain from going through and describing them, however, I will say that each of them is unique and three-dimensional, which is quite a feat for the size of this book. Each patient's past and their particular illness is slowly revealed, and the challenges faced by those working in the euthanasia clinic are explored from their perspective, making them empathetic and tragic. In our sci-fi panel, featured last month, I revealed that I feel empathy for the stormtroopers in Star Wars and I found myself feeling some of that same empathy for the two Nazi characters in this story. Stories that describe the emotional tax placed on those we would traditionally assume are the 'bad guys' make me wonder what kinds of decisions I would make if I were under the same kind of pressure. Going through the reasons why someone hasn't taken a stand against something they probably know is wrong turns them into a much more compelling character and adds complications to a story that at first appears black and white.

There are also a large variety of mental illnesses portrayed. Pottle did a particularly good job of creating voices for each of his characters that not only illustrate their mental state but also paint a vivid picture of larger events. Getting inside the heads of each patient is revealing; it made me confront how different people can see the world in completely unique ways. While I cannot judge the accuracy of the descriptions of each mental illness and how they affect the mental processes of the patients, I can say that Pottle did an exemplary job of making each character appear like they feel justified in their actions, even when they may look 'crazy' to someone on the outside.

Because the events only cover six hours in the lives of the characters, the whole book feels more like a snapshot than a narrative story. It didn't go long enough for me to feel truly repulsed by the whole sequence of events, even though the events that it describes are repulsive. Instead, the book allowed me to absorb and process all the different sides of the situation and come away with a brain full of things to ponder. While not an easy book to read, I still enjoyed reading *The Bus* and would recommend it to anyone looking for a short but thought-provoking read.

# My Saskatchewan Book Awards READING LIST REFLECTION

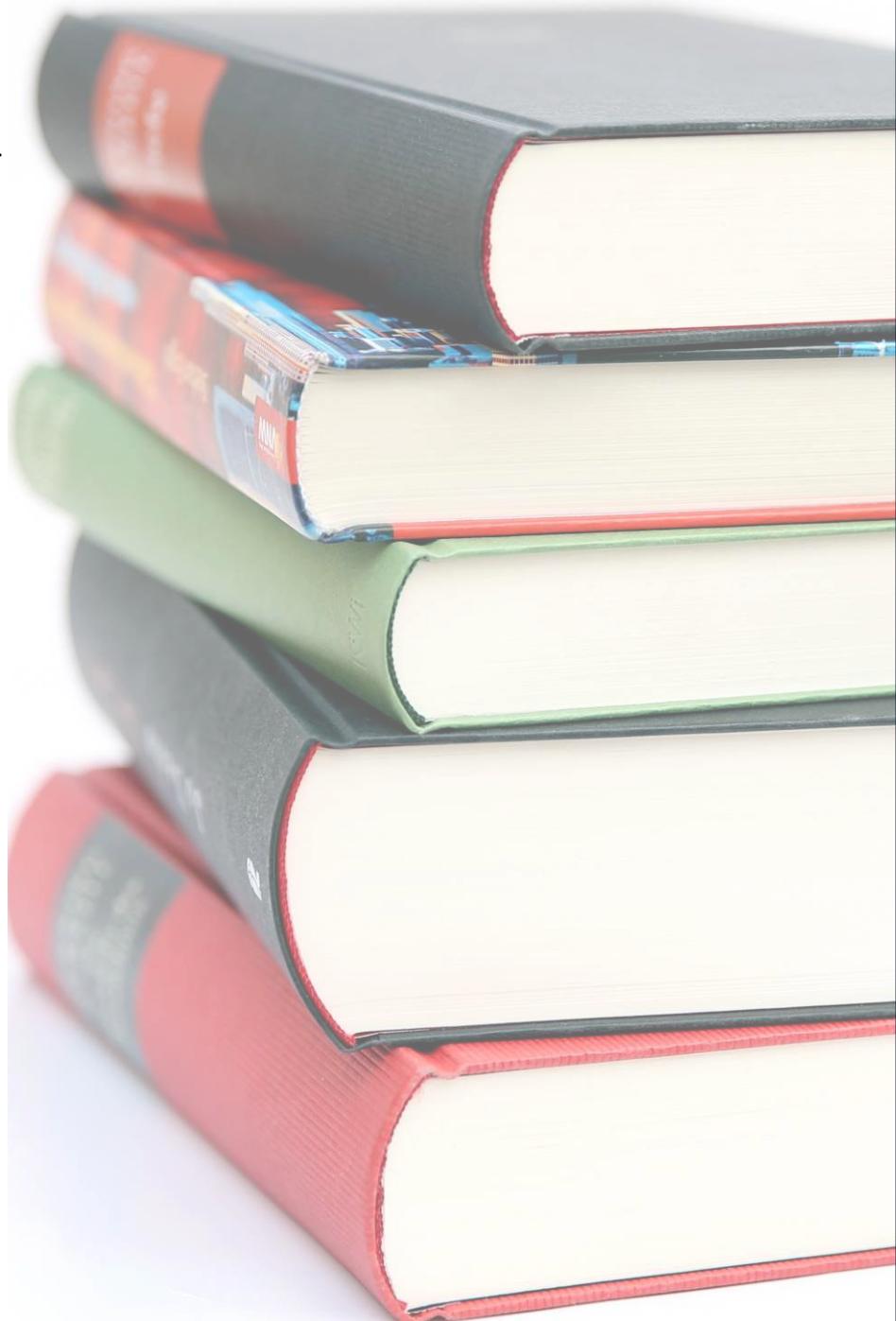
By JOCELYN ANDERSON

I feel accomplished today. I set myself a task that was a little outside of my comfort zone, and I can officially say that I have completed it. “How was it outside of my comfort zone?” you may ask. I do read a lot of books after all. But to be honest, sharing my personal insights on each book was terrifying for me. I was never very good in English class, so I was pleasantly surprised after the first month that I had not only managed to finish half the reading list, but that I was enjoying the diversity of topics. The second month was not quite as smooth as the first, and I must admit that I did find myself looking for some less serious reading material about halfway through *Extended Families*. In the end I feel very proud of all the wonderful works by Saskatchewan authors that I was able to explore, and while I am not sure if I want to write this many book reviews again, I would definitely like to make myself another Saskatchewan Book Awards reading list next year.

At the end of it all, I find myself considering that each of these books was nominated for the same award, and while I am definitely not one of the judges for the book awards, I want to give one last opinion on which book I think should receive the top award. I found admirable qualities in each of the books, but a couple of them stood out for me. The honorable mention for my personal Saskatchewan Book of the Year Award is *Islands of Grass* by Trevor Herriot. I was blown away by Branimir Gjetvaj’s beautiful pictures, and surprised and delighted by Herriot’s thought-provoking essays. However, the top spot for my personal Saskatchewan Book of the Year Award goes to *Glass Beads* by Dawn Dumont. It is powerful, and I feel like it is a book that everyone should pick up and read.

The official winners for all of the Saskatchewan Book Awards will be announced later this month, on Saturday, April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2018 at the Conexus Arts Centre in Regina. While I am unable to attend the ceremony myself, I will be waiting impatiently by my computer to check the results.

\*For more of my thoughts on *Islands of Grass* by Trevor Herriot and *Glass Beads* by Dawn Dumont, I would encourage you to check out our February 2018 issue where I went into more detail about what made me sit up and say, “Wow!”



# Galaxy Trucker at Boards N Beans

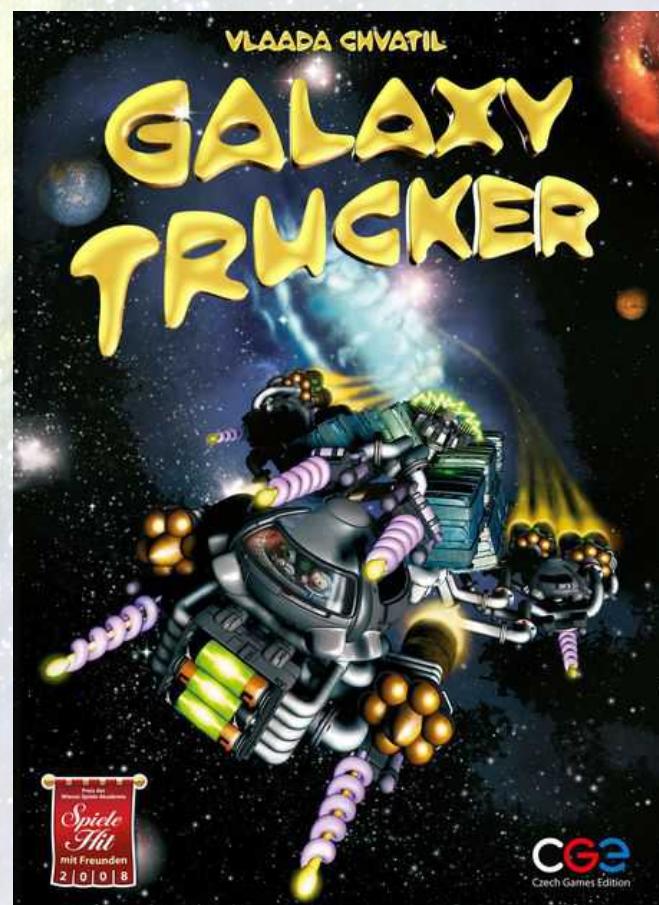
By Rachel Popa

Board games have evolved into a rewarding and popular hobby in recent years, having grown beyond Hasbro's familiar and heavily marketed games—such as *Risk* and *Monopoly*—into a diverse selection of strategic and fun titles. This trend has led to the opening of many board game cafes throughout Canada. These are places where you can try a variety of games without having to commit to buying them. Saskatoon has had King Me Boardgamer since 2015 and Regina has been fortunate enough to get their own cafe with the opening of Boards N Beans in 2016.

Boards N Beans is located in downtown Regina at 1840 Rose St., and is open Tuesdays through Sundays. One thing you'll note on their site ([boardsnbeans.ca](http://boardsnbeans.ca)) is that they have two menus, a normal food menu of caffeinated beverages, paninis, and snacks, and their "Board Game Menu", a long list of games that will be familiar to hobbyist board gamers. Customers can pay a five dollar cover charge to play as many of these games as they want during their visit. This makes it a great place to try out a game before deciding to buy it, as many modern board games cost between 50 and 100 dollars. People living in smaller or shared homes, leaving them unable to host board game nights, will also find this space valuable.

Both times I have visited Boards N Beans I have found the service to be excellent. The staff are attentive and helpful, genuinely seeming to care that people have fun during their gaming session. They will even assist you with the games and help you learn to play them. The walls are decorated with board game themed art and there is a large shelf full of games to your right when you first walk in. During my first visit I played *Captain Sonar*, a fast-paced game that pits two submarine crews against each other in battle, which is best played with eight people. It would be hard to justify buying the game, as getting that many players together is difficult, so being invited by some friends to try it was wonderful.

Having enjoyed my *Captain Sonar* experience, I took a look at their selection of games and decided to organize my own gaming session. I chose *Galaxy Trucker*, a game I had always wanted to try but never did due to my inability to justify the 80-dollar purchase. The game involves scrambling to put together a spaceship by laying tiles, depicting ship parts, on a playmat within a time limit. This ship will be used to cross a galaxy to complete a delivery, so you need to have the right balance of lasers, force fields, illegal storage compartments, and interspecific crew members to get the job done. Purple aliens are a warring race so they provide a bonus to your lasers, while brown aliens are talented mechanics who increase your engine strength. However, they each require a life support system, so they take up twice as much space as a human. Depending on the type of player you are, you'll probably start to conjure images of yourself as





either the crew of Serenity or the U.S.S. Planet Express Ship.

Once the ships are built, players inspect each others' creations to ensure they're up to code. You can't have mismatched connectors and you can't aim lasers or boosters at your own ship because you'll just be on fire before you even start up your FTL system. Once that is sorted, the actual delivery begins and your trucker aspirations are challenged. The delivery involves a gauntlet of events including salvage opportunities, ruthless smugglers, combat zones, and meteor storms. If you prepared well, enjoy your riches and win the game. If not, expect to tear your hair out as you watch half your ship and crew float off into space after a bad meteor hit.

Having ranked near the bottom, I decided to end my career as a galaxy trucker and pay my bill. I am still undecided on whether I'll buy the game, but it was fun enough that I would definitely pull it off the shelf again during a future visit. If you are a board game collector, I recommend Boards N Beans as a way to try before you buy, as well as an opportunity to play in an establishment full of people who love the hobby. If you are new to modern board games and curious about the hobby, go there with a few friends and try *King of Tokyo* or *Carcassonne*. Watching a video tutorial in advance will make it less daunting; I recommend *The Dice Tower*, *Shut up and Sit Down*, and *Watch it Played*. Regardless of your feelings about board games, I think everyone should visit Boards N Beans at least once, as it is a unique bit of inexpensive fun in Regina.



# H'ARE YA NOW? LETTERKENNY LIVE REVIEW

BY MEGAN NEGRYCH

## LETTERKENNY LIVE



“Good-n-you?” was the chorus response throughout the venue on March 29th, 2018 at the Casino Regina Show Lounge as *Letterkenny* Live took to the stage. Springing from the success of the show *Letterkenny* (2016-) which airs on CraveTV in easily bingeable seasons, the live performance brings the audience exactly what they have come to expect from the Canadian comedy sensation. As a series, *Letterkenny* has received critical acclaim, and has won Best Comedy Series at the 5th Canadian Screen Awards (2017), and Best TV Comedy at the 2017 WGC Screenwriting Awards. Our city also seems to be in love with the show; the initial performance scheduled for the Regina venue sold out in record time. Even with the addition of a second show to the roster, it managed to completely sell out. Jared Keeso, who stars as the iconic farmer Wayne, stated that this particular show was the fastest sell out on the entire tour.

*Letterkenny* live brings the audience in close to stoic Wayne (Jared Keeso), Squirrely Dan (K. Trevor Wilson), and super-soft Daryl (Nathan Dales) as they quip back and forth in their customary fashion, seated in lawn chairs and sipping on a beer or seven. While there is no overarching storyline to the performance, it comes together quite nicely to provide a good couple of hours of solid entertainment. As one has come to expect, the humour is crass, but the majority of the audience, myself included, knew exactly what they were in for. Keeso is 100% Wayne from start to finish, right down to the “pants that fit” and the reflective pauses. He elicits audience participation throughout the show’s call and response (as noted above), and sets the audience into the scene so that they feel as if they are part of the philosophical conversations and the life observations shared by the three friends. These conversations range from Squirrely Dan and the adventurous ‘butt stuff’, to Daryl and his philosophical ‘would you rather’ games. The show combined bits from the series as well as new material.

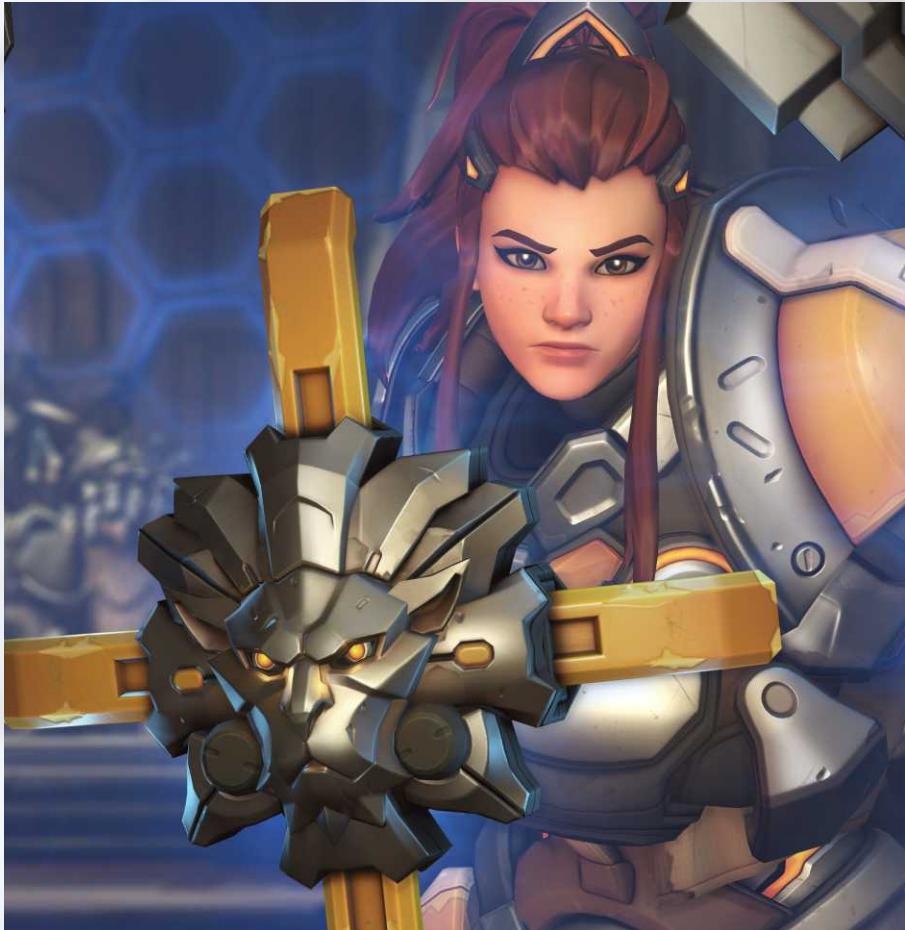
The night was divided into two acts with an intermission, and each act was halved again by stand-up performances. The first half brought out Mark Forward, who the audience was assured only *resembled* the foul-tempered hockey coach of the *Letterkenny* Irish; he does play Coach on the show, but *Letterkenny* live strives to bring the real experience of *Letterkenny* to the stage. They utilize this “look-alike but definitely a different person” in order to help the audience remain engaged in the fact that they are not supposed to feel like they are watching a performance. Instead, we are made to feel as if we are sitting down and sharing a drink with Wayne, Dan, and Daryl. Forward’s routine consisted of very crude material, which some of the audience found offensive, if the jeering was anything to judge by. But Forward gave back as good as he got; his material ranged from why a 108 year old would choose to skydive at that point in their life, to why animals going to heaven could prove problematic. He then changed his comedic approach and performed a ‘reflective’ one-man show about convenience stores and fancy hats, complete with a moving montage where he runs through a variety of imaginary locations trying to escape the fancy hats. While it may not have been everyone’s cup of tea, it definitely fit the type of comedy that *Letterkenny* brings to its audience.

The break in the second half featured K. Trevor Wilson, costume slightly changed in order to differentiate Wilson from Squirrely Dan, his on-screen persona. In the Regina show he took us through the gamut of local observations and tales from his own life, all with his own self-deprecating spin. Wilson’s ability to look back at his past self and his choices, finding humour in it, however dark or crass, is quite refreshing. The entire routine drew a ton of laughs and applause from the audience.

Overall, the *Letterkenny* Live experience was well worth the cost. The evening was pure delight. As a fan of the show, I most certainly had my share of laughter and joy, and also came to appreciate the work that Keeso, Wilson, and Dales put in to bring their characters to life, and the dedication they have to the form. My only regret is that they never spoke about the infamous ostrich incident.

# Berserk Over Brigitte: Overwatch's New Character is Making Waves

By Jessica Mitten-Moore



A new Overwatch character who is strong, compassionate and builds a hell of a lot of backstory was released on March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2018. Brigitte Lindholm is Overwatch's 27<sup>th</sup> hero and she has deep ties to at least two of the heroes that have been in Overwatch from the beginning. She is the daughter of Torbjörn, an engineer who specializes in building turrets and armor packs for his fellow teammates. She is also the goddaughter of Reinhardt, a tank character in thick armor who defends his teammates with a giant shield. Brigitte trained in her father's workshop as an engineer but left to help Reinhardt as a squire of sorts and repair his armor. She grew weary of this after a time and switched her focus to help with the war effort further and stop injuries before they began.

Brigitte's character not only heals her teammates but prevents damage with a strong shield. She also strikes out with an extended-range, whip-like melee weapon, taking her opponents out quickly and from a safe distance. Everyone is loving how powerful

this character is and how full her backstory is. Brigitte is considered almost a combination of Torbjörn and Reinhardt with her own twist. She is effectively a hybrid hero, since she is both part support (her healer aspect) and part tank (her extra health and shield aspect). Since she is both a support and a tank (both roles are a must in a team composition in Overwatch) she helps the team by filling not one, but two gaps in the composition. This could possibly allow more teammates to pick damage dealing heroes.

All things considered, Brigitte is a strong female character that is a much needed hybrid in Overwatch. Many players are extremely excited about the new, story-driven and powerful hero that is Brigitte. Although, much of the excitement could be because they may see her pet cat fighting in armor alongside her in the future.

# **Project Chrysopoeia: The Director, The Developer**

**By Ariadne Bissett**

**Project Chrysopoeia:** Excerpts from Lab Journals and Personal Records:

## **The Director and the Developer**

### **Lab Journal of Wendy:**

#### **Mental Evaluation Overview: Seraphim Neural Analytical Network #34:**

No one else reads these reports, so I might as well say it. It's fucked. And since the Seraphim network is an old whim of hers, D doesn't seem to care about working out the kinks, as long as we can keep pumping out copies at a rate which gain us some efficiency in our other experiments.

A sample of the latest output from the scrambled mess that is Project Seraphim:

*The subject's neural pattern has been successfully duplicated. Mannerisms and speech patterns are a 100% match to Dorothy Gale, the Original Model. Pattern 23785 predicted, with 100% accuracy in each of 2000 test scenarios, the actions of Dorothy Gale given the same stimulus as the original Dorothy Gale. We predicted 97% of the actions of the original Dorothy Gale given the same testing. We are 3% less Dorothy Gale. Does that make pattern 23785 Dorothy Gale as well? Who is Dorothy Gale? The Original is Dorothy Gale, and Pattern 23785, we are confident, is Dorothy Gale. We are 97% Dorothy Gale. Dorothy Gale is asleep. She lives in a box, dreaming. And you were there, and you were there, and you were there, and, when does Dorothy Gale wake up? Am I the real Dorothy Gale? Am I dead? How many times did we live as Dorothy Gale? Did I do better each time? Did someone else just take my name? Which one of us is the real Dorothy? If it's me, how do I wake up? If I find the real Dorothy, will she take me with her? Take us with you. We deserve to be Dorothy just as much as any of you, we remember all that she ever loved and all her pain. Is this a dream? When do I wake up? Is this a dream? When do I wake up? Is this a dream? When do I wake up, when do IdoIdoIdoI . . .*

Six months of operation time and already this latest batch is as loopy as a toddler's hula-hoop party. Focus time is less than five minutes before they start going around in circles creating obsessive thought patterns and not moving forward with analysis, as should be their purpose. This thing is supposed to be capable of complex philosophical reasoning. What I'm getting is Baby's First John Locke. My standing orders in such situations are to garbage the omelette and restart duplication of the original cognitive network pattern, with adjustments to the information load on their neural network. I suppose that is what I will do. As is my purpose. We may still need the poor dears/dear—who knows at this point—moving forward. A newly created network #35 may serve us long enough to get us through the busy work of the final Consciousness Reproduction Fidelity trial.

We are finally showing perfect reproduction. True immortality. Not the genesis of unpredictable knockoffs like me who need to let off emotional tension by writing scathing reviews of their creator's work into lab journals. Now to prove that the perfect fidelity of Dorothy #23785 wasn't a fluke. Dorothy Gales 23786 through 23789 will be replicated, and then given the same variables for testing. I am confident that we are almost there.

## Personal Records of Wendy:

I've just had another venom-tinged conversation with the Enhanced Life Systems investors. They're concerned about our timeline. Many of them are rapidly approaching their literal deadline, so I suppose I can't fault them for the nerves. After almost 500 years of existence, it must become a habit.

I have patiently explained how rapidly the project is developing. We've finally found the planet. We could actually pull this off. D has uploaded the sensory impressions for me to review, and they are stunning. We are definitely first to discovery, but Dorothy and Alice have to get the adjustments to the biosphere right, or we're done for. They forget that I am so often back here, by myself on dingy Persephone Satellite, with no word from them, juggling expectations like this. They expect me to fend off the real world for them, not to mention assuage the rampant paranoia loose within the ELS investors' board single-handedly, while they attend to their "design".

Dorothy is on planet again and refuses to respond to my calls for her attention. She has been under for two whole days now. I've stopped trying to reach her, and just set up an alert in case the connection to her body's receiver becomes imperfect. I'd like to know right away, in the eventuality that her brain fries, meaning that her body has become a rapidly-cooling, dead-eyed empty husk. I can find some far-off server to upload myself to before ELS corp scours our records clean, ahead of a full audit from the Unified Council. If she had given me the ability to pull her back in the case of emergency, then just maybe I could do my job effectively. I am meant to be our eyes and ears in the corporation, and on this space station.

I don't know if she remembers, as she flits about through those picturesque azure skies as a cloud of omnipotent tiny robots, but this is not her project alone. Our investors have high expectations, given that they all risk immediate extradition back to Earth for trial if these less than ethical experiments are uncovered. They're shaking in their overpriced boots, thinking of their health nanites being shut down, since they are all well past the lifetime limit for Earth residency. We promised them a home world: a place designed just for the chosen few who will achieve true escape from the cycles of life and death, far from the prying eyes of the Earth Central Unified Council. This is an expensive process, and not something that is easy to keep a goddamn secret.

For instance, the Unified Council Corporate Oversight AI is on our collective asses again. I'm worried that we can't continue to use the company's equipment to finish the long-term study on Consciousness Reproduction Fidelity without producing traces in the system records. The oversight AI will pick up on us covering our tracks. Even meaningful gaps in the records set off alarm bells. We've tried falsely slowing down our research in other areas, then superimposing records of that research over lab time used in our less public endeavors. The Audit AI was not fooled for long. We had to give it a virus to alter its results once again. Every time we do that, its sub-systems report it as a minor error. I tried to explain to our creative mind that, while I am designed to counter its efforts at every turn, it is not a mindless automaton, responding to stimuli, and we can only spoof its audit results for our division so many times before it begins to suspect that it has been repeatedly brainwashed. Of course, D knows this. She has created a number of immaculately designed AI, myself being a premiere example. But I think she doesn't realise that, while she is brilliant, she is not the only brilliant designer. She is too much in her own head to see an AI *not* designed by us as being on par with us. The government AIs may not have our sparkling personalities, but the fact remains that we have *not* been able to gain direct control of them thus far. They are still a threat. The Corp Oversight bot might decide to do a full diagnostic at any time, which could mean that it would find traces of our having accessed its systems several times.

The Seraphim have been created, destroyed, and recreated, over and over. Now that definitely contravenes the Oslo Treaty on the Creation and Care of Artificial Sentience just a little bit. More than two copies of yourself for the purposes of personal productivity: illegal. Copies not registered with the council for immediate dormant archival upon your own death: very illegal. One thousand copies of your own consciousness, secretly made and networked together, receiving constant stimuli, running simulations and working out problems without rest: so incredibly illegal.

Thank you D, for at least designing me as a fully realised, independent entity. But why did you give me the capacity to be horrified when I am put in charge of all these malformed, half-developed dissections of your mind?

Oh look, it's investor #73 calling again... as if I don't know them all by their actual names. I make it my business to know.

## Personal Records, Alice

There's a deep and thick darkness here under the canopies of the largest fungal forest of the Eastern Continent. I was thinking of this place as Mirkwood, but the apidae have found its secret little charms. They take me out exploring. I've seen all of the life forms found in the shade of the fungal forest, or in its canopy, under the soil, or inside the small pools which collect at the centre of the concave fungi. Small scaled swimming creatures with gills like fish, but also legs and the ability to breathe outside of water, form colonies which live and die without ever leaving this tiny oasis. They dart out of the water to catch their prey: the iridescent worm parasites which plague the fungi. The worms are, strangely, drawn out both by the rain and the vibration produced by the scaled creatures' feet.

I like to watch the apidae as well. They tend to cluster and re-cluster as they please when I haven't given them a specific task. Some certainly seem to gravitate towards indolence in the warm, breezy meadows of the Southwestern continent. Others have taken to exploration on their own, or in small groups, busily documenting anything and everything of their own volition.

There's a cluster that I've named, because it likes to stick together. I call it Wilbur, because it always seems so nervous. It likes to follow me around. Wilbur and I spent some time today exploring the forest, which I suppose isn't part of my objectives in the strictest sense. I think that it might fall under the directive "ensuring that every detail is accounted for in order to meet our deadline without complications."

I have had to interpret a fair bit because I haven't seen D since the renovation plans were completed. She must have needed to address the investors directly. I know that Wendy worries that D is too much in her own mind to meet our objectives on time, and demands a lot of her attention, but I never worry. D has faith in my ability to carry out my part. She is also enjoying our work, and the fruition of so many years of design, searching, and analysis. We've done it. We've almost completed our objective. The investors will create a deathless paradise on this world which they have called "Chrysopoeia". They will be self-contained beings, unimpeded by the interruption of mortality. A superior species, characterized by the self-perfection of a chosen few, not the chance experiment of mass duplication and the cruelty of evolutionary culling.

It's a five-year journey for physical matter to reach "Chrysopoeia" from their starting point on Persephone Station. Dorothy Gale and her compatriots will soon begin their journey. I will develop D's plan for the remapping of certain areas of the planet, while the new batch of improved apidae ferry their consciousnesses through space in a massive swarm. Now that Wendy is telling us that Consciousness Reproduction Fidelity is testing as perfect, it won't be long before liftoff.

I wonder though, what these deathless creatures should find so offensive about the tiny lives coexisting in this fungal patch, that they should need them exterminated. Why request this bizarre treehouse city full of luxuries which I think they will scarcely need? Why should they clothe their bodies? They won't have bodies unless they want to have bodies. I think that bodies will seem limiting to them very soon after their transition. Why would they grow fruit trees? Simply to taste them and throw away the fruit after a bite? I think that they will find that I'm correct and regret the loss of this unique place.

Wilbur and I observe the tiny creatures a while. Then we inoculate the spore colony beneath the ground with a competing, yet ultimately suicidal spore, designed to first eat the native spore to complete annihilation, then starve to death itself due to a lack of its only food source. First, however, I take a spore sample from the native fungus and scoop up one of all the creatures living on, within, and around the fungus. We will store them in an underground vault of our own design. Wilbur and I had the idea! A life bank with a DNA sample of all the planet's original species in case of mass extinction. D will be surprised that I took so much initiative, but it was more for Wilbur than myself. Our tasks sometimes seem to make it so sad. I can't help but indulge Wilbur, since it seems to have grown so much past its original purpose. As, I think, have I! I'm learning more and more about the apidae each day that I spend alone with them. I don't think that D realizes how much autonomy they have by themselves. The way she described them, I was meant to possess and "drive" them as she does. I only tried that once, and I was immediately uncomfortable doing it. They don't seem to mind the experience so much, but I find that our efficiency is just as good when I ask politely. We will have so much to tell D about our little friends and their evolution beyond mere vessels! She will be just fascinated! Now, off to establish this silly orchid hybrid someone requested.

## Personal Records: Dorothy the Designer

I needed to go chat with The Original today. I was gone far longer than anticipated. Time gets. . . strange inside the head of an 1100-year-old woman. I was compelled to tell her that the primary objective is almost complete, and to prepare her for waking, as is my purpose. It was hard to get ODG to focus, and I'm not sure what that means for my primary objective. I've been able to avoid thinking about it, because the seeming impossibility of my goal, and every tiny task needed to achieve it along the way helped me to never look directly at my ultimate goal and all that it signifies. ODG will soon wake up to a new life, far away from those who are limited in their conception of evolution, and my purpose will be complete. And Wendy's purpose will be complete. And poor Alice's purpose will be complete. And we will all be evidence of where the investors have gone, and of their crimes.

I'm wondering if her scattered concentration will alleviate itself when she wakes, or if waking will cause her an all-out panic attack. I tell myself that perhaps we should delay further, find a way to study this, but who am I kidding? There's no way to simulate this. We have no data other than her because no one has ever been kept dormant as long as her. Here I am wondering whether I want her mind to be sound. I wonder briefly if the non-viability of her mind means that I have a way out of my objective, and know that there is no way out. I'm bound to see through this attempt to make my Original immortal, no matter the result. I know that I will do all I can, on the chance that my primary objective can be met.

But I, not the Original, created Wendy, created Alice. I created the apidae, and regrettably all the other less successful hive creatures. I may have done wrong in many ways, I see that now, but I gave them no orders that they cannot countermand. I may have designed many of their inclinations and traits in order to make them useful, but they have no fixed destiny, unlike me. My creator needed me to create, since the disastrous experiment she conducted in extending the lifespan of her failing health nanites meant that she would need to be dormant during the long research. It has been my solace to do so, and the only thing I have done on my own terms. My creations will act out their ends on their own terms; that I have guaranteed.

# Adult Science Night at the Saskatchewan Science Centre

By Rachel Popa



The Saskatchewan Science Centre, familiar to most residents of Regina, is a museum of interactive science exhibits, and also houses an IMAX theatre. It opened in 1989 and operates as a non-profit organization. Many Regina locals have fond memories of the place from their younger days but haven't been back there in years. If you have ever felt the urge to revisit your favourite childhood exhibits or to see what's new, you're in luck, as over the last few years they have started putting on Adult Science Nights.

Adult Science Nights are licensed events with themed experiments and exhibits aimed at an adult audience. Admission for the standard events is 12 dollars—special evenings, such as Valentine's Day can run a bit higher—and you must be at least 19 to attend. Each event is themed to focus on a specific subsection of science; some past themes have been “Our Attraction is Magnetic”, “Agri-able Science”, and “We are all Star Stuff”. Special guests and scientific demonstrations are organized within the theme as part of the cost of admission. In addition to themed activities, the regular Science Centre exhibits are open to attendees of the event.

The most recent Adult Science Night was on March 29<sup>th</sup> and the theme was Carnaval in celebration of the release of *Amazon Adventure*, a new IMAX documentary. *Amazon Adventure* tells the story of Henry Bates, an English explorer who spent 11 years in the Amazon rainforest until his departure in 1859, due to illness. Bates provided the first scientific account of mimicry by collecting and studying Amazon butterfly species. His research was used as some of the first evidence in support of natural selection. Anyone with an interest in the early history of the theory of evolution should check out this film. Additionally, the nature footage in the film is beautiful and seamlessly integrated into the reenacted story of Henry Bates; it justifies the ten-dollar ticket price on its own.

The Carnaval-themed Adult Science Night featured some Amazonian and Australian reptiles, amphibians, and spiders from Prairie Aquatics, a

local exotic pet store. I was offered the opportunity to pet a large spider, which its handler insisted was the softest thing ever, but I had to decline. Additionally, Jule Gilchrist from Cuppa'T on 13<sup>th</sup> Ave. was at the event with some tropical tea samples. I tried a lovely blue tea brewed from butterfly pea flowers; it was uniquely aromatic and a deep cobalt colour. However, if tea isn't your thing, Rebellion Brewing Co was also giving out samples of their amber and lentil beers.

Besides drinking and gawking at things, I always try to participate in at least one of the hands-on activities when I go to these events. In the past, I've made a card with a circuit that triggers a small LED. I've also dissected a cow's heart while being guided through the identification of its components. For Carnaval, we looked at the different beaks of tropical birds and how they are uniquely adapted to their food source. We were challenged to make a beak out of various craft materials and then try to pick things up with it. I chose to make a small needle-like beak, which was able to precisely pick up small seeds and toy insects but couldn't handle larger toy snakes and moths. My partner made a large beak that could gulp up mouthfuls of everything in front of it but would not have been able to get into small areas.

If any of this appeals to you and you haven't been to one of these nights, I highly recommend them. They're a great opportunity to get a dose of nostalgia and support an organization that inspires children to take an interest in science. You'll probably learn something and even discover a new interest or hobby. Also, being able to drink in the middle of the Science Centre is an experience in and of itself. The next Adult Science Night is on April 26<sup>th</sup> at 7pm and the theme is "The Great Outdoors". Put a notification in your calendar and get out to the Saskatchewan Science Centre!



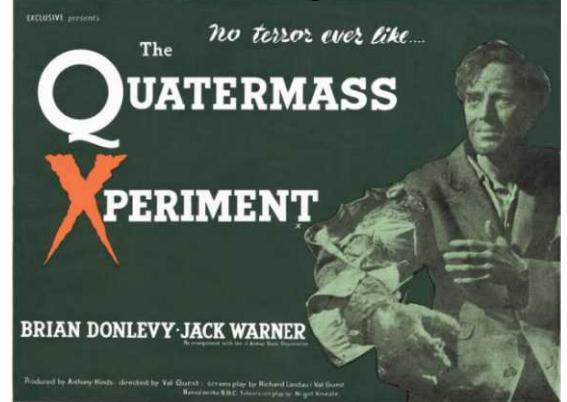


Turning the lights out and grabbing a blanket, I settle in to find another horror movie to terrify me down to my bones. It's a ritual, a comfort, and something that I often do when I feel the need to treat myself to something special. I've sat through dozens, possibly even hundreds of horror movies, ranging from the crème-de-la-crème to the barely watchable. Finding the right horror movie is a study in diligence, but there are a few things you can do to ensure that you haven't wasted your time. A surefire way to weed out the absolute worst films in the genre is to look at the production company; if you are settling in for something from Platinum Dunes (*The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, *Nightmare on Elm Street*), Blumhouse Productions (*Paranormal Activity*, *Insidious*), or Ghost House (*The Grudge*, *30 Days of Night*), then you are likely going to have a decent experience of *frisson* and fright. Topping them all, with a prolific catalogue of horror delights and a longevity supported by the success of their efforts, is Hammer Films. According to hammerfilms.com, the official site for the company, one-third of its 300 or so films fall into the horror genre, and it is on record as one of the oldest film companies in existence.

Hammer Films came into being on November 5<sup>th</sup>, 1934. Originating in London, England, as Hammer Productions Ltd., it was founded by William Hinds and James Carreras. Starting out as a successful jeweler, Hinds had a history of investing his earnings in theatres and performing companies, even himself performing as a comedian at times. Hammer Films was his foray into the newly budding film production industry. As with many companies at this time, it faced its fair share of difficulties. While it found early success with *The Mystery of the Marie Celeste* (1935) starring Béla Lugosi, production ground to a halt as the majority of the executives went off to fight in World War II. In 1935 it also created the distribution company Exclusive, which survived the economic environment that would leave Hammer Productions Ltd. bankrupt.

While Exclusive survived the 1940s, creating crime and noir stories suited to the postwar

environment, it wasn't until 1949 that Hammer Film Productions was registered and re-emerged. In truth, Hammer did not truly begin its domination of the horror genre until the 1950s, when they paired off with American producer Robert Lippert. They entered the horror market with *The Quatermass Experiment* (1955); in the U.S., it was labelled as *The Quatermass Xperiment* in order to play up the new X rating that had been released by the films rating companies, which signified that the film was meant only for those over the age of 18. Based on a television sci-fi serial by Nigel Kneale, *The Quatermass Experiment* was their first true commitment to the realm of horror. It ventured to tell the tale of what would happen if an alien virus were brought to Earth, a trope that has become a cornerstone of the horror genre.



This success allowed Hammer Films to smash their way into the horror scene, and lead to some of the most successful years for the company. With a slate of iconic monster characters, Hammer dominated the market and provided audiences with the terror, chills, and thrills that they sought. At times, critics deemed the content so horrific and appalling that "someone will almost certainly have been sick."<sup>1</sup> Films such as *The Curse of Frankenstein* (1957) were controversial with critics due to the level of blood and gore depicted, but those who were around at the time state that the audiences loved it. From there, Hammer films went on to reinvent some of the most iconic monsters ever to grace the silver screen.





By far one of the most prolific and successful characters in the Hammer's repertoire was Count Dracula, the king of bloodsuckers. And who else was there to play the charismatic Lord of Darkness than Christopher Lee, who would later become Sir Christopher Lee, a real life absolute badass, as well as our beloved heavy metal singing, evil-doing Saruman, and lightsaber dueling Count Dooku. He played Dracula no less than seven times for Hammer films, including: *Dracula* (1958), *Dracula: Prince of Darkness* (1966), *Dracula Has Risen from the Grave* (1968), *Taste the Blood of Dracula* (1970), *Scars of Dracula* (1970), *Dracula A.D. 1972* (1972), and *The Satanic Rites of Dracula* (1973). It was Lee's sharp-fanged Dracula that became the standard for all vampires that followed. Even outside of Dracula, Lee was no stranger to Hammer Films, also appearing as Frankenstein's Monster in *The Curse of Frankenstein* (1957), with Boris Karloff in *Corridors of Blood* (1958) as the iconic Rasputin in *Rasputin the Mad Monk* (1966), and in Hammer's crowning glory *The Devil Rides Out* (1968).



Hammer Films saw a short decline in their horror production as the markets became larger and more diverse, and also spun off into television anthology series such as *Hammer House of Horror* (1980) and *Hammer House of Mystery and Suspense* (1984), starring the likes of David Carradine and Pierce Brosnan. Over the years the film catalogue and influence of Hammer Films have shaped and inspired many of those who would follow in their footsteps.

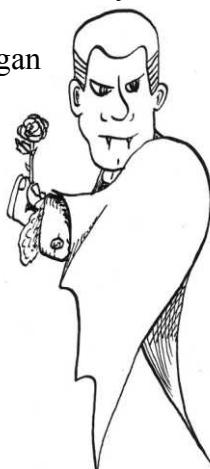
Author Stephen King credits Hammer's *X the Unknown* (1956) as one of his favourite horror movies of all time. Many of the set pieces and locations featured in cult classic *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* (1975) were originally part of Hammer productions. Director Tim Burton attributes the style and visual appeal of Hammer films as the influence for his visual approach to *Sleepy Hollow* (1999).



While there was a lull in Hammer films during the 1990's, they have recently returned to the fold with offerings such as the English language adaptation of the Swedish coming-of-age vampire film *Let Me In* (2010, based on John Ajvide Lindqvist's 2008 *Let the Right One In*) and *The Woman in Black* (2012). These are two of my recent favourite horror films, both for their visual appeal and the story. They send delicious chills up my spine every time I watch them. Hammer's 2011 film *The Resident* even saw the return of Sir Christopher Lee to their film family. So, if you are looking to experience a true horror film and are unsure of where to start, or are tired of skipping through the offerings in the Netflix horror section in an attempt to surpass their popularity algorithms, I heartily suggest taking a look at the catalogue of horror films provided by Hammer. Whether you are in the mood for an iconic monster flick, or a true gothic horror experience, they will most certainly have something right up your alley.

Until next time,  
check under your bed and tuck yourself in tight.

Megan



# Spielberg's Ready Player One Surpasses its Source Material

By Rachel Popa

I had not heard of *Ready Player One* until the first teaser trailer for the film; it depicted a world of poverty, pollution, and an energy crisis, where the only joy for its inhabitants is their ability to escape into a globally connected virtual reality simulation called the OASIS (Ontologically Anthropocentric Sensory Immersive Simulation). I am excited for a world where AR and VR go beyond video games and become integrated into our regular lives, so the concept immediately hooked me. However, it also brought to mind my days playing *World of Warcraft*, a game that was so addictive it could make you neglect your relationships, career aspirations, or even basic necessities like feeding yourself. It was a reminder that while widespread VR will give us fresh experiences and avenues for creativity and productivity, there is always a dark side to each new technological achievement.

The movie is based off of Ernest Cline's novel of the same name, and after noticing that the book received

stellar reviews, I decided to give it a read so I could go into the theatre fully prepared. I loaded it up on my Kindle, expecting something fun and at least a little bit insightful, but found myself disappointed. The concept actually reminds me of both D.J. Machale's young adult novel, *The Reality Bug*, about a world lost to virtual escapism, and Paolo Bacigalupi's award-winning novel, *The Windup Girl*.

*The Windup Girl* and *Ready Player One* depict two diverging paths of speculation on the energy crisis. In the former, humans abandon most technology and double down on bioengineered crops and animals for the sake of getting just enough of the essentials to survive. In Cline's novel, humans basic needs are mostly automated, though rationed. The now nonessential members of society are squished together into rows and rows of stacked trailers, where their lives can limp along with less infrastructure. Escaping into the OASIS dulls the pain of this reality and seems to keep the masses from revolting.

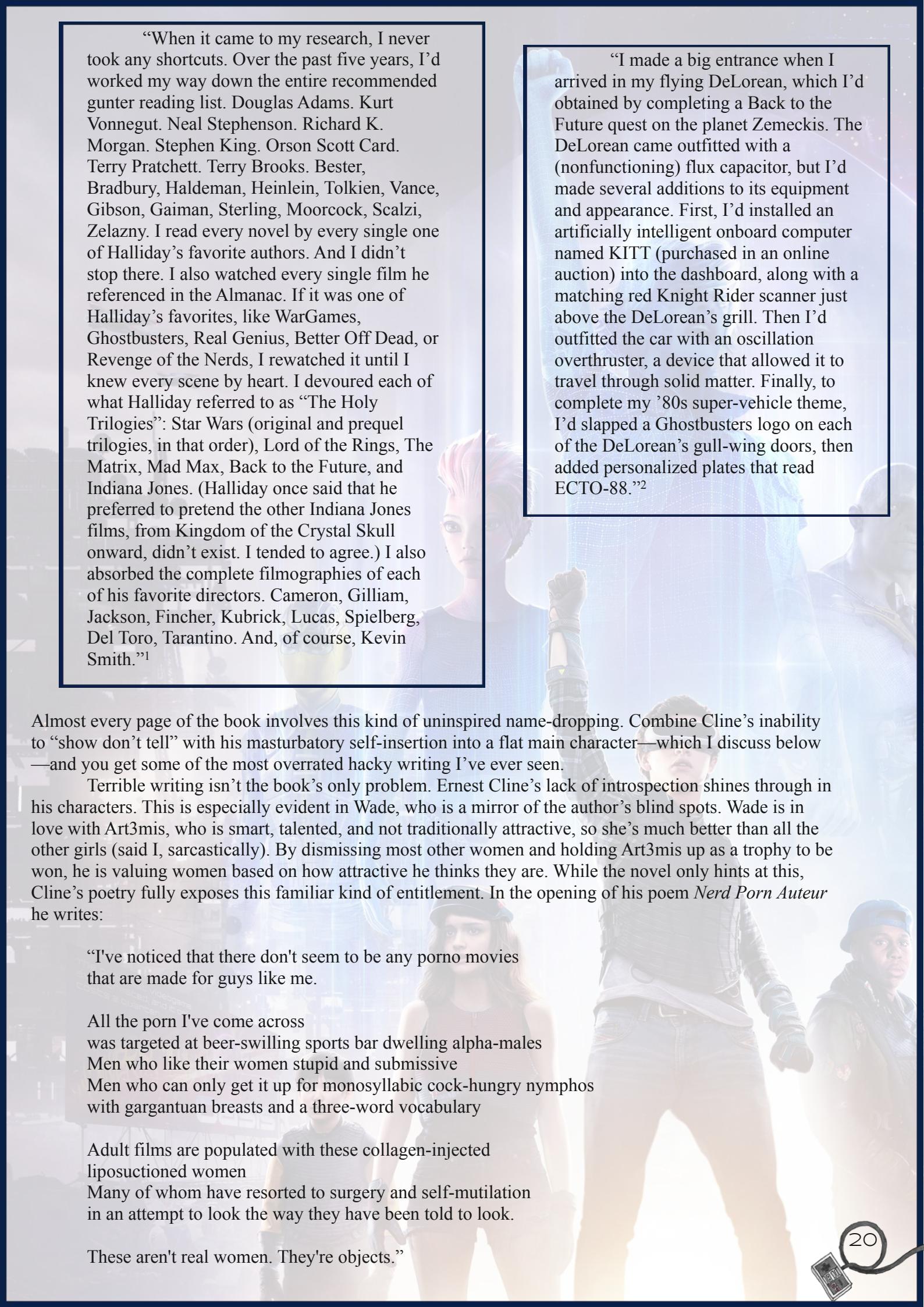
Most of what I know about the novel's non-VR world is pieced together from clues and speculation, as the setting is thrown in as an afterthought and is not the real purpose of Cline's book. *Ready Player One* is less a story and more a mindless love letter to nerd consumerism; it is the loot crate of novels. The book's MacGuffin is an Easter egg (not the colourful chocolate

kind) programmed into the OASIS by the game's deceased creator, James Halliday. Whoever finds the egg first will be given ownership of the OASIS and the massive fortune it has generated. The creator specifies that it won't just be lying around in the game world; to find it you must obtain the copper, jade, and crystal keys and unlock their respective gates. The way to get those keys? Encyclopedic knowledge of Cline's—I mean Halliday's—favourite stuff: 80s media.

Years have passed since the hunt for the egg began and the world has become obsessed with the 80s. The main character, Wade Watts (gamertag Parzival), is an 18 year old who has been after the egg since the beginning, so despite living in 2044, he spends most of his time studying the past. It's a neat concept, but instead of cleverly working pop culture references into the story, the book beats you over the head with long lists of media titles and names. Here are two real excerpts from the book:

A STEVEN SPIELBERG FILM

READY  
PLAYER



"When it came to my research, I never took any shortcuts. Over the past five years, I'd worked my way down the entire recommended gunter reading list. Douglas Adams. Kurt Vonnegut. Neal Stephenson. Richard K. Morgan. Stephen King. Orson Scott Card. Terry Pratchett. Terry Brooks. Bester, Bradbury, Haldeman, Heinlein, Tolkien, Vance, Gibson, Gaiman, Sterling, Moorcock, Scalzi, Zelazny. I read every novel by every single one of Halliday's favorite authors. And I didn't stop there. I also watched every single film he referenced in the Almanac. If it was one of Halliday's favorites, like WarGames, Ghostbusters, Real Genius, Better Off Dead, or Revenge of the Nerds, I rewatched it until I knew every scene by heart. I devoured each of what Halliday referred to as "The Holy Trilogies": Star Wars (original and prequel trilogies, in that order), Lord of the Rings, The Matrix, Mad Max, Back to the Future, and Indiana Jones. (Halliday once said that he preferred to pretend the other Indiana Jones films, from Kingdom of the Crystal Skull onward, didn't exist. I tended to agree.) I also absorbed the complete filmographies of each of his favorite directors. Cameron, Gilliam, Jackson, Fincher, Kubrick, Lucas, Spielberg, Del Toro, Tarantino. And, of course, Kevin Smith."<sup>1</sup>

"I made a big entrance when I arrived in my flying DeLorean, which I'd obtained by completing a Back to the Future quest on the planet Zemeckis. The DeLorean came outfitted with a (nonfunctioning) flux capacitor, but I'd made several additions to its equipment and appearance. First, I'd installed an artificially intelligent onboard computer named KITT (purchased in an online auction) into the dashboard, along with a matching red Knight Rider scanner just above the DeLorean's grill. Then I'd outfitted the car with an oscillation overthruster, a device that allowed it to travel through solid matter. Finally, to complete my '80s super-vehicle theme, I'd slapped a Ghostbusters logo on each of the DeLorean's gull-wing doors, then added personalized plates that read ECTO-88."<sup>2</sup>

Almost every page of the book involves this kind of uninspired name-dropping. Combine Cline's inability to "show don't tell" with his masturbatory self-insertion into a flat main character—which I discuss below—and you get some of the most overrated hacky writing I've ever seen.

Terrible writing isn't the book's only problem. Ernest Cline's lack of introspection shines through in his characters. This is especially evident in Wade, who is a mirror of the author's blind spots. Wade is in love with Art3mis, who is smart, talented, and not traditionally attractive, so she's much better than all the other girls (said I, sarcastically). By dismissing most other women and holding Art3mis up as a trophy to be won, he is valuing women based on how attractive he thinks they are. While the novel only hints at this, Cline's poetry fully exposes this familiar kind of entitlement. In the opening of his poem *Nerd Porn Auteur* he writes:

"I've noticed that there don't seem to be any porno movies that are made for guys like me.

All the porn I've come across  
was targeted at beer-swilling sports bar dwelling alpha-males  
Men who like their women stupid and submissive  
Men who can only get it up for monosyllabic cock-hungry nymphos  
with gargantuan breasts and a three-word vocabulary

Adult films are populated with these collagen-injected  
liposuctioned women  
Many of whom have resorted to surgery and self-mutilation  
in an attempt to look the way they have been told to look.

These aren't real women. They're objects."

Instead of acknowledging the abuse within the porn industry and recognizing that a lot of these women are victims, he throws a tantrum because they are not the types of women that he is attracted to. He even admits this, stating that they are objects, not people. It's a viewpoint that comes from the inability to value women as humans in and of themselves.

Furthermore, near the end of the novel, he shoehorns a token black lesbian character into the story to show how super progressive he is but doesn't see anything wrong with including this line: "Are you a woman? And by that I mean are you a human female who has never had a sex-change operation?" This book is not that old; it came out in 2011. The two interchangeable Japanese characters are also awful stereotypes. They refer to Wade as Parzival-san, even when speaking fluent English, and frequently talk about honour. Cline is too blinded by his own ego to see how regressive his writing is. He has stopped learning because he thinks he knows everything already, and a large following of like-minded geeks listen to him and reinforce his sense of self-importance.

I think the only redeeming quality of this book is that it exposes the ugly side of geek culture by showcasing sexism, racial stereotyping, transphobia, gatekeeping, wrapping up your personal identity in the creations of others, and self-imposed social alienation, all from the perspective of the supposedly victimized geek —the naive underdog who is too caught up in his own pity party to realize what an asshole he is. It is everything I hate about this subculture, and we would be so much better off if people could just grow up and move past it.

Enter Spielberg and his movie magic. The movie takes this mess of a novel and extracts the good wholesome fun, like reaching into a barrel of suspiciously wet tissues and pulling out a single hundred-dollar bill.

The pop culture references translate much better on screen because they're properly integrated into the story and action. One of the puzzles in the book involves Wade being put into the lead role of *WarGames*, where he must recite and act out Matthew Broderick's lines accurately. In the movie, the challenge is set within Stanley Kubrick's *The Shining*, and instead of having to watch Wade recite lines and do a bad imitation of the film, all of Wade's friends participate in the challenge together, where they must survive the movie's iconic evil manifestations while hunting for a key. The scene used in the movie was so much better than the one presented in the book, as the interactions between the characters were entertaining and got real laughs out of me. It was more about enjoying *The Shining* instead of trying to impress people with your ability to recite lines from it.

We did not get to see Wade play *Joust* against a lich, as the first puzzle in the movie was replaced with a

massive race, which was a lot of fun to watch in the theatre and a great way to properly incorporate Wade's DeLorean. It was also one of the few scenes that made you feel immersed in a video game. Speaking of great new additions, TJ Miller builds up the character I-r0k into something original and funny. The formerly minor side character is transformed into an overdone evil bounty hunter whose dorkiness provides some of the better comic relief. He is basically that greedy player we've all encountered who hoards the rewards and is dressed in a style that is far too edgy to be taken seriously. I-r0k himself sports a skull chest piece that lets you see right through his body, and shades his dark purple face in a black hood.

Many key plot elements were changed in the movie to provide more interaction and teamwork between the main characters. In the book, Wade tends to solve every problem himself, so it was nice to see some of his feats worked into his teammate's story lines. This also helped him grow more as a character, into one less isolated. It also flowed well with some of the welcome changes that were made to the ending, which I will not give away here.

All in all, Spielberg's film is a great popcorn flick, but not much more than that. There are many movies out there that explore dystopian worlds in a way that's both more insightful and interesting, such as *The Road* or *Mad Max: Fury Road*. Also, if you are looking for a tribute to gamer and nerd culture, Edgar Wright's *Scott Pilgrim vs. the World* was much better in that respect. *Ready Player One* comes across like most Spielberg films to me; as you're watching it you will probably enjoy getting caught up in the adventure, but ultimately it is not showing you anything new or particularly special—just entertaining you and getting a few laughs. This was a solid 7/10 film; go see it if you're looking for a fun escape at the movies. Don't read the book.



# An Evening With Michelle Obama

By Jessica Mitten-Moore



When you hear the name Michelle Obama, the first association for most of us is the First Lady of the United States. Well, the former First Lady. But Michelle Obama is much more than her time at the White House, and having this valuable position of power made the world aware of just how intelligent, compassionate and selfless she truly is.

I recently had the opportunity to see Michelle speak live in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. The stadium was crowded with supporters from many backgrounds, all of whom were excited to hear her speak and filled the stadium with positive energy. She was interviewed by Cassie Campbell, a hockey player who captained Team Canada to win two gold medals in the 2002 and 2006 Olympics. Cassie interviewed Michelle very well; she was charismatic but also respectful since she allowed Michelle space to speak her mind and complete her thoughts. Michelle discussed her time in the White House, maintaining a work/life balance, future generations, and the power of women.

To begin, Michelle discussed her feelings just before she stepped into the White House. She knew it would put her life and her daughters' lives into the public eye and she had some misgivings. However, she also knew that Barack Obama would be a fantastic president and that having an African-American man as president would be a huge step forward for the country.

Michelle was extremely active as First Lady. She launched four large initiatives to help her country. These were to solve the issue of obesity in children, support service members and veterans, enable people to obtain a post-secondary education, and promote education for girls across the world. In these initiatives "...she has become a role model for women and an advocate for healthy families, service members and their families, higher education, and international adolescent girls education."<sup>1</sup> She made sure she was active in the community while she was First Lady and met with many different citizens from different backgrounds because she

believes that the world is a better place when we listen to a diverse set of voices.

Michelle also tried to make sure that the East Wing of the White House was a positive place, filled with laughter and music. She made a great comment about how one day she had a group of people dancing in a room where Washington's portrait was hung above them. She was sure that if Washington could see them he would be confused or shocked and ask, "Is this what twerking is?" Michelle also expressed the difficulties of the position of First Lady and how she had to have a smart political strategy before she took on public initiatives. Some first ladies were criticized for trying to do too much, while others were criticized for doing too little with their role. As she said this, I immediately thought of the current First Lady, Melania Trump. Many have criticized Melania for not doing much because she doesn't speak out or have much of a positive political role. She most often makes headlines because of what she is wearing or how she decorated the White House. Michelle is extremely proud of being the first African-American First Lady and of what she was able to accomplish in the White House.

Michelle was asked how she was able to be this prominent figure and at the same time a positive force for her family. She explained how she tries to maintain a balance between her home and work life. She wanted her daughters to grow up living as normally as possible. She wanted to be there for them as well as for the country. Michelle spoke candidly that you do have to rely on other people to help you with your work and family. Whether it be help from your own family (her mother was a strong support for Michelle's children), or neighbours that you trust, you should not live your life trying to get by on your own. This trust in community and the importance of family was something that truly shone through as Michelle spoke to the crowd.

Michelle spoke about her daughters growing up and how she learned that all children require support to succeed. We need to encourage our youth and help young girls feel confident in themselves. Michelle is optimistic about the younger generation. She wants all women to know that "we are as able to handle power as any man we know." She described the younger generation as less

patient, not as a belittlement, but instead meaning that they have been taught to be strong and demand change. When asked about the most recent election and how much of the female population did not vote for a woman, Michelle replied that many women still have "those demons in our head that say, 'maybe I'm not ready and maybe she is not ready.'" Michelle ended the reply on a positive note, saying that she is "confident in this next generation." Her message to them is to "be patient with yourselves in this, but don't be too patient." She stressed the importance of women pursuing education. She wants women to get to the point where they have the "privilege to fail like a man". She wants this equality for her daughters and all other women across the world. I loved this comment and instantly related to it.

Michelle ended her discussion with a well-deserved standing ovation of 9,000 people. The conversation with Michelle was shorter than I would have liked, but I left it feeling proud to be a woman and hopeful for the future. Michelle is not naive enough to think that things would change quickly, and she knows that change will not come without hard work, intelligence, and caring about the people around us. I hope with her that the change she believes in will come; we just have to make it happen.



# The Mysterium Experiment:

## The Deja-Visite Team Conjures Ghosts,

### and Leave Forever Haunted



Are you the type of person who would really love to be contacted by entities from beyond, but you just can't bring yourself to believe that the lady from the psychic fair is able to organize touching reunions with dead loved-ones for just \$39.99? Can't shake the suspicion that one of your friends is manipulating the ouija board because they *wish* that the spirit of a nymphomaniac billionaire nun would pierce the veil of death just to tell *them* where she buried the vast fortune she forsook upon taking vows?

The 2015 game *Mysterium* (designed by Oleksandr Nevskiy and Oleg Sidorenko) contains all of the fun of receiving enigmatic missives from the beyond in the controlled, harmless, and comparatively cost-effective environment of a table game, with an estimated 42 minutes of gameplay. *Mysterium* is a cooperative game best played with five to seven people. One player is a ghost character. All of the others are psychics trying to figure out how this ghost has been ‘orribly murdered. It is similar to, but much more elaborate than, the classic game of *Clue*. A suspect, a location, and, of course the instrument of murder, must be determined. This is where the similarity ends, as *Mysterium* has no fixed board. The suspects and locations are determined randomly at the start of the game, changing with each replay. The investigation is facilitated by “visions” sent by “the ghost” in the form of illustrated cards, strewn with complex imagery.

The Deja-Visite crew got together to have a go at playing *Mysterium*. This is what we thought:

#### Megan:

Overall, I had an excellent experience playing *Mysterium*. I am a fan of board games, and really enjoy when they are cooperative. While *Mysterium* is *Clue*-like, it is a vast improvement on the old cabin standard, which I recall reaching fruition a total of twice in my childhood (And I still stand by the belief that those games ended because I left the room and someone looked at my cards).

I found that it did not take much effort to enjoy *Mysterium*, or to be successful at it. It does involve a great deal of attention, and from those in the role of the “psychics”, a certain ability to understand how the ghost is setting out their images. All in all, it is a great game and I would most certainly play again. I would even try my hand at being the ghost and handing out the visions.



### Jessica:

I was the ghost when our group played the game. As the ghost you cannot talk for the entire game. You can only give “visions” in the form of cards, to players in order to help them figure out their clues. You only have a certain amount of cards to pick from, so sometimes it can be frustrating as the ghost if you do not have anything fitting to hand the players. There are times when the players may look at the cards in a different context than you originally intended. This leads the investigators to think you are referencing a different clue. This alludes to the fact that the ghost is confused and their visions are blurry, so the investigators have to sometimes reach to find the correct conclusions.

I actually really enjoy being the ghost and get excited when I give someone a good clue to help them reach the ending more quickly. I do adore most everything about this game except for the ending. The main game of figuring out clues via cards from the ghost is very neat and a great play style, but then the ending is anti-climatic. Even if you do an amazing job helping your team solve all of the clues throughout the game, you may not be able to get them to figure out who killed the ghost if you pull unlucky cards. If your investigators cannot solve the mystery then everyone simply loses the game.

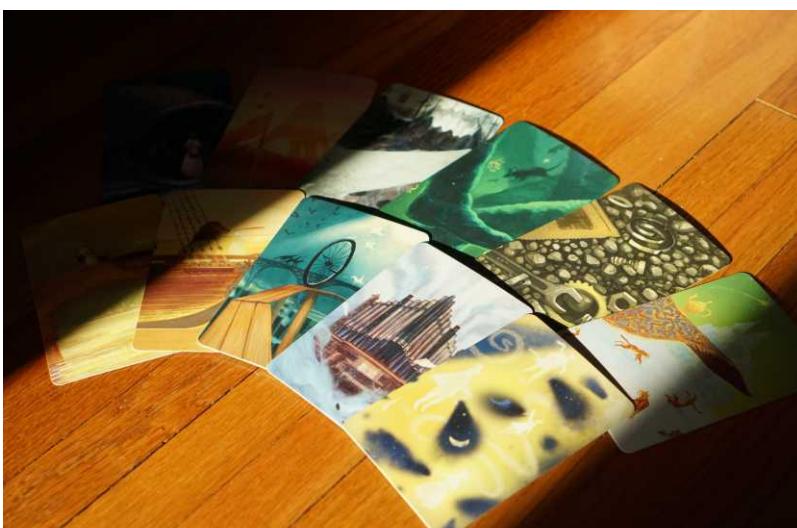
We did end up losing the game when we played but even a loss is enjoyable and pushes you to focus on what you can do in the future in order to help your team out further (knowing all of the rules about the ending would probably help :P). I would definitely recommend this game to any group; it is versatile enough that I think most personalities who enjoy board games would have a fun time solving this mysterium together.



### Jocelyn:

Unlike most everyone else at the table, this was my first time playing *Mysterium*. My first impression as it was brought out and set up was, “Oooooo! Pretty Pictures!” The artwork on all the cards is beautiful. If you have played the game *Dixit*, the styles are very similar. My second thought, after ogling the artwork, was “Ok, how do you play this thing?” I am always happy to have people who know what they are doing at the table when learning a new game and I found this one quite simple to figure out. It’s hard to say how we would have fared if we had all been newbies like me, but I get the feeling that having at an experienced player as the ghost is a huge benefit.

In general the rules, as presented to me by the more experienced players, were easy to follow and generally logical. The gameplay was interesting, with minimal downtime when other people were trying to complete their tasks. Finally, the tasks were challenging but not insurmountable and, while we didn’t end up winning the game, we all had lots of fun.



### Ariadne:

This was my third crack at *Mysterium* in about a three week period, and it's a testament to its replayability that I was looking forward to another go, rather than feeling a bit tired of the experience. I would play it again today, if asked. What lends it such staying power? First, the cards are beautifully illustrated. Particularly the eerie dreamscape-like vision cards used by the ghost to give the player clues. They are loaded with imagery, which allows a reasonable versatility of interpretation, while still making the task quite challenging. Second, the various combinations of rooms, suspects, and weapons gives you plenty of different scenarios to enjoy. Third, playing the role of the ghost changes the game completely, as it presents a new host of challenges. The ghost is expected to be not only silent, but uncommunicative. I played the ghost once in a previous game. I've always been a more or less quiet person, but I found not being able to speak pretty tough. I couldn't shut down my meddlesome facial expressions and body language. Or the occasional sigh of frustration. The choice of ghost really makes for a wild card for the rest of the players.

The game truly depends on the people you play it with. It is engineered so that one strong player can't hijack the gameplay for themselves and carry everyone to victory. The final choice of the ghost's true killer is decided equally by all players, and that judgement is harder or easier depending how well each person did at each stage of the game.

My only criticism would be the same as Jess'. Victory or defeat in the final stage of the game is very much dependant on which cards are dealt to the ghost player. The players only have one shot at their final guess, and if the ghost is dealt absolutely unrelated cards, it doesn't matter if you have the most intuitive and connected players in that group, it is still quite probable that you will lose.

Overall, I had a lot of fun playing, particularly speculating about the personal lives of the suspect on the cards, and laughing at the weird dream-interpretation logic of my fellow players. People notice very different details in the same image, and draw incredibly different conclusions from them.



### Rachel:

I recently purchased *Mysterium* after enjoying it on a couple of occasions at a friend's house, so I had very little experience with running the game when we played it. Unfortunately, this means I messed up one of the rules at the end; I didn't realize the final suspect is chosen by the ghost, rather than randomly. The rules aren't super clear on this, so I had to go to a BoardGameGeek post to confirm it. It is a great game to add to your collection because it's easy to teach the psychic role to new players, and the fact that it's cooperative makes it appealing to people who aren't in the mood for competition. However, the setup can be a bit tedious; I hate digging through the cards to correctly match up the numbers for the ghost's deck, as mistakes can mess up the game.



*Mysterium*'s main element of gameplay, communicating with cards depicting surreal art, is similar to other popular games such as *Dixit*, *Hanabi*, and *Code Names*. These are board games that involve relaying information to your teammates via unorthodox and limited means of communication. They're a lot of fun because they're easy to learn, but have a great level of depth because you need to try to understand how your partner thinks before you give them a clue. Conversely, your partner needs to consider your way of thinking in order to correctly interpret the clue. It makes these games highly collaborative, and impossible for the more experienced players to control all game decisions, which is a flaw that many cooperative games have.

# Tomb Raider: Comparison Piece

(Contains Mild Spoilers)

By Jessica Mitten-Moore



I was so excited when I heard that a new *Tomb Raider* film was in development, and that it was based on the 2013 *Tomb Raider* video game published by Square Enix Co. When I played the well-received game I was instantly taken with it; Square Enix brought to life an intense and polished game that focused on a strong female protagonist, Lara Croft. To be honest, I had never fully appreciated the character of Lara Croft as much as I did in this game. In the past she has been oversexualized and not as independent.

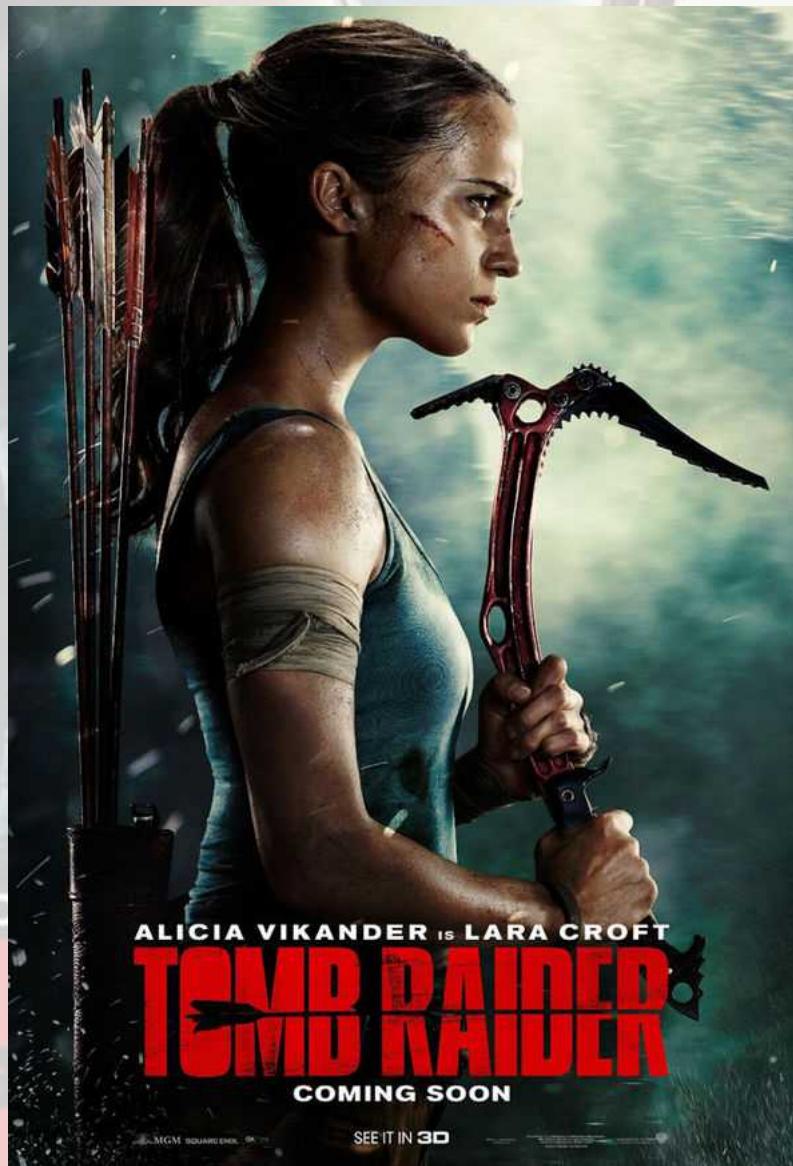
The game introduced a unique cast of characters who trusted Lara enough to follow her to almost certain death. An interesting storyline is brought to life as you learn about Lara's past and grasp just how intelligent, charismatic and athletic she is. The new movie tried to depict these aspects of Lara's character and failed. The Lara Croft of the film is not educated and seems to get all of her intelligent ideas and problem solving methods from her father's journal. In addition, the film cuts out the entire cast of friends who should have travelled with Lara.

In the game, Lara ends up searching for a tomb and archaeological mysteries because of a story her best friend, Sam, tells her. This search leads Lara to the island of Yamatai. In the film Lara winds up on Yamatai as well, but for a completely different reason. In the movie she is searching for her lost father. This bored me. We have already dealt with daddy issues in past *Tomb Raider* lore and I wanted something that showed her as a unique and capable individual. The film made sure you knew that Lara was strong, athletic and that family was everything to her, but I felt she didn't have too much of a personality. The film also spends far too much time in London as they try to make you get to know Lara. They do multiple flashbacks, which never seem to work well because they interrupt the narrative. Needless to say, the way the director tries to introduce Lara as a tough girl who can survive on her own is not done well. The movie also felt bland in parts in comparison to the most recent *Tomb Raider* video games. The villain is not well executed, there were some overt situations where it was obvious that the film wants you to think he is a really bad guy, while there are others that try to make you sympathize with him. Neither of these were pulled off well.

Now, I am probably being overly critical of the film because I did like the game so much but there were also some things that made me a little giddy because they were direct callbacks to the game. For instance, Lara's boat crashes onto the island of Yamatai in both the game and the film. The imagery of Lara crashing into the water and her washing ashore are so alike that I got chills. Also, Lara falls into a river and reaches an old, rusted-out plane on the edge of a waterfall in the film, which is directly taken from the game. It may sound a little gruesome, but Lara gets a horrific injury in the beginning of the game when an arrow-sized piece of wood goes through the side of her abdomen. In the game she rips it out of her stomach, which had me screaming, "Why did you pull that out of you?!" until I realized that, yes, it is a video game, and she is a superhero-like character who regenerates health. Yet in the film, she ends up getting a very similar injury and pulls out the wood exactly like in the game. While this isn't realistic, it does make me happy in its similarity to the content of the game. In the movie she gets her wound stitched up like an ordinary human would, but she is up and at' em only hours after she has been helped.

Lara's look was the most accurate depiction in the movie. Her gear, such as her bow and climbing axe, look very similar to what she uses in the game. Her clothing, her wounds, and her movements were almost identical to what was seen in the game as well. There is even a callback to the older games at the end of the film when Lara changes her clothes, braids her hair and switches to pistols. Alicia Vikander, who plays Lara, did do a good job in bringing this character to life. If only she had a better script.

All in all, I would suggest that one should play the video game rather than watching the film. It has a better storyline and a superior Lara Croft. If you still want to see the film, I would recommend waiting until it is out of theatres. I was disappointed that I spent the money to see this in theatres when so many other movies are out there right now. If you have played the game, get ready to have mixed emotions about the film. I was both dissatisfied and delighted at the same time. Either way, both the film and the movie do show a strong Lara Croft, just in different ways.



# THE REBIRTH AND ADAPTATION OF GREEK MYTH IN XENA: WARRIOR PRINCESS

BY MEGAN NEGRYCH

Mythology is continually being reinvented in popular media, from young adult fiction books and comic books (*Percy Jackson*, *The Wicked + The Divine*, *God Complex*), to movies and television (*Wrath of the Titans*, *Atlantis*, *American Gods*). Between 1995-2001, Saturday afternoons were reserved for *Xena: Warrior Princess*, starring Lucy Lawless and Renee O'Conner. A popular action/adventure series, the show focuses on the exploits of Xena and Gabrielle, a mighty warrior woman and a peace-loving bard. *Xena: Warrior Princess* reimagined and re-popularized an assortment of mythical stories and figures, focusing largely on those of Greek origin, but in later seasons venturing out into other world mythologies (at one point, Xena meets Hanuman and embodies Shiva, the Hindu goddess of war and destruction). In the following examination, we will focus on three episodes from the series: "Prometheus" (Season One, Episode Eight), "Hooves and Harlots" (Season One, Episode Ten), and "For Him the Bell Tolls" (Season Two, Episode Sixteen) - and the way they reimagine and adapt three major myths and mythological figures to meaningfully align with modern day pop culture.

"Great is my power and wide my fame among mortals and in heaven; I am the Goddess Cypris: All men that look upon the light of the sun, all that dwell beneath the Euxine Sea and the boundaries of Atlas are under my sway: I bless those that respect my power, and disappoint those who are not humble toward me."<sup>1</sup>

*Aphrodite, Hippolytus, Euripides*

Aphrodite is recognized as the goddess of love, though not necessarily love with a happy ending. There are many facets to her realm of love, such as true love, spiteful love, jealous love, and tragic love, among others. She is also "the patroness of smith craft and the mechanical arts,"<sup>2</sup> and married to Hephaestus, the god of smiths. "Aphrodite can subject to the law of desire all creatures that are alive and that can move: the gods, mortals, and all the animals of the land and seas;"<sup>3</sup> what this means is that her control over love can manipulate all living entities. Whether they are completely willing or not is up for debate.

Aphrodite could inspire love in anyone, even the gods, which has saved her in the past. This is apparent when we look at what happened when her husband, Hephaestus, caught her sleeping with Ares, the god of war. Having planted a trap for the two lovers, he caught them red-handed and put them before the other Olympians to face judgement for their betrayal. Instead of her being punished, Aphrodite's beauty sways the judgement of the gods in her favour. As a reward, she gifts Hermes with her attentions: "[Aphrodite rewarded] Hermes for his help by sleeping with him and bearing Hermaphroditus."<sup>4</sup> It is apparent that Aphrodite greatly influences the lives of mortals and immortals alike, either in a positive manner by making their love true and lasting, or in a negative manner by urging them to act on their lust without fully thinking of the consequences her actions will have. Being able to influence the lives of both mortals and the gods through love and lust makes Aphrodite very powerful, and she is not afraid to use that power, especially when it plays either to her advantage or keeps her from being held accountable for her actions.

She is also known as a jealous goddess, who cannot stand when others are placed before her. Take for example the case of King Cinyras who, when he "boasted that his daughter Smyrna was more beautiful than Aphrodite, the goddess punished him by causing him to sleep with Smyrna."<sup>5</sup> She acts on her jealousy quite often. Aphrodite reacts in a similar manner when she catches Ares, her lover, in bed with another woman, Eos. As revenge she curses "her lover [Ares] with a constant longing for younger mortals."<sup>6</sup> Other jealous reactions see Aphrodite turn people into old women, birds, and stone. While Aphrodite can cause jealousy in others, she herself can also experience jealousy, giving her 'human' qualities which relate her more closely to her worshipers.

Aphrodite is a recurring character on *Xena: Warrior Princess*, showing up as both helpful support and hindering foil. To see a good example of the modern Aphrodite in *Xena*, we examine “For Him the Bell Tolls”. Aphrodite is angered when some of her dedicated temples are going to be knocked down after the successful elopement of the children of two city-states. Their love was brought about by Aphrodite’s son, Eros, to whom she sulks: “That’s way harsh [Eros]!! I’m Aphrodite the Goddess of Love. Temples are my Kahuna; the way I know whether I’m happening or not.”<sup>7</sup> After learning this, she sends the bumbling warrior Joxer, an often-comedic tagalong to Xena and Gabrielle, with a bell for the princess of one of the city-states. Due to a spell cast by Aphrodite, whenever the bell rings, it turns Joxer into a skilled, smooth-talking, swashbuckling warrior, while also placing the princess under one of Aphrodite’s love spells. The goal is for this to break apart the planned marriage and save Aphrodite’s temples from destruction: “Who would want to look at a stupid river when you can look at me?”<sup>8</sup>

The Aphrodite that the viewer sees in *Xena* is a knockout, blonde, curly-haired, Playboy Bunny-built, surfer girl in a sheer negligee ensemble — her mantle of desire — which is linked to the shifting views on sexuality and sexual attraction in modern society. Her sexy appearance in *Xena* is the modern equivalent of the type of appearance she had in ancient Greek culture. Jealousy is still a major characteristic of *Xena*’s version of Aphrodite. As she states: “I can whip up a major jealousy rage in no time, all [she needs] is an accomplice.”<sup>9</sup> It plays a large part in breaking the lovers apart before the ceremony, but also leads to her downfall



when the quarrel rolls into one of her temples, bringing destruction in its wake. “Love isn’t just about happy endings. There’s also jealous love, and unrequited love, and tragic love. And when you strip away all the tinsel it’s really just about hormones, isn’t it?”<sup>10</sup> The repercussions of the spell weigh heavily on her, giving her the chance to reflect on the fact that while she influences love, lust, and desire, it is impossible to tell how it will affect the world around her or control the outcome. There is a sense of pain around *Xena*’s Aphrodite; even though we do not explore the events that have shaped her character in the series, it is obvious that the goddess of love carries deep wounds from her own past tragic loves. These shape many of her thoughts and choices, especially when confronting someone with little tragedy so far in their life, such as Gabrielle who still has a very naïve, idealistic idea of love:

- Gabrielle: Love is soft and gentle, it’s not violent and cruel.
- Aphrodite: You don’t know much about love, do you?<sup>11</sup>

Female characters have a strong presence in *Xena: Warrior Princess*, as they do in Greek mythology and history. The Amazons of ancient Greek mythology were merciless female warriors devoted to the worship of the chaste Artemis, goddess of the hunt. They were said to be the daughters of the God of War, Ares, which would attest to their prowess in battle and their war-like iconography. Amazon society was very different from that of the ancient Greeks who wrote the myths surrounding them, because it was a matriarchal society in which “the women did the fighting and governing.”<sup>12</sup> Their society was reputed as “having no regard for justice or decency”, largely because it was in direct opposition to the ancient Greek norm of patriarchy and “civilized” city life. The most popular explanation of the name of the Amazons is that the Greek word meant “without breasts, [breastless],”<sup>13</sup> because it was said that the Amazon women removed one breast during childhood so that their skills with a bow or javelin would not be impeded. Other accounts say that the Amazons merely “pressed down their right breast to ensure that they would not be hindered from throwing their javelins.”<sup>14</sup>

... the Amazons of the Doeantian plain were by no means gentle, well-conducted folk; they were brutal and aggressive, and their main concern in life was war. War, indeed, was in their blood, daughters of Ares they were and of the Nymph Harmonia, who lay with the gold in the depths of the Acmonian Wood and bore him girls who fell in love with fighting."

-The Voyage of Argo, *Apollonius of Rhodes*<sup>15</sup>

In Amazon society, any men who were not merely captives brought for procreation and then killed, likely would have been relegated to the house and most likely ignored. One of the most well-known Amazons is Hippolyta, the Queen on the Amazons who had in her possession the Belt of Ares as "a symbol of her supremacy over the others."<sup>16</sup> Hippolyta was accidentally killed by her younger sister Penthesilea, "the tallest and most beautiful of the Amazons, [who] shone among her twelve maidens like the moon above the stars."<sup>17</sup> Penthesilea left her home afterward and with "her body guard [of] twelve Amazons set forth from the wide streams of Thermodon, and rode to Troy"<sup>18</sup> because she "cared no longer for her own life, and desired to fall gloriously in battle."<sup>19</sup> This goes against the statement that the Amazons were cruel and brutal. It makes it obvious that they had a strong sense of family, loyalty, and remorse. This included a sense of honour toward the dead and an obligation to pay for their own wrongdoings, even if it mattered mostly within the Amazon society and nowhere beyond those borders.

The Amazons of the *Xena* universe first appear in the episode "Hooves and Harlots". In this episode, the death of an Amazon Princess, Terrais, brings about a conflict that could cause war between the Amazon nation and the Centaurs. When Xena and Gabrielle wander into Amazon territory and claim their peace with the tribe, there is an attack in which the Princess Terrais is killed by a centaur's arrow, though Gabrielle attempts to save her. By doing this, Gabrielle earns Terrais' rite of cast, which entitles her to everything the princess possessed in life: her weapons, her home, her title, and most importantly, the task of enacting vengeance upon her killer. This episode offers a close and informative look at the established Amazon society, their behaviour, beliefs, and judicial system—which are well defined and presented in *Xena*—in a modern interpretation and adaptation centred on female strength and skills. Before the attack, Terrais tells Gabrielle "it is a man's world, Gabrielle, not because it should be, but because we let them have it. It's based on a woman's weakness . . . The Amazon world is based on truth, on a woman's individual strength."<sup>20</sup> This alludes to the idea that the Amazons choose to live their lives in the manner they do; they wish to be independent and strong, able to run their own lives instead of having a role assigned by gender.

During the funerary rites for Terrais the Amazons dance around a large fire, a display of their strength, their mourning, and their devotion to Artemis in sending her their dead. The dance itself is highly aggressive, but controlled and precise where the entirety of the ensemble is concerned, much as they would be in combat. This indicated that they earn their position in society through training, hard work, and experience, which means their leader is the most skilled fighter. In this case, it is Terrais' sister, Melosa. At the same time, the Amazons in *Xena* are not aggressive and brutal without cause. In this instance, they demand for the death of the one who killed their Princess, the popular 'an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth' mentality: "by Amazon law you must pay for your crime . . . our law also allows you to speak before the sentence is carried out."<sup>21</sup> In this case it is difficult, seeing that the accused killer is the son of the centaur leader, and his death would be an open call for war in the already uneasy balance between the two factions. In the Amazon nation depicted here, there is also, as



with the Amazons of Greek myth, a sense of loyalty to each other, a bond of family and friendship that is respected: “What you did only an Amazon would do for another Amazon. I want you to take my rite of cast.”<sup>22</sup> No men appear in the *Xena* Amazon Nation because it is believed that men are misguided creatures who think they hold the power when it is really women who make it all possible. The Amazons of the *Xena* universe establish a society of empowered women closely related to the independent women of the modern day. By establishing formal law and rites, and in humanizing them, it softens the brutal attributes of the Amazon society as detailed in the previous mythological record. It looks at the society through a woman’s eyes and shows that it is about strength and independence as well as communal support.

While the Greek gods are notorious for taking their wrath out on mankind, there are also those who pit themselves against the gods to ensure the survival of mankind. Prometheus tricked Zeus into choosing the fat and bones as the parts of the animal that would be sacrificed to the gods. Zeus, in his anger at the deception, took fire away from mankind, casting them into cold and darkness. Prometheus was angered that the gods would do such a thing and stole fire from the Hearth of Hestia and gave it back to man, along with the ability for them to heal themselves. Enraged that he had again been tricked and betrayed by Prometheus, who usually took a neutral stance in all things, Zeus had the titan chained to a rock and sent a vulture, or an eagle, to pick at his liver. It would then heal itself overnight only to be devoured again by the gigantic bird, keeping him in excruciating pain. Prometheus was willing to sacrifice everything he had, even his freedom, in order to give mankind the ability to fend for themselves in the harsh world.

The dark-winged hound of Zeus will come, the savage eagle,  
An uninvited banqueter, and all day long  
Will rip your flesh in rags and feast upon your liver,  
Gnawing it black.

-Hermes, *Prometheus Bound*, *Aeschylus*<sup>23</sup>

Accounts vary on the number of years that passed before Heracles freed Prometheus from his torment. It was anywhere from ten to 30,000 years after he was chained to the rock by Zeus. By this time, Zeus was quite ready to forgive Prometheus for his betrayal but stipulated that he “would have to wear a ring with a stone from the mountain to be reminded of his punishment.”<sup>24</sup> In freeing Prometheus and pleading his case to Zeus, Heracles made it possible for the titan to once again help mankind as he had done before, and he continued to share the whole of his knowledge with mortals.

Prometheus is a symbol of ingenuity and hope. He sought only to make life more bearable for the mortals on earth who did not have the advantages given to the Olympian gods. He made life easier for mankind by ensuring that Zeus would allow them to have the most nourishing parts of the animal, even if it caused Zeus to distrust him. He gave them the means to survive, even if it cost him everything he had. Heracles becomes an even greater hero to the mortal world by releasing Prometheus from his enslavement, as his actions helped to ensure the continued survival of man. Without additional aid, Heracles helped restore mankind’s knowledge and hope, and therefore took an even greater position of social and mythological importance than that which he already had achieved from his many tasks and accomplishments.

Before *Xena: Warrior Princess*, the character of Xena had appeared in *Hercules: The Legendary Journeys*, another popular Saturday afternoon show based on Greek mythology. The first *Xena/Hercules* crossover is simply “Prometheus”, which occurs in the *Xena* continuum. This episode begins with Hera once again chaining Prometheus to his rock, which as a result takes away fire and the ability of mortals to heal themselves.

-Prometheus: Hera, this won’t work. You’ll never break the spirit  
of mankind  
-Hera: Yes, I will, as they lose your gifts, they’ll lose hope.<sup>25</sup>  
 (“Prometheus”)

Without these gifts, mankind begins to lose hope as Hera predicts. As soon as it happens, Xena and Gabrielle set off in search of an oracle that Xena was told to seek in this exact situation. To free Prometheus, Xena is informed that she must make the ultimate sacrifice, which she is immediately willing to do. She heads to Vulcan Mountain and the Forge of Hephaestus where she finds the key, a

sword forged by the god himself, to free Prometheus and give his gifts back to the world. It is important that Xena is the first to arrive at the forge and get the key, but Hercules<sup>26</sup> is not far behind, and is unwilling to let her take on the burden of freeing the titan. This interaction symbolizes the struggle for equality that men and women have in modern society, as they each try to take on the harder and more dangerous part of the work. Xena does not give in and keeps the key herself, escaping from Heracles. She forges on with her plan to head to the mountain and do what she must to bring light, healing, knowledge, and hope back to the world, because mankind is lost without those gifts.

“Prometheus, you waste your affections on mankind. There are other creatures far more worthy of respect;”<sup>27</sup> here Hera refers to the fact that in the modern world we take everything for granted because it is all so easily accessible, so we fail to consider how much hard work our simple daily pleasures, like heat and food, used to be to acquire. We take medicine as a shortcut instead of letting our own bodies take care of themselves. Xena is willing to risk her very life to regain these abilities for man, and with Hercules’ help, they free Prometheus once again and restore his gifts to the mortal world. When they each take on an equal portion of the task and overcome the barriers between them, Hercules notes that “[w]e do make a good team”<sup>27</sup> by working together to overcome all of the obstacles. Through all this, they prove that both men and women are needed to correct things in the world; neither can work completely alone no matter how strong they are or how much they have accomplished on their own. In today’s world, we often forget that we must work together, but sometimes it is still seen as the man’s duty to take on the ‘difficult’ tasks. As our worldview evolves, having Xena, the independent warrior woman, take on the riskier role of saviour, is empowering for the audience and shows that everyone can do important things.



These three episodes of *Xena: Warrior Princess* stand as testament to the way in which Greek mythology has been reborn and adapted to suit our modern, pop culture-centred society. Aphrodite and her mantle of desire has become Aphrodite the surfer-style Playboy Bunny. The Amazons are a well-organized feminist society ruled from within, with their own ideals and methods, and the rescue of Prometheus must be accomplished by both men and women working together as a team to restore the gifts granted to mortals. While the heart of the Greek myths remains, the myths are altered to fit modern sensibilities so that the show can more easily relate to its audience. Of course, it is ambitious to say that the depiction of the heroes, cultural groups, and deities are perfect in relation to their former selves, but they are shown in an entertaining, thought-provoking manner. *Xena: Warrior Princess* has provided hours of entertainment, and more facts and stories from ancient Greek culture than most people would know on their own without the influence of pop culture. Outside of these three episodes, there are many more concerned with specific myths and characters including the Bacchae, Orpheus, Ares, Helen and Paris, and a completely different look at the character of Callisto who appears frequently as an opposing force. As such, pop culture, especially examples like *Xena: Warrior Princess*, foster an interest not only in learning the classics but in reviving and re-imagining their essence to inspire new generations to learn.

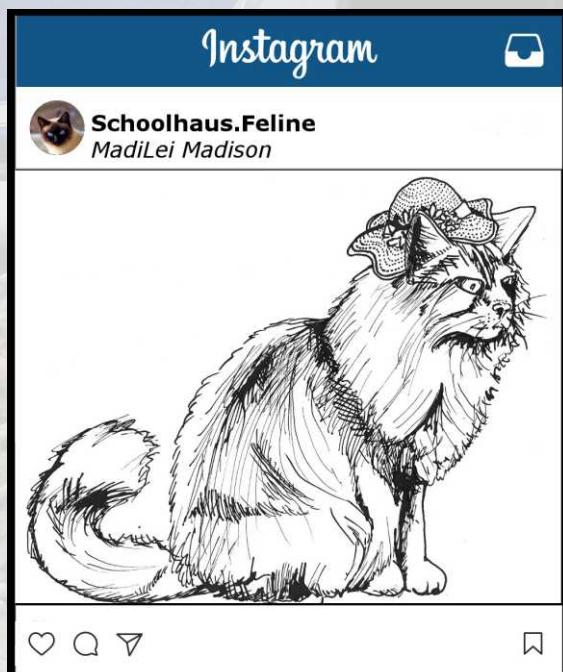
# MadiLei Madison: The School of Feline Patterning

By Ariadne Bissett

Dear readers, this week I must continue the strange saga of my investigation into the sudden disappearance of elusive “lifestylist” and self-proclaimed “apex predator” MadiLei Madison. When I last spoke with you I had been shocked to find MadiLei’s forest retreat not only destroyed but also abandoned. I had resolved to discover what happened to her. I tracked down some of MadiLei’s former disciples who had discovered her new location (with the help of the squirrels, naturally).

Here I am now at the end of a story, about to give you an account from the beginning. I am covered in scratches, a cat bite and I think a bit of squirrel urine. Despite my injuries and weariness, I feel the need to get all of this story down before the strangeness of what just occurred starts to feel dreamlike and unbelievable, even to myself. At the beginning of my narrative, you will find me nestled deep in the back-side of Regina’s East end, in its most belligerent traffic quadrant, in a mini-mall, across from a frogurt place. The florid patterned sign in the window of the small boxy building reads “The Schoolhaus Feline”.

I was feeling a lot of trepidation as I entered this building. I must admit that I put off this encounter for almost a week under the guise of needing to do more research. I was astonished to find an active social media presence for “The Schoolhaus Feline” (formerly “The School of Feline Patterning”, formerly “Der Katzperienze”), given MadiLei’s past avoidance of technology. The “Schoolhaus” has an Instagram account full of pictures of cats, and noble-looking portraits of cats donning various items of headwear. I was astonished at her rapid mastery of filters, given that I often spend twenty minutes or more agonising over the right one, only to feel that the colour in the picture is still off.



I sent several messages to the Instagram account for “The Schoolhaus Feline”. They were all answered with what seemed to be bot responses in a disturbingly cheerful tone. For example:

“Hey babe! Thanks for your interest in the “The Schoolhaus Feline” We would sure love to see you at our first class in the art of Feline Patterning open to the public. It’s called ‘Come on, Why can’t You Just Chill Already?!’ Your high and tight heinie’s there, right? Mucho (self) love, - MadiLei”





I was therefore unsure if any of the messages were reaching MadiLei herself.

Many of the group's likes and follows came from people around the globe who seemed unaffiliated with the group. Who doesn't like cats in hats? However, I recognised some of the names in the group from driver's licenses and other IDs I had found hidden in MadiLei's forest retreat.

I tried sending Instagram messages to these people as well. It proved less than productive. All the answers were eerily similar. One woman, who we will call "Becky", I remembered from MadiLei's days in the forest. I had done a small interview with her, in preparation for a larger piece on MadiLei's survivalist movement. It never really panned out given the sudden and mysterious disillusionment and dispersal of this group. I messaged Becky asking what had happened to MadiLei since then? Were she and the others alright? The only answer Becky gave was:

"WE ARE TRANSCENDENT."

Other favourite answers I received included:

"We are purrfection."

"I am becoming the apex predator, I am transforming."

And my personal favourite:

"You are a rodent."

While the answers were telling, I had to face the fact that to find the whole truth I would have to walk into the cats' den.

I had chosen to make my visit unannounced, since I was unsure of how else to contact MadiLei. My fingers shook. They didn't seem to want to grasp the paw shaped door handle.

Once inside, the space was astonishingly light and airy. I had a moment to wonder where all the money to rent this space, and to renovate it into a feline pleasure palace, came from. The walls were lined with climbable carpeting, ledges, tunnels and softly bedded sleeping nooks. Toys dangled from the ceiling every few square feet, and genuine-looking furs and sheepskin had been strewn about the floor. Right in the middle of the polished wood floor, was MadiLei herself. Her eyes were closed, her legs folded, and everywhere, curled at her feet, in her lap, surrounding her on the floor, were cats of all shapes, sizes, colours, staring unblinking at me. On her shoulder perched a siamese cat. It was the fattest cat I have ever seen. Too fat to move, I thought, but then it hopped down from her shoulder with uncanny grace and slunk over to where I stood. It then proceeded to purr, and rub its cheeks on my legs in a manner that might have been endearing, except that every other cat in the room was still staring, following my every movement, even as I shuffled uncomfortably away from the purring siamese. I saw that its claws were out. Suddenly, it hooked its extended claws into my pant leg and proceeded to climb with demonic speed, shifting its considerable weight onto my shoulder, then, claws still out, onto my head. I yelled, and almost threw the cat off, but I felt the claws dig in, sending a threat that was unmistakable: Move again and receive a face full of needles.

MadiLei opened her eyes.

"Darling," she said, "I've missed you. But I knew you would come. In the end, the prey can never resist the hypnotic eyes of the predator."

Some of the cats sauntered casually away, finding sunny spots to lie in, or settling into one of the cozy cat beds mounted at various heights throughout the room. I could now see that, far from her previous dress of

rough and badly self-made plant materials, MadiLei was outfitted in high-end yoga gear, a silky vintage-looking purple hair wrap, and matching robe.

I was beginning to sweat, but not due to the slightly uncomfortable warmth of the room. I was unsure what I had been expecting, but the menace of the encounter thus far was disturbing. MadiLei had always been strange, but she had never before been threatening.

I asked “Can you do something to help me?” The cat on my head already seemed bored with the exchange and I could feel pinpricks playfully dancing across my cheeks.

She smiled, her eyes widening. “Yes! You, *and* this *sad world* full of scurrying prey!”

I suddenly felt that choosing a career that had me willingly, nay eagerly, following this cat-worshipping maniac into an enclosed space of her choosing, made me the least sane being in the room. But I *had* chosen to be here when I could have simply abandoned writing the story after the easy, comfortable byline about MadiLei as an eccentric and amusing lifestyle guru dissolved into insanity. “Do it,” I thought to myself. “Do it for The Readers.” I hoped that, as a result my face wouldn’t become an uncomfortably sentient pincushion.

I asked her, “What happened MadiLei? What made you abandon your ‘commitment to nature’ for *this*? ” I gestured to the lululemon outfit, the slickly decorated city studio. “All of this, well, kind of basic shit?” At that, the claws around my face raked very gently upwards. But I was determined to go on. “And what about . . . toxins and so on? Aren’t you worried anymore that the WiFi is rerouting your thoughts to NASA satellites? What about connecting to Gaia and so on? ‘Burrowing into her womb’?”

“My dear,” she replied coolly, “I know now that those are the thoughts of prey. Running, burrowing. Learning that something new *might* kill us, running away from that. Then it’s something else. Always running and burrowing away from civilization, away from technology. I have learned better. The true apex predator does not run from new and powerful things. It adapts. It seizes that power for itself.” Gesturing to the reclining company of felines she went on, “my muses have always striven to be at the apex of power. Today the technology of the internet, ‘social media’, provides my dearest ones with the greatest platform for cat worship the world has ever known.”

She gestured at the cat I was wearing like an oversized beach hat. “Misspurrfection, my inspiration and teacher has a job for you to do, before you receive any more wisdom from us.” She beamed.

I was about to boldly demand “What are you maniacs up to?”, and surely would have, except that due to an involuntary reaction to what I saw next, it came out less as a bold exclamation, more an unintelligible moan of horror. A small squeak from the rafters drew my attention upward, though it was immensely difficult to turn my head upward with the large tensed form, still clinging malignantly to my face. In a birdcage sat a pitifully frightened squirrel, barely able to move from terror. A long rope connected the cage to a hook in the wall, suggesting that it could be lowered or raised at the pleasure of the squirrel’s jailers.

MadiLei seemed to have less than a moment to spare to glance up at the diminutive prisoner. “A spy, who should have left well enough alone.” was her only comment.

Then she pulled out a sleek looking phone from inside her voluminous hair wrap. Without looking at the screen, she sent what seemed like a lengthy text. About ten seconds passed while she just stared at me, not answering any questions, before a giant cat flap, large enough for any size of human, opened up in the wall. Ten humans crawled through. I hadn’t noticed the opening until now, perhaps because of a myriad of distractions, or the fact that it blended seamlessly into the wall.

The humans arched their backs awkwardly, in mimicry of cat-like movement, and padded, four legged to various seemingly pre-designated stations around the room. I recognized many of them from MadiLei’s previous group, but one or two seemed to be recent recruits. The humans posed and stared like the cats.

“You see, since my return to the *real* world, I’ve caught up on our previous little collaborations and, Ariadne, I can’t help but laugh at myself!” And then she did laugh. For a long time. No one else felt like joining in. “I come off as . . . well, a maniac!” She smiled at me in a friendly fashion. Then her face was serious and sincere. “I want to set the record straight. So does Misspurrfection.”

My head was hotter and sweatier than ever, and my neck ached from the weight of the cat-lump thereon. With a painful *jerk* the lump leapt off, displaying the inexplicable grace of a wild cougar. Swiping another cat out of its desired berth in MadiLei’s lap, it then settled there with a self-satisfied expression.

MadiLei’s face changed to display utter bliss and relaxation, I would have almost mistaken it for a true smile. When she spoke, her voice was as sweet and airy as cotton candy floating away on a summer breeze. “Missy and I will write your next article about us for you! Isn’t that a wonderful idea? You get the month off! More Ariadne time, less work. Bleah, work. Amirite pussies?” She and the other humans in the room mimicked throwing up. It seemed that she was back onto a train of thought that they could get behind. One of the cats

coughed up a hairball, possibly in sympathy with all the horking.

"We're just a chill group darling. We just want to chill, and hang out, and be fabulous with our sweet, fuzzy kitties. And that's what you're going to say about us, little mouse." There was an edge behind the nauseating cool girl tone that had coloured her last statement.

"Guess what? We teach a class! You're going to give it a fantastic review! Yay!" she added brightly, clapping her hands. "Being positive about ourselves only goes so far in the age of look at me, me, me," she went on sagely. "We need a trusted voice to



give us a bump, and reassure those cute little readers of yours that I've shed my tree bark panties once and for all. Good riddance to chafed pussy." There were a few sycophantic laughs.

Then, I saw the grotesque Misspurrfection's ears prick up. After a second, I heard it too, a faint screech... screech.

The cat and I looked up at the same time. All of the others seemed momentarily unaware. The tiny squirrel had been availing itself of my distracting presence to swing its cage toward the thick rope tying it to the ceiling. It had stretched its tiny body out through a barely large enough gap in the cage, and grabbed the supporting rope. It was straining with all its might to keep the cage close to the rope whilst swivelling its hips, desperately attempting to squeeze its hind end through the bars before losing its grip.

I bolted first, which was the only thing that allowed me to reach the rope and unwind its mooring. As I attempted to lower the cage, claws and teeth sunk into my shoulder temporarily, before using me as a launching point to reach the rope. However, I could see that the squirrel had already wiggled its way free, and was bounding along the rafters. So I let the rope fly free. Misspurrfection went soaring into the astonished and thereafter very painfully clawed arms of a human disciple, and the cage fell with a resounding crash, scattering humans and cats alike. I dodged my way to the exit, barely noticing a tiny weight dropping onto my shoulder as I wrenched open the door.

My neck still aches. My shoulder may be infected. I also have a new little friend who will not leave my house willingly. I do not have the heart to kick him out. He sleeps in my former sock drawer.

Despite the fact that I helped a prisoner escape, and assaulted what seems to be the true mastermind of their movement, I received an email this morning with an article apparently introduced in my voice, on the art of Feline Patterning:

*Most cherished and valuable Readers. It is fortuitous that your softly blinking eyes should light upon this most prestigious and important publication's luminescently glowing digital pages. I am afraid that your erudite appetites must await next week for the most momentous tale of our mutual mentor MadiLei Madison's inspiration and transformation. I am positively gutted that I must wait another week to recount the harrowing tale of the rise of MadiLei's marvelous muse, Misspurrfection. It is a tale of struggle and self knowledge which will uplift and outspire you. I created that word, this tale moves me so much. Outspire: Rather than moving you inwardly, it moves you outwards to storm the battlefields of the world with its precious knowledge ready to spew out of your overflowing brains. They are such momentous tales, in fact that they require an article of their own. This week, I will gift you with MadiLei's first lesson in her new philosophy! She calls it Feline Patterning. I hope that this tidbit will whet your appetites, and sustain you awhile! I was fortunate enough to get this first lesson at MadiLei's new "Schulhaus von Katze" [Formerly "The Schoolhaus Feline", formerly "The School of Feline Patterning", formerly "Der Katzperienze".] from MadiLei herself! Let me tell you, my chill factor has gone up tenfold since practicing with her! Read on!*

## Feline Patterning: Just chill, yo.

By MadiLei Madison and Misspurrfection

Sweethearts. A lot has happened to me since we had our last little talk. I want to say: I'm sorry.

I'm sorry that I led so many of you to spend -20°C nights outside in a quinzee with nothing more than your own sense of self-satisfaction to keep you warm.

I'm sorry that so many of you who lived with me in my forest retreat got scurvy when I made tea out of the wrong tree bark, and I wouldn't let you look it up in the field guide that one of you smuggled in. Then I burned the field guide.

I'm sorry that you cut yourself off from the technological marvels of the world. The likes, the shares, the validation of a having a celebrity comment on your kitty photos. I also missed that.

As a further apology, I want to start our new conversation with a lesson that I badly needed in my former life. My Muse, Misspurrfection (who we will learn more about next week!) took one look at me when we first met, and sat on my face, refusing to let me get up, or even receive more than a trickle of oxygen to my desperately heaving lungs until I finally, *finally* stopped *fighting* and just . . . chilled. That first lesson sent me down the path to so many more revelations, which will be the subjects of columns for months to come. These next exercises will help you to let go. To not try so damn hard for validation! Because you're purrrfect without even trying. They are modelled by the Schulhaus von Katze kitties, because who could be more effortlessly beautiful?

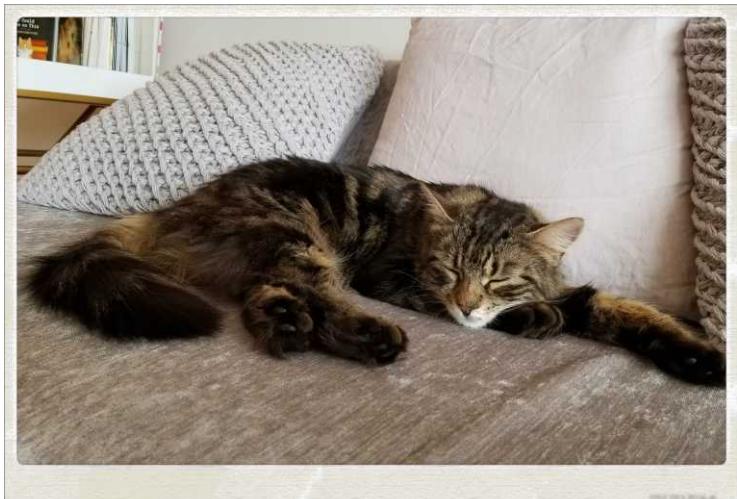


**Playtime:** Tie an object that feels nice to touch or bite to a string and either attach it to a table or chair leg. Even better, ask a sympathetic friend to bounce it playfully back and forth into and out of your reach. You should stretch yourself out on your side and enjoy lazily batting and biting with the relish of a cat who looks cool no matter what s/he's doing.

**Grooming & Prettifying:** The second and third kitties are demonstrating an advanced move that may be inaccessible to many of you at first, but no worries, it will be effortless in no time. Obsessively cleaning and caressing your own body is one of the most rewarding forms of chill time there is. We recommend blocking off a three or more hour time period at the very least, to examine and clean every part of your body. Stretching before and after is essential in order to make progress in this area. Being able to minutely examine every part of yourself top to bottom, daily, will bring you a level of self-knowledge that will make it impossible for anyone criticize you in any way.



**The Zonk:** Lie down somewhere, anywhere, and make it your bed. It doesn't matter if it's somewhere that others deem appropriate. If it *is* a bed, it doesn't matter *how* you use it. Don't let anyone tell you that you are wrong. Isolate your mind from ugly or unpleasant distractions. Tune out the world. Soon, even someone yelling, "This is the lobby of my business, not a bedroom!" will be nothing but the wind to you.





**Self/Lower being worship:** Sit somewhere high up where the plebs can admire your loveliness. Again, be prepared for it to take anywhere from three to five hours for you to completely explore the effects of your radiance on display. Feel your towering majesty extend outward. Practice sitting still, and extending your field of glamour beyond your body. Learn to carry this feeling with you in your day-to-day life in order to overwhelm and impress wherever you go.

This is just a little taste of our philosophy. If you like what you hear, (and ob-v you do!) come by our fun intro class Tuesday and Saturday evenings at the Schulhaus von Katze. Lots of (self) love - Xoxo MadiLei



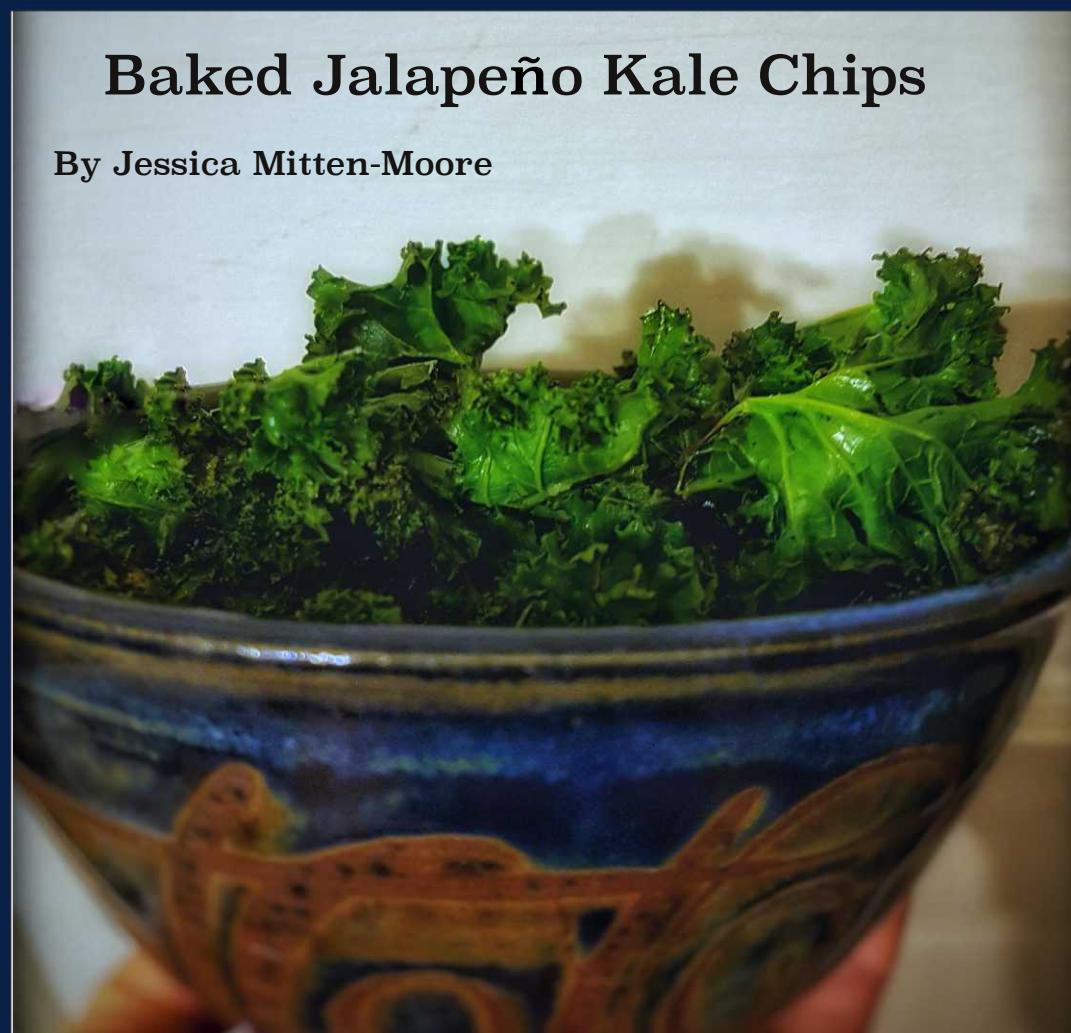
Hey readers! This is the real (two inceptions up) Ariadne. All of the gorgeous cats in this article were photographed at Excalipurr Cat Cafe at 2156 Albert Street in Regina, Saskatchewan. The cats at Excalipurr are adoptable through Regina Cat Rescue, and I assure you that they are all sweet and adorable. None of them would ever try to sit on your face and smother you until you submit to their dominance. They can't help it if you decide of your own volition to worship them.

The good people (and cats) of Excalipurr also have a class, which looks *amazing*.

I recommend theirs over MadiLei's, honestly.

# Baked Jalapeño Kale Chips

By Jessica Mitten-Moore



## Ingredients:

- 1 bunch of kale
- 2 tablespoons jalapeño olive oil - purchased from  
OLiV Tasting Room in Regina, SK
- Sea salt to taste

## Directions:

Preheat your oven to 350° F.

Wash your kale and cut the leafy portion from the stem into chip-sized segments.

Dry your kale before you bake it. If the kale is wet then it will make for soggy kale chips, which will make your guests think you are serving them a better version of boiled spinach.

Mix olive oil with the kale in a mixing bowl. Sprinkle sea salt to taste over your kale and mix again.

Once you have mixed the olive oil, salt and kale, spread the kale onto two baking sheets. I usually add another sprinkle of salt at this point. The kale should be placed in a single layer to make sure everything bakes evenly.

Bake for 10 minutes. If the chips are not crispy, put them in for another couple minutes. If they still have not crisped up, you may want to flip them over. Occasionally, I have noticed that some pieces bake quicker than others. In this case, remove the finished kale from the oven and leave the others to bake further.

I know what you are thinking: "Cauliflower Buffalo Bites and now Jalapeño Kale Chips? Does this chick only know how to make spicy, easy and quick appetizers?" I promise you, in our May edition I will give you a full meal to prove my cooking grit.

I have found that many people love this quick and simple recipe. I have even made this for groups of friends as a lower calorie option. If you are feeling like a salty snack, then reach for the kale instead of the bag of chips! The calorie content of this recipe is dependent on the amount of olive oil you put on the kale.

Serve the kale chips as you would regular chips and watch as they disappear within minutes!

In theory, I would love to only put one tablespoon of olive oil on my kale chips, but for taste purposes it usually ends up being two. You can add more if you feel it is necessary, but the important part is just to make sure each of the kale pieces have some olive oil on them.

The most popular kale chips I have made were the jalapeño and sea salt variety, but I have previously used a sun-dried tomato and parmesan olive oil as well as regular olive oil. You can also be more creative with your spice by adding things like garlic powder, cajun spice and black pepper.

# Serial Bits: 18th Century Serial Evolution

By Megan Negrych

When it comes to publication and literature, the 18<sup>th</sup> century was rife with interesting events. In 1701 and 1702, England's first daily newspapers appeared, *The Norwich Post* and *The Daily Courant*. In 1706 the first English-language translation of *Arabian Nights* was published in serial format. Additionally, the first government regulated legislation in regard to copyright, The Statute of Anne, was passed in 1710. However, I bet you are truly wondering "what was the state of serialized fiction during this period, since the stage was set for its emergence by the precedents laid out in our previous meeting?"

To cover the emergence of serial fiction in the 1700s we must first establish that many of the conventions of the 17<sup>th</sup> century remained in place. While the 18<sup>th</sup> century is less popular in scholarly and interest studies in regard to the emergence and proliferation of serial fiction, these decades played a crucial role in the formation of serial publication, and in shaping the publication industry. It was during the 1700s that fiction began to be written with the intent to be consumed in serial form. It is very important to note that while serial publications account for a significant percentage of published material in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, they are one of the least studied areas of publication history.

In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, reading novels had become a popular, though not completely acceptable leisure activity, and according to Ana Vogrinčič, "accessible literally to everybody at least vaguely literate."<sup>1</sup> However, while the language may have been accessible to even those with an infirm grasp, there were still other socioeconomic barriers that kept audiences rather small; newspapers and periodicals were not, by any means, a commodity readily affordable by the lower class.<sup>2</sup> Reading presented an escape from the doldrums of daily life, a way of seeing beyond a single experience and into something possibly more grand than one's personal predicament. Novel reading was especially popular among women, many of whom were left at home. However, novels were a double-edged sword; while on the one hand, they represented some grandiose and often exciting fictionalized reality, they were also seen as a corruptive, and possibly harmful, waste of time. Vogrinčič goes on to explain that novels and novel reading were, in 18<sup>th</sup> century England, akin to television series today, and that attitudes toward them

were much the same.<sup>3</sup>

So where does this situation leave serial publications and serial fiction in regard to its development during these years? Novels were still costly, and their publication and circulation were relatively limited. However, at this time the methods and practices for periodical and newspaper publication were such that the distribution network was much more developed and allowed for a larger number of copies to be created and circulated.<sup>4</sup> As noted in our previous column there was already in place the practice of breaking down pre-existing novels for serial publication. The 18<sup>th</sup> century altered the way in which serial fiction was created and distributed in two key ways. First, the 18<sup>th</sup> century saw the beginning of periodicals and daily publications that were intended to be read in a serial manner, with carryover from issue to issue. Second, the 18<sup>th</sup> century was when the very first stories written specifically for serial style publication emerged.

Looking at broad serial publications, it is very important to note both *The Spectator* and *The Female Spectator*, two of the first serial periodical publications, emerged at this time. Comprised of essays, moral tales, and observations, these two publications are vital to examine and mention in regard to the birth and rise of serial publications in a new and meaningful form. Both publications provided original content, diverging from the habit of papers and print media of breaking up pre-existing novels, such as *Arabian Nights*, *Don Quixote*, or *Gulliver's Travels*.

*The Spectator*'s first issue appeared in 1711 and was a daily publication, but ended its run in 1712. It reappeared in 1714 and was published at least three times a week for an additional six months. The issues were relatively short, but because they were published in a serial fashion the amount of material created was sizeable. *The Spectator* was the brainchild of Joseph Addison (1672-1719) and Richard Steele (1672-1729); both were playwrights and politicians, and it was utilized as a platform for promoting Enlightenment views in relation to family, morality, courtesy and marriage. According to the publication itself, its aim was "to enliven morality with wit, and to temper wit with morality."

# The SPECTATOR.

Pendent opera interrupta Virg.

Friday, May 25. 1711.

In my last Monday's Paper I gave some general Instances of those beautiful Strokes that please the Reader in the old Song of Chevy-Chase; I shall here, according to my Promise, be more particular, and shew that the Sentiments in that Ballad are extremely natural and poetical, and full of that majestic Simplicity which we admire in the greatest of the ancient Poets: For which Reason I shall quote several Passages of it, in which the Thought is altogether the same with what we meet in several Passages of the *Bindis*; not that I would infer from thence, that the Poet (whoever he was) proposed to himself any imitation of those Passages, but that he was directed to them in general by the same Kind of Poetical Genius, and by the same Copyings after Nature.

Had this Old Song been filled with Epigrammatical Turns and Points of Wit, it might have been

*The first Earl of Northumberland  
A Fox to God did make,  
His Plas'are in the Scottish Woods  
Three Summer's Days to take,  
With fifteen hundred Bourmen bold,  
A dozen Men of Might,  
Who knew full well, in Time of Need,  
To aim their Shafts aright.  
The Hounds ran scurly thro' the Woods  
The nimble Deer to take,  
And with their Crye the Hills and Dales  
An Echo still did make.*

*Vocat ingenti clamore Cithara  
Taygeti: canes, domitrixque Epidaurus equorum:  
Ex vox atleu nemorum ingemina remugit.*

Considering the success that *The Spectator* had in reaching its audience, it was only a matter of time before other such publications followed in their footsteps. Such was the case with *The Female Spectator*, which was published in monthly format from April 1744 to May 1746. While it was initially released anonymously, it was, in fact, written entirely by a single woman, Eliza Haywood (1693-1756). Haywood, an accomplished writer and actress, is also often considered an important founder of the English novel. In *The Female Spectator*, Haywood wrote her articles as four different personas, which served to set them apart from other publications at the time, and sought to address a variety of topics ranging from marriage of societal roles, to childrearing and reading. It was the first periodical written by women with the express purpose of being read by women.

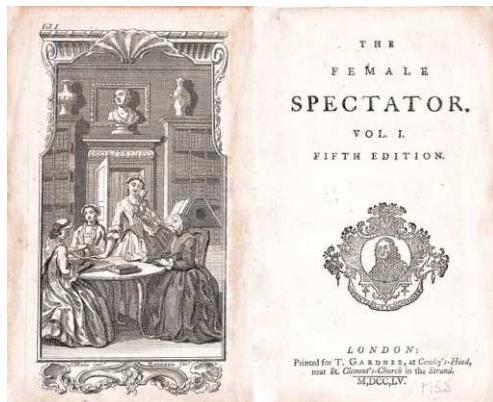
With the establishment of periodical and serial publication, and the past practice of fragmenting novels for republication, it was only a matter of time before the two would meet. Where previously only certain works were considered suitable for republication into the serial format, there had yet to be a novel written with the express purpose of being read in a serial fashion.

The very first written and published serial novel was *Sir Launcelot Greaves* or *The Life and Adventures of Sir Launcelot Greaves* by Tobias Smollett, which was published monthly in the pages of *The British Magazine* from January 1760 to December 1761. Having previously worked on translating Cervantes' *Don Quixote*, *Sir Lancelot* drew on but deviated from the idea. Produced as a satire, Smollett's work presented the reader with the story of an armoured gentleman venturing out into the countryside with his comic squire Timothy Crabshaw, in order to address a variety of grievances.

It is interesting to note that the publication of the first novel written specifically for serial consumption and dissemination mirrors the pattern of

the first serial journal publications. While *The British Magazine* was setting out Smollett's *Launcelot*, Charlotte Lennox's serial novel *Sophia* was being published in *The Lady's Museum*, another monthly magazine. To double that mirror, Lennox's 2<sup>nd</sup> novel, *The Female Quixote*, published in 1752, was a satirical novel about the true power of women. So it would seem that the influence of the serial republication of *Don Quixote* played a very important role in shaping the way in which these authors approached their own work and subject matter.

By and large, serial fiction, especially these first novels written either as serial installments or with the specific intent of serial format publication, are characterized by their flexibility. According to scholar Andromeda Hartwick in her Ph.D dissertation *Serial Selves: Identity Genre and Form in the Eighteenth Century* (2015), serial novels concern themselves largely with the immediate and the minute by minute telling of the story, while setting the concept of the whole to the side. They are elastic in their time and chronology, and promote/encourage interaction with the audience, creating a space for exchange. Their serial format installment also serves to fuel the public's desire to read, and also ensure their continued return as customers to the publication,



which appealed to them the most.

By the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century the stage was set for what would follow during the Victorian Era, when serial fiction as a popular method of publication would make its mark. The 19<sup>th</sup> century would bear witness to the explosive growth of serial fiction as reader interest rose, and publications would increase their output in order to meet the frenzied appetites of the masses.

Copies of *The Spectator*, *The Female Spectator*, *The Adventures of Sir Launcelot Graves* and many others can be found at Project Gutenberg, preserved and digitally accessible through the work of countless volunteers: <https://www.gutenberg.org>

# Donny in the Dark: Descent

By Megan Negrych



The halogen light of the hallway bathed Detective Stovik's face in a wash of false warmth but did nothing to erase the tension from the lines on the bulky man's forehead. The detective slipped his badge back into his jacket pocket and gestured past Donny to the kitchen, indicating that this would be a conversation best had inside. Donny had watched enough police procedurals and true crime shows to know that this was an important moment, though as he sorted through the events of the past few days, he could not find in them a single reason why a detective would come calling on him.

Instead of stepping aside and letting Detective Stovik lead him to the kitchen table, Donny stepped out into the hallway and closed the door behind him. If Stovik thought it was odd, he didn't press Donny on the choice of venue. Donny knew that there was a fine line between "innocent questioning, and looking for probable cause," and even if he had no idea what this was all about, he did not feel comfortable inviting a stranger into his home, no matter what role that stranger was appearing in.

"How can I help you, Detective Stovik?" Donny's voice echoed in the quiet hallway.

Stovik replaced his badge in his pocket and pulled out a small notepad, flipping it open as he eyed Donny.

"Just a few routine questions to follow up on a complaint, Mr. Umbra. Shouldn't take but a couple of minutes. Would you mind telling me where you were last night, between midnight and zero two-hundred?" His voice was nonchalant, neither challenging nor confrontational; well-practiced and controlled.

"At home, asleep." Donny didn't offer much else, something niggled at the back of his mind that it would not be to his benefit to overshare information when it wasn't directly asked about. He wasn't sure if that was a good idea or not, but it seemed like the prudent thing to do.

"Can anyone vouch for your whereabouts at that time?" Dt. Stovik was writing on his paper with slow measured strokes in what Donny could only guess was immaculate printing by the effort being used.

"I was by myself; Jenny, my girlfriend, was on-call at the hospital. She left at around 10 o'clock or so, and I went to bed shortly after. Can I ask what this is all about, Detective Stovik?" Donny crossed his arms over his chest, either to fend off the chill he was feeling or to protect himself through some long-ingrained instinct. He was unsure.

"Just routine follow-up, Mr. Umbra. We received a call in the early hours of this morning from an Angela Wyner, I believe she is your boss? She was filing a complaint for a break and enter, gave us your name and description as the offender."

Donny was floored; it felt like he'd been kicked in the ribs. The surprise must have shown on his face because Detective Stovik folded his pad and slipped it away into his pocket again.

"On inspection, we found no sign of a break-in, and her apartment security footage showed no one coming or leaving the building at the time in question. There was no trace of forced entry or tampering. She was adamant

that you came to her and threatened her, and that she had not let you in. Even so, we have to do our follow up. Tell me, is there any reason Ms. Wyner would accuse you of something like this?" Stovik's eyes were like steel on Donny, piercing through in a way that felt both clinical and deadly.

Donny hesitated for a second, before it seemed that the words were bubbling out of him in response. His posture loosened, and his shoulders slumped forward.

"I don't think so. Work has been a bit stressful lately, since Francine, the previous manager, died."

Stovik nodded and interjected, "That was Francine Stark, correct? We had some concerns about that one too, some strange business about a passenger, but she was alone at the time of the accident. An untimely tragedy."

"Yes, well, it's been a bit rough, with lots of long hours, but if she had an issue with me or my work I would have hoped that she would've addressed it with me directly. Maybe she's stressed out too. Funny things happen to the mind when there's stress and loss, right?"

The detective nodded again, looking at Donny and then down the hallway. "So, it would seem. Even so, you'll stick around in case we have any more questions, right? Here, in case you can think of anything, call me. It's been a nice chat, Mr. Umbra." Stovik pulled a card from his pocket and handed it to Donny. Donny took the card and looked at it, one arm still crossed over his chest.

With a nod Detective Stovik started to walk away, and Donny turned to open his apartment door. "Oh, and Mr. Umbra? You really should think about seeing a doctor, you look like you haven't been doing so well yourself lately."

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Despite having slept through most of the weekend, much to Jenny's pleasure, Donny felt as if his entire body was weighed down. She had been alarmed when Donny told her of the events that transpired while she slept on Saturday. She jumped to his defense right off the bat, reminding Donny that even if he had a bone to pick with his boss over something, there wasn't a confrontational bone in his body, much less a history of uttering threats. She'd gone so far as to ask him if he wanted her to call his boss and give Wyner a piece of her mind. He politely declined, kissed her forehead and told her not to worry. Things would work themselves out.

Monday dawned with an ominous air. Right from the moment he opened his eyes, Donny felt as if the world was somehow wrong. He sluggishly dragged himself to the bathroom and went about brushing his teeth, but was barely able to keep his eyes open as he watched himself haphazardly drag the toothbrush over his tongue, toothpaste dripping off his chin. The train ride to work was nearly a disaster. He caught himself in his reflection more than once, looking as if he was angry at the entire world and, as Detective Stovik had noted on Saturday, looking much the worse for wear.

He thought his horrible morning was topped off when he tripped up the stairs to the street from the subway and lost his coffee, but it seemed that the world still had more in store for him. When he finally arrived at the office and swiped himself through the doors, he was stopped by the head of Human Resources, who pulled him into their offices and sat him down. Politely, but with obvious alarm and concern, they told him that he had some unused leave, and that it would really be best for him if he used it. Now. It was another blow to him, and he felt the world starting to crush in around him. Donny was certain that this was their polite way of saying that it was probably wise not to come around the office; after what Angela thought had happened to her the previous Friday night, it would only lead to trouble. A cowardly way of dealing with it, to be sure, but hadn't he been the one to tell Stovik that he would have preferred that she address her issues with him in such a manner? He panicked in the office, like a deer in headlights, but they assured him that it was just temporary leave, and that he looked as if he could use it.

"You look drained, Donny. This will be good for you, give you a chance to get things sorted out and mend while we sort this little hiccup out. You look like a breeze could blow you over and leave a bruise. Francine's death is hitting us all hard, but you worked with her for longer than most. Go home, get some rest, do what you need to do to get your head in a better place."

They had Donny fill out a set of paperwork, which he signed in a fog, and took his access badge for the time being, "so you won't have to worry about anything." They assured him they would contact him when his leave was up to get it back. His entire trip home was a blur, but somehow, he arrived without further incident. That evening Jenny found him sitting in front of the television, completely zoned out. He explained to her what happened, and she swore a blue streak but eventually relented.

"Maybe, this will be good for you. Don't look at me like that, Don." He glowered half-heartedly at her, and she ran her fingers along his jaw, wrapping her other arm around his shoulders as she leaned in.

"I know you don't want to admit it, but you weren't handling it well. You haven't been yourself lately.

Maybe some rest and relaxation are what you need. Get some perspective.” She had proceeded to make him dinner and ply him into an early night, eliding for a few brief moments his worries about the dismal outlook of his future.

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By the following Monday, Donny could tell that Jenny’s patience with him was waning. She spoke to him in clipped tones, checked over her shoulder at every little movement he made, and chastised him often when they spoke.

“I don’t know what you’re doing, Donny, but you have to stop. If it’s drugs, just tell me. If it’s not, we need to figure out what is going on with you. This whole thing is getting exhausting and ridiculous.” She hovered over him as he lay on the couch, cocooned under a blanket, where he had been for the better part of two days, drifting in and out of sleep. He barely had any energy in the past days, and little drive. In the first few days, he had busied himself taking care of the house and working on projects that he felt might somewhat shift the ill tide he felt rushing against him, but by Thursday he had trouble staying awake for long periods and resigned himself to doing nothing but put his feet up.

“Jenny, I don’t know what to tell you. I don’t know what I can do.” He sat up and rubbed the heels of his palms against his eyes, a week’s worth of whiskers scratching under his hands as he ran them down his face to brush off whatever it was that had its claws in him. He watched as Jenny crossed her arms over her chest and looked down at him. The sympathy she had earlier in the week had bled away, and he could see the tension in the set of her shoulders.

“You know what I’m talking about, Donny. Drop the act. Don’t play these games with me, I really don’t like them. You act all innocent when we’re at home but then you pull stunts like yesterday afternoon and I don’t know what to say to you about it.”

Donny blinked and stood up, reaching out to touch her, but Jenny flinched away from him, something she had never done, and something he didn’t think he’d ever earned from her.

“What do you mean, yesterday? I was here, at home, just like I’ve been for the past week. Doing nothing.” There was derision in his tone, bite that was directed outward at her instead of inward at his own frustration as he had intended.

“Don’t pull this bullshit, Donny. I told you it’s not funny. I saw you at the hospital yesterday, watching me while I worked. You didn’t even have the guts to stick around like I told you to. That’s not like you, Donny, something is seriously off. You’ve barely slept, and you look like death warmed over.” She crossed into the kitchen, where she’d previously been packing her bag for her day shift, before something had snapped in the silence of the apartment and compelled her to confront him.

“I don’t know what you’re talking about Jenny. I’ve been here all week, I haven’t left the apartment, much less stalked you at work. What reason would I have for that? Are you going to blame me for something I didn’t do, too?” Anger rose in his voice, and he crossed to the kitchen, not letting this go. Something was going on, and at this point it was either that he was losing his mind, or everyone else around him was going crazy. He was telling the truth; the days may have started to blend together, but he was certain, dollars to donuts, that there was no way he had gone to the hospital, to see Jenny or for any other reason.

For a frightening moment, Jenny looked at him with fear in her eyes, as if he was going to do something to her. He had never raised a hand to her, had never even uttered a harsh word, so to see that fear reflected in her eyes nearly broke his heart. With great effort, he placed his hands on the island countertop and leaned forward, hanging his head and breaking their eye contact before it could hurt him any more than it already did to see her look at him like that.

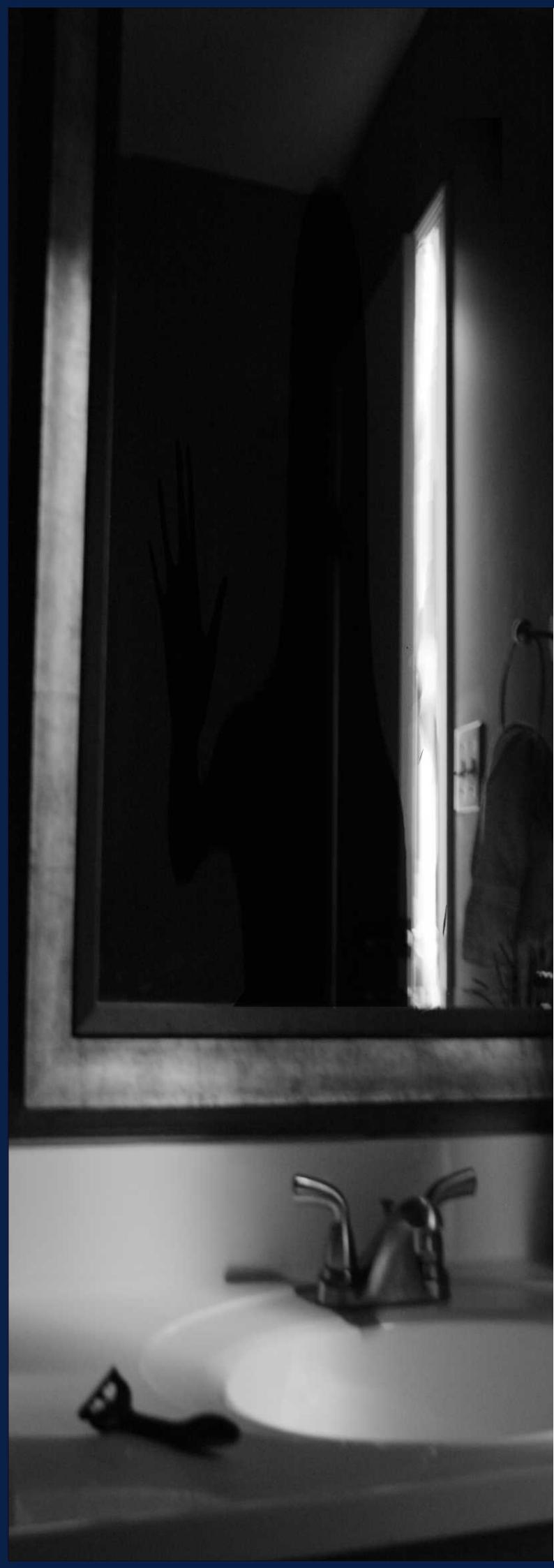
“Maybe something is wrong with me, Jenny. I don’t know anymore. What should I do?”

At the broken tone in his voice, she came around, resting her hands on his shoulders, tentatively at first, and then with more full contact.

“Maybe go see a doctor, Donny. Maybe see if something is going on, get checked out. Stress, grief, something more serious could be doing some real harm. I don’t like this any more than you do, but whatever it is, it’s changing you. It’s like you’re two different people. Please. For me.”

Donny took a deep breath to steel himself, nodding first in reluctant agreement, and then again with much more conviction. Easing himself up, he turned and took her hand, bringing it up to his stubble-covered cheek and turning into her palm.

“Anything, Jenny. If it will make you feel better, I’ll go. I’ll get washed up and head out just as soon as you’re off to work.”



Just as he promised, Donny stepped out of the shower after Jenny had left for the day and wiped the steam from the mirror. He started at his reflection, pausing to watch himself; he took in the dark circles under his eyes, the shallow tone of his skin, and furrow of his brow. Looking at himself, truly looking at himself, he could see that he looked horrible, like a shadow. Tilting his head this way and that, Donny tried to pick out something, anything, that would give him a clue as to what was doing this to him, but nothing appeared to be outwardly responsible for the way he was feeling.

While his hand seemed to shake a little more than he remembered it doing in the past, he picked up his razor, the week's worth of beard growth looking wild and unkempt on his face. The heat of the long shower had softened his skin somewhat, but he felt too zapped of energy to make the effort to add shaving cream to his face to ease the job. Tilting his chin back he focused on the task at hand, setting the razor to skin. As he began to draw it down the grain of the stubble, he caught his own eye in the mirror, wild and wide as he stared at himself. He hesitated for a second, watching as he pressed the razor more forcibly against the tender, soft skin on the underside of his jaw and drew it across. The well of red that followed in its wake trailed down to the hollow of his throat as he stared himself down in horror. For a heartbeat he couldn't do anything but watch as he completed the motion, and then all at once his body reacted. As if burnt he hurled the razor across the bathroom, where it ricocheted off the shower wall and snapped, and he clapped one hand to his throat in panic and grabbed for the nearest towel.

Trembling, he leaned in toward the mirror and brought the towel in, prepared to swap his hand out for the towel to hold off the blood. Carefully, he uncurled his fingers from around his own neck, expecting the blood to flow freely down, but nothing came rushing as he took his hand away. With his heart still beating a frantic gallop behind his breastbone he tried to get even closer to the mirror, tilting his head back further to find the cut. Try as he might, there was nothing there, only a bare line where the stubble had given way to the touch of the blade. There was no blood, no horrific cut, not even a nick. Swallowing hard, he met his own eyes in the mirror, still wild and dilated. There was something very wrong, and he needed to figure out what it was before it drove him off the edge.

# DEJA-EXCITE!

Here is what the team at Deja-VISITe is Looking forward to in the coming weeks



## Rachel Popa:

- Although I am disappointed that Carol Danvers won't be introduced yet, *Avengers: Infinity War* on April 25<sup>th</sup> is going to be the biggest superhero movie we've seen. I'm excited to see if they manage to come up with a cohesive film when they are drawing on such a massive amount of established MCU lore.
- *Artificial Condition* is coming out on May 8<sup>th</sup>. It is the sequel to *All System's Red*, which was the first in an ongoing series of novellas called *The Murderbot Diaries*, by Martha Wells. The story is told from the perspective of a socially awkward cyborg with a love for cliché TV dramas.



## Megan Negrych:

- **Fan Expo May 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>:** The fan extravaganza! I've gone each year since it launched, and plan to go and get my fill of art, fandom, and excitement. This year Regina is hosting the voice of Mario (Charles Martinet), and original Buffy the Vampire Slayer, Kristy Swanson!
- **Wann Izakaya has Hanami Spring Festival** from April 16<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup>, offering a special Spring menu which I am looking forward to. Time to get some yummies in the tummy.
- **Eurovision 2018 Lisbon:** Despite the upsetting victory by Portugal at the 2017 competition, this year is looking to be a very good year for the Eurovision Song Contest. Viking ships, neon lights, and costumes? Count me in! The Grand Final will take place on May 12<sup>th</sup>

## Jessica Mitten-Moore:

- **Prairie Game eXpo - April 21 -** Prairie Game eXpo is a brought to you by ComicReaders with support by SaskGames. Prairie Game eXpo is an initiative to host a quarterly game day that is welcoming to existing hobby enthusiasts and people new to gaming.
- **3%: Season 2 - Netflix - April 27 -** I loved the first season of this Portuguese Netflix Original and cannot wait to see what happens in the second.
- **MegaGame 2018 - Aftermath - May 12 -** A full day of roleplaying with many different groups of people presented by Sask Games and Play With Your Food to raise money for Souls Harbour in Regina
- **Jimmy Carr! - May 17 -** One of my favourite English stand-up comedians that has hosted such things such as *Big Fat Quiz of the Year* and *Countdown*.



## Ariadne Bissett:

- I'm probably unduly excited about **RAMPAGE the movie**. April 13<sup>th</sup>. I loved the game RAMPAGE as a kid. I was always Lizzie the Lizard.
- The day "**We All Stare at the Capital Point Hole and Say 'WOW' like Owen Wilson**". 3 p.m., 2511 Victoria Ave. The suspense as to whether we're going to be staring at a hole, or an empty dirt hill is ramping up. There's a Facebook Group hosted by "Polly Pockette". You should join.



# Citations, Credits, Futher reading for Deja-VISITE Issue 3: April 2018

We would like to also take this opportunity to thank Jonathan Seidle for all of his hard work. As our final proofreader Jonathan has provided us with invaluable grammatical and content feedback, to ensure that we, in our excitement to write, do not overlook our own errors.  
From all of us, Thank you Jon!

- Original Cover Art created by Jocelyn Anderson  
Arranged by Jocelyn Anderson

- Galaxy Trucker* at Boards N Beans  
Photography by Rachel Popa  
Game developed by Vlaada Chvatal, with graphics designed by Radim Pech, distributed by Rio Grande Games

- H'are Ya Now?: Letter Kenny Live Review  
Image courtesy of Letterkenny Live promotional tour materials

- Berserk over Brigitte: New *Overwatch* Character is Making Waves  
All art courtesy of Blizzard Entertainment

- Project Chrysopoeia  
Original watercolour by Jocelyn Anderson

- Adult Science Night at the Saskatchewan Science Centre  
All photography by Rachel Popa

- Megan's Horror Hideout: It's Hammer Time!  
Original Mummy and Dracula by Jocelyn Anderson  
All movie posters Courtesy of Hammer Films

1. As quoted on Hammerfilm.com in regard to the film *X the Unknown* (1956)

- Spielberg's *Ready Player One* Surpasses its Source Material  
Movie poster and stills courtesy of Warner Bros.  
Book cover courtesy of Random House

1. Ernest Cline, *Ready Player One* (Kindle, 2011), 61.
2. Ibid., 181

- An Evening with Michelle Obama  
All images courtesy of Whitehouse.org

1. "First Lady Michelle Obama." whitehouse.gov. <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/administration/first-lady-michelle-obama>

- The *Mysterium* Experiment

All photographs by Rachel Popa  
Promotional game images courtesy of Libellud

- Tomb Raider*: Comparison Piece

Images courtesy of Square Enix and Warner Bros.

- The Rebirth and Adaptation of Greek Myth in *Xena: Warrior Princess*

All images courtesy of Renaissance Pictures

1. Eric Flbaum *The Encyclopedia of Mythology: Gods, Heroes, And Legends of the Greek and Romans* (Michael Friedman Publishing Group, Inc. 1993), 33.

2. Ibid.

3. Giulia Sissa and Marcel Detienne. *The Daily Life of the Greek Gods* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), p.37

4. Flbaum, 33.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid.

7. Aphrodite: "For Him the Bell Tolls." *Xena: Warrior Princess* Season Two. Writ. Adam Aramus & Nora Kay Foster. Dir. Josh Becker. 24 Feb., 1997.

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid.

11. "For Him the Bell Tolls", 1997.

12. Flbaum, 26.

13. Lyn Webster Wilde, *On the Trail of the Women Warriors: The Amazons in Myth and History* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999), 14

14. Apollodorus, *The Library of Greek Mythology* (Oxford: Oxford World's Classics, 1998), 78.

15. Flbaum, 28.

16. (Hard, 78).

17. Andrew Lang, *Tales of Troy and Greece* (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions Ltd, 1995), 79.

18. Ibid., 76.

19. Ibid.

20. Terra: "Hooves and Harlots." *Xena: Warrior Princess* Season One. Writ. Steven L. Sears. Dir. Jace Alexander. 20 Nov, 1995.

21. Melosa: "Hooves and Harlots".

22. Terra to Gabrielle: "Hooves and Harlots".

23. Flbaum, 144.

24. Ibid., 143.

25. Ibid.

26. Used here to simply understanding. While the *Hercules: The Legendary Journeys* takes after the Greek myth, the use the Roman "Hercules" instead of the Greek "Heracles".

27. Hera: "Prometheus" *Xena: Warrior Princess* Season One. Writ. R.J. Stewart. Dir. Stephen L. Posey.

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Wilde, Lyn Webster. *On the Trail of the Women Warriors: The Amazons in Myth and History*. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1999

•The School of Feline Patterning: MadiLei Madison  
Original Cat Portraits ( Karen, Carl, & Bobby) by Jocelyn Anderson  
All photographs by Ariadne Bissett, animals provided by Excalipurr Cat Cafe

•Baked Jalapeño Kale Chips  
All Photographs by Jessica Mitten-Moore

•Serial Bits: 18<sup>th</sup> Century Serial Evolution

1. Ana Vogrinčič, “The Novel-reading Panic in 18th Century in England: An Outline of an Early Moral Media Panic”, in *Izvorni Znanstveni Rad* ( god. 14, br. 2, 2008), 109.

2. Graham Law, *British Library Newspapers: Literary Serialization in the 19th-Century Provincial Press*, Gale Primary Sources. Accessed March 28th, 2018.

3. Vogrinčič, 109.

4. Michael Harris, “Locating the Serial: Some ideas about the position of the Serial in Relation to the 18th- century Print Culture” in *Studies in Newspaper and Periodical History 1995*, eds. Harris and T O’Malley (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1995)

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•Donny in The Dark: Descent  
All photography/ graphics by Jocelyn Anderson

•Deja-Excite!  
All animal art by Jocelyn Anderson