

The Teacup

Winter 2023 Edition



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Titanic: Michael Stallard - Eddie J (Removes)

Finally, the ship set off. After hours of doing the laundry while the passengers boarded from Southampton, I felt the ship rumble beneath my feet. We were on our way to New York! Luckily with no fresh water I didn't actually have to wash anything, but with over 300 first class passengers who still wanted me to iron their fancy clothes I sadly had lots of work to do. I hated this job, but it was my only way to get to America, and I got paid while doing it, which was helpful as I had little money. The ship I was on, the Titanic, was the largest ever built, and I couldn't quite believe I was on it. The entire ship is state of the art, which should have made work quicker, but several hundred people want me to iron and press their fancy clothes. Time passed slowly, but eventually all my laundry was finished, and I went up to my room. As I walked through the thin corridors of the crew's cabins, I could hear the noise from the café above me. My cabin was eight people in a room, currently all of them were off on their shifts working in various parts of the ship. I walked through the door and lay down on my bed, staring at my dingy, cramped room. I changed into my pyjamas and pulled the covers over myself, the bed creaking beneath me. I stared out the window at the turbulent Atlantic and slowly drifted off to sleep.

I woke up and went to the canteen to get breakfast, which was cold porridge and bread, then went back to toiling with the clothes of the first-class passengers. Two days later I was still doing the same thing, this job never got any less boring, but my dreams of New York still stayed with me. After several hours I walked again back to my room and went to bed.

In the middle of the night, I was woken by a booming crash that seemed to resonate through the entire ship. Had the ship struck something in the ocean? My cabinmates were starting to stir, I climbed out of bed and stumbled to the window. Outside, on my left I could see an iceberg stuck into the side of the ship, that's what that monumental noise had been! The boat was rocking more than before, and I could hear the metal and timber creaking in strain. I yelled at my cabinmates to wake up.

"Why are you waking us up, it's the middle of the night," one grumbled sleepily. I panickily told them about the iceberg and they looked out of the window.

"We need to wake up the passengers and then get to the lifeboats, now," I shouted. I bolted out the door and the others followed. Other crew members were now also waking up, possibly from my yelling if they hadn't heard the crash and doing the same as us. We ran up the stairs, most of us taking two at a time until we reached the floor the passengers were on. I told them to wake the passengers up by any means necessary and to make sure as many got to the lifeboats as possible. I ran through the corridor and began banging on doors and yelling as loud as I could. When I reached the end, I ran back through doing the same and then went to the next floor and did the same again.

After about an hour I went upstairs to go and get on a lifeboat myself, I was alarmed to see that there were hardly any left, but hundreds of passengers were waiting on the deck. I heard.

someone shouting my name. I looked around to see another crew member yelling at me to get on his lifeboat to help to row and get the passengers to safety. I felt grateful knowing I would get to safety, but I also felt guilty looking at all the eyes following me who probably wouldn't survive. I could feel the ship tilting now, slowly sinking into the freezing depths. I ran to the lifeboat and jumped aboard, grabbing an oar. The pulley lowered us down into the water and we landed with a splash. I began to row as hard as I could away from the sinking ship, icy water lapping over the sides. After about ten minutes the other crew member told me to stop rowing, we had made enough distance from the ship. The passengers were murmuring nervously, I looked behind me to see that the Titanic was breaking in two. I could see people falling into the water as they desperately tried to cling on to the fractured ship. Some of the passengers were screaming now, no doubt thinking of the loved ones still aboard. I thought of my cabinmates, had they managed to get off too? It was unlikely, I had been incredibly lucky, their faces flashed through my mind, I hadn't even known most of their names. There was nothing to describe that feeling, far worse than guilt or selfishness. It wasn't like I'd had a choice, I told myself, I had been ordered to get on this boat, but it still didn't make me feel any less guilty.

For about two hours I sat there, watching as the ship disappeared beneath the waves, until I heard the horn of another ship. I looked around, startled, to see where it had come from. The ship was small, compared to the Titanic, with only one funnel but it looked able to carry all the survivors. The passengers on our lifeboat began cheering, as did those on the other boats, I began frantically rowing to the ship. We reached the ship first and they threw down ropes to pull us up. I lashed them to our lifeboat. We were hoisted up onto the deck of the Carpathia, as I could see its name was, and were quickly checked by its crew members to make sure we were okay. I breathed in, grateful we were finally safe, and blacked out, on the deck, dreaming of New York.

Titanic: Catherine Poole - Ella B (Removes)

Had Papa warned about the dangers of the unforgiving sea, I would have never fallen prey to the promise of White Star Luxury Liner the unsinkable Titanic. For no ship could every escape the clutches of the godless ocean and no soul should ever bear witness to such horrors

We had set sail on Wednesday 10th April 1911. It was a glorious morning, and Titanic with all its splendour gracefully departed the docks of Southampton with pride and grandeur. Many commoners were present at the docks to bid farewell to us and simply admire this magnificent beast.

Our cabin was appropriately located on B Deck, after all Papa had paid a handsome sum of £800 to ensure we received the best cabin in the deck and an impeccable service. I was a new debutant and deck B, and C was reserved for only high society.

On 14th April, my day started off in normal manner, since we boarded the grand Titanic, breakfast, swimming, high tea, and dinner. At 11:40 pm, I was awoken from my deep slumber with a rather gigantic shudder. At first, I thought I was dreaming, but I became acutely aware that I was fully conscious when I heard usual commotion, which was peculiar at this time of night, especially for Deck B.

Papa had only just returned from the smoker's lounge in a rather jolly mood. I asked Papa if he was aware of what had happened, but he was in such high spirits to even realise what had happened. Mama was also awakened by the "thud", but the butler reassured us that "it was nothing to worry about".

I returned to my soft and warm bed, glaring at the dark night, it was so cold, I asked the maid to bring me an extra blanket. As I drifted off to sleep, I was abruptly woken by my mother, asking me to dress up and wear a warm coat, for the captain had ordered us to do so. Of course, standards had to be maintained even though it was 12:15 a.m. I wore my periwinkle tinted dress, that Papa had bought me from Paris.

It was only when we arrived in the lobby that I was informed by Mr Ridley, that we were sinking. I was shocked to discover this, after all this was meant to be an unsinkable ship. As we arrived on Deck many of the passengers from 2nd and 3rd Class were also present, much to mother's disdain.

At 12:45 a.m. we boarded the lifeboat No 7, the string band was playing in the background which made the entire affair a lot more pleasant and drowned out the noise of the dreadful rockets. Papa was unable to board the same boat as us, as the captain had ordered that women and children must disembark before any 1st class male passengers.

There was plenty of room on our boat, as we only had 27 passengers. Many of our friends were simply unconvinced that we were sinking, including Papa, though that may have been the whisky speaking and not him. For it was undeniable that the "Bow" of the ship was slowly succumbing to the weight of the ocean, yet desperately clutching to any grandeur it had.

What ensued after is a narrative of traumatic and chaotic events, mainly instigated by the lack of manners from the 3rd class passengers, desperately fighting to board boats, skipping the queue, and causing bedlam.

The night was still but there was anguish, echoes of screams and cries, it was all but a distant sound to the passengers of boat No 7, as we sailed away from the lawlessness of the Great Titanic and became spectators from afar.

I remember Mama looking at her watch it was 1:30 a.m. when we heard gun shots in the calm night. Mama had tried to convince the crew member to return, but to no avail. I remember watching the last distress rock at 1:40 a.m. it lit up the sky, like a red inferno.

Then came the horrors. I watched silently as the lights of this great vessel turned off one by one at 2:18. It was as if the ocean knew where to find the light switch. The remaining passengers' pleas became louder and louder but all I can see was a silhouette of the once magnificent Titanic.

The commotion could be heard from miles around. I saw many people lose hope as they plunged into the freezing waters, some voluntarily accepting their terrible fate.

You simply could not imagine that the once grand and beautiful Titanic was now damned. Defeated by a puncture caused by an iceberg, one might say an unworthy opponent, compared to the strength and magnitude of its rival.

I saw the passengers clinging to the bars for their life; the deck being flooded and the everlasting shrills and screams of all that aboard it.

The boat then abruptly snapped in two, similarly to one chopping a piece of wood.

The bottom side (the stern) slowly accepted its final destination, as it crept underneath the blanket of the ocean. The top side wavered on the surface for a few moments like a great whale flapping its gigantic tail, yet it soon overflowed with water, and it soon joined its other half.

In the last two minutes, all I remember was that passengers were thrown overboard, people with life jackets considered themselves most fortunate, for the poor souls that had nothing, did not stand a chance.

The next few hours felt like an eternity, we were all freezing, the screams became less and less.

Relief arrived at 3:30 as the Carpathia's rockets saw us floating peacefully. My anxiousness for friends and feelings of distress quickly subsided, as we were scooped onto the boat. We were the 6th boat to get rescuers, which mama found quite disagreeable, yet immense gratitude went toward our rescuers who were tipped very well. After the most chaotic and tormenting day, we set sail due to New York with only 651 passengers compared to the 2,207 that were on the ship that day. Sometimes I'm still haunted by thoughts of guilt, as I saw how the third-class members were treated for their lack of wealth, scrambling to being able to reach a lifeboat. I saw the slowly sinking grand ship. And worst of all, I saw the looks of pure horror on the passengers' eyes. But they are only human, and around 1,500 casualties were not an expectation when we boarded the ship, blissfully unaware of the events to come.

Titanic: David Hargrave – Thomas G (Removes)

Hello, my name is David Hargrave and I worked as a stoker on board the famous Titanic. A stoker is a person who shovels coal into the boilers to keep the ship running. In case you didn't know, the Titanic disaster was a huge ocean liner that sank on its maiden voyage on the 14th of April 1912. The reason why it is so famous is because so many people died due to a lack of lifeboats on board the ship. Approximately more than 1500 people died. Most of the survivors were in first class while the majority of the deaths were from the third class and crew.

The Titanic was the largest ship of its time and set off on its maiden voyage on the 10th of April 1912 fully laden with 2240 passengers and crew. The work inside the boilers was cramped, hot and exhausting. We, stokers, were the driving force of the ship, hidden.

away from all the passengers. Millions of tons of coal were loaded on board to feed the boilers that made steam to power the engines. A key fact that few people know is that the fourth funnel was for show and just provided ventilation for the cabins.

On the 10th of April the ship left Southampton for Queenstown in Ireland and then left for New York. The four days the ship spent at sea were wonderful for the first and second class passengers. There were 329 first class passengers and they sailed in extreme and lavish comfort. They had a vast workforce to cater with every need. The first class passengers had a squash court, a gym, a swimming pool, a library and a range of dining rooms, bars and restaurants.

The second class was not as luxurious but no less disappointing. There was oak panelled dining rooms and mahogany wood furniture and the meals were prepared in the same first-class kitchen.

Third class was the only class not given much attention although they did have a general room with wooden hard-wearing benches where the third-class passengers hung out, smoked cigarettes and chatted. They also had a designated smoking room.

On the fateful day of the 14th of April 1912, the Titanic sped across the North Atlantic at speed attempting to arrive ahead of schedule. They had received multiple warnings of icebergs but they were ignored. Here are the moments I remember from when the iceberg struck.

I was down in the mail room which was next to the boiler room having my break close to the bow of the ship when the iceberg penetrated the ship's hull. A big gush of water poured in through a series of holes in the steel panels. I was the only one there, so I rushed out of the door to tell my colleagues. As I was making my way back to the main boiler room, I

saw the bulkheads being lowered. I had to run to get there; just making it before the door shut. The boiler rooms were chaotic, there was water seeping in under the floor causing boilers to be extinguished by the sea water flowing in.

I got knocked from behind and banged my head on some pipes, knocking me out. I must have been unconscious for twenty minutes as when I woke up all the crew had deserted. I got up and ran to the nearest door. I saw a great wave of water burst through so I ran to the opposite door. No water was present, so I dashed through. The bulkhead was halfway shut and I made it with seconds to spare. I shudder still to this day to think about what would have happened to me if I got trapped behind the bulkheads.

The lift wasn't working so I had to run up the grand staircase. By the time I reached the top there were at least two levels of water flooding the staircase. As soon as I went out onto the top deck there was a huge swarm of passengers and crew running about. There were distress signals being shot into the air creating loud bangs that spooked the passengers even more. I turned and ran towards the lifeboats.

There was a huge swarm trying to get into this lifeboat. As I looked around, I realised there weren't any more lifeboats to be lowered. As I was looking at the swarm I got pushed by the mob right to the edge of the boat and if it wasn't for another lifeboat that was in the process of being lowered I would have almost certainly perished in the sheer drop. I landed on the seat and caused a big bump but I knew that I would live on.

Many many years later I still feel extremely lucky that I am still alive, only a handful of

crew survived the sinking with the stokers having the highest death rate on the Titanic.

Titanic: Dame Anna Thomas – Anya P (Removes)

I can still remember that day as if it was yesterday even though the tragic incident happened over a week ago.

I was on my way to New York for my new book launch with my children. We were 4 days in when I was tucking my youngest child Jirjis into bed, and I couldn't find my eldest child Mariam. I decided to wait for a few minutes when the ship took an unexpected jolt. The door to our family's cabin slammed into me, injuring my hand severely. I was attending to it when some of the men from my village rushed in and informed me that our ship was in danger. I was instructed to stay in our berth whilst the crew sorted out the ship, but I knew better. I needed to collect my children and find a lifeboat otherwise we probably wouldn't survive.

I rushed Jirjis to an empty lifeboat and told him to wait their whilst I quickly found Mariam and dressed her. Together we gathered as many valuables as we could carry. I kept her close to me and quickly guided her through all the rush and noise on the ship.

We all proceeded onto the lifeboat trying to get as far as possible from the horrifying scene behind us. My children and I didn't make it that far when the Titanic started sinking. I rushed to shield my children's eyes with my cloak to prevent them from witnessing the unfolding spectacle in front of them.

I will never forget the way it sunk, the front of the descended into the water whilst the back stuck up. I watched in horror as the ship snapped in half and both sides started sinking rapidly to the bottom of the North Atlantic Ocean.

After three hours, we all started to lose hope when somebody spotted Carpathia. Everyone started frantically waving, desperate for them to notice us, and thankfully they did. The ship came to pick up all 700 of us and after a long week we finally made it to New York. We were quickly rushed to the Hospital where the nurses attended to my family and me.

The doctor has told me to lay in bed and get some rest to vitalise my mind and body, so I guess that I won't be going to my book launch anytime soon.

Supernatural: The Best Time in my Death – Alex M (Thirds)

Being a ghost has been the best time in my death.

The mist gathered over the grey skies. A murder of crows circled the forest, as their squawk echoed through the hollow trees, full of cobwebs of nightmares. The leaves rustled as a rat scurried through them and a branch snapped behind them. A looming shadow advanced. The gloved hand clasped the handle of the knife and slowly put it in its sheath. A red droplet fell from the sheath and fell onto the ground. The body lay on the floor, pale and cold. As the

headlights of an old car came bumping up the hill, the man holding the knife turned and ran down the hill, not looking back - his face showing no emotion, empty as the moon's glowing face. I watched him, as he walked away from the scene.

I had just been killed - my body lay on top of the hill and somehow, I was standing next to it, translucent and weightless. I felt as if my body was lifting off the ground, and I was unable to control it. Then I heard the sound of a car engine, and a truck came clambering up the hill. It stopped at my feet and a man opened the door. I came towards him, but he just looked straight through me as if I didn't exist. Now I realised fully what had happened.

There was no point trying to get his attention because I knew he couldn't see me; after all ghosts were invisible to the human eye. It came to my attention that now I was a ghost, I had developed certain abilities, such as phasing through walls and being invisible. Then I ran down the hill, chasing after the man who had given me the power to hunt him down. I ran through the forest, branches flying into my head but coming out the other end. Running through trees and bushes I was unaware of a translucent figure, waiting for me at the bottom of the hill. A scarf swayed as a gust of wind blew over the heath and a hand pulled a pair of glasses from the cloaked face. A

long trench coat that stretched down to his ankles touched his polished brown shoes. A red scarf, the colour of my blood, wrapped around his head concealing his identity. He took a step forward, his toe brushing the ground, dust flying up suffocating the air. He pulled a badge from his pocket, that shone in the luminescence and engraved in gold lettering it said DETECTIVE P.A. JOHNSON. A smile spread across his face. "I see you are in need of some assistance". He spoke in a soft voice, like a feather of a dead bird.

The man still walking looked back in the moor, he saw nothing but a shimmer of candlelight from a nearby cottage. For a moment he paused, contemplating whether the residents of the cottage had seen him. He slowed down as he heard a black SUV come across the dirt road. A mysterious man in a black suit and sunglasses opened the door, he stood in between two hunched men beside him. "The task is completed now sir" said the man with the knife. They climbed back in and left the man in the evening's bliss.

"You must be wondering how I found you on this murderous night".

I looked in shock as he pulled a piece of paper giving every detail of my day that evening. The evening I died.

Now I know even a criminal will get to be free again.

Supernatural: Whispers in the Abandoned House – Yahya M (Thirds)

The rain fell relentlessly, drowning the desolate field in a mournful symphony of droplets. I kicked the flat tyre of my car, cursing under my breath at my bad luck. In the distance, an abandoned house stood as a relic of forgotten time, its sole window piercing the darkness with an eerie glow. I had no choice but to seek shelter within its decaying walls.

As I trudged through the field towards my haven a mist descended around me, a shiver ran down my spine like someone was playing the keys on a piano.

Pushing the creaking front door open, I stepped into a world lost to the ravages of time. I stepped into a vast entrance hall covered in a thick, eerie darkness. The windows were shattered, leaving only fragments of glass strewn across the floor. The grandfather clock was cloaked in a veil cobwebs and dust. My lungs filled with the musty smell of abandonment.

“Hello! Anyone home?”

Shadows danced along the corridor, leading my gaze to the top of the stairs. There, staring between the spindles of the stairs a pair of glistening eyes glowed at me. I bounded up the stairs two at a time, desperate to avoid the voids in the rotten steps.

A corridor of doors revealed themselves as I reached the top, they stood tall like lifeless soliders...apart from one. The door at the far end beckoned me closer, its frame cracked and weathered, but glowed with an otherworldly light as though it held secrets behind it.

Inside, I found myself in a child’ room, frozen in time. Faded wallpaper adorned with playful animals, tattered stuffed animals, and a small bed covered in dusty sheets told tales of a life interrupted. My breath caught as I noticed a glimmer beneath the bed. A glass eye rolled out, glistening in the dim light, only to reveal itself as a teddy bear’ missing eye.

Aghast, my heart pounded, I knelt to retrieve the eye, my hand trembling. Suddenly, a small, pale hand darted out from beneath the bed, fingers brushing mine. Startled, I peered under the bed to find a young boy, his eyes wide and filled with an otherworldly light.

“I’m lost,” the boy whispered, his voice barely audibles above the rain outside. “I can’t find my parents.”

My initial shock turned to compassion, and I extended my hand to him. “Come with me,” I said gently. “I’ll help you find your way back.”

We walked hand in hand out of the room, down the stairs and onto the creaking veranda. Just as we took the final step, I turned to reassure the boy, but he had vanished into thin air. Panic surged through me as I scanned the darkened field, searching for any sign of the child.

And then, there he was, standing amidst the rain, a faint, puckish smile playing on his lips as he waved goodbye. It was then that realisation washed over me like a chilling wind – the boy was no lost child; he was the ghost of this long-forgotten house, forever trapped within its haunted confines.

As I stood alone on that veranda, I couldn’t help but shiver, knowing that I had glimpsed the supernatural, a world where time had no meaning, and the boundary between the living and the dead blurred into one.

As I walked away, the only thing that was left with me were the whispers of the abandoned house.

Supernatural: The Caretaker – Bailey K (Thirds)

I've been the caretaker of St. Mary's School for the past 30 years. It's a pretty old building, settled in the core of the town, with ivy creeping up its stone walls and an air of history that you can almost taste. But there's something else too, something that hides in the shadows when the sun goes down.

It started faintly. A door creaking open when I was sure I had locked it, lights flickering in the hallway when no one was around. I didn't think anything about it because the building was old. But then, things escalated. Books began to fall off shelves, the sound of children's laughter echoed through empty corridors, and once, an unsettling scream stabbed the silence of the night.

I've never been one to believe in ghosts or spirits, but these incidences were too frequent and too strange to ignore. I started researching the history of St. Mary's and discovered a tragic event from over a century ago. A fire had broken out in the school, claiming the lives of several children.

Could it be that their spirits were still remaining, trapped within these ancient walls? The thought sent shivers down my spine.

So far, I felt a strange sense of duty towards these lost souls. After all, I was the caretaker of their eternal home.

I began to approach these paranormal activities with a new perspective. Instead of fear, I felt sympathy. I started talking to them, acknowledging their presence. I would wish them good morning as I unlocked the doors and say goodbye to them as I cleared the rest of the kitchen.

To my surprise, this seemed to calm the spirits. The incidences became less violent and more playful. A ball bouncing down the stairs, a piano playing a soft song in the music room, a child's drawing appearing on my desk.

Despite the unusual circumstances, I've come to value my role as not just a caretaker of a school, but also as a guardian for these lost souls. It's taught me that every place has a story to tell, every wall holds secrets, and every room echoes with laughter and tears of times gone by.

Being a caretaker at St. Mary's is not just about maintaining an old building; it's about protecting its history and acknowledging its past. It's about parallel with those who came before us and ensuring their stories continue to be told.

So here I am, an old man tending to an old school with its inhabitant spirits. It may not be an ordinary job, but it's my job. And despite the occasional spooky whisper or ghost footsteps echoing in the hallways, I wouldn't trade it for anything else.

After hearing my story, my granddaughter decided to discover the mysteries about this haunted school. She leaped into the car like a frog, trying to catch a fly hovering above Its head, eager to see the dangers and prepare to battle the ghostly remains of the school (graveyard).

As we arrived, her mouth shut while asking herself, what has she done.

She was scared but also excited. She wanted to know more about the school and its ghostliness. We walked around the school, her eyes wide with wonder and a little fear. We heard the laughter of children, saw books falling off shelves, and even heard a piano playing by itself.

She was scared, but she was also brave. She asked questions, took notes, and even tried to communicate with the spirits. She was respectful and kind, just like I had taught her.

Over time, she became more comfortable with the spirits. She would say hello to them in the morning and goodbye in the evening just like myself. She even started bringing them small gifts - a drawing, a flower, a piece of candy.

In the end, my granddaughter learned a lot from her experience at St. Mary's School. She learned about history, about bravery, and about respect for those who came before us. She also learned that ghosts aren't always scary - sometimes, they're just lost souls looking for a friend.

And so, we continue our work at St. Mary's School. It's not an easy job, but it's an important one. We are the caretakers of this old building and its ghostly inhabitants.

Now that my granddaughter (Emily) knows more about the school and feels comfortable, she decides to come to work with me daily, usually she leaves me at 8:00 and comes back to me at 4:30 to explore the school, unlike something that happened on a Thursday lunch time.

She walked into a girl's changing room and found a dusty box that was surrounded by dirt with little pebbles taking over it. She slid the lid off, being cautious, trying not get a splinter. A feathery presence pushed out of the lid and shone like a shining star in the firmament. Emily held the feather, her eyes wide with surprise. It was glowing like a star. She felt a strange warmth from it, like it was alive. She had never seen anything like it before.

Suddenly, she could see shadows beside her, running back and forth. Soon she saw outlines shadowy outlines making the shapes of the dead yet again, running back and forth. She was not sure whether they were energetic, excited, lost but she still continued her quest. Next came facial features, they looked down and even one of them was crying. after their "bodies" were fully revealed, she made out that they looked sad and lost.

Emily decided to help these ghosts. She talked to them, comforted them, and used the feather to show them the way. It was hard work, but Emily was brave.

Over time, Emily became known as the "Ghost Friend" of the school. She helped many ghosts find peace and move on. And in doing so, she found a new purpose in her life.

The feather became Emily's most important tool. It was a reminder of her journey and the lives and the past lives she had touched. And though she was still young, Emily knew that she had found her calling.

And so, Emily continues her work at the school, helping both the living and the dead. She is not just a caretaker - she is a friend to those who are lost.

The Enforcers – Nihal P (Removes)

They were damp, cold, and hard. Very hard. The old, dirty floorboards creaked somewhere in the distance. I tried to enjoy the last few minutes of my sleep because I knew what was coming next. I reached over to my brother; I could feel him shivering and quietly whimpering in pain. I tugged him close to me trying to share my body warmth. I was dreading to wake up and start another laborious day. Then suddenly an awful din made me sit up bolt right. That was our cue to start the day. It was 5am. I helped my brother get to his feet as he was so feeble from not being able to eat for several days. I didn't need to make my bed as I didn't have one. We slept on the floor with no blankets. It was especially bad now as it was the winter. There was one window, but the glass had been shattered meaning the sharp, belligerent winds would flow in. As I hugged my brother tightly, I knew I had to ameliorate our living conditions as I was the only one who could. My parents died when I was incredibly young and when my brother was just born. Since then, I have looked after my brother.

A low, raspy voiced shouted for us to get out quickly and if we didn't, he would punish us. As we made our way outside, we were given our daily pill. This was one of the many things none of us knew the reason for taking. The tempestuous weather and the howling winds took advantage of our bare skin and our rag which we wore as clothes. Looking around us everyone was hurrying about, and I saw several kids and teenagers being whipped and kicked about. I tore my eyes away from the dreadful scene; however, this happened all the time as it was seen as the norm, but I still couldn't bear to watch it. The people who controlled us had never been seen. They wore high tech suits, but no one knew who their boss was. A sharp pain shot up my back as I got kicked forward. "Hurry up!" shouted the guard. I grabbed my brother's small, bony wrist and started working by carrying heavy machinery onto several trucks. After that, we were sent to the mechanics room as we were especially skilled with machines, so we were called to fix broken ones. Everyone went to school until the age of 7 before they had to start working. This was where we picked up our mechanical skills. No one in our community knew.

where we were. Or how we got here. Or what our names were. Or how old we were. Our society were made up of mostly males but there were around five girls. One of them looked slightly younger than me based on her size. However, she

mysteriously disappeared and hasn't been seen since. The rest were adults. We just did what we were told and never dared to speak up as we were cowed by their threats. After we finished several arduous tasks, we were finally allowed to have our one meal of the day. Rice and beans.

After we finished the horrible meal, we had 10 minutes of free time before we had to go to bed. My brother and I would usually go for a walk at this time even if it were freezing cold. As we cautiously walked over the slippery ice, we approached a sign saying, 'East Border,' no one had ever been across the border. That was where the real world was, but it was practically impossible to escape, as they had extremely tight security. We eventually were called back to our sleeping area. After a glacial night we were called out at 5am. We then had another gruelling day of several strenuous tasks before it came time for our meal.

Midway through the meal a loud bang filled the room, and several pieces of debris flew helter-skelter around the hall. I grabbed my brother and hid under the table. I covered his ears from the loud bangs of gunshots. I saw several pairs of legs bolt outside trying to escape while I could hear people screaming in pain. These dauntless people were indefatigable but in the end the weapons were too powerful, and they surrendered. We slowly emerged from our hiding place and a surly man barked at us to go back to our sleeping area. As we walked back to our sleeping area, we saw several people lying on the floor dead. Blood had been splattered on the wall. It was a horrific sight. We picked up our pace and went back to our area.

As we entered a guard was lying on the floor dead. I could feel my brother get scared, so I held him close to me. We shut the door and slowly approached the sinewy figure. I took the helmet off to reveal a rather grotesque face full of scars and cuts. He was a middle-aged man with a beard and dark caramel eyes. With help from my brother, we took his suit off. Just then we heard footsteps and quickly put everything into the corner of the room. However, the footsteps walked.

past us and slowly faded. We waited for a while until we heard no noise and then pulled the suit back out. It was very dark, but the moonlight illuminated a part of the room. Carefully taking apart the suit my brother looked at me in amazement. We couldn't believe how advanced this technology was. We had never seen this before. Several messy wires poked out at various places. I remembered reading about this in school. The material was steel. This explained why it had been so heavy. After a while, my brother went to sleep but I stayed up all night studying this extraordinary piece of technology.

After what felt like an eternity of investigating, I finally came across an unknown item. It was a lime green glowing gem. It was not inserted properly as it felt very loose so as I started to reconfigure the armour, I pressed it in with all my strength. This definitely triggered something because suddenly the whole suit started

lighting up. Scared that one of the guards would notice I took the gem out and tucked it into my pocket. I then decided to go to sleep so I could get some rest.

The next day as we were awoken, I told my brother everything. He was astonished and it was the happiest I had seen him in an exceptionally long time. After an intense day of cleaning blood and dragging bodies the night finally came so I could reveal my plan to my brother. As we both lay down, I said "I will go into the suit and follow the rest of the guards in the night. Hopefully, this should lead to their main base. I will then explore around and try and find any valuable information. I will then go and pretend to be a guard for our area and come back. If anyone asks where I went say I'm went to the medical room."

My brother replied "This is way too dangerous! If they find out you're not one of them, they will kill you."

I hugged him tightly and replied, "I will be fine." In the early morning at around 4am I dressed up into the suit and inserted the gem. I could just about see through my helmet. The suit lighted up and I made my way outside. Several guards were patrolling the area, and I did the same. I walked up and down trying to act the same. After about 30minutes another guard started to walk towards me. All me

muscles stiffened, and my heart was pounding in my chest like a sledgehammer. A man with a mean voice questioned "Where is your weapon?"

I replied in my manliest voice "One of the peasants broke it when trying to fight me." The other man then told me to follow him while someone else took my guarding place. Struggling to keep up with his pace I obediently followed him. We finally reached a door with the words 'The Enforcers' on it which seemed to lead to a massive building. I looked at the code he put in. 63954. 63954. 63954. I tried my best to remember it. As we entered a man sitting behind a desk asked us for our ID. Panic started to rise within me. ID? I didn't know anything about an ID. Luckily, the man in front read his out from his arm. When it was my turn, I did exactly what he did. Taking a strap of my arm seven digits appeared before my eyes. I slowly became at ease again. After reading out the ID, I followed the man through another set of double doors. A bright light filled the room. It was amazing. The room was spotless, and the white floors sparkled from the light. Several machines filled the room and the man asked for a standard gun. Immediately I was handed a large heavy weapon. He told me that he needed to be somewhere and that leave when you have the rest of your weapons. I nodded instinctively and then as he left several people in fully white uniforms came up to me and started adding several weapons to me. There were grenades, swords, and guns. I'm not sure how the guards did this every day because by the end of it I could barely walk as the armour weighed me down so much. Eager to explore, I made my way outside and into the hallway.

I strolled through the corridor, trying to act as similarly as possible to the normal guards, I looked cautiously around to see if there was anything useful. As I walked around, I noticed a room with the label 'Project 1', thinking that looked like something important I approached the door. Trying to be as concealed as possible I slipped into the room. It took me a second for my eyes to adjust to my surroundings but when they had I was speechless. There was a massive machine with several metal rods stuck from it. It looked like a mini satellite. I approached the machine, careful not to get too close and there was a sign saying, 'The brainwasher.' I knew these people were crazy but to brainwash all of us was insane! Little did I know the process had started a long time ago. A small clock in

the corner of the room indicated that it was 04:42 which meant everyone would be waking up soon, so I needed to be swift with what I did next.

I briskly exited the room and walked further into their base. Discretely glancing in each room, I finally reached something important. It had 'Planning Room' written on it in crisp gold writing. Entering it slowly I found something that could help us escape. There was a timetable showing the guards shifts for night duty. It was at 1:09 am all the guards had a 10-minute free time. If we planned an escape at this exact time, it could possibly work. Extremely cautious of the time I exited the building and went back to our sleeping area. My brother was waiting for me. I gave him a warm smile as I entered and at once you could tell he was relaxed again. I told him everything I found, and he was shocked at my discoveries.

"A brainwashing device! Are they crazy!" he said, I nodded in reply. I then explained that tonight could be the night we escaped. He seemed thrilled by what I said but I told him to do whatever they tell you today because we don't want them paying extra attention to us. The rest of the day we blended in with the crowd and when it came to the night, we were both restless. As the night fell a massive storm came. The wind howled fiercely while the raindrops were as hard as machine gun bullets. However, my brother had had enough of this place, and he wanted to go. I looked at the watch from the suit of the guard and it was 1:08am. We had one minute until we could be free. 30 seconds. 10. 9. 8 .7. 6. 5. 4. 3. 2. 1. Go time. I clutched my brother's hand and carefully went outside. We were pummelled by the rain and were drenched within a matter of seconds. We watched all the guards retreat back to the base for their break however we didn't know that one guard still stays on duty. As we approached the fence a voice called out "What are you doing? Get back or I will shoot you!" Before I knew what I was doing my brother took the lead and made a run for it. Our feet splattered in the mud and water blurred my eyesight. We majestically climbed over the fence trying to dodge several bullets coming towards us. As we made it over the fence, we immediately bolted for the forest. Surprisingly, we didn't get shot but the guard had climbed over the fence and was following us in hot pursuit. Knowing we couldn't fight him we both hid behind two different trees opposite each other. We waited until he came sprinting into the forest before we both stuck our legs out and he tumbled.

over going headfirst into a log and was knocked out. We took his gun and ran as fast as we could. While we ran, I couldn't help but feel as though we had forgotten something or someone. When we finally came to a halt my brother looked sick to the core. The next words that he said rattled me. "We forgot her." I was baffled at this as I didn't know who four was. Suddenly, he pulled out a wet crumpled piece of paper and handed it to me.

It read:

'I am writing this to try and make you remember our sister. The day you came back to me and told me about the brainwashing device everything made sense. As I had never liked swallowing big pills, I never had them when they were given to us every morning. I would pretend to put them in my mouth and then spit it out later. The more I didn't take them the weirder things became. We were all together, you, me, and four, then one day she was taken elsewhere, and you forgot about her. I was furious that you couldn't remember our sister but more so lonely and scared that I was the only one who could remember her. I tried visiting her, but I couldn't find her. Then one day I saw her. She had been imprisoned inside a cage. I tried to meet her secretly and when I did, she remembered you and me. I was ecstatic but also heartbroken. They were treating her like an animal. She was extremely dirty and so skinny that she looked like a living skeleton. She asked me to help her escape so I promised her that together we would.'

I looked up at my brother overwhelmed with a mixture of emotions. He then said, "We are a family, and I made a promise to her, so we are going back for her whether you like it or not."

The Enforcers – Anonymous (Removes)

It was about noon, October 23rd, 2023, when we spotted them. A massive ship, similar to the cruisers from Star Wars, was coming to Earth from the black void of space. The world governments tried to contain the knowledge, but an observatory in Greenwich discovered the ship as well, and they made it public. Within days, the news spread like a wildfire. Every news channel was covering it. It was trending #1 on every social media platform. Riots broke out across the world. Stores were drained of their stock by panicking people. Almost every country declared martial law. Yet, closer the ship came. By the end of the month, you could see the ship with the naked eye.

On November 4th, Tokyo residents woke up to a loud hum. As they looked to the skies, they would be shocked by the sight of alien ships hovering over the city. They looked like big white triangles with engines on the back and bottom, and a big

glass panel on the front, which did not show the interior, as it was one-way glass. They just floated about the city, not doing anything. From the east, 5 F-35B fighters rushed past. As they completed their first run from east to west, two things that looked like small cannons protruded from the sides of one alien ship. Each one aimed at a jet.

Two flashes of blue light came out from the cannons, and suddenly two of the jets had been split in two, separating cockpit from the engines. Both pilots ejected. The pilotless remain of the two aircraft tumbled down into an area filled with flats. When the impact came, a fireball grew to a size of 150 metres in diameter and the resulting shockwave destroyed tens of thousands of windows, including mine. 1,700 people died. The ships repeated the same action for the remaining three aircraft, until all five were reduced to rubble on the ground. An innumerable amount of people had just died.

An explosion of glass woke me up. My windows had shattered, and panes of glass littered my carpeted floor. I rushed out of bed, put on some slippers, and looked outside. I saw the ships, and I was extremely frightened. Then I saw trails of orange from the west, at least 30. Then they slammed in the ships. All of them erupted in a ball of flame. The shockwave threw me into some cupboards I had in my room, near the back wall. My back seared with pain. Trying to ignore the pain, I grabbed a backpack and rushed downstairs. I opened my food cabinets and took some things. I drank a lot of milk from the fridge, which revitalised me. I grabbed cheese, nuts, a variety of fruits and vegetables, some cans of spam, a kitchen knife, a hammer, three boxes of matches, a compass, a map and some stacks of Yen worth about £20,000. I had wanted to leave the country for a long time, and this was my final motivation. Japan would no longer be safe for people. I would have to leave my family behind, but I didn't feel much remorse after the quarrel we had had. That was why we lived separately. I set off, going through the twisting streets of Tokyo. I would not go to investigate the crash site, no matter how strong my curiosity was. I doubted it would be safe there. I saw other people in the streets, likely with the same purpose as me to some degree.

After about 4 hours of walking, I had reached the city limit. I sat down to eat some nuts and some cheese, before carrying on with my journey. I was now encountering thick forests, with dark interiors and massive, tall trees, but my compass and map led the way. I would be going to Nagasaki and get a boat to the United States. The forests were quite hard to navigate through, and even after eight hours, I could not see the end. I had taken two breaks, eating some fruits and a can of spam. It was 4pm now, and I was getting tired. I took some fallen leaves on the ground and put them in a large pile. I then tried to sleep on that. Unfortunately, it had started to rain heavily, and it took a whole 2 hours to get to sleep.

The next morning, I ate another can of spam, and set off again. Within ten minutes of walking, I had come across a small, deserted town. It looked to have been

abandoned quite recently. I went inside one of the houses. There was no dust or dirt, it looked like a normal house. Going through the kitchen cabinets, I found a couple cans of potatoes. I stuffed them into my pack. The other houses had a few items for me to take, more cheese, a bar of chocolate, bottles of water and a packet of instant noodles. There were a few shops, but I skipped their inventories as my bag was already full. I noticed a cell tower nearby when I exited one of the shops. I tried opening the news, and, surprisingly, it worked! There were reports of strange humanoid robots patrolling the streets of Tokyo. No one went outside unless to get food from shops or to go to work. The robots called themselves the enforcers. They implemented curfew laws for all residents, saying they couldn't be out later than 6.30 PM, which was ridiculous. The residents feared that they would implement more bizarre legislations. I turned off my phone. This news was an even better motivator to get me hurrying on my journey faster. I left the small, lifeless town behind and continued on.

Hours passed. I was travelling for vast swathes of flat farmland. I paused for a break and ate chocolate 3 hours in, before continuing. Two hours after that, I found another town, large and not abandoned. It seemed to be about the size for 20-25 thousand residents. The streets were quite bustling. I went from door to door, explaining my predicament and asking to stay with them for a few days. After about a dozen houses, I met one homeowner who took me in. He looked about 27, male and quite tall and muscular. He told me that he let me in because he had a girlfriend in Tokyo who had been in the exact same position that I had been. But she decided to stay with her family.

He wanted to come with me to escape to the United States for a better and safer life as well. I accepted, because two people are always better than one. He told me that he would be going out to get some food, and I could stay home or go out with him. I chose to stay. I would try and get to know my home for the next couple of days.

Once he left, I explored the house. It seemed very strange that he trusted me this much after only a few minutes. The house was quite spacious. The living room was large with a big TV and two sofas. The dining room had a large table with six chairs and paintings - rather simple. There were two small bedrooms. He had a moderately-sized kitchen. I set all of my stuff down inside the bedroom that didn't appear to be occupied.

About ten minutes later, he came home with two bowls of Miso soup. He put them in the microwave for twenty seconds. He took them out, invited me to the dinner table and we started to eat. I asked him why he trusted me so much, but he ignored the question. He asked me how many days I was to be staying here, to which I answered four. He nodded and went back to eating his soup. It was delicious, with all the flavours combining. We didn't say a word after we had finished eating. He went to his bedroom, and I put on the news on his TV to get an update on the situation in Tokyo.

The robots had increased in number drastically, and there was another rule implemented. Every two and a half years, this year being on November 24th, all residents were to stand on their heads for 37 minutes at 3:21 PM. No one had any idea why this rule was implemented. It could be a sort of ritual, some people thought, as it served no real purpose.

It was getting late. The man came downstairs and told me he would be going to bed. He had lent me a spare toothbrush. I was also getting tired, so I followed him upstairs. I brushed my teeth and slept under bed sheets for the first time since I left Tokyo.

The Enforcers – Jessica T (Removes)

Colours were what ruined people's lives. People like me were destined to work for barely anything even though I am only thirteen. People like me don't have friends. People like me are entirely alone until we die, unless you plan on doing what I did. The Enforcers made a hierarchy system 96 years ago, back in 2057, just after World War III ended. The Enforcers are solely in control of everything and everyone. If you slipped up in the slightest way, if you even said something remotely bad about them, that was the end of your life. My great grandfather was part of that self-centred group. I would've become one of them, my life would be glorious. All of my problems would've been solved in an instant and I could've lived my life to the fullest, but here I am polishing the shoes of a man I don't even know the name of. My great grandfather was a stupid, self-centred, careless man. One day, a long, long time ago, he got into a fight with one of the other Enforcers. About what, you may ask? Well, my great grandfather managed to egg the head Enforcer's house. He obviously thought that that was just an amazing prank, however as you might have expected, the boss didn't really like it. He kicked him out of the group just a week later without any struggle. Just thinking about what my life could've been like brought a tear to my eye. "Oi, stop whinging and polish my shoes! I need to go soon you little brat!" What a massive reality check. "Sorry sir," I whispered, my voice breaking mid-way through my second word.

Obviously my sorry was not good enough for him, as he huffed, got up, and walked off. People could easily do this to me as I was in the orange group and did it often. The worst social group you could get into was mine. I was born into this group and so was the rest of my family. I can't remember ever seeing my family as they had to go off and work in different cities as servants before the time I was five. We have to wear fully orange clothes so we can be easily seen in a crowd of people, we look like prisoners and that was exactly what the Enforcers wanted. Nobody talks to us unless they want something. There are five different colour groups: orange (the servants), pink (lower class), green (middle class), purple (upper class) and most importantly yellow (the Enforcers). You could only be born into these categories so being born is just like roulette - it is completely random. I sighed and got up only to be called by one of the greens again. My life was highly repetitive, draining and generally exhausting. I had to drag my old brown paper bag across the floor to the bench where the man was sitting. The Enforcers made another rule that we oranges have to wake up at 3am. They tried to make life as hard as possible, and it worked. My arms are cut and bruised, my shirt dirty and my hair matted. No matter how hard I tried to pull my paper bag

to the bench, I couldn't, it wouldn't budge. I had no muscle on my arms, and the last time I had something to eat was yesterday at 5.40 in the afternoon. That was just over 24 hours ago, and you could tell. My body dropped to the ground and the world turned dark.

I breathed in the air around me. It wasn't dirty. The streets must've changed in the time I had been sleeping. I used all my might to open my eyes, they felt like they were glued shut. Somehow, I was in a house. The walls were moss green, the ceiling white, and there were no cobwebs in sight. I was dreaming. Or maybe I was hallucinating. I can never really tell the difference between the two. Either way, I didn't want to go back to reality. That's until my face went white with fear and my eyes popped out of my head. The walls were green. I had been taken in by that man. That green man I was about to help. I was fully awake now; my mind was racing. I looked down and saw a green cardigan someone must have slipped over my orange jumpsuit and a note on the sofa next to me. 'You're green now. Change into the green dress and come downstairs. Your new name is Evelyn Hughes.' My great grandfather's egging problem turned me into an orange. Orange as in the colour not the food. It was quite a large jump to become a green. My life might actually become better because some man pitied me. I pulled the dress over my head and hurriedly headed downstairs.

Over the next couple of days, I practised my new posher accent and adjusted my sleep schedule to the one of the greens. The Enforcers allowed the greens to wake up at 10am which was a very drastic change from my previous schedule. Life was fairly good as a green, although they made us drink a cup of raw egg in the mornings for protein. This almost always made me sick, and before long I tried to get out of drinking the eggs. The Enforcers had no idea that I didn't take my eggs. Maybe they didn't know everything. The Enforcers also had no idea that I switched colour. If they found out I would be dead as soon as they could find me.

By the time I reached my 15th birthday, I had become tired of this lifestyle. I was sick of the eggs, sick of the chores and sick of the family I was with. The youngest girl I was staying with would always steal my clothes and cut them up for "fashion". The Enforcers also made it that we had to always carry a bucket with us wherever we went because apparently, they were 'useful'. One day I had become so bored of this, so I made a plan. I took my bucket, measured it, grabbed some green cardboard and cut a disc of it out. I skipped my way to the closest clothes store. Directly next to the green section was the purple section. I cautiously looked over to find my size of dress. I located it and quickly snatched it off of the rack, making the entire rack sway from side to side. This grabbed attention relatively rapidly, so I placed my green disk at the bottom of my bucket, over the dress, then put a stern look on my face so nobody disturbed me while I sprinted out. Say goodbye to Evelyn Hughes, I thought to myself. I was now Eve Hill. I walked to the bathroom and changed into the flowy purple dress. I brushed through my long, brown, silky hair with my fingers then tied it back into a slick bun. I waltzed out of there, leaving my clothes and bucket behind.

"Hello, miss, I'm new to this neighbourhood, could I stay with you for a while?" I asked. The lady who opened the door was wearing a lovely plum gown. I smiled at her trying to convey that I was a warm person with a colourful personality. My heart was beating so quickly that I thought I would pass out again. Whether I would have to sleep on the street or not was in her hands. What if she knew I was originally an orange? What if anyone finds out where I fled to? "Oh, you must be freezing! Yes, do come in dear," the woman said in a cheery tone. Her voice sounded raspy but very joyful, so I felt at ease instantly. I stepped into her bright, spacious, modern kitchen and had a look around. This woman had marble counters, with

shiny white cabinets. I had never seen a house so clean! She beckoned me over to sit at the island in the centre of the room, and have a cup of tea, then went to go and get her tea bags from her shopping bags she had left in the hallway. At first when I took a sip, the tea managed to burn the roof of my mouth, and I just sat there like an idiot and tolerated the pain. I didn't want to scare the woman letting me stay with her, so I kept quiet. She gracefully strolled back into the room after going to the bathroom and saw that the tea had a purple lipstick stain around the rim of the mug. She was aghast with the thought of me drinking without letting it cool down. She rushed over, nearly tripping on the hem of her dress, and started asking me a lot of questions. She was asking if I was hurt as the tea had not cooled down yet. I just sat there and stared at her. I had only met her around ten minutes ago, why did she care so much? It felt good to be cared about, however as I opened my mouth to reply to her concerns the excruciating pain came back. I used my hands to try and signal that I was not able to talk and luckily, she understood.

Once I had processed all that had just happened, there was a loud knock on the door. I hopped off of my chair to go and answer the door, but the woman (whose name I got told was Whitney) told me to stay sitting and that she would go and answer the door. I sat there for what felt like ages and zoned out. I heard murmuring but I was too tired to focus on the words being spoken.

I used that time to vitalise my body before Whitney and a man came through the doorway. The man was wearing yellow. He was an Enforcer. I was less than ten metres away from an Enforcer, how unlucky was I! I was paralyzed with fear. Fortunately, the man was wearing a dark visor which meant he couldn't actually clearly see me. Whitney told him that I couldn't speak so I forced on a smile and nodded, hoping he would see the motion. I realised I was completely anonymous to him. I got up to 'go to the bathroom' and hid in the hallway. They were talking about me, but not under my current name, they were using my orange name. They had just figured out that I was no longer a servant, so they were just going around and asking if anyone had seen me. I kept as silent as I could and waited cautiously for the man to leave.

The door's slam was as loud as pans being hit together, and it sent a shudder down my spine. My hands were in tight fists, and I crept back into the kitchen. I heard Whitney mutter about how horrible the Enforcers were to the poor servants. I smiled and nodded along, knowing that I had now found my new home.

The Enforcers – Anum J (Removes)

My name is Daisy Walker. It might be strange that when I was 15 years old, I had my first day of 'proper school'. Here is why I was homeschooled for 10 years.

I was 5 years old when it all happened. 5 is a young age, which is why it is surprising that I could remember it all in full detail. It was a normal school day when helicopters appeared in the sky. My teacher had the gall to hide under her desk and abandon us. I never saw her again, so I thought she was dead. Swift-footed people in dark clothes head to toe burst into the colourful classroom. They

told us that they meant no harm, but I knew that they would keep us in cells and torture us for the rest of our lives if they had to.

Before we could get up from our desks, they strode over to us in proud, wide, quick steps. One person grabbed both of my wrists in such a manner that they boasted of purple bruises for an entire week. I had no intention of disobeying these foreigners, but I felt a deep sense of dread inside of me, telling me that it would never be normal again, that these foreigners would never leave, no matter how many times 'Apprehensive Alice' chanted to herself under her breath. They threw me in a van and drove me home with my classmates. My parents were furious that I was dropped off after three hours. These people were called The Enforcers. They put strict rules upon us. One rule was that girls couldn't go to school until the age of fifteen. Women and girls couldn't leave the house unless it was for shopping, or farming. The young girls would be on the farm for four days a week.

When I was brought back home three hours later, my dad had an argument with the person who threw me into the house. The Enforcer threw him back into the house, showing his strength, leaving me and my mum aghast while he lay on the floor bleeding from his head. He got a concussion from this injury, making him forget the most random things. However, as a result of the law, the responsibility of us and the household still rested on his shoulders. One week, he forgot to pay taxes. He believed he had already done it and refused.

to pay more. As a result of this, he was publicly whipped to death. I was seven years old at that time. Too young to understand. My mum mourned for him every day.

Eight years passed. It was the first day of school at the age of fifteen because of the Enforcers' rules. My brothers still got to go to school because they were boys. George absolutely hates school and learning. He was sixteen. Mark is the opposite. He was seventeen. He came back from school with awards of all sorts. For 'attending every science lesson' and for 'participating in a random maths competition'. I wasn't excited for school. I wanted to be more like George. I packed my bag, containing a solitary pencil case. We couldn't afford anything and didn't know what to pack. I caught the bus, but it could also be called a rusty box on wheels. I stood at the doors, took one look at my house, and stepped out of my comfort zone.

I sat at the back of the bus, not wanting any attention, when a boy sat next to me. He was the first boy I'd seen in 10 years apart from Mark and George. It was not that big of a deal. He tried talking to me, and I kept my lips sealed. I didn't want friends; I wanted a good future for me and my family. Friends would pull me off that difficult path. I stood up, and went to some other seats, alone again. I tried texting Mum to pass the time, but she was probably too busy throwing a party for herself because she was finally rid of me. Her number was the only one I had on

my phone, so I froze in horror when an unknown number texted me. I looked around, and no one was on their phone except for that really creepy guy who sat next to me. He looked at me, smiled sheepishly, and turned off his phone. I went over and sat next to him.

I asked him what his name was; his name was James. I told him my name was Kate (it isn't my name; my actual name is Daisy). He was friendly, so I decided to make him my acquaintance. I still didn't tell him my name was Daisy. I went to school. I survived. It was.

incredibly difficult; people were picking on me because of what happened to my dad. Why are humans so mean and annoying? James tried to stand up for me and failed. I could tolerate it anyways. On the way home, someone slipped a piece of paper into my pocket. The paper said: To Daisy, Meadow at the park. Now. Bring a friend, if you have any lol. #R3B3L

I decided to go after texting mum. I brought James, my only friend, with me. We stood in the middle of the meadow. I shouted out the strange code at the end of the note, and the two of us dropped down a hole in the ground.

We fell into chairs. A person sat opposite us; my teacher who I thought was dead! She explained to us that there was a group of rebels, trying to stand up to The Enforcers, and she was the rebel leader! James looked uncomfortable, taking a sudden interest in his glasses. I was very pleased. Someone had the common sense I was looking for inside of myself. I immediately joined the rebellion and James joined because I joined. We were made joint leaders of the battles between rebels and Enforcers. Our first battle was at home. I'd already told my mum about what had happened, but thankfully she didn't freak out. She was proud of me for taking such a responsibility. All of the Enforcers in our area lined up in a massive line. Me and James with 30 other skilled fighters (it turns out farming gives you weapon skills) seemed hopeless. However, the Enforcers were awful at fighting. We won the battle with ease.

We travelled around the country fighting battles (I left school ages ago). But then we lost a battle. The captain said that we were resting on our laurels, but we definitely weren't! The Enforcers just seemed to be getting stronger and stronger. In battle, James seemed to be getting weaker and weaker, like our friendship. It was really strange, but I started to trust him less and less. I started to think he was keeping a secret when dark bags appeared under his eyes one morning. He was really jumpy and alert. I went into his room to 'clean his room'.

and to try to find any hints as to why he was so tired and jumpy. I knew for certain that he was keeping a secret when I found a yellow piece of paper sticking out of his pillow sheet. Yellow is the Enforcers' colour. Any normal person like me would know that. I took the piece of paper. It was a family tree, with James' name

circled in red. James Wells. Where had I heard that surname before? It became clear when his mother's name was circled in red. Georgia Wells. James was the son of the Lead Enforcer.

I went through his pillow. There were letters in fancy handwriting, thanking him for information? It hit me like a lorry breaking the speed limit. He was a spy. At that unfortunate moment, he entered the room and found me frozen on his bed, holding his family tree paper and one of the letters. He could've done anything to me. He opened his bag- which I thought had medications for his allergy he told me of- and pulled out a knife. It was a beautiful thing, with a jagged, sharp blade. He smiled at me, a smile I had never seen before. Evil. He closed the door behind him. "So, you've found out my secret?"

Refuge – Luca B (Fifths)

The endless flurry

of snow.

Heavy showers

battering slits of bare skin

and thick snoods

Eyes, suffocating

Trapped

Behind a windscreen

of misty white

Bodies laden

Layers of survival

and protection

Yet plough on they do.

churning through battlefields

of snowflakes

At last, here

Stark shards

of ashen grey rock

Decorated

intricately with icicles

Bring with them shelter.

But do they signify refuge?

or simply a brief restbite

From the ascending fight

A good start – Altaya V (Thirds)

As the sun came up, lighting up the land, I clutched Rose's hands with nerves. She always had a way to make things ok, even when they were not. We were perched on a bench in the train station. Rose looked at me, smiling softly. "Rose" I said quietly "Why aren't you coming? Why do I have to leave?". Rose's face fell, and she looked into the distance.

"Because Daisy, I am six years older, and England isn't very safe right now. You see, when two countries don't like each other, they fight. Then the fighting turns into war, and war is something no child should have to see." Now, I may be 6 years younger, but I can always tell when something is bothering my sister. I looked into her eyes, as blue as the sea, and I saw something: Worry, anger, fear.

But most of all, behind the little curtain in her mind, I saw something you could never usually see in sweet Rose, unless you were her sister of course. I saw hate.

Hate towards Nazis, and especially to Hitler.

“Are all Germans bad?” I asked. She chuckled.

“Daisy, of course not. This isn’t all their fault. It’s ours too. War is a game that people like to play, but there are never any winners. The other side may surrender, but either way you lose lives. People lose brothers, sisters, mothers, fathers, everything!” She cried. But then she looked at my worried face, and sighed, pulling me closer.

“I am staying here, as a nurse, to help prevent all these lives being lost. You are going to Scotland, to make new friends, stay with Aunt Winifred in the Manor, and you are not to fret about me.” I nodded, closing my eyes and resting my head on her shoulder.

I was awoken by the sound of the train, and some worried screaming and shouting from lots of children. Some were as old as fifteen, some only months old. Some seemed a lot like me, scared and worried. Rose grabbed my bags and led me onto the train. She kissed my cheek and squeezed me hard. I started to cry, telling her I was too scared.

“I will write you every day, and this will all be over soon! You will come home, I promise.” She smiled, a tear rolling down her cheek, but she stepped back as the train left.

“I LOVE YOU!” She cried.

“I LOVE YOU TOO!” I screamed back, pressing my hand against the cold window. And as we zoomed away, I realised I may never see Rose again.

The train seemed long and boring without Rose. I watched the world go by through the window, as the big bustling city turned into the quiet calm countryside. I tried to sleep, but as soon as I closed my eyes, I saw Rose. I wrote a letter with my quill and paper to her. While I was writing, a trembling boy, that looked about six came up to me. “S’cuse me, d’you have a sweet for me to eat?” he asked quietly. I nodded and handed him a bon bon. He smiled and started to walk away, but I grabbed him. “Whats wrong?” I asked.

“I. I’m scared. Last time I went away, there were a lot less people. I was put with a mean lady, and she didn’t take care of me.”

He squirmed out my grip and ran away. I sighed. I hadn’t met Aunt Winifred. What if she was mean? What if she didn’t like me? Rose told me she was nice, but she could have just been trying to make sure I didn’t fret. I spent the rest of the journey worrying.

When we arrived, I stepped off the train, breathing in the fresh air. It reminded me when I went to the beach with my family, and the air was so fresh. It ached to remember. I looked round and saw a middle-aged woman and her husband trotting towards me. I looked at her face, and inside I saw my mother, me and Rose.

“You must be Aunt Winifred!” I said, “Pleasure to meet you, my name is Daisy.”

She looked surprised at my politeness. I’d been practicing with Rose back home.

“Dear, call me Auntie Winnie! And the pleasure is all mine. This is your Uncle Tommy” She pointed at him, and he smiled cheerily. I shook his hand, and they helped me carry my bags. We took a horse and cart, and we went to the Manor. It wasn’t far, and Auntie Winnie asked me how I was, and I tried my best to be really angelic.

Uncle Tommy heaved open the big brown doors to the Manor, and I gasped. The Manor was so vast, and beautiful, I was overwhelmed. A little dog came and barked at my feet. I bent down and stroked it gently. “Welcome to your new

home!” Auntie Winnie exclaimed. She led me to a cosy armchair, and the puppy jumped on my lap. Uncle Tommy must have seen the letter peeking out of my bag.

“Should I post this?” he said. I nodded. Auntie Winnie said she must get me some tea and left. I sighed contently, looking around. My heart still ached, and I missed Rose, but this wasn’t so bad.

This was happening to lots of kids in London. I was still upset, but it could have turned out worse. Auntie Winnie is so sweet and kind, and the Manor is amazing. I don’t know what the future holds, but I do know that this, is a good start.

Hell with no Heaven – Riya J (Thirds)

The slope I walked up was an unsettling one, with long grass crawling up your knees, and the moonlight creating an imaginary pathway for me, as the original one was covered in weeds. The building I approached was a 2-Storey, bleak and broken one, to which I was entitled to inspect. Below the slope, the sea was angrily spitting onto the jagged rocks, and there was a sea breeze that made the air dance across my skin and gave me goosebumps. I looked behind me to see the warm and welcoming town, the lights smudging because of the distance. Two guards stood by the door, and nudged their heads towards it, beckoning me to enter. And so, I did. I immediately regretted it. The innards were total chaos. Shattered glass was sprayed around the building and limp, frail bodies were spread around the floor. The first thing that I noticed was the smell. The damp reek of unwashed bodies and uncleaned clothes. The hot and sticky sweat of more than a hundred people cramped in one small and narrow space. I wanted to hurry with the report and get out of here, but they told me that every detail had to

be included, so I didn't want to lose my job in my haste to exit. I noticed that not everyone in here had a sleeping bag or something to keep warm, even though those who did, didn't have them in great condition. I warily stepped over the bodies, and occasionally I would kick one without meaning to, but they didn't rouse, they simply groaned and began to snore again. They must find that sleeping on a wooden floor with a roof over your head is better than sleeping on rock hard stone with rain seeping into your ragged sleeping bag. Two men were shrouded in a corner, one with oversized top and large trousers, with a cigarette poking from his purple lips, and the other with an extremely anxious face and similar clothing. The look had probably been founded from all the weeks and days of wondering when your next meal was. I gave the first man a condescending look, and he decided not to keep his mouth shut by saying,

"Keeps the hunger away mate." He says, "But it always comes back. Back to bite."

And with that, he blew a whole gust of smoke towards me and watched my face agonised at the smell. He chuckled, and I moved on, to the slim staircase I saw in front of me. At least my stay here was brief and nearly completed. I cautiously slipped up the sleepers or wanting to stir any of the sleepers or disturb any of those who were up. The sound that emitted from them were not pleasing since all they did was creak and whine. As I turned the corner I met with another little community on the second floor, this space had 1 door on the side, which was ajar, showing me the supplies of food and other necessities that were huddled inside. The upper floor was tidier and less scented as the other, but there were still cracks in the windows where the water was bleeding in. Water started to trickle from the ceiling and a woman rushed over and put a metal bucket down triumphantly. She turned to resume her assigned job when her eyes flickered on me. She noticed my tweed suit and my satin tie. My neatly combed hair, and from that she could infer who I was.

"Inspecting I suppose? Well, how do ya like it? It's pretty, no? As pretty as ya fancy mansions and your Ferrari Testarossa's?" She chuckled. "Ya thinks we're joking, ya think we are lying. We ain't. This is how life is. For us. Ya spends all your money on fancy mansions and fancy cars. Ya rollin' in it!"

I felt bad for her. But I also remembered that the inspection that I was currently doing, was one that many people were relying on, the reasons that they didn't want to share with me. I took a breath and continued on. I had only taken a few steps, when a little boy, a meter or two away from me, started to tremble, and then called out, as a strike of thunder hit the building and made it shudder.

"Mummy!" He cried. "I'm scared!"

The lady I was talking to, came over and hooked a blanket over the little boy. It was woven from snippets of clothing that had worn away and had to find other uses, because nothing could be wasted.

"Don't worry sweetheart. It will be alright." She said.

"Yes." Another person comes over, a man this time, but too young to be dad. A brother.

"The Shakings never last."

But it didn't seem like this one was stopping. It kept shaking till dust started to rain from the ceiling, and the whole building felt like it was going to tip into the frothing sea.

"Everyone out!" | screamed. There was a moment of hesitation, before they all started to frantically grasp the idea that the building was collapsing. Some people were kicked from their sleep, and hurriedly told the news, where they would leap to their feet, and rushed over to the staircase. Some were left there to crumble, but I took over the job and roused them myself. Once I was sure that everyone from the second floor had been evacuated, I checked the first, but it was completely empty. When everyone had stormed down the stairs and caused a stampede, everyone must have awoken down here, and left too, feeling the tremble under their feet. I ran towards the exit, knowing that I would make it, But as I came closer, I realised there was not enough time. I was a split second too late, as the building caved in, and the wood came toppling above me. Now I can say, I'm happy that I saved all of those innocent people. Maybe their lives were absolute hell, with no sign of Heaven, but I am still satisfied. Because their lives were more worth living than mine would ever be. I know they will make an impact on the world, and change other people's hearts, people like me.

Home on the Streets – Ruhaan B (Thirds)

Sirens whooped. Snow crunched. Flashlights brightened in my direction. I had a rush of adrenaline when I thought they didn't find me. 'POLICE! GIVE YOURSELF UP' was what made me realise my game was up. I crawled out of my bed, the bitter January air giving me an unpleasant shock. The harsh winds screamed into my ears as I hastily packed up my very limited belongings. I walked out of my doorway, eyes of steel glaring at me while I tried not to look back in shame. Silence. I'd have to find somewhere else. The fuzz watched as I hopelessly wandered away. I was used to this by now. Wouldn't get any better the more it happened. Drops of rain fell on my head as I walked around Shaftesbury Avenue. I'd be very lucky if I were to a night with no interruptions. Every night there'd be a fussy landlord evicting me from the only place I had to stay. I walked down the road as I watched the police driving away. I decided I'd have to stay awake. Only for a few hours until dawn, I repeatedly told myself as my inner urge wanted me to sleep. I gazed into the distance, reflecting on my past with Mum and Vince. I thought about my actions. After a good half hour, I finally gave in. I found a nice, cosy doorway, unpacked my things, and went to bed.

Had a good night's sleep. No interruptions. I decided to get out of my cramped doorway before any complications arose. I had to start getting some dosh. Only five pounds fifty-seven pence to my name. I perched outside my favourite begging location and waited. Waited. Took a while until my first donation. Twenty pence it was. Wasn't going to complain though.

The waiting game was a boring one. The clouds started crying, and a group of deranged blokes threatened me before I had to make a run for it. found a quiet alleyway and counted my profits. Eight pounds nineteen I now had. A good three quid in three hours wasn't bad. The dense fog really started to take effect when I went to my favourite yet affordable restaurant to treat myself to a light, late breakfast.

Found another beggar on my way. Feisty, he was. Took his chances in a fight before I'd acknowledged his existence. I was tired, my back aching, my knees in a state of despair. Certainly not ready for this. I looked at him. Inexperienced, he was. Could tell. Thought his clothes looked slightly too clean. He swung at me. Gave him a piece of my mind, I did. He wasn't that fierce when you broke his outer shell. Silence was all I heard as he trudged away.

I went back to walking. I could feel the eyes of others glaring at me while I only tried to ignore them. The cold air was killing me.

It was a while until I got to the restaurant. It's hard, you know, walking on foot to every place you go. Not enough dosh for a cab. Rarely enough for a ticket on the tube. Even then it'll only get you a few stops down the line, and then you're down four quid. Horrible, these prices are. Won't ever get used to 'em. I got strange looks as I found a place to sit, away from the busy streets of London. Honestly, I got really lucky. Usually it's packed, more people to give me dirty words, more people to ruin my day. I ordered and waited, until my huge feast of a coffee and 2 sandwiches arrived. It would keep me full for at least half a day or so. More time to get more dosh, to get more food, to live. A gruelling process it was, day by day. Not at all my liking

I dawdled in the warmth of the restaurant for a good twenty minutes after I finished my meal. It was a blessing, getting some warm air after spending a night in a random person's doorway. You think it's a matter of 'getting used to it'? Go on then, you try it. Sleep in someone's doorway in clothes covered in holes, will you? Trust me, no one ever has or ever will get used to it. I only hurried out of the restaurant when I saw a waiter coming my way. Not my priority to get into arguments. Didn't want to get banned from my, frankly, only place to eat. It'd be a slight annoyance for me if I couldn't eat. Just slight.

As I left the restaurant, it coincidentally started pouring with rain. My golly good luck! it felt as if the whole world was out to get me. I decided I'd have to find a place to stay for a few hours. Just until the rain parted. I sauntered around until I found the shelter of a tree and started my afternoon routine. To be honest, I think that the rain had put everyone off. Hardly anyone came out for their usual afternoon stroll. And out of the people left, only a couple people decided to give me some change. Only made two pounds in five hours. Certainly, one of my worse sessions.

The rain parted as soon as it became sunset. The night sky was a beautiful array of different abstract colours all fitting together; it was art-textbook worthy. I decided I should move to a better shelter than a tree, especially since the rain had stopped.

I found a nice doorway that I thought I could spend the night in. It looked like the connecting house was abandoned enough; however, I did not want to take the chances of being discovered as a trespasser. I carefully unpacked my belongings, trying not to be heard. I probably stayed awake for another hour after I meant to go to bed. The day had been slightly more eventful than usual, I thought as I looked back on the day's happenings. However, I was ready for a new day, a new dawn, a new light. So, I went to sleep.

Stone Cold Creative Writing – Aliza K (Thirds)

As the fog wrapped itself around me like a scarf, I shivered and walked along the filthy streets of Abbey Road. The stammering gusts tore the clouds like a shredded veil; below my feet, the glittering ice cracked and groaned until it finally spit out like a lightning bolt. Rusty cigarettes and ale glasses paved the streets up, it had reminded me of you know who. It was

Christmas Eve and Gail, and I spent the whole evening, talking about how life was like back home. I talked about mum and dad and how they never really felt like parents to me, I mean dad did leave me and I wouldn't even be here if it wasn't for mum's stupid choices. I poured my whole heart out to Gail, it seemed strange; I've never felt like this before with anyone, not even with Carole, she had a life of her own, she didn't need me, she had a home, a partner, nothing I would be able to get. This time last year, I was told to be independent and figure out how to live with only a sleeping bag and a couple of quid, yet here I am not even knowing how I'm going to survive through this cold winter.

Life was difficult back then, I wanted to die, there was no purpose for me to live anymore. All these thoughts jumbled through my head; I couldn't even get a job for Chris's sake. I didn't know how I was going to get around until I saw something that could change my life forever. As my eyes made contact with the miracle, my whole body felt a boom of joy, it was if I was on top of the world.

Right in front of my eyes was a building and you're probably thinking why this building is so special, but it wasn't just any old building. It was an abandoned one. One that could make everything better. No one had been living here for hundreds of years by the looks of it. The derelict building stood lifeless. Its crumbling chimneys and hanging gutters were clogged with rotting leaves. The walls were pitted, as if they had been gnawed by hundreds of starving rats. Only ragged traces of glass remained in the windows- sharp shards jutting out of the rotting sills, but like Ginger always used to say: "it doesn't matter what's on the outside, it's what's on the inside that counts" the only thing I cared about was all the things I have been yearning for: warmth, shelter and I already had Gail, a person that I now wanted to spend the rest of my life with.

Taking a deep breath in, I crept inside, hoping to make it out alive. I looked around and it looked like a movie, better than a movie, a dream. I had walked into heaven. My face was painted with an ecstatic smile, it was something that hasn't happened in a while. Analysing the room, I pictured everything that I could use: a piece of cardboard that Gail and I could sleep on, some rough chunks of cloth that we could use to give us warmth, I could keep on talking till Doomsday if I wanted to. People would probably think that this is poor conditions, but I'm used to it, been out and about for the past year, if anything this is an upgrade.

We explored the rest of the place, and it was believed to be a run-down church which explained the broken cross, and the continuous ticking of the grandfather clock which somehow seemed to be still working. We entered a vast, echoing hallway that led to a dark flight of stairs. The staircase felt ominous, every step I took was followed by a creaking echo. There was nothing to fear, I felt that I should put Gail first and protect her no matter what hardship I had to go through. We opened the low, ancient-looking door that was studded with sharp, black nails. This room may have been a pleasant, comfortable room, but damp, dirt and disuse had made it their home. There was a wild, overgrown feel to the place which explained the torn wallpaper and clouds of dust hanging over everything, yet I knew this was the start to a new adventure.

Soon enough, winter had relaxed its grip, and the world was waking to new growth. The scent of the bluebells was flung like wafts of perfume in the air. It was if, overnight, nature had painted the hills in red, yellows and greens and sprinkled tiny diamonds on the rivers to shimmer and waltz in the fresh morning sun. Spring was in the air, and I have had the time of my life; I have a place that I could finally call home and a girl that I could call the love of my

life. Every time I'm around Gail, I can't help but break into a wide grin whilst my eyes sparkle with elation. I didn't want to be anywhere else, not even with Ginger, Carole, Mum, not with anyone.

I chose to be the best version of myself by starting a campaign called the Big Issue Foundation and it was all about helping homeless. It was to show them that they can get through this and all they needed to do was to just ask, but back in the day, we would be mocked for that. No one knew how it felt to be put in our shoes, so I am glad it is normalised to ask about where to get food for free, or where to get a good night's rest. All you now needed to do is simply walk into a soup kitchen, food bank, homeless shelter, warming stations. God, The list could on forever!

As time passes on, Gail and I were going to the caff for our usual coffee just like the good old times. The streets were carpeted with fresh blossoms, hardly anyone was sleeping on them thanks to Gail and me. Who would have ever thought that a young, scruffy boy like me with a helpless girl would be able to change everything for the better? I could've not asked for anything more, I had the love of my life, an incredible home and I made a difference in this world. "Happiness depends upon us, so even if we forget about it for a while, we should never completely forget about it" was once said by Link Shelter, it's got a ring to it, doesn't it?

Raven Poem – Nitrisha V (Lower Fourth)

The 12 o'clock bell tolled,
Whilst the December frost was cold.
Midnight, dreary and black,
A chamber door was to be seen.
With such a name as NEVERMORE!

Tapping at this chamber door,
With delicate yet embroidered curtain,
An uncertain rustling of each black curtain and dull leaves,
Was still yet to be discovered.
Darkness permeated and nothing more!

Pondering who would be behind the chamber door,
'Tis no one answered, yet again, tapping,
December, dark and sorrow, came a voice,
'The fact is I was napping, and gently, you came rapping.'
The door opened and nothing more.

Long I stood there, tapping, and wondering,
In the bleak and black season, no one could see me,
Not even the man who opened the door,
Yet the silence was unbroken until a whispered word 'Lenore,' was spoken.
This it is, and nothing more.

An echo murmured back the word- Lenore,
Petrified, he went back into the chamber,
His soul within him was burning like a fire.
Tapping somewhat louder than before, at this chamber door,
With such a name as NEVERMORE!

Doubting whether or not, the old man would open the chamber door,
I perched and sat, near the window shutter,
What was to be seen was black and white,
Thus far, flung the shutter, weary and bleak,
'Tis the breeze of the wind and nothing more.'

Deeping into that darkness,
The man started to smile by me, the ebony bird,
Was it a blessing or a curse?
Stil perched upon a bust of Pallas, just above the chamber door,
Darkness was still around and nothing more.

Lonely on the placid bust,
Not a noise was to be heard,
Except the muttered words 'Other friends have flown before,'
And that 'I will leave him,'
Rising in a pitch, said I 'NEVERMORE!'

Whilst the air grew denser,
A crooked voice was to be heard - 'WRETCH,'
And I pondered 'Why?' the distant memories of Lenore,
Came to his melancholy mind,
Gurgling croak said I, 'NEVERMORE!'

Swung by angels and yet,
Heaven bent towards us,
Understood what Lenore was,
Fancy that, it was a sainted maiden whom the angels named Lenore,
Quoth I, 'NEVERMORE!'

Still sitting on the Pallid bust of Pallas,
Just above the chamber door,
Half-asleep, dreaming dreams,
A loud voice of the man was to be said,
'Leave my loneliness unbroken, 'Quoth I 'NEVERMORE.'

LENORE, LENORE!
Is here, no more.
Yet still sitting here,
Was a presence of evil.
This shall be lifted, with such name as 'Nevermore.'

Tantalus Poem – Tara J (Lower Fourth)

I once, without thinking twice,
Decided to test the Gods with my ultimate sacrifice.
Filled with misguided dedication, I completed a monstrous task,
Hoping nobody would have questions to ask.

I must serve a meal to the Gods,
A golden opportunity, what were the odds?
I could make each and every one of them seem dumb,
Outsmart the Gods, a legend, I would become.

All-knowing and divine, the Gods seemed to me,
However, were they all we have deemed them to be?
Soon, they would each be my guest,
And we could see who was truly the best.

Unlike any other meal, I chopped and boiled my dear son,
A mystery, not to be revealed by anyone.
The Gods all came, ready to feast,
Unaware they were about to eat a deceased.

Only the upset Demeter ate, the others all instantly knew,
I underestimated the Gods, apologized in the hopes they would happily bid me adieu.
Zeus, however refused, devising other plans,
He sent me to Tartarus, where food and water were banned.

Enticing fruits and fresh water fill my gaze,
They are just out of reach; how will I survive infinite days?

I have lost all sense of time being trapped here,
The anger, sadness and depression are too much to bear.

I am filled with regret every second of my eternal life,
What was I thinking cutting up my son with a knife?