



King's High School

The Junior & Senior
Creative Writing Clubs'
Collaborative Spring Anthology:

The Gothic

The Clocktower

by Olivia

The clocktower stood old and decrepit against the rest of the well-kept buildings, like a dying plant reaching for sunlight amongst a bed of blossoming flowers. The haunting echo of the discordant bells hung stagnant in the chilling night air, it fought against the howling wind that screamed through the cracked stained-glass windows and the relentless Scottish rain that hammered down on the shingled roofs. The sounds clashed violently to form a cacophonous symphony unwelcomed to any ear except hers. Fractured glass littered the steps of the spiral staircase like loose pebbles on a cobbled road, a seemingly insufficient issue that proved harder than expected to traverse in her worn leather-soled shoes. The steps reached high above her, curling in on themselves as they stretched into the looming shadows above. The jarring melody entranced her, the wooden steps beckoned her to follow.

She obliged.

She began her ascent with determination led blindly by the chimes of the clocktower, the volume all-consuming as her candlestick's flame flickered in fear, timid as the air grew cold and wet. The weathered wood creaked and groaned under her gentle, driven steps forced to bear the weight of those who walked before her, and her free hand mindlessly trailed along the flaking paint that hung on helplessly before bits chipped and fell in the chasm that was slowly growing beneath her.

Goosebumps ran quickly across her arms as the low temperature continued to cool and fear began to settle in. Her sodden dress did little to warm her as the cold settled into brittle bones and the shawl covering her shoulders behaved as an accessory rather than its intended protection against the harsh elements. Wet hair stuck to the back of her neck sending a more than unpleasant chill down her spine, but it didn't matter, the dissonant music of the bells provided warmth, lulling her back to her dreamlike state as she continued further up in the cavernous clocktower.

Perhaps she held too much hope in the fabrics that were meant for strolling leisurely down the promenade not trudging up abandoned building in the darkness of night.

However, the bells had called her.

She *had* to follow.



Graveyard Ballet

by Izzy

In a sudden silence, 'neath the willow's weep,
A shadowed silhouette, where shadows deeply creep.
The moon, a pale witness to the darkened scene,
As spectres stir in graves, their rest unseen.

Cobbled streets echo with the midnight toll,
Through fog-kissed alleyways, a mourner's stroll.
Gas lamps flicker, casting eerie hues,
On cobbled paths where the haunted muse.

Beneath the cloak of the velvet night,
A macabre waltz, a ghastly sight.
The undertaker's carriage, black as coal,
Rattles through the cobblestone street in a funereal roll.

In the graveyard's embrace, where tombstones stand,
Names obscured by the grasp of the spectral hand.
Moss-covered angels with eyes that weep,
Guarding secrets where the restless sleep.

Through iron gates, the cryptic whispers sigh,
Of bygone tales where mourners cry.
A raven perches on a twisted yew,
Its ebony feathers, a cloak that imbues.

In the parlour, shadows dance in flickering flame,
A symphony of woe, a mournful claim.
Velvet drapes, a shroud for the night,
As candles flicker in their sepulchral light.

The old clock tolls, a requiem chime,
Echoing through the corridors of time.
In this macabre dance, where darkness thrives,
A graveyard ballet, where the soul survives.



The Lighthouse Theory

by Lola

One day something disastrous happened. Unexpected. Fatal. Eye-closing. Something occurred to the big lighthouse on the side of Oakhill Road a few weeks ago; and you're not going to like it. A terrible storm was forecast to strike at night- this is how everything started.

As the evening passed by slowly, gusts of winds were brewing; and the clouds, they looked as heavy as thousands of bricks piled on top of each other. As the weather got progressively worse, everyone went to bed early, hoping it wouldn't be a restless night.

Wind whistling, finding its way through the cracks on the shutters, the windows, cracked by the

wind, were open and flying continuously back and forth, slamming into the walls. Rain and thunder started and never stopped, along with the sight of lightning hitting buildings every few minutes. This went on for hours and hours. Everyone thought it was such a tremendously long night until they looked at the time.

11.00AM everyone's clocks and watches said. The town was disorientated. Pitch black skies; where was the daylight? As they frantically tried to call loved ones and friends on the landline telephone, no signal would get through. The amount of downpour that had landed made the ground a swamp. As the dark day went by, massive gusts of wind continued to smash windowpanes and the

gales poured into homes. Still with no signal, no light, and no chance of the storm lightening up, everyone nervously waited it out until bedtime. Yet again it was a restless night. Everyone was tossing, turning, thinking; it was utter confusion.

A new awakening; stormy, saturated roads, frigid temperatures, tempestuous winds. Again, with no landline signal, the town was feeling a case of Déjà Vu. And, as you can presume, everyone was even more confused and getting as anxious as ever.

As days and days went on, one family in particular, a family of scientists living in the lighthouse, thought they had cracked it. Their theory was

the outside the Earth there was a whole other dimension of giants, bots and aliens who were controlling this, and the lighthouse was their control tower.

One afternoon, when the rain let up, the whole town rushed to its hall. Everyone was chatting together having made sure their loved ones were okay, talking in confusion and giving one another comfort before they were shortly interrupted. The family of scientists ran up to the stage and explained their theory. Everybody gainsaid, looking at each other in disbelief.

But...what else could it be?

The Creepers

by Elektra

I was lost, alone and in dire need of help, desperate for shelter, somewhere to spend the night away from cold, cruel November. Wandering through what seemed like a never-ending forest packed with towering pine trees that almost blotted out the sun completely, I knew I could go on no longer and gave myself up for lost. On I went and, as I walked further into the blackness, I could make out the outline of a tall black building. At first, I could only see its silhouette but as I came closer, I could just make out its foreboding features. It was a truly horrifying sight.

The building was tall and crooked, and everything was black: the walls, the roof, the door and even the window frames. There were very few windows and the windows that were there were small, barred, compressed into slits and there was no welcoming glow from within because even the interior seemed to be a black lifeless void. Constantly over-shadowed by the towering pines that surrounded it, the vast forest seemed to engulf this monstrosity. This would turn out to be an old, disused Victorian lunatic asylum, but I was ignorant to this fact. I was drawn to this rickety, mysterious building, oblivious to what it contained. Cold, hungry and tired, I staggered up to the solid, black door, and eased it open. The door made an awkwardly loud creak as it opened and I cautiously peered inside to observe a dusty front room, laced with cobwebs. A rickety, winding stairway was hunched in one corner and looked like it hadn't taken anyone's weight for a thousand years. And still everything was black like a giant had dropped a bag of soot over the spooky asylum.

As I continued to explore the seemingly deserted building, I heard the pitter-pattering of little feet on the bare floorboards and the squeaking of rats scampering away into the shadows as I approached. Creak! I spun cautiously and scanned the room, but there was nothing to be seen through the darkness. I thought to myself that I must be hearing things. I stepped into another room that was filled with ripped sofas,

battered armchairs and dusty, old, frayed curtains. As I stepped into the room I began to cough and splutter for the air was thick with dust that snaked down my throat and clogged my lungs. Suddenly, a bare light bulb flickered from the ceiling before becoming lifeless once more. Creak! Again, the door creaked, and I turned around but this time the room behind me was not empty. A pale, ghostly figure of a hunched, old man, as old as time, was standing in the doorway, staring into my soul with his hollow eyes.

As soon as I saw him, an icy feeling crept up my spine and I froze in terror at the sight of the ghost. I tried to move, I tried to scream but nothing came out, I was frozen to the spot. It glided towards me, and I felt a wave of extreme cold wash over me as the ghost went through me. And then I felt myself falling. Falling down, down into the icy depths, down, down, down as it got colder and colder. Blackness enveloped me as a red patch spread across my chest. The falling seemed to last forever until I hit some cold, hard floorboards. All around me were pale, ghostly figures that crept along the floor as if unsure of their surroundings. One of them approached me, muttered "We are the creepers. You are one of us now" and floated right through me. And then I knew. I was among the creepers now, dead, a ghost, gone from the living world. I floated lifelessly through the empty corridors until another victim entered. Suddenly, I had an unusual urge for this young soul to have the same fate as mine. I surged towards it, anger rushing through my veins. As I came closer to her my icy hands reached out and my

spindly fingers brushed her face. Then I went through her and froze her innocent heart.

It was her that killed the next victim, a young boy. She is now a ghost too: she drifts around halls as I do. And this is the loop: we become, we wait, we kill, we are satisfied, we drift for the rest of time. I am now stuck in the endless loop of life as a ghost, among the creepers. It will never end.

The Little Girl Under the Willow

by Elektra

A stroll in the darkness through the fields and woods,
The trees all huddled with their looming hoods,
Then under drooping boughs of a willow,
Was a little girl draped in a cloud of white,
I wanted to scream but it won't come out,
I tried to run, to scream, to shout,
But all in vain, it certainly was a ghost all right,
And that is how my life ended that night.

Am I Human

by Georgia

Thursday 29th February 1964

Am I human? It was pitch black and there were no lights shining. I could feel something soft with the occasional lump in it but nothing too hard. As I couldn't see it, I was guessing it was soil. I lifted my hands gently up into the air but straight away I was stopped. It was like I was confined to a teeny weeny small space. I knocked hard on what was now my roof and started shouting. Of course, no one could hear me because I was obviously trapped in a metal cube or cage. I kicked and I hit the so-called ceiling until it finally gave way, and I was swallowed by a mound of soil. I coughed. I spluttered. I choked.

Friday 15th March 1964

I knew it was pointless because no one could hear me. It was strange because I could still breathe even though I was being eaten by soil. There was obviously something wrong with me and I intended to figure out what it was but first I had to get out of this dark space and into the real world. But how? I didn't know how but I decided to start scratching away at the soil trying to make it move so I could become exposed again. As I was leaning over on my side to get out of the underworld, I suddenly got a pinch as if something was trying to bite me. It turned out that the 'thing trying to bite me' was called a watch. I remembered before I was trapped that there was this old woman in my life (someone who I loved very much), called a grandma who looked after me and cared for me and had a possession called a watch and I had one, so just to check I tried racking my brain to try and remember what it was.

At last, it came to me! I knew what a watch was. A thing to tell the time with little hands that spin round and round and round just so we can have the satisfaction to watch it spin, spin, spin. I loved it but it was stopping me escaping but I didn't know how to so I had the time to just stare at the little thing.

Saturday 21st March 1964

All was at calm apart from a little scurrying sound coming from not far off. It felt like I had been digging for days not just a few hours and my arms hurt and my legs ached even though I wasn't really using them. I hadn't made much progress with my digging, and it was getting pointless. I decided to give up but then that would get me nowhere and I would be underground forever. And no way I was staying down here a moment longer.

Sunday 1st April 1964

After a long, tired week, I was beginning to feel parched because I hadn't drunk anything in days and my tummy felt like a block of ice and I desperately needed something mouthwateringly delicious. But that was never going to happen, not even in a million years to come. A long time came and passed and somehow, I was still alive, still breathing. I was getting desperately worried! I needed help and fast. Not because of the reason you may think but because of the conditions underground and the life choices I must make to survive – not that I could do anything about them.

Monday 8th April 1964

I dug and I dug until my arms were about to fall off and I could feel the sweat on my forehead with my grubby hands. It was challenging work and I had only just realized that I was digging deeper underground rather than digging upwards toward the sky. That was it - I was a complete failure and the world's dumbest underground... well I didn't know what I was! This was impossible, I was on the verge of properly giving up. I couldn't believe that I had been so stupid and had spent all of my time digging in the completely wrong direction.

Tuesday 22nd April 1964

More days passed and I hadn't done any digging because I had blisters. My hands were so sore that I could hardly feel them. All I could do was lie in the muddy underworld and hope they would get better soon so I could start digging again before I died of starvation. The truth was I was trapped and I had to live my life here. There was no way out.

Wednesday 2nd May 1964

Not much to say. Only hard done by feelings.

Thursday 24th May 1964

I felt even more alone than I did when I woke up. I hated to say it but I really was depressed.

Friday 5th June 1964

I still couldn't dig and my hands were even sorer. I was starting to worry because the blisters were absolutely huge but I couldn't pop them because that could lead to an infection. Ouch! They really hurt when I write. This next thing I write down is going to be hard to believe. When I woke up I was buried with a bunch of random stuff. There was this diary and pen so I decided that every day I would jot down my feelings and how my day went (not normally very well).

Saturday 26 June 1964

Today was a very hard day. I woke up lying on my back with a sore hands and I couldn't breathe. I panicked and panicked but eventually I could. I didn't know if it could happen again which is why I was terribly scared. Being down here can't be good for anyone especially a young girl like me. I don't think I will ever be escaping. For now!



The First Case

by Cecilia

The velvet sheets on my bed flowed like a waterfall. I was not waiting for any-thing specific; I was just thinking. All I could think about was what could've been. What could have been if I was a boy. If I were not born at this time, in this family, would I have my future all planned out for me? Every day was the same. Though sometimes after a long tiring day, I would go outside for a walk alone. The moon looked like a spotlight on the lake. It was beautiful. It was on one of those cold nights I decided that whatever happened I would not sit there as a decoration looking pretty. I was determined to do something, anything.

A few weeks later, I went downstairs to breakfast when I heard my mother weep. Then I entered the drawing room. With a nervous expression on his face, my father stared at his newspaper in disbelief. I walked behind his chair trying to sneak a peek at it. I could not believe what I was seeing. "Princess Margret murder by unknown man." The article was written in jet black ink across the page. I suddenly understood why my mother was so upset. Everyone in all of England knew who Princess Margret was. Everyone adored her. Yet someone had murdered her? There were certainly some dots that needed joining...

I was not sure how, but I was going to solve this case. Of course, my mother, or father for that matter, knew that I had these hopes and dreams, but it didn't matter. I became aware that I wouldn't be able to work here, so I called for cab to the centre of London. I had brought with me a brown leather bag holding: a note pad, a couple of dresses, a few books to help me and I snuck some bags of food from the kitchen. Upon entering the black cab, I immediately lowered the blinds. I did not need anyone seeing me know.

My Grandmother lived with my grandfather, whom I had never met, in a large house on Baker Street. Baker Street, I realised when I arrived, was remarkably quiet. I wondered why. I had anticipated that baker street would be teeming with devoted fans and loyal followers waiting outside apartment 221 for sherlock to arrive back home. The driver pulled up at a stone house with a midnight black door. I thanked the driver and cautiously disembarked the vehicle. I glanced around before gently tapping on the door. A tall, middle-aged lady answered the door. She had fair hair and a silver key around her neck. Neither of us spoke for a short while. After a few awkward moments she asked me whether she could help." Oh, I'm sorry," I said. "I was hoping to speak with my grandmother, Lady Cynthia." She nodded respectfully and took my coat. She led me through the vast home and into a spacious room. My grandmother was facing a wide window at the top of the room. "Excuse me ma'am, this young lady is here to see you." She slowly and gracefully turned around. As the other lady left the room, we exchanged polite smiles. Her grin was warm and comforting. After I told her my situation, she reassured me that I was welcome here anytime.

I took out my leather notepad and a quill pen and sat down in the comfortable, warm bed. I starred at the empty page and twisted the lid of my pen. I wrote:

My very first case. I will find you Princess Margaret.



The Girl Who Awoke

by Sophie

This story Begins in the graveyard near the town Crowfall where Lucy Giggins, a 13-year-old girl who sadly died 3 years ago, body was buried. It was night and there was a deafening silence floating around the graveyard, until there was a loud bang which seemed to come from her grave. Then the uneven soil started to shake, and a hand appeared, two hands then a girl's head popped out of the soil. This wasn't the head of Lucy Giggins, no her face always was flushed and had a warm smile on it, but this head was like a cold stone, when you looked at the head it sent shivers down your spine and each time you looked at it it was a different shade of grey.

She scrambled out of the rocky, dark soil and untangled the weeds which had formed their roots around her legs. She tried to stand up but fell once or twice, clearly not remembering how to balance and then walked and inspected the gravestone which loomed over the grave she came out of. On the gravestone it read,

"Here lies Lucy Giggins, loved much by her family but sadly passed on Friday the 13th of November 2020."

She looked confused and stood there not knowing who they were, what had happened and if they were real.

Then, a boy came up to her maybe around the ages of 14-15 with dark hair and brown eyes but very, very pale skin. The boy approached her and introduced himself,

"Uh... Hello. I'm D- David, if you don't mind me asking, who are you?"

The girl continued to look confused and stared blankly into his eyes.

David said clearly and slowly, "Do you speak English?"

The girl flicked her golden blond hair out of her face and gently tucked it behind her ears and replied,

"This may sound weird, I know nothing about myself, all I know is that I have just scrambled out of a grave."

David went blank and moved his eyes up and down like he was x-raying her. David went to the gravestone and said,

"Well for the moment let's just say you are Lucy, stay here I will come back with food".

Lucy began to get cold and found a comfy place to settle under a couple trees and used branches that were laying on the floor as a blanket. She looked up, started to count the sparkling, shimmering stars until she softly went to sleep. Snapping and cracking noises woke Lucy up to find David cautiously walking towards her.

"You can come home with me if you want," David asked, "I haven't told my mum, she's not normally so welcoming to unexpected visitors but I can just sneak you upstairs.". Lucy nodded.

Slowly and steadily, she trodded behind David. Once they got to his house, he slipped his key in the lock trying not to make a sound, but a small click managed to sneak out of the door making David jump. David opened the door and Lucy ran up the stairs, opened the door which had his name sign posted on and shut the door. David came in closed the door and strolled upstairs to his room. SMASH, CLANGING, CLATTERING came from the downstairs kitchen.

"DAVID, come help me down here." Shouted his Mum, David looked at Lucy and then the stairs not knowing what to do, he replied "One second, Mum!"

He then got Lucy to hide under his bed, and then scampered down the stairs. David wanted to get up to Lucy as soon as possible but he was held up for numerous reasons: the pans needed picking up, dinner needed cooking, he needed to eat dinner and had to go to family movie night. After everything was checked of his mums list for him, he snuck some leftovers from dinner, which was beef bolognese, and poured it into a small container. Carefully, he slipped it into his pocket, advanced back up the stairs and went into his room.

"Psst, u can come out now." He whispered, whilst slipping the food out of his pocket. Lucy slowly slipped out from under the bed, took the food and slipped under the bed again.

"I'm sorry I took so long, I had to make dinner and watch a movie with my family, are you angry at me?" David explained. Lucy propped her head out from under the bed and replied,

"No, it's just dark down here," Lucy paused "I like the dark". David then told her that he had to go to school tomorrow so needed to go to sleep. He got ready for bed, leaped onto his bed and settled down to sleep.

Chirping sounds woke them up telling them it was time for school. They both got changed into their uniform, Lucy had to wear the boy's uniform as David didn't have a skirt. They both slowly strolled down the stairs to get breakfast, but they didn't check whether his parents were there already. Luckily, they weren't. POP! There toast was ready. Whilst they were munching on their toast Davids dad walked past them said

hello to David and then left again, not noticing Lucy was there. David was confused because Lucy was sitting right next to him, how come his dad didn't see her?

They walked into school, the ice-cold air brushing on their cheeks making Davids cheeks turn as red as a rose but Lucy's just turned even more grey. The school looming above them, David went and found his friends – Maisie, Jack and Adam. They caught up on what happened at the weekend and then David told them about Lucy. Lucy, who was standing behind David, started to back away but she was too slow. David turned around to show them this friend of his that came out of a grave, but everyone looked confused.

Lucy nervously introduced herself, " Hi I'm Lucy Giggins." No one replied, David's friends started to look at each other weirdly until Jack said

"Grow up mate, we are 14 we don't need 'imaginary friends!'" All of jacks friends laughed and started to run away.

Confused, David and Lucy walked in silence both asking themselves what had happened whilst going to form. Suddenly, a whole group of friends started chasing each other down the corridor heading straight towards them. David jumped to the wall but somehow Lucy jumped but went through the wall. As soon as the group passed he sprinted as fast as he could down the corridor away from Lucy as he just realised that Lucy was a ghost. But Lucy wasn't very quick at adding things up so she just started to walk around school not knowing why David left her like that at a place she didn't know. It wasn't until she accidentally walked through somebody that she realised... she was a ghost.

A Gothic Narrative

by Bethany

Towering over me, a cast iron gate with sky stabbing bars. The wind was howling tonight, worse than it normally did, like a lost sin, crying to be released from a never-ending darkness. Sharp slabs of stone pierced my feet like I was ambling upon thick shards of glass and the lunar moon shone like the only light in a world of none.

My heart was in my mouth and all I could feel was the continuous hammer in my heart, warning me something; but I didn't listen. Hands clammy, I gently brushed the handle of the gate. It felt cold and slippery in my hands, as I stealthily pushed the gate open a small amount. It stopped halfway, so I forcefully pushed the creaking gate open, producing a loud, disturbing shriek; and in I stepped; into the garden; into another world.

It was magical. A dark, mysterious world yet to be discovered. As I wondered through the meandering path, it all came back to me: the crisp, black flowers; the tall arch draped in ivy; and the glorious house framing the sight. It was like the clearest of images, except for one small

thing. For someone who had never seen the garden before, or who was simply unattached, wouldn't have realised, but I did. For some reason, I started to drift in a certain direction. It was as if my head had detached from my body and was leading me to an unknown place, but my heart knew that I had to follow. So, I did.

Suddenly, everything stopped. From looking at the pure sight, I instantaneously knew what it was. There was a tall, dark stone, covered in dirt. There was an engraving on the front, but because of the state of it, you could barely see what it read. I squinted at it with a deep connection, and finally understood.

It was my sister's grave.

Like smashing glass, my heart collapsed into a million pieces, and I ran, as fast as I could, towards the house. Struggling for breath, I collapsed against one of the crumbling brick walls in which the garden was contained behind. I couldn't think straight: the pure thought of my sister brought dread into my heart and drained any thought of happiness.

Why had I even come here? What was I thinking? Right now, the only place that I wanted to be was at home. It was better that way. I was just about to leave, when I noticed something: something that definitely did not fit in...

Scared, I looked up to find that there was a dim light in one of the rooms. Now I really had to leave. But, out of nowhere, the shape of a figure came into view. The face was too dark to see, excluding the huge, brown eyes which shone in the darkness. The figure raised a pale hand, slowly, slowly, and held it at me. Then, then I realised. The huge, dark eyes; the long, straggly locks: it was all coming back to me. But then the figure disappeared, like a magician performing a mind-boggling trick, gone forever. This was all too much now, I needed to go, and I turned around and...

There she was.

Death

by Bethany

A thick, black mist
Of uncertainty
A crushed dream
Awaits in the darkness
The sickly-sweet smell
Of a rotting heart
A dark secret
Lies in the shadows
Deep, never-ending pools
Of eyes
That trick you.
Into believing lies
Crisp, chic lips
Of a head
That deceives you.
Until you decide to die
A decaying smile
Unfurling from a face
A face
That no one can know
No one can know.
No one will know.
Never.





King's High School

King's High School
Banbury Road
Warwick CV34 6YE
t: 01926 494485 e: khs-enquiries@warwickschools.co.uk

kingshighwarwick.co.uk