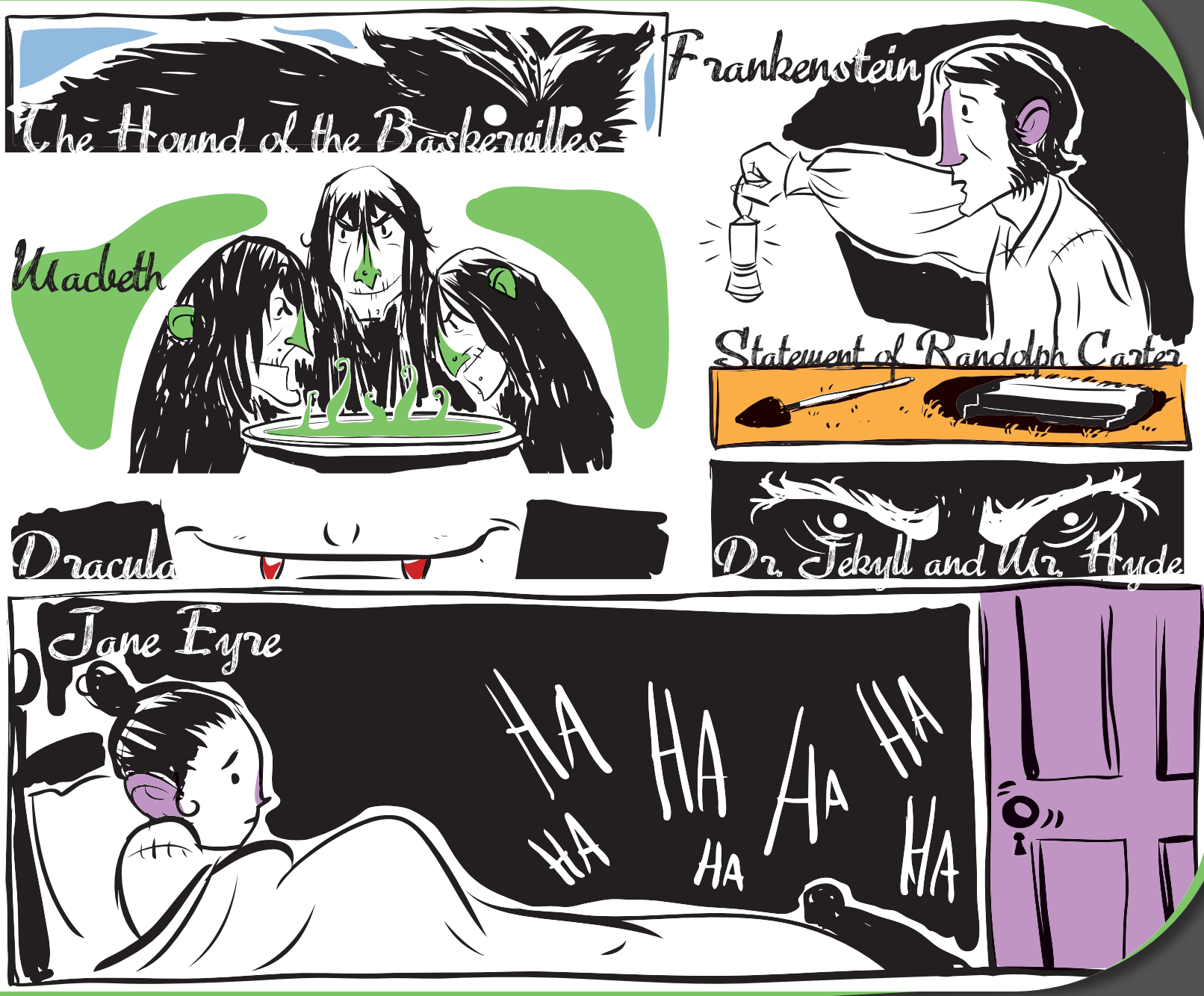
Haunting Plots

5th Grade



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Haunting Plots

The Raven
Edgar Allan Poe, 1845

Read this version of Edgar Allan Poe's "The Raven." Find the definitions for the highlighted words in each stanza. Use clues from the text to help you.

Once upon a midnight dreary, while I **pondered**, weak and weary,
Over many a strange and curious volume of forgotten **lore**,
While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping,
As of someone gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door.
"'Tis some visitor," I muttered, "tapping at my chamber door-
Only this, and nothing more."

And the silken, sad, uncertain rustling of each purple curtain
Thrilled me- filled me with fantastic terrors never felt before;
So that now, to still the beating of my heart, I stood repeating,
"'Tis some visitor **entreating** entrance at my chamber door-
Some late visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door;-
This it is, and nothing more."

Presently my soul grew stronger; hesitating then no longer,
"Sir," said I, "or Madam, truly your forgiveness I **implore**;
But the fact is I was napping, and so gently you came rapping,
And so faintly you came tapping, tapping at my chamber door,
That I wasn't sure I heard you"- here I opened wide the door;-
Darkness there, and nothing more.

Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there wondering, fearing,
Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortal ever dared to dream before;
But the silence was unbroken, and the stillness gave no token,
And the only word there spoken was the whispered word, "Lenore?"
This I whispered, and an echo **murmured** back the word, "Lenore!"-
Merely this, and nothing more.

Back into the chamber turning, all my soul within me burning,
Soon again I heard a tapping somewhat louder than before.
"Surely," said I, "surely that is something at my window **lattice**:
Let me see, then, what thereat is, and this mystery explore-
Let my heart be still a moment and this mystery explore;-
'Tis the wind and nothing more!"

Open here I flung the shutter, when, with many a flirt and flutter,
In there stepped a **stately** Raven of the saintly days of yore;
Not the least kind gesture made he; not a minute stopped or stayed he;
But, with air of lord or lady, perched above my chamber door-
Perched upon a bust of Pallas just above my chamber door-
Perched, and sat, and nothing more.

Then this ebony bird **beguiling** my sad fancy into smiling,
By the grave and stern, strange nature of the **countenance** it wore.
"Though thy crest be shorn and shaven, thou," I said, "art sure no craven,
Ghostly grim and ancient Raven wandering from the Nightly shore—
Tell me what thy lordly name is on the Night's Plutonian shore!"
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

"Prophet!" said I, "thing of evil!—prophet still, if bird or devil!—
Whether Tempter sent, or whether tempest tossed thee here ashore,
Desolate yet all **undaunted**, on this desert land enchanted-
On this home by Horror haunted—tell me truly, I implore-
Is there- is there balm in Gilead?—tell me- tell me, I implore!"
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

"Be that word our sign in parting, bird or **fiend**," I shrieked, upstarting-
"Get thee back into the tempest and the Night's Plutonian shore!
Leave no black **plume** as a token of that lie thy soul hath spoken!
Leave my loneliness unbroken!—quit the bust above my door!
Take thy beak from out my heart, and take thy form from off my door!"
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

And the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting, still is sitting
On the **pallid** bust of Pallas just above my chamber door;
And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon's that is dreaming,
And the lamp-light o'er him streaming throws his shadow on the floor;
And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on the floor
Shall be lifted—nevermore!

1. **Pondered**: a. ate b. thought about
2. **Lore**: a. news articles b. legends
3. **Entreating**: a. begging for b. ignoring
4. **Implore**: a. ignore b. beg for
5. **Murmured**: a. spoke softly b. shouted
6. **Lattice**: a. a child's toy b. a criss-crossed structure
7. **Stately**: a. sloppy b. dignified
8. **Beguiling**: a. tricking or deceiving b. changing
9. **Countenance**: a. expression b. fancy hat
10. **Desolate**: a. refreshing b. lonely
11. **Undaunted**: a. excited b. not discouraged
12. **Fiend**: a. friend b. cruel or wicked person
13. **Plume**: a. feather b. crumb
14. **Pallid**: a. glowing b. pale

ANSWERS: 1. b 2. b 3. a 4. b 5. a 6. b 7. b 8. a 9. a 10. b 11. b 12. b 13. a 14. b

Frankenstein: The Modern Prometheus

Mary Shelley, 1818

Frankenstein ***was published at the height of the Industrial Revolution, a time of many new scientific discoveries. In the book, a scientist tries to create a creature out of old body parts.*** **Frankenstein** ***was not only scary because it was about a monster, but because it reflected peoples' fears that science might one day go too far.***

It was on a dreary night of November that I beheld my accomplishment. With an anxiety that almost amounted to agony, I infused the first spark of being into the lifeless thing that lay at my feet. It was already one in the morning; the rain pattered dismally against the panes, and my candle was nearly burnt out, when, by the glimmer of the half-extinguished light, I saw the dull yellow eye of the creature open. It breathed hard, and a convulsive motion agitated its limbs.

How can I describe my emotions at this catastrophe, or describe the wretch I spent so much time and care making? His limbs were in proportion, and I had selected his features to be beautiful. But great God! His yellow skin barely covered the muscles and arteries beneath. His hair was a lustrous black, and his teeth were of a pearly whiteness, but these things only formed a horrid contrast with his watery eyes, his shriveled skin and straight black lips.

I had worked hard for nearly two years, for the sole purpose of infusing life into an inanimate body. I had deprived myself of rest and health. I had desired it with a passion that far exceeded anything else. Now that I had finished, the beauty of the dream vanished, and horror and disgust filled my heart. Unable to endure the sight of the being I had created, I rushed out of the room.

How does the narrator feel at the beginning of the passage?

_____

How does he feel at the end?

_____

Why does the narrator feel the way he does at the end?

_____

Draw a picture based on the description of the monster.

Jane Eyre
Charlotte Bronte, 1847

Read the passage and answer the questions on the next page.

I hardly know whether I had slept or not; at any rate, I started wide awake on hearing a vague murmur, which sounded as though it was just above me. The night was drearily dark; my spirits were depressed. I sat up in bed, listening. The sound was hushed. I tried again to sleep; but my heart beat anxiously. The clock in the hall struck two.

Just then, it seemed my chamber-door was touched; as if fingers had swept the panels along the dark gallery outside.

"Who is there?" I said, but nothing answered. I was chilled with fear. All at once I remembered that it might be Pilot, who, when the kitchen-door was to be left open, sometimes found his way up to Mr. Rochester's chamber: I had seen him lying there in the mornings. The idea calmed me somewhat, and I lay down. An unbroken hush now reigned again through the whole house, and I began to feel the return of slumber.

But it was not fated that I should sleep that night. A dream had scarcely approached my ear, when it fled affrighted, scared by a marrow-freezing incident enough.

This was a demoniac laugh—low, suppressed, and deep—uttered, as it seemed, at the very keyhole of my chamber door. The head of my bed was near the door, and I thought at first the goblin-laugher stood at my bedside—or rather, crouched by my pillow: but I rose, looked round, and could see nothing. As I still gazed, the unnatural sound was reiterated: and I knew it came from behind the panels. My first impulse was to rise and fasten the bolt; but again I cried out, "Who is there?"

Something gurgled and moaned. I heard steps retreat up the gallery towards the third-storey staircase: a door had lately been made to shut in that staircase; I heard it open and close, and all was still.

"Was that Grace Poole? Is she possessed with a devil?" thought I.

I could no longer remain by myself: I had to go to Mrs. Fairfax. I hurried on my frock and a shawl; I withdrew the bolt and opened the door with a trembling hand. There was a candle burning just outside, and on the matting in the gallery. I was surprised at this circumstance: but still more was I amazed to perceive the air filled with...

What do you think Jane sees in the air? Use information from the last paragraph to support your answer.

Now, write another paragraph to end the passage.

The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde

Robert Louis Stevenson, 1886

The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde ***is the story of a man who can turn into a monster. Read the passage below.***

On Sunday, when Mr. Utterson was on his usual walk with Mr. Enfield, their path once again went through the by-street. When they came in front of Dr. Jekyll's door, they stopped to gaze on it.

'Well,' said Enfield, 'that story's at an end. We shall never see more of Mr. Hyde.'

'I hope not,' said Utterson. 'Did I tell you that I once saw him, and shared your feeling of repulsion?'

'It's impossible to do the one without the other,' returned Enfield.

'Be that as it may, let's step into the court and take a look at the windows. To tell you the truth, I am worried about poor Jekyll. Even outside, I feel as if the presence of a friend might do him good.'

The court was very cool; a little damp and full of premature twilight. The middle one of the three windows was halfway open; and sitting close beside it, with an air of sadness, like some kind of prisoner, was Dr. Jekyll.

'Jekyll!' he cried. 'I trust you are better.'

'I am very low, Utterson,' replied the doctor, 'very low. It will not last long, thank God.'

'You stay indoors too much,' said the lawyer. 'You should be out, taking in the fresh air like Mr. Enfield and me. Come, now; get your hat and take a walk with us.'

'I should like to very much,' sighed Dr. Jekyll, 'But no, I dare not. Still, I am very glad to see you. This is really a great pleasure; I would ask you and Mr. Enfield up, but the place is really not fit.'

'Why then,' said Utterson, good-naturedly, 'the best thing we can do is to stay down here and speak with you from where we are.'

'That is just what I was about to propose,' returned the doctor with a smile. But the words were hardly uttered before the smile was struck out of his face and succeeded by an expression of terror and despair, which froze the very blood of the two gentlemen below. They saw it but for a glimpse, then the window was instantly thrust down.

But that glimpse had been enough to shock them. They turned and left the court without a word. In silence, too, they walked down the by-street; and it wasn't until they had come to the next intersection, where even for a Sunday there were still some stirrings of life, that Mr. Utterson at last turned and looked at his companion. They were both pale; and there was a horror in their eyes.

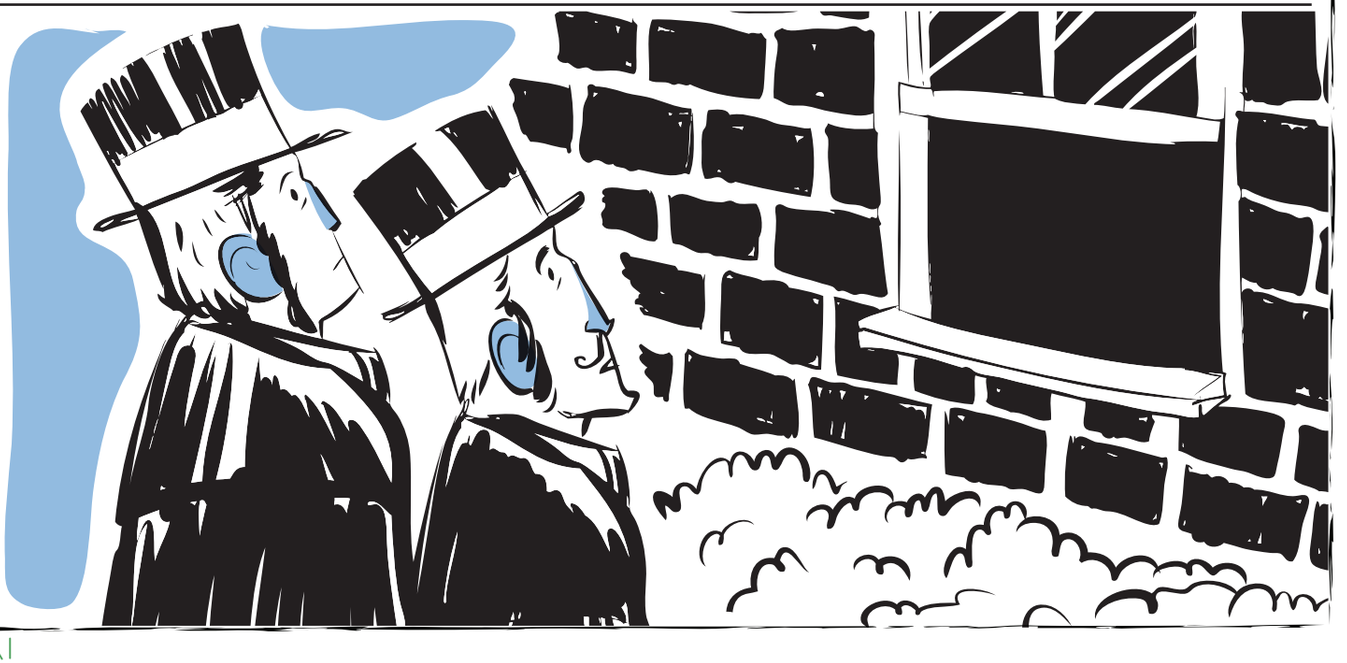
'God forgive us, God forgive us,' said Mr. Utterson.

But Mr. Enfield only nodded his head very seriously and walked on once more in silence.

(continued)

What do you think Mr. Enfield and Mr. Utterson saw in the window?

There are three characters in this scene, but we only hear it from the perspective of two. Rewrite the passage from the perspective of Dr. Jekyll.



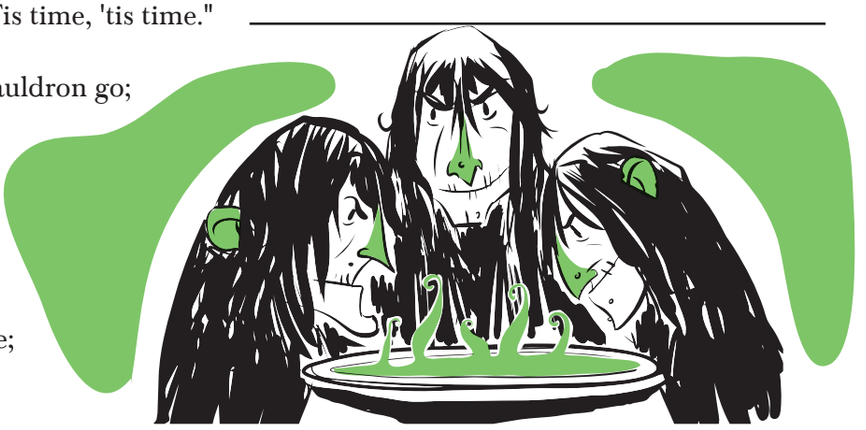
Macbeth
William Shakspeare, 1606

Macbeth ***is a tale of kings and royalty, but is perhaps most famous for the scene below, in which three witches attempt to cast a spell. The language, of course, is quite outdated. See if you can guess what each bolded word means. This exercise is all about guessing – don't worry about being right or wrong!***

FIRST WITCH: Thrice the **brinded** cat hath mew'd. _____

SECOND WITCH: Thrice and once the **hedge-pig** whined. _____

THIRD WITCH: Harpier cries "'Tis time, 'tis time." _____



FIRST WITCH: Round about the cauldron go;
In the poison'd entrails throw.
Toad, that under cold stone
Days and nights has thirty-one
Swelter'd venom sleeping got,
Boil thou first i' the charmed pot.

ALL: Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.

SECOND WITCH: Fillet of a **fenny snake**, _____
In the cauldron boil and bake;
Eye of newt and toe of frog,
Wool of bat and tongue of dog, _____
Adder's fork and **blind-worm**'s sting, _____
Lizard's leg and **howlet**'s wing, _____
For a charm of powerful trouble,
Like a hot broth boil and bubble.

ALL: Double, double toil and trouble
Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

THIRD WITCH: Scale of dragon, tooth of wolf,
Witches' mummy, maw and **gulf** _____
Of the **ravin'd** salt-sea shark, _____
Root of hemlock **digg'd i'** the dark, _____
Add thereto a tiger's **chaudron**, _____
For the ingredients of our cauldron.
ALL: Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

SECOND WITCH: Cool it with a baboon's blood,
Then the charm is firm and good.

Bonus: Find an annotated version of *Macbeth* online or in a bookstore and see what the words really mean!

Dracula
Bram Stoker, 1897

Dracula ***is written as a series of letters and journal entries from characters that have met him.***

JONATHAN HARKER'S JOURNAL

8 May—I began to fear as I wrote in this book that I was telling too much. But now I am glad that I went into detail, for there is something so strange about this place that I cannot help feeling uneasy. If there were anyone to talk to I could bear it, but there is no one. I have only the Count to speak with. I fear I am myself the only living soul within the place.

I only slept a few hours last night, and feeling that I could not sleep any more, got up. I was just beginning to shave, using a small mirror I had brought with me, when suddenly I felt a hand on my shoulder, and heard Count Dracula's voice saying to me, 'Good morning.' It amazed me that I had not seen him, since the mirror covered the whole room behind me. I was startled, and thus cut myself slightly, but did not notice it at the moment. Having answered the Count's greeting, I turned to the mirror again to see how I had been mistaken. This time there could be no error, for the man was close to me, and I could see him over my shoulder. But there was no reflection of him in the mirror! The whole room behind me was displayed, but there was no sign of a man in it, except myself. This was startling, and on top of the other strange things I have seen here, it increased that feeling of uneasiness that I always have when the Count is near.

Then, I noticed the cut. It was bleeding, and the blood was trickling over my chin. I laid down the razor, turning as I did so half round to look for some sticking plaster. When the Count saw my face, his eyes blazed with fury, and he suddenly grabbed at my throat. I drew away and his hand touched the string of beads around my neck that held the crucifix. It made an instant change in him, for the fury passed so quickly that I could hardly believe that it was ever there.

'Take care how you cut yourself,' he said. 'It is more dangerous that you think in this country.' Then seizing the mirror, he went on, 'And this is the wretched thing that has done the mischief. It is a foul bauble of man's vanity. Away with it!' And opening the window with one wrench of his terrible hand, he flung out the mirror, which was shattered into a thousand pieces on the stones of the courtyard far below. Then he withdrew without a word. It is very annoying, for I do not see how I am supposed to shave without a mirror.

When I went into the dining room, breakfast was prepared, but I could not find the Count anywhere. It is strange that as yet I have not seen the Count eat or drink. He is a very peculiar man! After breakfast I did a little exploring in the castle. I went out on the stairs, and found a room looking towards the South. The view was magnificent. The castle is on the very edge of a terrific precipice. A stone falling from the window would fall a thousand feet without touching anything! There are doors everywhere throughout the castle, and all are locked and bolted. In no place save from the windows in the castle walls is there an available exit. The castle is a veritable prison, and I am a prisoner!

MINA MURRAY'S JOURNAL

11 August— I am too agitated to sleep, so I may as well write. I have had such an agonizing experience. I awoke in the night with a horrible sense of fear upon me, and of some feeling of emptiness around me. The room was dark, so I could not see Lucy's bed. I lit a match and found that she was not in the room. The door was shut, but not locked as I had left it. I didn't want to wake her mother, so I threw on some clothes and went to look for her.

(continued)

I ran downstairs and looked in the sitting room. Not there! I looked in all the other rooms of the house, with an ever-growing fear chilling my heart. Finally, I came to the hall door and found it open. The people of the house are careful to lock the door every night, so I feared that Lucy must have gone out. I took a big, heavy shawl and ran out. The clock was striking one as I was in the road, and there was not a soul in sight. I ran along the North Terrace, but could see no sign of her.

There was a bright full moon, with heavy, black clouds, which threw the whole scene into a diorama of light and shade. As the clouds passed I could see the ruins of the abbey, and the church and churchyard became gradually visible. Then, the silver light of the moon struck a half-reclining figure, and it looked almost as if something dark stood behind it.

Whether it was man or beast, I could not tell. I flew down the steps to the bridge, which was the only way to reach the East Cliff. The time and distance seemed endless, and my knees trembled as I toiled up to the abbey. When I got almost to the top I could see the figure, for I was now close enough to distinguish it even through the spells of shadow. There was something, long and black, bending over the white figure. I called in fright, 'Lucy! Lucy!' and the long, black figure raised its head, and I saw a white face and red, gleaming eyes.

Lucy did not answer, and I ran to the churchyard. As I entered, the church was between me and her seat, and for a minute or so I lost sight of her. When I came in view again the cloud had passed, and the moonlight struck so brilliantly that I could see Lucy with her head lying over the back of the seat. When I bent over her I could see that she was still asleep. She was breathing in long, heavy gasps, as though striving to get her lungs full. As I came close, she put up her hand in her sleep and pulled the collar of her nightdress close around her, as though she felt the cold. I flung the warm shawl over her, and drew the edges tight around her neck, lest she should get some deadly chill from the night air, and fastened it with a big safety pin. But I must have been clumsy in my anxiety and pricked her with it, for when her breathing became quieter, she put her hand to her throat again and moaned. When I had her carefully wrapped up I began very gently to wake her. At first she did not respond, but gradually she became more and more uneasy in her sleep, moaning and sighing occasionally. I wished to get her home at once, so I shook her forcibly, till finally she opened her eyes and awoke.

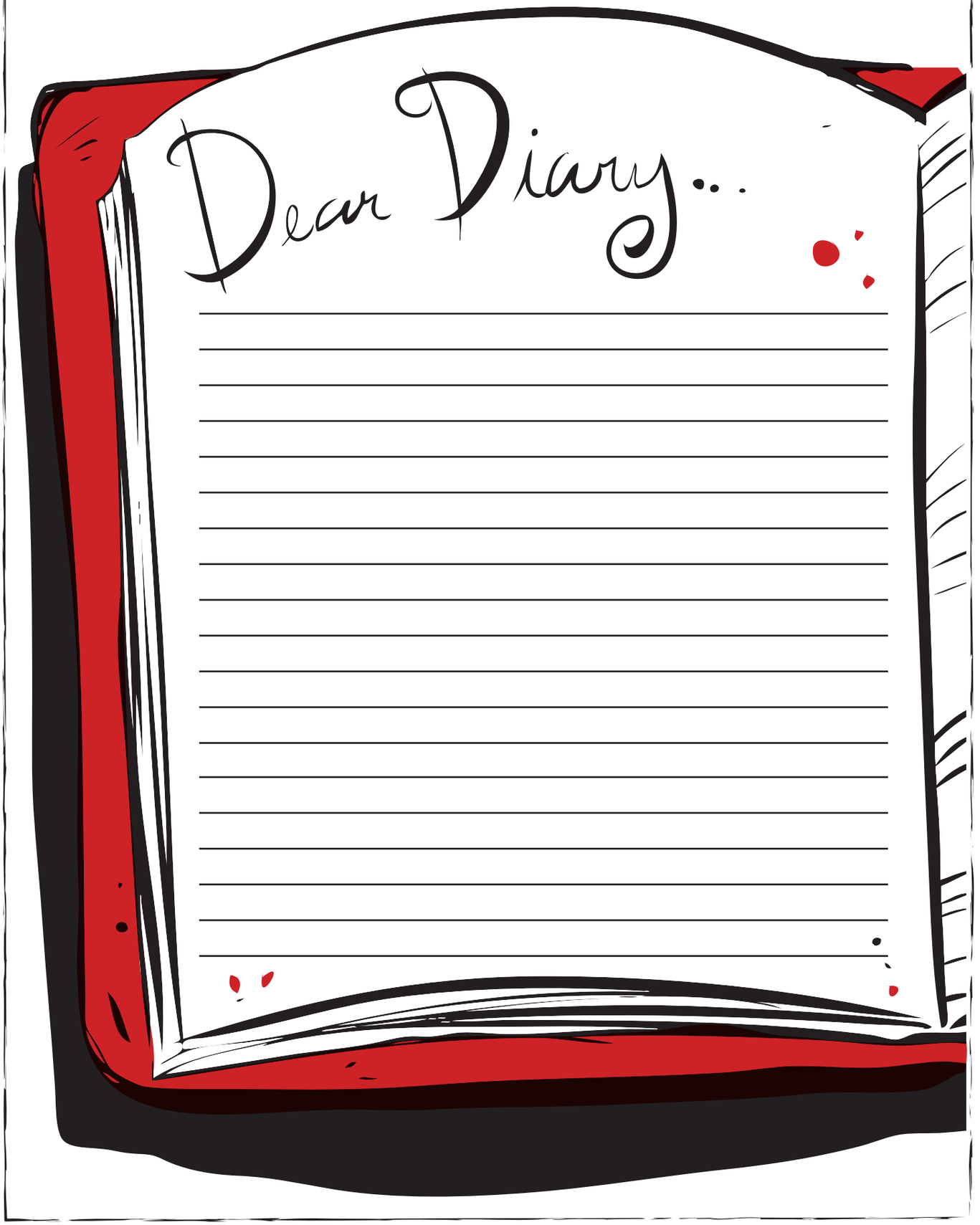
Even at such a time, when her body must have been chilled with cold, and her mind somewhat appalled at waking in a churchyard at night, she did not lose her grace. She trembled a little and clung to me. When I told her to come with me, she rose without a word.

We got home without meeting a soul. I was filled with anxiety about Lucy, not only for her health, but for her reputation in case the story should get out. When we got in, I tucked her into bed. Before falling asleep she implored me not to say a word to anyone, even her mother, about her sleep-walking adventure. I hesitated at first, but on thinking of the state of her mother's health, and how the knowledge of such a thing would fret her, and to think of how such a story might become distorted in case it should leak out, I thought it wiser to do so. I hope I did right. I have locked the door, and the key is tied to my wrist, so perhaps I shall not be again disturbed.

Same day, noon.—All goes well. Lucy slept till I woke her and seemed not to have even changed her side. The adventure of the night does not seem to have harmed her. I was sorry to notice that my clumsiness with the safety-pin hurt her, for the skin of her throat was pierced. I must have pinched up a piece of loose skin and have transfixed it, for there are two little red points like pin-pricks, and on her nightdress was a drop of blood. When I apologised, she laughed and petted me, and said she did not even feel it. Fortunately it cannot leave a scar, as it is so tiny.

(continued)

Imagine Count Dracula kept a journal as well. Write another entry from his perspective expressing how he feels about Mina, Lucy and Jonathan.



The Hound of the Baskervilles

Arthur Conan Doyle, 1902

The Hound of the Baskervilles ***is the most famous of Sir Arthur Conon Doyle's Sherlock Holmes novels. Read the passage below.***

'I have in my pocket a manuscript,' said Dr. James Mortimer.

'I observed it as you entered the room,' said Holmes. 'It is an old manuscript. The exact date is 1742.'

Dr. Mortimer drew it from his pocket. 'This paper was given to me by Sir Charles Baskerville, whose sudden death created much excitement in Devonshire. I was his personal friend as well as his medical attendant. He was a strong-minded man, sir, shrewd and practical, and yet he took this document very seriously, and his mind was prepared for just such an end as did eventually overtake him.'

I looked over his shoulder at the yellow paper and the faded script. At the top was written: 'Baskerville Hall,' and below in large, scrawling figures: '1742.'

'It appears to be a statement of some sort.'

'Yes, it is about legend which runs in the Baskerville family.'

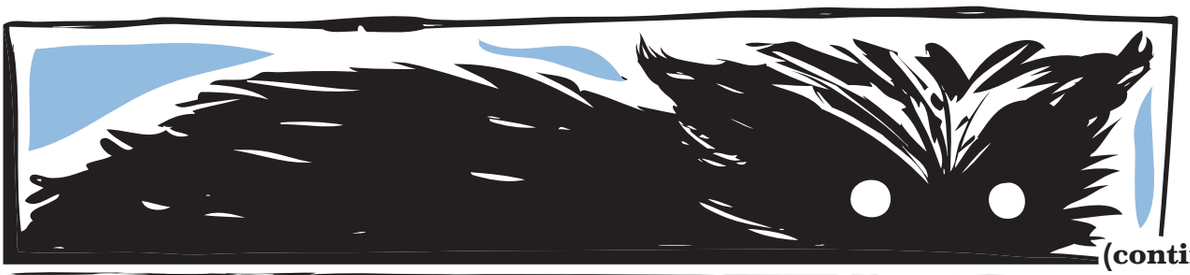
'But I understand that it is something more modern and practical upon which you wish to consult me?'

'Most modern. A pressing matter, which must be decided within twenty-four hours. The manuscript is short and is intimately connected with the affair. With your permission I will read it to you.'

Holmes leaned back in his chair, placed his fingertips together, and closed his eyes, with an air of resignation. Dr. Mortimer turned the manuscript to the light and in a high, cracking voice read the curious, old narrative:

'In the time of the Great Rebellion, Baskerville Manor was held by a man named Hugo. Now, saints have never flourished in these parts, but there was in him a certain cruelness which made his name known through the West. Hugo fell in love (if it could be called that) with the daughter of a yeoman who held lands near the Baskerville estate. But the young maiden rejected him, for she feared his evil name.

'One day, Hugo, with five or six of his wicked companions, went down to the farm and carried off the maiden. When they brought her back, the maiden was placed in an upper chamber, while Hugo and his friends sat down to a long carouse. Now, the poor lass was terrified by the shouting and terrible oaths she heard below. At last, in the stress of her fear, she snuck down under the eaves and ran homeward across the moor.



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'Some time later Hugo went upstairs to take food and drink to his captive, and found the chamber empty. Filled with anger, he ran downstairs and sprang upon the great table, crying aloud that he would give over his body and soul to the Powers of Evil if he could find her.

'While the revellers stood aghast at his fury, they cried out that they should put the hounds upon her. Hugo ran from the house, shouting to his friends to saddle his mare and unkennel the hounds, and giving the hounds one of the maid's handkerchiefs, he sent them off full cry in the moonlight over the moor. Then the whole of them took horse and started in pursuit. They rode swiftly, following the road back towards the maiden's home.

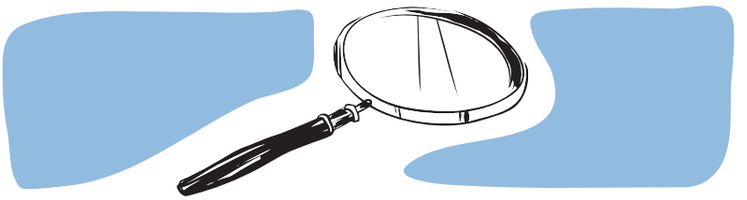
'They had gone a mile or two when they passed a night shepherd of the moorlands, and they cried to him to know if he had seen her. The man was so crazed with fear that he could hardly speak, but at last he said that he had indeed seen the unhappy maiden, with the hounds upon her track. 'I have seen more than that,' said he, 'for Hugo Baskerville passed me upon his black mare, and there ran behind him such a black dog as God forbid should ever be at my heels.' The squires cursed the shepherd and rode onward. But soon their skins turned cold, for there came a-galloping across the moor Hugo's black mare, an empty saddle trailing behind him. The revellers rode close together, for a great fear was on them, but they still followed over the moor.

'At last they came upon the hounds. These dogs, though known for their valour, were whimpering in a cluster at the head of a deep valley, some slinking away and some gazing down the narrow valley before them. Most of them would by no means advance, but the boldest three rode forward down the hill. At the bottom stood two great stones, still to be seen there, which were set by forgotten peoples in the days of old. The moon was shining bright upon the clearing, and there in the centre lay the unhappy maid. But it was not the sight of her body, nor was it the body of Hugo Baskerville lying near her, which raised the hair upon the heads of these three daredevils, but it was that standing over Hugo was a foul thing, a great, black beast, shaped like a hound, yet larger than any hound any mortal eye has rested upon. As they looked the thing tore at Hugo Baskerville, and as it turned its blazing eyes and dripping jaws upon them, the three shrieked with fear and rode for dear life, still screaming, across the moor. One, it is said, died that very night of what he had seen, and the other two were but broken men for the rest of their days.

'Such is the tale of the hound which is said to have plagued the family ever since. I hereby ask that you refrain from crossing the moor in those dark hours when the powers of evil are exalted.'

When Dr. Mortimer had finished reading, he pushed his spectacles up on his forehead and stared across at Sherlock Holmes. Holmes yawned.

'Well?' said he. 'Do you not find it interesting?'



'To a collector of fairy tales.'

Dr. Mortimer drew a folded newspaper out of his pocket. 'Now, Mr. Holmes, here's something a little more recent. This is the Devon County Chronicle of May 14th of this year. It is an account of the death of Sir Charles Baskerville which occurred a few days ago.'

Holmes leaned a little forward and his expression became intent. Dr. Motimer readjusted his glasses and began:

(continued)

'The recent death of Sir Charles Baskerville has cast a gloom over the county. Though Sir Charles had resided at Baskerville Hall for a only a short time, his amiability of character and extreme generosity won the affection and respect of all who had met him.

'Sir Charles, as is well known, made large sums of money in South African speculation, returning to England with his gains. It was his desire that the whole country-side should profit by his good fortune. His generous donations to local and county charities have been frequently chronicled in these columns.

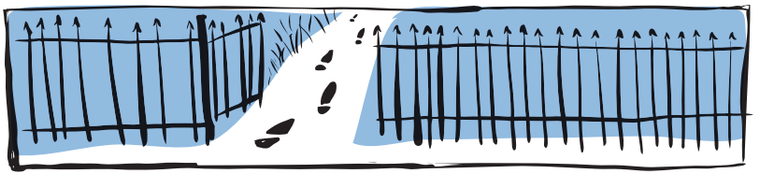
'The circumstances of Sir Charles' death are not entirely clear, but enough has been done to dispose of those rumours to which local superstition has given rise. There is no reason to suspect foul play, or to imagine that death could be from anything but natural causes.

'The facts of the case are simple: Sir Charles Baskerville was in the habit of walking down the famous Yew Alley of Baskerville Hall every night before going to bed. On the 14th of May he went out as usual for his evening walk. At twelve o'clock the butler, finding the hall door still open, became alarmed, and went in search of his master. The day had been wet, and Sir Charles's footmarks were easily traced down the alley and out a gate which leads out on to the moor. It was at the far end of it that his body was discovered."

Dr. Mortimer refolded his paper and replaced it in his pocket.

'Those are the public facts, Mr. Holmes, in connection with the death of Sir Charles Baskerville.'

'These are the public facts?' said Holmes.



'They are.'

'Then let me have the private ones.' Holmes leaned back and put his fingertips together.

'In doing so,' said Dr. Mortimer, who had begun to show signs of some strong emotion, 'I am telling things which I have not confided to anyone. My motive for withholding it from the coroner's inquiry is that a man of science like myself must shy away from superstition. For this reason, I thought that I was justified in telling less than I knew, since no practical good could result from it, but with you there is no reason why I should not be perfectly frank.

'The moor is very sparsely inhabited, and those who live near each other are thrown very much together. For this reason I saw a good deal of Sir Charles Baskerville. Sir Charles was a quiet man, but a shared interest in science kept us together. He had brought back much scientific information from South Africa, and many an evening we spent together discussing it.

'Within the last few months it became increasingly plain to me that Sir Charles was strained to the breaking point. He had taken this legend of the hound to heart—so much so that, although he would walk in his own grounds, he would not go out upon the moor at night. Incredible as it may appear to you, Mr. Holmes, he was honestly convinced that a dreadful fate overhung his family, and certainly the fates of his ancestors were not encouraging. The idea of some ghastly presence haunted him, and on more than one occasion he asked me whether I had on my medical journeys at night ever seen any strange creature or heard the baying of a hound.

(continued)

'I can remember driving up to his house in the evening some three weeks before he died. He happened to be at his hall door. I had descended from my gig and was standing in front of him, when I saw his eyes fix themselves over my shoulder, and stare past me with an expression of the most dreadful horror. I whisked round and had just time to catch a glimpse of something which I took to be a large black calf passing at the head of the drive. So excited and alarmed was he that I was compelled to go down to the spot where the animal had been and look around for it. It was gone. I stayed with him all evening, and he showed me the narrative which I read to you. I mention this small episode because it assumes some importance in view of the tragedy which followed, but I was convinced at the time that the matter was entirely trivial and that his excitement had no justification.

'I suggested he go to London. His heart was, I knew, affected, and the constant anxiety in which he lived was having a serious effect upon his health. I thought that a few months of distraction would send him back a new man. On the night of Sir Charles's death the butler, who made the discovery, sent for me. I was able to reach Baskerville Hall within an hour of the event. I checked and corroborated all the facts which were mentioned: I followed the footsteps down the alley, I saw the spot at the gate where he seemed to have waited, I remarked the change in the shape of the prints after that point, I noted that there were no other footsteps save those of the butler, and finally I examined the body, which had not been touched until my arrival. Sir Charles lay on his face, his arms out, his fingers dug into the ground, and his features convulsed with some strong emotion to such an extent I could hardly recognize him. There was certainly no physical injury of any kind.

But one false statement was made by the butler. He said that there were no traces on the ground near the body. He did not observe any. But I did—some little distance off, but fresh and clear.'

'Footprints?'

'Footprints.'

'A man's?'

Dr. Mortimer looked strangely at us for an instant, and his voice sank almost to a whisper as he answered:

'Mr. Holmes, they were the footprints of a gigantic hound!"

COMPARE AND CONTRAST CHARACTERS

Write four personality traits of each character in the chart below.

Sherlock Holmes				
Dr. Mortimer				
Sir Charles Baskerville				
Hugo Baskerville				

What two characters are the most alike?

_____

What two characters are the most different?

_____

The Legend of Sleepy Hollow

Washington Irving, 1820

The Legend of Sleepy Hollow ***is one of the earliest pieces of American fiction and one of the first pieces of American horror literature. Read the beginning and the end of the story.***

In one of those spacious coves which indent the eastern shore of the Hudson, at that broad expansion of the Tappan Zee River, lies a small town called Tarry Town. Not far from this village, perhaps about two miles, is a little valley, among high hills, which is one of the quietest places in the whole world. A small brook glides through it, with just murmur enough to lull one to repose; and the occasional whistle of a quail, or tapping of a woodpecker, is almost the only sound that ever breaks the tranquility.

From the listless repose of the place and its peculiar inhabitants, who are descendants from the original Dutch settlers, this little glen is been known by the name of Sleepy Hollow. A drowsy, dreamy influence seems to hang over the land and pervade the very atmosphere. Some say that the place was bewitched by a German doctor during the early days of the settlement; others, that an old Indian chief, the prophet or wizard of his tribe, held his powwows there before the country was discovered by explorers. Whatever it may be, the place exists under the sway of some witching power that holds a spell over the people, causing them to walk in a continual reverie. As such, the whole neighborhood abounds with local tales, haunted spots, and superstitions. Stars shoot and meteors glare across the valley more than in any other part of the country, and the nightmare seems to make it the favorite scene of her adventures.

The most famous spirit that haunts this region is the apparition of a figure on horseback without a head. It is said by some to be the ghost of a trooper whose head had been carried away by a cannon-ball in some battle during the revolutionary war; and who is forever seen by the country folk, hurrying along in the gloom of night as if on the wings of the wind. His haunts are not confined to the valley, but extend at times to the adjacent roads, and especially near the church. Thought historians are sure that the body of the trooper is buried in the churchyard, they still claim that the ghost rides forth to the scene of battle in nightly quest of his head; and that the speed with which he passes along the Hollow is because he is in a hurry to get back to the churchyard before daybreak.

This legend has furnished many a wild story in that region of shadows; and the spectre is known to all as the Headless Horseman. What's remarkable is that the story is not confined to the native inhabitants of the valley, but to everyone who resides there, even for a little while. However wide awake they may have been before they entered that sleepy region, they are sure soon enough to inhale the witching influence of the air, and begin to grow imaginative—to dream dreams, and see apparitions.

How did it feel to read the first part of the story? Write down five feelings you had while reading it here.

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(continued)

It was the very late when Ichabod, heavy-hearted and crest-fallen, traveled homewards along the lofty hills above Tarry Town, which he had traversed so cheerily in the afternoon. The hour was as dismal as himself. Far below him, the Tappan Zee spread its dusky waters, with here and there the tall mast of a sloop riding quietly beside him. In the dead hush of midnight, he could even hear the faint barking of the watch-dog from the opposite shore of the Hudson.

No signs of life occurred near him but the occasional chirp of a cricket, or perhaps the guttural twang of a bull-frog, from a neighboring marsh.

All the stories of ghosts and goblins that he had heard in the afternoon now came crowding upon his recollection. The night grew darker and darker; the stars seemed to sink deeper in the sky, and clouds occasionally hid them from his sight. He had never felt so lonely and dismal. He was, moreover, approaching the very place where many of the scenes of the ghost stories had been laid. In the centre of the road stood an 'enormous tree, which towered like a giant above all the other trees of the neighborhood, and formed a kind of landmark. Its limbs were gnarled; large enough to form trunks for ordinary trees, twisting down almost to the earth and rising again into the air. It was connected with the tragic story of Major André, who had been taken prisoner; and was universally known as Major André's tree. The common people regarded it with a mixture of respect and superstition, partly out of sympathy for the fate of its namesake, and partly from the tales of strange sights and doleful lamentations seen and heard near it.

As Ichabod approached the tree, he began to whistle. He thought his whistle was answered, but it was the wind sweeping through the dry branches. As he approached, he thought he saw something white hanging in the midst of the tree—he ceased whistling; but on looking more narrowly, saw that it was a place where the tree had been struck by lightning, and the white wood laid bare.

Suddenly, he heard a groan—his teeth chattered and his knees smote against the saddle, but it was the rubbing of one bough upon another as they swayed about by the breeze. He passed the tree in safety, but new perils lay before him.

About two hundred yards from the tree, a small brook crossed the road and ran into a marshy, thickly-wooded glen. A few logs, laid side by side, served for a bridge over this stream. On that side of the road where the brook entered the wood, a group of oaks and chestnuts, matted thick with wild vines, threw a cavernous gloom over it. It was at this spot that the unfortunate André was captured. This has since been considered a haunted stream, and fearful is the man who has to pass it alone after dark.

As he approached the stream his heart began to thump. He summoned up all his resolution, gave his horse a kick in the ribs, and attempted to dash briskly across the bridge. But instead of starting forward, the animal made a lateral movement, and ran against the fence. Ichabod, whose fears increased with the delay, jerked the reins on the other side, and kicked hard with the contrary foot. It was all in vain: His steed started, it is true, but it was only to plunge to the opposite side of the road into a thicket of brambles and bushes.

Ichabod now bestowed both whip and heel upon old Gunpowder, who dashed forward, but came to a stand just by the bridge, with a suddenness that had nearly sent his rider sprawling over his head. Just at this moment a plashy tramp by the side of the bridge caught the ear of Ichabod. In the dark shadow of the grove, on the margin of the brook, he beheld something huge, black, and towering. It stirred not, but seemed gathered up in the gloom, like some gigantic monster ready to spring upon him.

(continued)

Ichabod's hair rose upon his head with terror. What was to be done? To turn and fly was now too late; and besides, what chance was there of escaping a ghost or goblin, which could ride upon the wings of the wind? Summoning up courage, he stammered —"Who are you?" He received no reply. He repeated his demand in a more agitated voice. Still there was no answer. Once more he cudgeled the sides of the inflexible Gunpowder, and, shutting his eyes, broke into a whistle again.

Just then the shadowy object put itself in motion, and, with a scramble and a bound, stood in the middle of the road. Though the night was dark and dismal, Ichabod could make out a horseman of large dimensions, mounted on a huge black horse. He kept aloof on one side of the road, jogging along on the blind side of old Gunpowder, who had now got over his fright and waywardness.

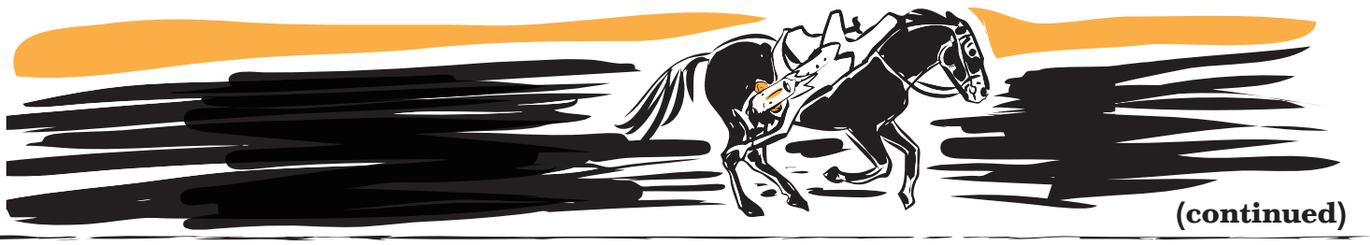
Ichabod, who had no relish for this strange companion, now quickened his steed in hopes of leaving the dark figure behind. The stranger, however, quickened his horse to an equal pace. Ichabod and fell into a walk, thinking to lag behind—the other did the same. His heart began to sink. He tried to resume his tune, but his parched tongue stuck to the roof of his mouth and he could not utter a note. There was something in the dogged silence of this companion that was mysterious and appalling.

It was soon accounted for. On mounting a hill, which brought the figure of his fellow traveller in relief against the sky, Ichabod was horror-struck to see that he was headless!—but his horror was still more increased, on seeing that the head, which should have rested on his shoulders, was carried before him on the pommel of his saddle. His terror rose to desperation; he rained a shower of kicks and blows upon Gunpowder, hoping, by a sudden movement, to give his companion the slip—but the spectre started full jump with him. Away they dashed, stones flying and sparks flashing at every bound. Ichabod's flimsy garments fluttered in the air, as he stretched his lanky body away over his horse's head in the eagerness of his escape.

They had now reached the road which leads to Sleepy Hollow; but Gunpowder, who seemed possessed with a demon, made a wrong turn, and plunged downhill to the left. As yet, the panic of the steed had given his unskillful rider an apparent advantage in the chase; but just as he had got halfway through the hollow, the saddle gave way, and he felt it slipping from under him.

He had just enough time to save himself by clasping old Gunpowder round the neck when the saddle fell to the earth, and he heard it trampled under foot by his pursuer. The goblin was hard on his haunches; and he worked hard to maintain his seat; sometimes slipping on one side, sometimes on another, and sometimes jolted on the high ridge of his horse's backbone, with a violence that he feared would cleave him asunder. An opening in the trees, he saw the walls of the church dimly glaring beyond.

Suddenly, he remembered where the Horseman had always disappeared in stories. "If I can reach that bridge," thought Ichabod, "I am safe." Just then he heard the black steed panting close behind him; he even felt his hot breath. Another convulsive kick in the ribs, and old Gunpowder sprang upon the bridge. He thundered over the planks; and gained the opposite side. Now Ichabod looked behind to see if his pursuer might vanish, as in the legends, in a flash of fire. Just then he saw the goblin rising in his stirrups in the very act of hurling his head at him. Ichabod tried to dodge the horrible missile, but too late. It hit his head with a tremendous crash, and he tumbled headlong into the dust as Gunpowder and the goblin rider passed him by.



(continued)

The next morning Gunpowder was found without his saddle, and with the bridle under his feet, soberly cropping the grass at his master's gate. Ichabod did not make his appearance at breakfast. Dinner-hour came, but no Ichabod. His students assembled at the school-house, and strolled idly about grounds, but no schoolmaster. An inquiry was set on foot, and after diligent investigation they came upon his traces. In one part of the road leading to the church was found the saddle trampled in the dirt; the tracks of horses' hoofs deeply dented in the road at furious speed. The tracks were traced to the bridge, beyond which, on the bank of the brook, was found Ichabod's hat, and close beside it a shattered pumpkin. The brook was searched, but the body of Ichabod was never found.

The mysterious event caused much speculation. Gossip collected in the churchyard, at the bridge, and at the spot where the hat and pumpkin had been found. Many of the old stories were called to mind; and when they had diligently considered them all, and compared them with the symptoms of the present case, they shook their heads, and came to the conclusion that Ichabod had been carried off by the Headless Horseman.

It is true, an old farmer, who had been down to New York on a visit several years after, and who told this story all across town, claimed that Ichabod Crane was still alive. The old country wives, however, maintain to this day that Ichabod was spirited away by supernatural means; and it is a favorite story often told about the neighborhood round the winter evening fire. The bridge became an object of superstitious awe, and that may be the reason why the road has been altered, so that it approaches the church by the border of the mill-pond. Ichabod's school-house soon fell to decay, and was reported to be haunted by a ghost. The ploughboy, walking homeward of a still summer evening, has often heard a voice at a distance, whistling a melancholy tune among the tranquil solitudes of Sleepy Hollow.

How did you feel reading the second part of the story? Did your feelings change? Write down five feelings you had reading the ending of the story here.

The Statement of Randolph Carter

H.P. Lovecraft, 1919

H.P. Lovecraft is a pioneer of science fiction writing. Here is one of his earliest stories.

I repeat, gentlemen, your inquisition is fruitless. Keep me here forever if you must, but I can say no more than I have already. Everything I can remember I have told with perfect honesty. If anything remains vague, it is only because of the dark cloud which has come over my mind—that and the nature of the horrors which brought it upon me.

I do not know what has become of my friend Harley Warren. For the last five years I've been his closest friend, and have participated in his research into the unknown. I will not deny that we were on the Gainesville pike, walking toward Big Cypress Swamp, at half past eleven that night as your witness stated. But what followed, and the reason I was found alone and dazed on the edge of the swamp the next morning, I must insist I know nothing of. You said there is nothing in the swamp or near it which could have formed the setting of that frightful episode, but I know what I saw. Nightmare it may have been—nightmare I hope it was—but this is all that my mind retains of what took place.

I had no clear idea of our object that night – Warren wouldn't say. We ended up in an ancient cemetery. It was in a deep, damp hollow, overgrown with curious creeping weeds and filled with a vague stench. All around us were signs of neglect and decrepitude, and I was haunted by the notion that Warren and I were the first living creatures to invade the silence of centuries there. Over the valley's rim a waning crescent moon peered through the mist that seemed to emanate from the catacombs, and by its feeble, wavering beams I could distinguish an array of antique slabs, urns, cenotaphs, and mausoleums; all crumbling, moss-grown, and moisture-stained, and partly concealed by the abundance of the unhealthy vegetation.

My first vivid memory of that night is of pausing with Warren before a half-obliterated sepulchre, and throwing down our equipment. I had with me an electric lantern and two spades, whilst Warren held a similar lantern and a portable telephone. No word was uttered, for the spot and the task seemed known to us, Without delay we seized our spades and began to clear away the grass and weeds; drifting the earth from the flat, archaic mortuary. After uncovering the entire surface, which consisted of three immense granite slabs, we stepped back to survey the scene. Then Warren returned to the sepulchre, and using his spade as a lever, pried up one of the slabs.

The removal of the slab revealed a black aperture, from which rushed a miasma so nauseous that we stumbled back in horror. After an interval, however, we approached the pit again, and as our lanterns lit the cavern, we could see a flight of stone steps, dripping with some detestable substance of the inner earth and bordered by moist walls.

Next, I can remember Warren addressing me.

"I'll have to ask you to stay on the surface," he said. "I'm sorry, but I can't let someone with your frail nerves go down there. You can't imagine, even from what you have read and from what I've told you, the things I shall have to see and do. Heaven knows I'd be glad to have you with me, but I couldn't drag a bundle of nerves like you down to probable death or madness. Stay where you are, and I promise to keep you informed over the telephone of my every move—I've enough wire here to reach to the center of the earth and back!"

(continued)

I was anxious to accompany my friend into the depths, yet he proved inflexible. After I reluctantly agreed to stay above, Warren picked up the reel of wire and adjusted the instruments. At his nod I took one of them and seated myself upon an aged, discolored gravestone. Then he shook my hand, shouldered the coil of wire, and disappeared into that indescribable ossuary.

For a moment I could see the glow of his lantern, and heard the rustle of the wire as he laid it down after him; but the glow disappeared abruptly, as if a turn in the staircase had been encountered, and the sound died away almost as quickly. I was alone, yet bound to the unknown depths by the telephone wires, whose surface lay green beneath the struggling beams of that waning crescent moon.

In the lone silence of that city of the dead, my mind conceived the most ghastly fantasies and illusions. The grotesque shrines around me seemed to assume a hideous personality. Shadows seemed to lurk in the recesses of the weed-choked hollow and to flit in some blasphemous ceremonial procession past the portals of the tombs in the hillside; shadows which could not have been cast by that pallid, peering crescent moon. I constantly consulted my watch by the light of my lantern, and listened with feverish anxiety to my telephone, but for more than fifteen minutes heard nothing.

Then a faint clicking came from the phone. I called down Warren in a tense voice. Apprehensive as I was, I was still unprepared for the words which came up from that uncanny vault. He who had so calmly left me a little while previously, now called from below in a shaky whisper:

"God! If you could see what I am seeing!"

I could not answer, I could only wait. Then came the frenzied tones again:

"Carter, it's terrible!"

This time my voice did not fail me, and I poured into the transmitter a flood of excited questions. Terrified, I continued to repeat, "Warren, what is it? What is it?"

Once more came the voice of my friend, still hoarse with fear, and now tinged with despair:

"I can't tell you, Carter! It's too utterly beyond thought. No man could know it and live. Great God! I never dreamed of THIS!" Stillness again, except for my now incoherent torrent of shuddering inquiry. Then, Warren said in a pitch of wilder consternation:

"Carter! For the love of God, put back the slab and get out if you can! Quick, leave everything else and go; it's your only chance! Do as I say, and don't ask me to explain!"

I heard, but was able only to repeat my frantic questions. Around me were the tombs and the darkness and the shadows; below me, some peril beyond human imagination. But my friend was in greater danger than I, and through my fear I felt a vague resentment that he should deem me capable of deserting him under such circumstances. More clicking, and after a pause a piteous cry from Warren:

"Beat it! For God's sake, put back the slab and beat it, Carter!"

Something in the boyish slang of my companion unleashed my faculties. I formed and shouted a resolution, "Warren, brace up! I'm coming down!" But at this offer Warren's tone changed to a scream of utter despair:

(continued)

"Don't! You can't understand! It's too late—and my own fault. Put back the slab and run—there's nothing else you can do now!" The tone changed again, this time acquiring a softer quality, as of hopeless resignation. Yet it remained tense through anxiety for me.

"Quick—before it's too late!" I tried not to heed him; tried to break through the paralysis which held me, and to rush to his aid. But his next whisper found me still held inert in the chains of stark horror.

"Carter—hurry! It's no use—you must go—better one than two—the slab—" A pause, more clicking, then the faint voice of Warren:

"Nearly over now—don't make it harder—cover up those steps and run for your life—you're losing time— So long, Carter—won't see you again." Here Warren's whisper swelled into a cry; a cry that gradually rose to a shriek fraught with horror —

"Curse these things—My God! Beat it, Carter! Beat it! Beat it!"

After that was silence. I know not how long I sat whispering, muttering, calling, screaming into that telephone. Over and over again I called, shouted, and screamed, "Warren! Warren! Answer me—are you there?"

And then there came to me the crowning horror of all—the unbelievable, unthinkable, almost unmentionable thing.

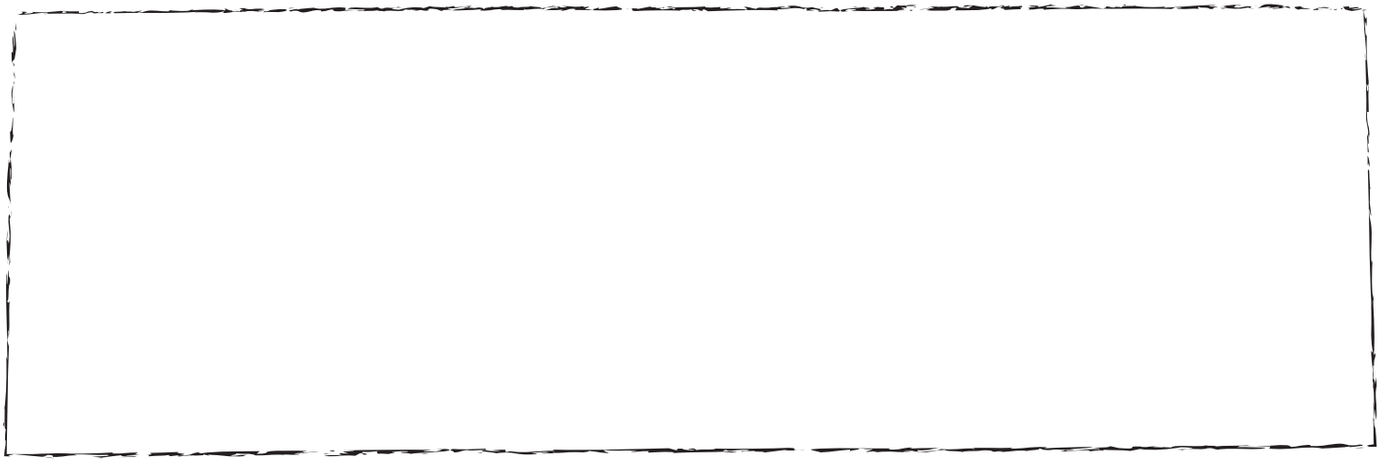
Eons seemed to elapse after Warren shrieked his last despairing warning, and only my own cries broke the hideous silence. But after a while there was a further clicking in the receiver, and I strained my ears to listen. Again I called down, "Warren, are you there?", and in answer heard the thing which has brought this cloud over my mind.

I do not try, gentlemen, to account for that thing—that voice—nor can I describe it in detail, since the first words took away my consciousness and created a mental blank which reaches to the time of my awakening in the hospital. Shall I say that the voice was deep? Hollow? Unearthly? Inhuman? Disembodied? What shall I say? It was the end of my experience, and is the end of my story. I heard it, and know no more.

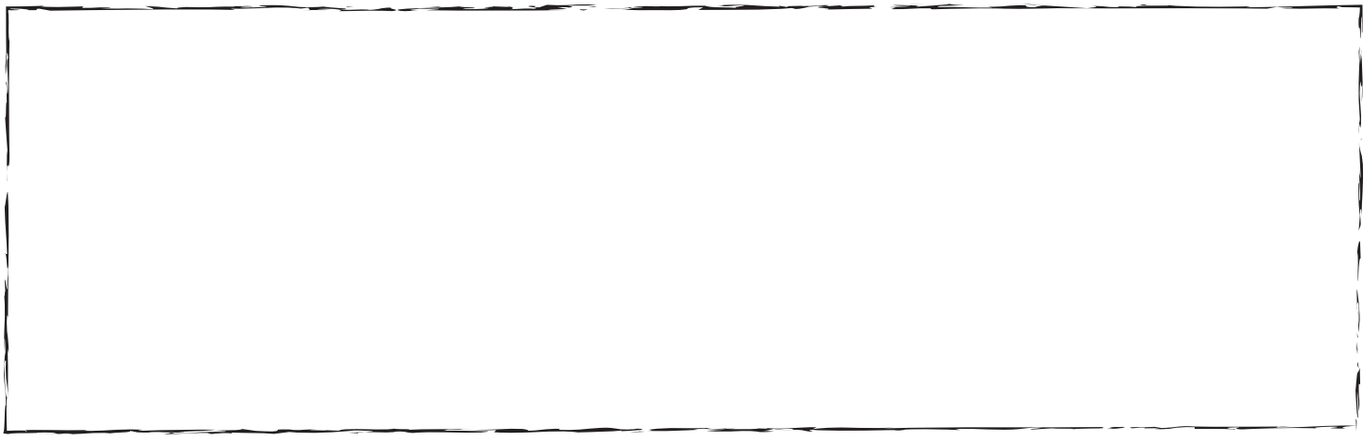
As I sat petrified in that cemetery in the hollow, amidst the crumbling stones and the falling tombs, I heard it well up from the innermost depths of that open sepulchre as I watched amorphous shadows dance beneath an accursed waning moon. Then, a voice said to me:

"YOU FOOL, WARREN IS DEAD!"

The Statement of Randolph Carter **is full of great description. Draw a detailed picture of each scene below.**



We ended up in an ancient cemetery. It was in a deep, damp hollow, overgrown with curious creeping weeds and filled with a vague stench...Over the valley's rim a waning crescent moon peered through the mist that seemed to emanate from the catacombs, and by its feeble, wavering beams I could distinguish an array of antique slabs, urns, cenotaphs, and mausoleums; all crumbling, moss-grown, and moisture-stained, and partly concealed by the abundance of the unhealthy vegetation.



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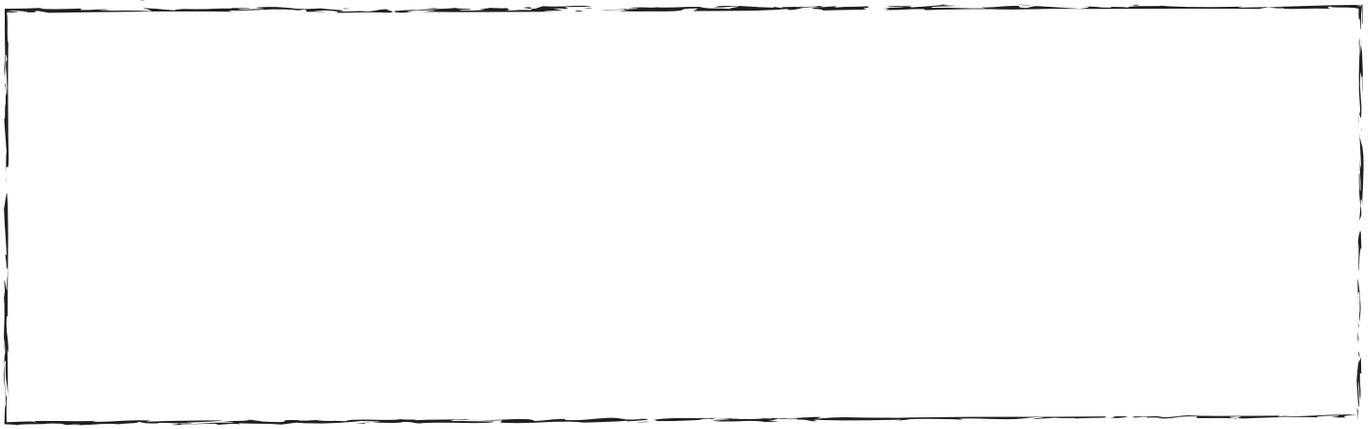

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Great job!

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