



IT'S LIT

National English Honor Society Literary Magazine

2017 Halloween Edition

Cover art by Haley Austin

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Letter from the Editor

Hello readers! This is the first-ever edition of the National English Honor Society's Literary Magazine. We will be featuring a variety of creative works within this publication, ranging from original artwork and writings by NEHS members to renowned pieces by established writers. Our goal in creating this magazine is to display the masterpieces of students and professional writers alike in hopes of inspiring you to put your thoughts and stories into words or art and share them with the world. Every great writer or artist started small, and any of the talented students featured in this magazine has great potential to leave their mark in our culture through their creative ingenuity. I would like to thank all of the members of the National English Honor Society; none of this would be possible without your efforts! Your contributions are truly the heart of this project. I would also like to thank Mrs. Weathersby for her tireless efforts to make the NEHS a success, and her support in the creation of this magazine. Finally, I would like to thank you, our readers. Your interest is a great encouragement to us! Thank you all again, and happy Halloween!

Sincerely,

Haley Austin

NEHS President

Found Poem

By Kaytlin Hobbs

consequently somewhat peevish -- even Pluto began to experience the effects of my ill temper.

One night, returning home, much intoxicated, from one of my haunts about town, I fancied that the cat avoided my presence. I seized him; when, in his fright at my violence, he inflicted a slight wound upon my hand with his teeth. The fury of a demon instantly possessed me. I knew myself no longer. My original soul seemed, at once, to take its flight from my body; and a more than fiendish malevolence, gin-nurtured, thrilled every fibre of my frame. I took from my waistcoat-pocket a pen-knife, opened it, grasped the poor beast by the throat, and deliberately cut one of its eyes from the socket! I blush, I burn, I shudder, while I pen the damnable atrocity.

When reason returned with the morning -- when I had slept off the fumes of the night's debauch -- I experienced a sentiment half of horror, half of remorse, for the crime of which I had been guilty; but it was, at best, a feeble and equivocal feeling, and the soul remained untouched. I again plunged into excess, and soon drowned in wine all memory of the deed.

In the meantime the cat slowly recovered. The socket of the lost eye presented, it is true, a frightful appearance, but he no longer appeared to suffer any pain. He went about the house as usual, but, as might be expected, fled in extreme terror at my approach. I had so much of my old heart left, as to be at first grieved by this evident dislike on the part of a creature which had once so loved me. But this feeling soon gave place to irritation. And then came as if to my final and irrevocable overthrow, the spirit of PERVERSENESS. Of this spirit philosophy takes no account. Yet I am not more sure that my soul lives, than I am that perverseness is one of the primitive impulses of the human heart -- one of the indivisible primary faculties, or sentiments, which give direction to the character of Man. Who has not, a hundred times, found himself committing a vile or a silly action, for no other reason than because he knows he should *not*? Have we not a perpetual inclination, in the teeth of our best judgment, to violate that which is Law, merely because we understand it to be such? This spirit of perverseness, I say, came to my final overthrow. It was this unfathomable longing of the soul to vex itself -- to offer violence to its own nature -- to do wrong for the wrong's sake only -- that urged me to continue and finally to consummate the injury I had inflicted upon the unoffending brute. One morning, in cool blood, I slipped a noose about its neck and hung it to the limb of a tree; -- hung it with the tears streaming from my eyes, and with the bitterest remorse at my heart; -- hung it because I knew that it had loved me, and because I felt it had given me no reason of offence; -- hung it because I knew that in so doing I was committing a sin -- a deadly sin that would so jeopardize my immortal soul as to place it -- if such a thing were possible -- even beyond the reach of the infinite mercy of the Most Merciful and Most Terrible God.

On the night of the day on which this cruel deed was done, I was aroused from sleep by the cry of fire. The curtains of my bed were in flames. The whole house was blazing. It was with great difficulty that my wife, a servant, and myself, made our escape from the conflagration. The destruction was complete. My worldly wealth was swallowed up, and I resigned myself thenceforward to despair.

I am above the weakness of seeking to establish a sequence of cause and effect, between the disaster and my fall; but I am detailing a chain of facts -- and wish not to leave even a possible link imperfect. On the day succeeding the fire, I visited the ruins. The walls, with one exception, had fallen in. This exception was found in a compartment wall, not very thick, which stood about the middle of the

Story Reviews

Here are some creepy Halloween reads that a couple of NEHS members highly recommend.
Find out what makes these stories worth your while!

“The Birds” is a short horror story by Daphne du Maurier. When I started reading it I didn’t like the story at all, but the further I got the more I was hooked. The author makes you wonder what would happen to us if nature turned on humanity. She takes you on a journey by describing a desperate fight for survival against an unnatural world, and uses great technique by keeping the horror constant and randomly introducing surprising and terrifying events. Using birds as a harmful animal was scary to me because I didn’t realize how dangerous it would be if they all became hostile at once. No joke, after reading this I avoided birds for a few weeks. However, I really enjoyed reading this horror story. It was definitely not boring like I thought it would be. Daphne du Maurier leaves the story on a cliffhanger, which I hated. It does leave you with a suspenseful impression, but I don’t like wondering what would happen next. Overall, I thought it was a very good read and I would definitely recommend it to all lovers of horror and anyone looking for a good Halloween story. —DJ Horton

“The Monkey’s Paw” is honestly one of my favorite horror stories of all time. One of the reasons that it has earned a spot in my personal library is the incredibly suspenseful feeling the author creates without being overly-explicit with details. He leaves a lot of the story to your imagination, which almost makes it creepier. I remember reading it for the first time and feeling really frightened. No other story had managed to make me feel that way until this one. Another reason I love this story is because it answers a commonly asked question: “Should we always get what we wish for?” “The Monkey’s Paw” answers this in a horrifying and grotesque way that is bound to make your skin crawl. If you want to find out what’s so terrifying about this story, you should check out “The Monkey’s Paw” today! You won’t regret it! —Samuel Fowler

A “Wicked” Experience

Over fall break, I had the opportunity to watch the hit Broadway musical, “Wicked”. The experience was amazing. The play is about the witches of Oz and their beginnings, and what made them into what we know them as today. It is a musical comedy, but provokes deep thought about the way you treat others. The play conveys an important theme: perspective can change everything. Of course, the impeccable talent of the actors and elaborate sets made for a fantastic experience, but the story was great as well. I laughed, cried, and thought profoundly about things that seemed so simple to me before I watched this play. Overall, it was great time and definitely scores a 10 out of 10 from me. —Katelyn White



Facts About



1. Poe's mother died when he was just three years old.
2. Edgar often wrote with a cat on his shoulder and had an obsession with cats.
3. Poe is credited for defining the modern short story.
4. Poe originally wanted to use a parrot instead of a raven in the famous poem "The Raven", but he thought it didn't evoke the right tone.
5. "The Raven" was a personal challenge Edgar imposed upon himself. He wanted to write 100 line poem, enough for one sitting. He ended up with 108 lines.
6. In 1848 after his wife's death in 1847, Poe attempted to commit suicide by ingesting opiates.
7. He introduced the first recorded literary detective in "The Murders in the Rue Morgue." The detective character would lead to become the stereotypical detective we know today.
8. The famous eerie portrait displaying Poe as baggy-eyed and unattractive was far from what Edgar really looked like. He was actually a very athletic and handsome talented sportsman, holding a record for swimming six miles up the James River in Virginia.
9. The American football team the Baltimore Ravens are named in honor of Edgar Allan Poe's poem "The Raven".
10. One of the 12 survived copies of Poe's first book "Tamerlane and Other Poems" was sold at Christy's for \$662,500, a record price paid for a work of American literature in 2009.

“The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar”

By Edgar Allan Poe

OF course I shall not pretend to consider it any matter for wonder, that the extraordinary case of M. Valdemar has excited discussion. It would have been a miracle had it not--especially under the circumstances. Through the desire of all parties concerned, to keep the affair from the public, at least for the present, or until we had farther opportunities for investigation --through our endeavors to effect this --a garbled or exaggerated account made its way into society, and became the source of many unpleasant misrepresentations, and, very naturally, of a great deal of disbelief.

It is now rendered necessary that I give the facts --as far as I comprehend them myself. They are, succinctly, these:

My attention, for the last three years, had been repeatedly drawn to the subject of Mesmerism; and, about nine months ago it occurred to me, quite suddenly, that in the series of experiments made hitherto, there had been a very remarkable and most unaccountable omission: --no person had as yet been mesmerized in articulo mortis. It remained to be seen, first, whether, in such condition, there existed in the patient any susceptibility to the magnetic influence; secondly, whether, if any existed, it was impaired or increased by the condition; thirdly, to what extent, or for how long a period, the encroachments of Death might be arrested by the process. There were other points to be ascertained, but these most excited my curiosity --the last in especial, from the immensely important character of its consequences.

In looking around me for some subject by whose means I might test these particulars, I was brought to think of my friend, M. Ernest Valdemar, the well-known compiler of the "Bibliotheca Forensica," and author (under the nom de plume of Issachar Marx) of the Polish versions of "Wallenstein" and "Gargantua." M. Valdemar, who has resided principally at Harlaem, N.Y., since the year 1839, is (or was) particularly noticeable for the extreme sparseness of his person --his lower limbs much resembling those of John Randolph; and, also, for the whiteness of his whiskers, in violent contrast to the blackness of his hair --the latter, in consequence, being very generally mistaken for a wig. His temperament was markedly nervous, and rendered him a good subject for mesmeric experiment. On two or three occasions I had put him to sleep with little difficulty, but was disappointed in other results which his peculiar constitution had naturally led me to anticipate. His will was at no period positively, or thoroughly, under my control, and in regard to clairvoyance, I could accomplish with him nothing to be relied upon. I always attributed my failure at these points to the disordered state of his health. For some months previous to my becoming acquainted with him, his physicians had declared him in a confirmed phthisis. It was his custom, indeed, to speak calmly of his approaching dissolution, as of a matter neither to be avoided nor regretted.

When the ideas to which I have alluded first occurred to me, it was of course very natural that I should think of M. Valdemar. I knew the steady philosophy of the man too well to apprehend any scruples from him; and he had no relatives in America who would be likely to interfere. I spoke to him frankly upon the subject; and, to my surprise, his interest seemed vividly excited. I say to my

before given me any tokens of sympathy with what I did. His disease was of that character which would admit of exact calculation in respect to the epoch of its termination in death; and it was finally arranged between us that he would send for me about twenty-four hours before the period announced by his physicians as that of his decease.

It is now rather more than seven months since I received, from M. Valdemar himself, the subjoined note:

My DEAR P--,

You may as well come now. D-- and F-- are agreed that I cannot hold out beyond to-morrow midnight; and I think they have hit the time very nearly.

VALDEMAR

I received this note within half an hour after it was written, and in fifteen minutes more I was in the dying man's chamber. I had not seen him for ten days, and was appalled by the fearful alteration which the brief interval had wrought in him. His face wore a leaden hue; the eyes were utterly lustreless; and the emaciation was so extreme that the skin had been broken through by the cheek-bones. His expectoration was excessive. The pulse was barely perceptible. He retained, nevertheless, in a very remarkable manner, both his mental power and a certain degree of physical strength. He spoke with distinctness --took some palliative medicines without aid --and, when I entered the room, was occupied in penciling memoranda in a pocket-book. He was propped up in the bed by pillows. Doctors D-- and F-- were in attendance.

After pressing Valdemar's hand, I took these gentlemen aside, and obtained from them a minute account of the patient's condition. The left lung had been for eighteen months in a semi-osseous or cartilaginous state, and was, of course, entirely useless for all purposes of vitality. The right, in its upper portion, was also partially, if not thoroughly, ossified, while the lower region was merely a mass of purulent tubercles, running one into another. Several extensive perforations existed; and, at one point, permanent adhesion to the ribs had taken place. These appearances in the right lobe were of comparatively recent date. The ossification had proceeded with very unusual rapidity; no sign of it had discovered a month before, and the adhesion had only been observed during the three previous days. Independently of the phthisis, the patient was suspected of aneurism of the aorta; but on this point the osseous symptoms rendered an exact diagnosis impossible. It was the opinion of both physicians that M. Valdemar would die about midnight on the morrow (Sunday). It was then seven o'clock on Saturday evening. On quitting the invalid's bed-side to hold conversation with myself, Doctors D-- and F-- had bidden him a final farewell. It had not been their intention to return; but, at my request, they agreed to look in upon the patient about ten the next night.

When they had gone, I spoke freely with M. Valdemar on the subject of his approaching dissolution, as well as, more particularly, of the experiment proposed. He still professed himself quite willing and even anxious to have it made, and urged me to commence it at once. A male and a female nurse were

in attendance; but I did not feel myself altogether at liberty to engage in a task of this character with no more reliable witnesses than these people, in case of sudden accident, might prove. I therefore postponed operations until about eight the next night, when the arrival of a medical student with whom I had some acquaintance, (Mr. Theodore L--l,) relieved me from farther embarrassment. It had been my design, originally, to wait for the physicians; but I was induced to proceed, first, by the urgent entreaties of M. Valdemar, and secondly, by my conviction that I had not a moment to lose, as he was evidently sinking fast.

Mr. L--l was so kind as to accede to my desire that he would take notes of all that occurred, and it is from his memoranda that what I now have to relate is, for the most part, either condensed or copied verbatim.

It wanted about five minutes of eight when, taking the patient's hand, I begged him to state, as distinctly as he could, to Mr. L--l, whether he (M. Valdemar) was entirely willing that I should make the experiment of mesmerizing him in his then condition.

He replied feebly, yet quite audibly, "Yes, I wish to be "I fear you have mesmerized" --adding immediately afterwards, deferred it too long."

While he spoke thus, I commenced the passes which I had already found most effectual in subduing him. He was evidently influenced with the first lateral stroke of my hand across his forehead; but although I exerted all my powers, no farther perceptible effect was induced until some minutes after ten o'clock, when Doctors D-- and F-- called, according to appointment. I explained to them, in a few words, what I designed, and as they opposed no objection, saying that the patient was already in the death agony, I proceeded without hesitation --exchanging, however, the lateral passes for downward ones, and directing my gaze entirely into the right eye of the sufferer.

By this time his pulse was imperceptible and his breathing was stertorous, and at intervals of half a minute.

This condition was nearly unaltered for a quarter of an hour. At the expiration of this period, however, a natural although a very deep sigh escaped the bosom of the dying man, and the stertorous breathing ceased --that is to say, its stertorousness was no longer apparent; the intervals were undiminished. The patient's extremities were of an icy coldness.

At five minutes before eleven I perceived unequivocal signs of the mesmeric influence. The glassy roll of the eye was changed for that expression of uneasy inward examination which is never seen except in cases of sleep-waking, and which it is quite impossible to mistake. With a few rapid lateral passes I made the lids quiver, as in incipient sleep, and with a few more I closed them altogether. I was not satisfied, however, with this, but continued the manipulations vigorously, and with the fullest exertion of the will, until I had completely stiffened the limbs of the slumberer, after placing them in a seemingly easy position. The legs were at full length; the arms were nearly so, and reposed on the bed at a moderate distance from the loin. The head was very slightly elevated.

When I had accomplished this, it was fully midnight, and I requested the gentlemen present to examine M. Valdemar's condition. After a few experiments, they admitted him to be an unusually perfect state of mesmeric trance. The curiosity of both the physicians was greatly excited. Dr. D-- resolved at once to remain with the patient all night, while Dr. F-- took leave with a promise to return at day-break. Mr. L--l and the nurses remained.

We left M. Valdemar entirely undisturbed until about three o'clock in the morning, when I approached him and found him in precisely the same condition as when Dr. F-- went away --that is to say, he lay in the same position; the pulse was imperceptible; the breathing was gentle (scarcely noticeable, unless through the application of a mirror to the lips); the eyes were closed naturally; and the limbs were as rigid and as cold as marble. Still, the general appearance was certainly not that of death.

As I approached M. Valdemar I made a kind of half effort to influence his right arm into pursuit of my own, as I passed the latter gently to and fro above his person. In such experiments with this patient had never perfectly succeeded before, and assuredly I had little thought of succeeding now; but to my astonishment, his arm very readily, although feebly, followed every direction I assigned it with mine. I determined to hazard a few words of conversation.

"M. Valdemar," I said, "are you asleep?" He made no answer, but I perceived a tremor about the lips, and was thus induced to repeat the question, again and again. At its third repetition, his whole frame was agitated by a very slight shivering; the eyelids unclosed themselves so far as to display a white line of the ball; the lips moved sluggishly, and from between them, in a barely audible whisper, issued the words:

"Yes; --asleep now. Do not wake me! --let me die so!"

I here felt the limbs and found them as rigid as ever. The right arm, as before, obeyed the direction of my hand. I questioned the sleep-waker again:

"Do you still feel pain in the breast, M. Valdemar?"

The answer now was immediate, but even less audible than before:

"No pain --I am dying."

I did not think it advisable to disturb him farther just then, and nothing more was said or done until the arrival of Dr. F--, who came a little before sunrise, and expressed unbounded astonishment at finding the patient still alive. After feeling the pulse and applying a mirror to the lips, he requested me to speak to the sleep-waker again. I did so, saying:

"M. Valdemar, do you still sleep?"

As before, some minutes elapsed ere a reply was made; and during the interval the dying man

seemed to be collecting his energies to speak. At my fourth repetition of the question, he said very faintly, almost inaudibly:

"Yes; still asleep --dying."

It was now the opinion, or rather the wish, of the physicians, that M. Valdemar should be suffered to remain undisturbed in his present apparently tranquil condition, until death should supervene --and this, it was generally agreed, must now take place within a few minutes. I concluded, however, to speak to him once more, and merely repeated my previous question.

While I spoke, there came a marked change over the countenance of the sleep-waker. The eyes rolled themselves slowly open, the pupils disappearing upwardly; the skin generally assumed a cadaverous hue, resembling not so much parchment as white paper; and the circular hectic spots which, hitherto, had been strongly defined in the centre of each cheek, went out at once. I use this expression, because the suddenness of their departure put me in mind of nothing so much as the extinguishment of a candle by a puff of the breath. The upper lip, at the same time, writhed itself away from the teeth, which it had previously covered completely; while the lower jaw fell with an audible jerk, leaving the mouth widely extended, and disclosing in full view the swollen and blackened tongue. I presume that no member of the party then present had been unaccustomed to death-bed horrors; but so hideous beyond conception was the appearance of M. Valdemar at this moment, that there was a general shrinking back from the region of the bed.

I now feel that I have reached a point of this narrative at which every reader will be startled into positive disbelief. It is my business, however, simply to proceed.

There was no longer the faintest sign of vitality in M. Valdemar; and concluding him to be dead, we were consigning him to the charge of the nurses, when a strong vibratory motion was observable in the tongue. This continued for perhaps a minute. At the expiration of this period, there issued from the distended and motionless jaws a voice --such as it would be madness in me to attempt describing. There are, indeed, two or three epithets which might be considered as applicable to it in part; I might say, for example, that the sound was harsh, and broken and hollow; but the hideous whole is indescribable, for the simple reason that no similar sounds have ever jarred upon the ear of humanity. There were two particulars, nevertheless, which I thought then, and still think, might fairly be stated as characteristic of the intonation --as well adapted to convey some idea of its unearthly peculiarity. In the first place, the voice seemed to reach our ears --at least mine --from a vast distance, or from some deep cavern within the earth. In the second place, it impressed me (I fear, indeed, that it will be impossible to make myself comprehended) as gelatinous or glutinous matters impress the sense of touch.

I have spoken both of "sound" and of "voice." I mean to say that the sound was one of distinct --of even wonderfully, thrillingly distinct --syllabification. M. Valdemar spoke --obviously in reply to the question I had propounded to him a few minutes before. I had asked him, it will be remembered, if he still slept. He now said:

"Yes; --no; --I have been sleeping --and now --now --I am dead.

No person present even affected to deny, or attempted to repress, the unutterable, shuddering horror which these few words, thus uttered, were so well calculated to convey. Mr. L--l (the student) swooned. The nurses immediately left the chamber, and could not be induced to return. My own impressions I would not pretend to render intelligible to the reader. For nearly an hour, we busied ourselves, silently --without the utterance of a word --in endeavors to revive Mr. L--l. When he came to himself, we addressed ourselves again to an investigation of M. Valdemar's condition.

It remained in all respects as I have last described it, with the exception that the mirror no longer afforded evidence of respiration. An attempt to draw blood from the arm failed. I should mention, too, that this limb was no farther subject to my will. I endeavored in vain to make it follow the direction of my hand. The only real indication, indeed, of the mesmeric influence, was now found in the vibratory movement of the tongue, whenever I addressed M. Valdemar a question. He seemed to be making an effort to reply, but had no longer sufficient volition. To queries put to him by any other person than myself he seemed utterly insensible --although I endeavored to place each member of the company in mesmeric rapport with him. I believe that I have now related all that is necessary to an understanding of the sleep-waker's state at this epoch. Other nurses were procured; and at ten o'clock I left the house in company with the two physicians and Mr. L--l.

In the afternoon we all called again to see the patient. His condition remained precisely the same. We had now some discussion as to the propriety and feasibility of awakening him; but we had little difficulty in agreeing that no good purpose would be served by so doing. It was evident that, so far, death (or what is usually termed death) had been arrested by the mesmeric process. It seemed clear to us all that to awaken M. Valdemar would be merely to insure his instant, or at least his speedy dissolution. From this period until the close of last week --an interval of nearly seven months --we continued to make daily calls at M. Valdemar's house, accompanied, now and then, by medical and other friends. All this time the sleeper-waker remained exactly as I have last described him. The nurses' attentions were continual.

It was on Friday last that we finally resolved to make the experiment of awakening or attempting to awaken him; and it is the (perhaps) unfortunate result of this latter experiment which has given rise to so much discussion in private circles --to so much of what I cannot help thinking unwarranted popular feeling. For the purpose of relieving M. Valdemar from the mesmeric trance, I made use of the customary passes. These, for a time, were unsuccessful. The first indication of revival was afforded by a partial descent of the iris. It was observed, as especially remarkable, that this lowering of the pupil was accompanied by the profuse out-flowing of a yellowish ichor (from beneath the lids) of a pungent and highly offensive odor. It was now suggested that I should attempt to influence the patient's arm, as heretofore. I made the attempt and failed. Dr. F-- then intimated a desire to have me put a question. I did so, as follows:

"M. Valdemar, can you explain to us what are your feelings or wishes now?" There was an instant return of the hectic circles on the cheeks; the tongue quivered, or rather rolled violently in the mouth (although the jaws and lips remained rigid as before;) and at length the same hideous voice which I have already described, broke forth:

For God's sake! --quick! --quick! --put me to sleep --or, quick! --waken me! --quick! --I say to you that I am dead!"

I was thoroughly unnerved, and for an instant remained undecided what to do. At first I made an endeavor to re-compose the patient; but, failing in this through total abeyance of the will, I re-traced my steps and as earnestly struggled to awaken him. In this attempt I soon saw that I should be successful --or at least I soon fancied that my success would be complete --and I am sure that all in the room were prepared to see the patient awaken.

For what really occurred, however, it is quite impossible that any human being could have been prepared.

As I rapidly made the mesmeric passes, amid ejaculations of "dead! dead!" absolutely bursting from the tongue and not from the lips of the sufferer, his whole frame at once --within the space of a single minute, or even less, shrunk --crumbled --absolutely rotted away beneath my hands. Upon the bed, before that whole company, there lay a nearly liquid mass of loathsome --of detestable putridity.

“A Terrifying Tale”

By Connor Fowler



Well, I guess I'll start writing now. I should probably explain myself: I'm Robert, and I'm failing my English class, which is the only reason you're reading this now. My teacher said that I can write a ghost hunting article about some abandoned building for an extra 100 this semester (something I desperately need)! Trust me, I wouldn't be writing anything if my grades weren't down. Unfortunately, I'm stuck writing about some abandoned house in the middle of the woods. At least the myths are interesting, though.

According to local lore, the house is haunted by some spirit (probably of one of the houses occupants) that roams around the grounds at night. I know that's not the best telling of a ghost story, but the major details were kind of lost as I asked more and more people. Without further ado, because I really don't want to spend the rest of my fall break writing this documentary, I'm going to go to the house for the first time.

October 9th, 2017- Morning (8am)

Since the ghost supposedly doesn't come out until nightfall, I'm going to take this time to further explorer the house. As you can see from the photo, the house is barely standing. The second story has pretty much caved in, so there won't be any ghost hunting up there. Even though nothing looks any different from a regular abandoned building, I'm still getting creeped out.

I guess I should tell y'all about the ghost some more since I got a physical description. This creature is pitch black, stands 8 to 10 feet tall, has no facial features except for a mouth, and has long claws on its fingers. Charming, right? Well, I looked the place over and I guess I should head out. I'm going to come back tonight and see if I can find any ghosts.

October 9th, 2017- Night (11pm)

Walking around in the dark wasn't nearly as boring as it was at 8 in the morning. When I drove up in the car, the moon was full and bright, and the nocturnal animals were making their excited sounds. My original plan was to check in the house to see if I could find any ghosts, but I accidentally stabbed my ankle on a piece of wood sticking out of the ground. My ankle burned like fire after that! While I was checking my injury, I noticed something: the woods were completely quiet. Usually that's a sign that a predator (in most cases, a human) is around; this seemed different though. Even the coyotes and owls, who usually don't care for humans and run around when they're present, are completely still and silent. Something bigger than me was in the woods. I was being watched. Needless to say, I made a point to get to the car and drive home as fast as I could. Better luck ghost hunting tomorrow, I guess.

October 10th 2017- Midday (1am)

After spending all morning completing other over-the-break-assignments, I decided to head back to the abandoned house. Everything looked normal as I was walking up to the building, but the back of the house was a different story. I found a set of footprints coming from under the house. The prints were human shaped, but much larger than a normal person's foot. That wasn't even the creepiest part: there was a claw stuck in the bottom edge of the house. The claw was pointed, long, and felt like the same stuff that human nails are made out of (nothing like the claws of any animal I've seen before.) I decided to take the claw with me on the way home. I also feel the need to point out the fact that the stick I had cut myself on last night was also near the entrance. I would have checked under the house, but I didn't bring a flash light. Besides, those footprints could have just as easily been drag marks from some small animal bringing supper home: nothing to worry about.

October 10th 2017- Night (10:30pm)

I actually saw a ghost! Well, I don't know what it was, but it looked kind of like the descriptions given in the stories. I'm getting ahead of myself, I should probably start at the beginning. I drove up to the woods, and I started walking to the house. The night air was cool and the sound of night time insects and animals could be heard all around. I decided the underside of the house was the first thing I was going to check.

Then I heard the noise. Sure, there are deep voiced sounds in nature, but this was unnatural; this was the sound of something insidious. I heard heavy footsteps and saw the source of the sound: a towering human-looking monster as described by the locals (the main difference is that words cannot describe the pure terror one feels when they look at this thing.) It slowly hobbled into the middle of the house and made more of those clicking noises. This was the moment I decided to run. Thank goodness I decided to check my pockets for the car keys because I noticed they weren't in my pocket. I looked around the house through a crack in the floor and felt my heart sink as I saw the keys were right next to the monster's foot. I decided to make my way out from under the house (as quiet as I possibly could). As I was leaving the hole, I heard the creature start slowly walking towards the back of the house, directly where I was. I ran around the side of the structure and ducked just in time to avoid being seen by the ghost. I watched as it slowly started crawling into the pit I had just emerged from. I stealthily went inside the house and picked up the keys. I looked at the hole in the floor just to see the monster staring right back at me. The deep clicks started speeding up rapidly. It opened its horrible mouth and let loose a high-pitched, blood-curling scream. I'll remember that shriek for a long time; it sounded just like a scream that you hear from a woman in a horror movie. This scream, however, sounded furious, almost evil. Needless to say, I was flying as fast as my legs would carry me. The screaming continued and I heard the monster pursuing after me. I quickly glanced back as I was running, but all I saw was pearly white teeth. For some strange reason, the creature stopped chasing me as soon as I passed into the tree line. I quickly jumped into the car and we started speeding home.

October 11th 2017- Morning (6am)

It attacked me. I wasn't planning on going to the house today. Mom wanted me to go to the grocery store and pick up some pumpkins to decorate the house with. I was driving by the woods. The monster slammed into the side of my car at a blinding speed. I'm currently in my upside down in the car. Legs crushed by the wheel. Not much time. Creature's getting clo —



“Halloween”

By Evann Fowler

The food is out– the table’s set
 Cars start arriving one by one
 Hugs and kisses, no regrets
 We’ll have such fun before the night is done!

The Sun saunters down
 From his heavenly throne
 Family that have gathered ‘round
 View a sunset of warm, crimson tones

Little ones run, laugh, and play
 With enough spirit to make my day
 Everyone that sees one sweet child
 Cannot help but crack a sincere smile

Pie, candy corn, the crunch of leaves
 The moon painted orange-red
 But the best parts of Hallow’s Eve
 Are our wonderful family and friends

Special Student Feature

“The Light Died Away”

By Matthew Giffin

The Light died away
 As the Sun descended under the Earth,
 The birds' chirping lessened,
 And the wind picked up,
 Cutting through the peace and rest of the Day.

The violet sheet above my head
 Was spangled with the jewels of Heaven,
 And the moon gave her Light.
 For Hope survives even in the Darkness
 Until all Radiance has perished.

But Satan blew it all away,
 And the expanse of Heaven became gray,
 And so came the death of today,
 And Darkness dispersed without delay.
 The sheet of sky above my head was dyed black.

A howl pierced the resulting calm of Night,
 And the surrounding brush was overcome with excitement.
 A hiss came from the tree beside me,
 And Satan pounced on me,

Wrapping around me,
 Encompassing my body,
 Sapping my strength from me.
 He gazed into my eyes
 And my vision was made foggy,
 And his gaze became as fire, knives, and poison to my soul.

My light,
 My Life,
 My Word,
 Was dead.