

# Serpentine

Winter  
2006



# Serpentine Magazine

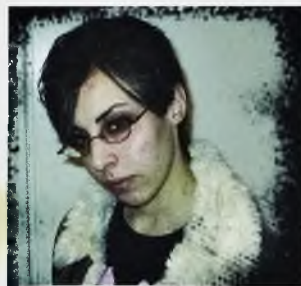
## Staff

Editor - in - Chief  
Elizabeth D'Ambrosio  
"LILITH OYA"

Assistant Editor - in - Chief  
Dan Cacace



Literature Director  
Andrew Fattorusso  
"LORD FOX"



Sarah Shulman  
Faculty Advisor

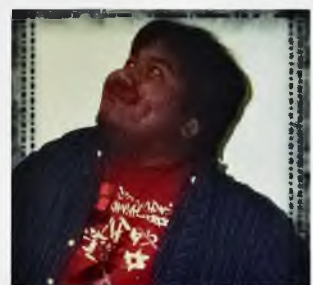


Serpentine Magazine  
2800 Victory Blvd.  
Building 1-C Room 225  
Staten Island, NY 10314

Art Design & Layout Director  
Alicia Rebelo



Business Manager  
Earl Gatchalian



A Publication of  
The Serpentine Literary Magazine  
A Student Organization of The College of Staten Island

Serpentine Magazine is published by students of The College of Staten Island. All works contained within this publication are the property of their creators and are protected by copyright law. No materials within this publication may be reprinted in whole or in part, in any form, without the consent of the creators themselves. Opinions expressed herein are those of the writers and are not necessarily shared by the Serpentine staff or The College of Staten Island. Serpentine is not a publication of the College of Staten Island. The College of Staten Island and the City University of New York are not responsible for the contents of this magazine. All submissions to Serpentine Magazine become property of Serpentine magazine. Serpentine is not responsible for return or loss of all submissions

# Other Staff and Contributors

Managing Editor  
Ra' chaun Rogers



Editor  
Evan Perez



Layout Editor &  
Project Coordinator  
Kevin S.P. Mamakas



Erik Erkman  
Richard Fedey  
Brian Gonzalez

Servete Kolar  
Roger Matthews  
Marty

Prof. Cate Marvin  
Noodlez  
Lisa Roberts

Phillip Yee  
Eymon Zhu

## Note from the Editor



While keeping *Serpentine's* heart and soul, this particular issue was a doorway for many changes that we hope would become lasting traditions of the magazine. To begin with, this is an entirely new staff on board. Previously, none of us had any hands on experience and if anything, had only submitted work. This is our first chance to actually bring you the artistic talent of CSI personally. We've had to learn a lot on the way, since we didn't have many people to turn to for directions. Despite that, I think we really pulled off a fantastic issue.

Among the obvious changes in *Serpentine's* format, it will now be sharing space with a section that we are calling *Artifacts*. Just flip this magazine over and there it will be. *Serpentine* has always had a place for visual artists, but the current staff felt that it was too limited. So, within the pages of *Artifacts* will be the opportunity that the visual artists of CSI deserve. You will find a wide and soon to be wider gallery of artwork as well as relating articles and interviews.

Literature will always be a major part of *Serpentine*, but it's about time it stops hogging all the glory.

Speaking of literature, one of our editors Ra'Chaun, took it upon himself to undergo a great project. He requested to write about the characters appearing on both covers. A lot of time and effort was poured into making this piece come alive. Everyone should definitely take the chance to check it out. This fantasy piece has the works: comedy, action, and drama. Its conclusion will appear in the spring issue.

I hope you will come to embrace this new form of *Serpentine* as we have. The possibilities are limitless for 2006 and we intend to bring you much that hasn't been seen around here before. Our intentions are not just to bring you the talent of CSI students but to also provide motivation to the dormant or unknown artists on this campus. This place is an opportunity no aspiring artist should pass up. Come, be seen and be heard. Show everyone what you can do.

Editor-in-Chief  
Elizabeth D'Ambrosio

# An excerpt from The Liaisons of Utopia: Chapter 1 The First Battle

By Lilith Oya

Face buried in her pillow, Ealisaid forced herself to breath, long, slow, and deep. It wasn't so much as to calm her racing heart, but to keep up the charade that she was fast asleep. Her left hand, which was always beneath the down cushion, tightened around her grandmother's wakizashi. Developed warrior senses revealed three intruders, all skillfully attempting to mask their movements. The soft ring of unsheathed metal confirmed the malicious intentions that lay ahead.

A slight rustle and Ealisaid knew someone had approached her bedside. Slowly, she felt the sheets slip away from her tiny frame. Fear and tension rode the breeze that crept upon her exposed skin and gave her an uncontrollable shake. She hoped that the chill night air would mask the cause of the nervous tremble.

*Will I be killed now or raped first?* Even though she was only ten years old, she didn't put the latter thought past them. *They're scum after all. Papa double-crossed them 'cause of it.* She wasn't sure she understood the exact circumstances of what had happened between her father and his former employers. What she did know was that they were bad people and they had been very angry for a long time. Despite the bits of terror that fluttered in her stomach, she trusted that her father loved her and that he was doing the best he could for his little girl.

Ealisaid wasn't the least bit worried about him. Two assassins surely weren't enough to handle his abilities or size. What plagued her more was this test of her patience. Right now, he wouldn't be able to protect her and she would be forced to do for herself. One slip, though, could mean her life. Even after all this time, she had not yet become numb to the constant struggles that had been imposed on her young existence.

Feeling foreign heat and perspiration close to her flesh she became aware that the stranger was reaching out. She readied her body and mind, ...*NOW!* Even before her eyes could focus in the darkness, her right hand shot out from under and latched onto a leather bracer. At the same time her left slid from the pillow, unsheathing the blade. Despite her limited strength, her unexpected tactic allowed her to tug in the assailant with ease. She thrust outward and felt the penetration of his neck, the exiting steel shimmering red in the moon glow. His tortured wailing invaded the room.

*Please shut up! Shut up! You'll draw the others!* Pulling free, she swung again, desperate to silence him and make her escape. She could hear the sickening gargle of the man choking on blood before dead weight crumpled to the floor. Scrambling to the edge of the bed, she glanced behind her to confirm what she feared. In her panic her legs had tangled up in the sheets. She whimpered and tugged frantically as she helplessly watched one of the remaining two rushing after her, a long sword raised high.

"PAPA!"

The weapon came down and Ealisaid felt its edge tear across her back, splitting open both skin and muscle. She clenched her eyes and teeth, tasting mouthfuls of salt water that poured down her face. The fire in her cheeks rushed down her body burning away all of its energy.

"EALISAID!" Her father's voice was among the sound of a snapping neck. His footsteps seemed to be coming closer, yet, they seemed to be moving farther away.

Ealisaid felt herself being swallowed by the night. It seeped into her eyelids and even into her lungs, strangling her. She reached out desperately for her father whose voice seemed to be trailing off into nothingness or maybe she was going deaf. Losing her balance, she tumbled forward, and plunged into darkness.

Ealisaid yelped in pain as her shoulder smashed into a hard surface. In her muddled state the metallic clank of her wakizashi's plummet was the equivalent of glass shattering. Against the throbbing of both her temples and shoulder, she reached out for the weapon, feeling secure when the soft leather grip was between her fingers once more. Her skin was slick with perspiration and peeled from polished wood as she rolled over. The moisture had caused her silk nightdress to cling and tangle about her body as well as the dark curls around her face to frizz. Despite shoving them out of her eyes, her surroundings remained a blurry mess.

"For Deities' sake." With a groan she awkwardly grasped about the nearby nightstand, fumbling for small oval spectacles. In a groggy haze she finally set them on the bridge of her nose and reacquainted herself with the room.

Nothing was out of order, aside from the twisted sheets of her restless sleep. The single bed and simply carved furniture lay flush against the white washed walls. A woven dragon rug was sprawled in the middle displaying its menacing snarl and lightning breath. Heavy green drapes concealed the sliding balcony door, only allowing a sliver of the blinding sun to peek through the middle part.

"Damn nightmares." Ealisaid was unsure of whether to be aggravated over her premature rise or to be grateful that the torment had been interrupted. She sat there for a few minutes with her knees drawn close, twirling the long braided tassel of the sword with her fingers. A sudden tickle down her back, warm and thick, finally made her blink. She reached behind, her fingers smeared something, "Blood, again?" She almost didn't sound surprised, instead there was aggravation in her tone. A sharp breath was forced out of her lungs. "Now I need a shower." Abandoning the blade on her bed, she made way for the bathroom which was just off the tiny entrance foyer. The hot water was turned up high as she pulled the stained nightdress over her head. Eagerly, she stepped within the mirrored walls of the shower stall, immersing herself in a cloud of steam and raining relaxation.

After the sting of the wound had passed the tension in her muscles melted, but she found herself unable to settle, *Why do I keep dreaming about those days with my father? Like I need to ask myself that,* Ealisaid chuckled sarcastically. Involuntarily she had been lathering up the locks of hair that reached down to her waist and after whisked the bar of soap across her flesh, *He*

*knows that my first intention in coming here was just to spite him, but things have been different. That's so trivial to me now.*

After rinsing away the foam, she gazed into the mirrors. She had developed profoundly since that incident seven years before. The three subsequent had continued along the same path of fear and paranoia. It wasn't until the later four blessed her that she was able to fully bloom. Although she had not really grown tall, she had grown fierce and deadly. Her pale complexion rippled with strength, her dark eyes were bright with a storm's power.

The angle of the mirrors allowed her a clear view of her back. She pulled the heavy curls away, revealing the reminder of her bleak childhood. A thin scar marked a slanted path from her shoulder blade to her lower back. However, the discolored line had split down its middle, as it usually did following the nightmares of her childhood. Although never as deep as when she first acquired the injury, it always managed to be enough to spill blood and cause much discomfort. The water was still polluted with red as it disappeared down the drain.

Glancing up, Ealisaid's eyes met with those of her reflection. She stared hard till she no longer saw any of her features except for her eyes. They were her father's. Gazing into them, she could see him all over again right before her as if it could actually be.

She recalled how he had thought the place was useless and full of charlatans, believing only his bloodline could provide her with what she needed: a family, a home, morals, the training to develop her talents. She wondered if that was why he haunted her. Was it because she defiled his thickheaded ways, refusing to make them her own? Was it because by doing for herself she had to trample his memory and all he had taught her? Her fist slammed against the wall, causing the entire stall to rattle and a web of cracks to suddenly dance around her knuckles.

At least here she had made a life for herself, one that he could have never provided. She had friends and family who loved her and a father who cared about her. Her skills had become more than anything he could have made of them. With him the only thing she had was her existence, and she could have lost that at any time. He could have never cared. If he did, why would he have put them in danger by giving them a life on the run, a life where they always had to look behind to see who was chasing?

With a quick turn of the knob, the water halted its flow. Ealisaid straightened her shoulders and clenched her fists, "Haunt me all you want, but I will never regret coming here. I will not crack because of your selfishness. I will succeed here. I will earn the title of a true warrior and whatever I accomplish in my time beyond this, it will be known that I owe it to this home and certainly not to you."

Confident of her victory in her spiritual battle, peace of mind overcame her for the first time that morning. She grabbed the silk robe hanging on the bathroom door, knowing that some fresh air will really help to get my day started. The drapery, which had carefully guarded the darkness of her room, was finally relieved of its task. Sunlight poured in, unveiling the scenery that, even after four years, was still as grand as the first day.

It was the magnificent grounds of the University of Eden, a paradise to any determined student willing to take hold of all its opportunities. Following the death of her father, Ealisaid had enrolled, willing to give anywhere that wasn't an orphanage a chance. Her "unfortunate" situation and the promise of her developing talents earned her a new place of belonging.

The view from the tenth and topmost floor of the dormitory was always perfect. The structure encircled the lush main grounds. Mightily stood the Main Tower in the center, its eighty stories dwarfing even the protective outer walls of the campus. Surrounding it were eight others only a fourth of its size, each at opposite ends. These smaller towers represented the entire reason the university had been constructed. Elementalism, the focus of education at Eden, was the summoning of the eight Elements. Originating in ancient eras, it disappeared over time, however, it was reintroduced into the world just a few hundred years before the rise of the university. Their students could come to learn its secrets and power from experienced professors. Each tower had become a center of study for each Element. Starting with North and moving clockwise, the towers were labeled: Holy, Wind, Animal, Fire, Hell, Earth, Plant, and Water.

It had already been four years since the young woman had first come to the University of Eden, commonly called the UoE. Because of the customs of her bloodline, she had already begun her training as a Wind Elementalist years prior to her arrival. But, compared to other students, her experience was minimal.

When she was young, she had always wanted to be like her father and the other family members he had spoken of. She wanted to be a warrior just as powerful, if not more. Attending the UoE she realized that her ancestors really weren't what she had believed all those years. They were only exposed to what their small and limited communities could discover. Here, under the guidance of those from all over the world, she was truly able to learn to tap the winds and lightning to the fullest. She expanded far beyond anything she could have imagined.

Ealisaid recalled seeing the ones her father cursed more than anyone, the Master Elementalists. In her childhood, she had believed that her father must have had very good reasons for the way he felt. But, like with many other issues concerning him, she had come to attribute it to his closed mind. With long robes of white and Elemental colors, with a display of infinite battle knowledge, wisdom, and raw power, she knew right then that her dream of matching her father was completely naïve. It was just ridiculously attainable. Surpassing him was a joke.

Ealisaid couldn't help but plaster a grin across her face as a breeze teased her hair and tickled her cheeks. After four years of intense training and studying she was finally going to graduate. She was going to become one of them, earning her title as a Master Wind Elementalist. One of her life's greatest goals was about to be realized.

# The Vengeful Fox

By Lord Fox

I am alone.  
I have nothing.  
I have nobody.  
I had it all.  
I was once a simple sheep.  
I was apart of a flock.  
But my Shepard had forsaken me.  
He left me for the wolves.  
The other sheep did nothing.  
They just stared at me,  
Thanking God it was I and not they.

There is nowhere safe to go.  
The only place I can go is in the woods,  
Where the wolves stay.  
So I hid in the woods.  
I hid and pondered my life.  
Hid and pondered,  
Hid and pondered.  
I pondered until all my thoughts turned into anger.  
Then that anger turned into an uncontrolled rage.

I didn't want to be a lost sheep anymore.  
I didn't want to become a wolf that needed to be in a pack.  
I turned into something stronger.  
I turned into something that is everything I am.  
Strong,  
Clever,  
Adaptable.  
I became,

The Vengeful Fox.

And I will have my revenge.

On the Shepard, for abandoning me.  
On the sheep, for not doing anything when I needed help.  
On the wolves, for turning this world into a dark place.

They will all die.  
Slowly.  
Painful.  
And the last thing that they will see,  
Is me.

# THE DESERT FLOWER

by Lord Fox

On a forgotten island, off of a city of kings, there once lived a boy in the last year of his youth. He lived on an island mostly covered in sand, but in the center of the island, was paradise. Life was perfect for him. The boy was born into the most powerful royal family in the land, and had a very close friend at his side.

One day, the boy left his home in paradise to explore the desert that covered the rest of the island. He told his family that he would go out into the desert to find out what kind of man he is. He wandered the desert for days and days, and after every sunrise, the day would feel warmer than the day that just past.

During his search, on the hottest day of his travel into the desert, he came across a beautiful desert flower. For his short-lived years in paradise, he has never seen such beauty in his life. He instantly fell in love with the flower.

"I must have you," he said to the flower. "You are the most beautiful flower in the world. I will take you home and treasure you forever." He then picked up the flower and started to run back to his home in paradise; and after each sunrise, the day would feel cooler than the day that just past.

When the boy returned to paradise, he showed everyone the flower that he had found in the desert. When he showed it to his good friend, he didn't seem impressed by it.

"It's just a simple flower," said the good friend. "It is nothing special." The boy ignored his good friend's comments and when home to show it to his family.

When the boy showed the flower to his mother, she looked at it and said, "This flower is nothing special. This flower doesn't show how great this family is. You deserve a flower greater than this. Get it out of this house."

"But mother," the boy said. "I love this flower. I wish to keep it, care for it, and love it, even passed the days that I die. I cannot exist without it."

The mother's eyes filled with hate and anger. She said with a commanding voice, "You will get rid of that flower, or I will bar you from this house and you will not be a part of this family!"

The boy was heartbroken. Afraid to be disgraced and homeless, he hid the flower in a secret spot outside of paradise that only he and his friend knew existed. And everyday before the sun set, he would visit the desert flower.

One day, the boy went to go visit the desert flower. When he arrived to the spot where he hid the flower, it was gone. He looked everywhere in and just outside of paradise for the flower. The boy then went to his good friend's house and knocked on his door. His friend answered the door.

"My good friend, do you know where my flower went?" the boy asked.

"No," said the boy's friend. "I don't know where your stupid flower is."

"That flower is not stupid!" the boy said with all of the anger in his heart. "I love that flower! Don't you ever call that flower stupid!" In a fit of rage, the boy forced his way into his friend's house. As he entered his friend's house, he noticed something unusual sitting on his friend's night table.

"Get out of my house!" the friend screamed at the boy. "You are not welcomed here!" The boy ignored the screams of his friend and headed into his friend's room. When the boy entered the room, he was shocked to see his flower at his friend's bedside.

"Is this my flower?" said the boy with tears slowly running down his face. The friend stared at the boy with hatred in his eyes, "You can't love this flower!", says the friend. "You can't care for it, or take care of it like I can!"

"But I love that flower!" screamed the boy with tears now bursting out of his eyes. "I'll do anything for that beauty!"

"That's not true," said the friend. "You wouldn't leave your family for it. I am willing to leave this paradise for this flower; and you are not."

The two boys began to stare at each other. They both looked at each other with all of the rage and hatred that this world can possibly obtain. It was the stare that started wars, and destroyed peace. "Then prove it." Demanded the boy.

The boy grabbed the flower and said to his friend, "Leave everything you own here, and bring only yourself. We will both go to where I found this desert flower and stay there. Whoever leaves that spot first, loses the flower. This will prove who deserves this flower."

They both agreed to the terms, and shook on it. The next day, the two boys both left their homes in paradise, their families' names, and everything else that they hold dear in life, for the desert flower. They wandered the desert for days and days, and after every sunrise, the day would feel warmer than the day that just past.

They finally reached where the boy found the flower. The boy planted the flower and took a seat in front of it. His friend sat across from him. They both began to stare at each other.

They are still sitting, to this day, in the desert on that forgotten island. But after every sunrise, the day feels colder than the day that just past; their anger to each other becomes stronger than the day that just past; and the desert flower slowly began to weep.

# SWIM

By Lisa Roberts

I walked across the black sand in Trinidad  
and waded in the warm crystal blue water.  
The Devil came in with the tide and smiled.  
He offered me his hand and I took hold as I  
swam into the darkness.  
A rip tide sucked me down to the never ending pit of the Ocean.  
A Life was ripped out of me.  
Oxygen was scarce.

## Drown

The water turned cold.  
The waves ravaged the shore.  
The Ocean moaned in pain.  
A greater power fought for a soul.  
Ripped from captive arms,  
I was spat out, back onto the unforgiving shore.  
I choked on salt water mixed with my mistakes.  
I found my Soul standing before me. It reached its hand out and pulled me up.

## Forgiveness

The sky opened and released. It ran over my skin, beneath my flesh,  
and through my veins, washing away my sin.  
The sun bullied its way through. It pierced through the holes in my soul,  
and warmed me both inside and out.  
Deep down inside something sprung to life.  
My Soul led me back to my solid footprints, engraved deeply in the now white sand.



# The Cheater's Delight

by Lisa Roberts

## Hugo Frost

Every time I close my eyes I see her. I see her long dark hair, curvaceous body, and soft lips. As I lay in bed I dream about touching all three of them. I can hear my heart pumping faster and faster. My head is spinning with the memory of the last night we spent together. Blood rushes to tell-all areas, so I quietly climb out of bed. On nights like this I sleep on the couch. I cannot take the risk of calling out the wrong name in my sleep. The name that doesn't belong to my beloved wife Mia, but instead Sadie, her best friend.

I toss and turn on the couch that Sadie and I have shared on numerous occasions. We continuously gave into our selfish desires and then would battle with the guilt that always intruded on our casual meetings. Every time we meet we threaten to destroy not only our marriages, but our friendships. Mia and Sadie have been best friends for years. Tyler Monaco, Sadie's husband, has been my best friend forever. I love him like a brother, but I just can't seem to keep my slimy hands off his wife.

We met Sadie and Mia in college. I saw Sadie first, but I was occupied with other girls, so Tyler took his shot. Before I knew it he was head over heels in love with her and dragging me off to the jewelry store to pick out a ring. I didn't care that he was marrying Sadie. I liked her, but not enough to compete with Tyler for her.

Not too long after their wedding, I started dating Mia. She confessed that she always had a thing for me but I was too much of a ladies man. It didn't take me long to realize what an amazing person she was. Then one day I was the one dragging Tyler to the jewelry store. Marrying Mia felt right. I do love her, but over the past couple of months Mia has become obsessed with reproduction. I do want to have a family, but right now the idea of a baby feels like nails being pounded into my coffin. I'm too young for this.

Sometimes I feel like I'm too young to be married. These feelings led me right back to Sadie. I know it sounds immature, but I need to be with Sadie. I need to prove to myself that I still have it in me to get what I want. I need to feel like Hugo Frost the bachelor, not Hugo the husband. I made the decision to pursue Sadie. Ironically enough, Sadie had become overwhelmed in her marriage too. She came to confide in me and I comforted her. I may have comforted her a little too much. As I lay here and think about the past couple of months, I wonder if it is all worth it. Is my ego trip worth losing Mia and Tyler? I am a selfish ass.

I wake up in the morning and Sadie is the first thing on my mind. I dreamt of her all night. I hope I get the chance to be with her today. As I sit up on the couch, I immediately notice Mia standing in front of me, waiting to be noticed.

"Morning baby," I said, trying to shake the memory of Sadie.

"You slept out here again. Why do you keep coming out here at night? You act like you can't sleep in the same bed as me."

"I couldn't sleep again. I fell asleep while I was watching the tube."

"I'm worried about you Hugo. I know something is wrong, I can feel it."

"You always think something's wrong."

"I'm usually right," she reminds me.

I can feel my gut tighten. *She knows, oh crap she knows! Don't stop lying! Never stop lying! She thinks something is wrong, but she can't prove it.* I walk over to her and embrace her.

"What could possibly be wrong? I've got everything I always wanted." I suddenly realize that I had just told the truth for once. I hold her close to my body and kiss her. Almost immediately I imagine I am kissing Sadie.

## Mia Frost

I love my husband with all of my heart. Despite his past as a former bachelor, I chose to believe that those days were over for him. I ignored my best friend's warnings about him. She never thought that he could be a good boyfriend, much less a good husband. I wanted him to prove her wrong. He did prove her wrong by proposing. I know my husband. I know he is lying to me and for the past four months, all he has done is lie to me.

I wanted to ignore what my gut was telling me. I wanted to ignore his less than enthusiastic reaction to my baby proposal. I even wanted to ignore hearing him calling out Sadie's name in his sleep the other night, but the way he said her name made my skin crawl. It was the way lovers say each other's name, not the way friends do. Hugo meets the criteria for a cheating spouse. He has had a noticeable change in behavior. He comes home late, very often. He dresses differently. He never wants to go out anymore. He has become distant. Even the way he kissed me this morning was different. It was hard for

me to pretend that I am still the same doting wife I was two nights ago. The wife I was before I came home from a business trip early. I was about to put my keys in the door, when I heard Sadie laugh. As I stood there a while longer, I could hear the unmistakable sounds of them making love in my living room. I don't know why I chose not to interrupt them. Maybe I just want to see how much longer they are willing to lie.

### **Sadie Monaco**

I came home the other night smelling like Hugo's favorite after-shave and cologne. I went straight to the shower as soon as I got in. Tyler was due to be home in a few minutes and the second he saw me I knew he would wrap me in his arms. I couldn't let him touch me if I was still smelling like his best friend. I scrubbed my skin until it turned red. At one point I wondered if I was still scrubbing away after-shave or guilt.

I don't know why I am cheating on Tyler. He is a wonderful man and the love of my life. I don't know what I would do without him, but there is something missing. Something that Hugo gives me. Hugo makes me feel sexy. He lusts after me in a way that makes me feel like I'm 19-years old again. He craves my touch and I crave his. Tyler treats me like a queen, but that is not what I need and he is so busy. We don't spend time together the way we used to. Sometimes I feel like being his wife is just a title written on paper. When we do get to be with each other I am the happiest. Some how it just is not enough. I have a great husband and marriage but I insist on destroying it.

Mia Frost is my best friend and I am sleeping with her husband. Why would I choose Hugo? I always wanted him but I fell in love with his best friend instead. I have tried to end it before but I just can't do it. I know Mia wants to have a baby with Hugo. The right thing to do would be to stop the affair and let Mia have her family, but I don't think Hugo wants to.

Every time we're together the lies get worse. The guilt becomes more unbearable. Mia confided in me that she suspects something is going on with Hugo. I convinced her that she was being too paranoid. I felt sick to my stomach. I was lying to my best friend to protect my relationship with her husband.

### **Tyler Monaco**

When Mia appeared at my house late one afternoon, I was surprised. Sadie was away for the weekend, so I knew she had come to see me. Her eyes were red and blood shot. Her hair was damp as if she had driven here straight from the shower.

"Is everything alright?" I asked her. I was beginning to be very concerned.

"No, I don't think they are. Do you know where Sadie is?" She was fidgeting and sounded nervous.

"Sadie went to see her mom. I thought she told you."

"Are you sure?"

"Mia what is wrong with you?"

"Nothing. I can't seem to find my husband and I figured she might have an idea of his whereabouts."

"Did you guys have a fight?"

"About a week ago I was out of town on business. Things wrapped up early, so I caught an earlier flight home."

"I didn't know that. Hugo never said you were back early."

"No he wouldn't now would he? Hugo did not know I was back because he was too busy doing other things."

"Other things like what?"

"Like your wife."

Even though I had heard the words quite plainly, it took a while for me to understand what they meant. I wanted to ask her how she could be sure that they were having an affair, but the pain I saw in her eyes told me she was.

She explained the things that she heard that night. My stomach twisted into mini pretzels. My hands began to shake and tears found their way to my eyes. I excused myself and walked back into my bedroom. As I looked around the room, I saw my wife's face. I could smell her perfume. I could feel her touch. I could hear her voice lying to me every time I asked her what she had done all day. My head began to spin with anger. I could feel myself breaking out into a cold sweat. The palms of my hands were cold and wet. Just then I felt a hand on my shoulder. A hand pulling me towards it. I turned around and saw it was Mia. I reached out for her and kissed her. She did not pull away.

## Blood Skies

by Evan Perez

You ask for whom the bell tolls,  
 It tolls for me,  
 For I am death,  
 The reincarnation of evil himself,  
 My power is unimaginable,  
 I lived by the sword,  
 And I sentence all who oppose me by it as  
 well,  
 I watch and see,  
 As I make your eyes bleed scarlet red,  
 All have tried to kill me,  
 No one has,  
 For I am immortal,  
 I was born to sentence all to pure damnation,  
 Nothing will get in the way to see the world be  
 destroyed by my hands alone,  
 No one will defy me,  
 No one can deny the fact,  
 That this is the end,  
 No mortal will live,  
 For you all have hurt me once before,  
 And I shall not get hurt again,  
 One day you all will stare up into the sky,  
 And when the sky turns black,  
 And starts to pour down the blood of innocent  
 victims,  
 You will all know,  
 That it is the end of the world,  
 As you know it.

## Eternal Scars

by Evan Perez

I can never live without the pain,  
 This pain,  
 Is my life,  
 These nightmares of mine,  
 Have been corrupting me,  
 From the moment of my birth,  
 You people believe that I am normal,  
 I am far from it,  
 You people say that you understand what I have been  
 through,  
 None of you could understand it,  
 None of you could fathom my agony,  
 My body, mind, and soul,  
 Have grown old from the years of hell that i have recieved,  
 I can't be considered a human being,  
 I don't know what you could call me anymore,  
 From all the pain,  
 From all the misery,  
 From all this agony,  
 I have receive these eternal scars,  
 That remind me,  
 Of this life,  
 That I utterly loathe.

## Forever in Love

by Evan Perez

The sweetness of your kiss,  
Reminds me of the time when we were just  
friends,

The times we had back then,  
The most fun I ever had in my lifetime,  
The gentleness of your touch,  
Reminded me of the time we became more  
than friends,

We became lovers,  
Even though we feared the worst of this  
path,

We still took a chance,  
And put our friendship on the line,  
I remember that one night,  
That I never came by,  
And you wonder why I broke my promise to  
you,

I heard you called the house non-stop,  
To find out where I was,  
But no one answered the phone,

You called my cell,  
And I didn't answer it,  
Now you started to worry,  
The news flash came on,

And boy of the age seventeen was shot,  
Two gun shots,  
One on the head,

And the other straight through his heart,  
And when you saw the kid's picture,  
It was I,

I died that night,  
Trying to come by your house that night,  
Who would have thought I be killed before  
the age of twenty one,

That night,  
You started to cry,  
I wasn't able to wipe them tears away,  
And you remembered the one thing I said to  
you,

I loved you the moment I saw,  
And I'll love you till the day I stop breathing,  
But now I long for your touch,  
Your kiss,

And for you to come to the other side,  
Cause I am forever in love with you.

## Cry for Me

by Evan Perez

Cry for me, For I shall not return.  
You may believe,

That this path I choose,  
Shall be a lonely one in fact,

But understand this,  
I choose to walk this path,  
I choose to be alone,

For I want nothing to do with civilization  
anymore.

Cry for me, For you drove me away.  
With all your lies,

With all of the false truths,  
You wanted to play my game,  
You should have known better,

That in the end,  
I would have put you in Checkmate.

Cry for me.

You would never understand my pain,  
For you never went through it.

You can fathom the way I think,  
Cause you can't see beyond black and  
white lines.

To understand why,  
You would have to already had known the  
answers.

Cry for me, Cause I love the sound,  
Of your tears,  
Hitting the floor.

# Barren Chronos

By Ra'chaun Rogers

The barren landscape stretched across the horizon and the desert was riddled with waste. The sun began to set like a child drawing a purple line in the sand. The breeze roared across the wasteland while grains of sand danced on the wind.

A dark skinned man carrying a scythe walked among the mounds, the blue sun beamed down causing the golden orb, which was once his right eye to shine. He wore a long black coat. On the back of his head was the insignia of a blood red skull, and on his head a red bandana.

Sand whipped and whirled around him, distorting the silhouette in front of him. When it subsided, he raised an eyebrow, now catching sight of the image before him. A young woman wearing a rose colored French dress stood on a dune. She attempted to survey the landscape while shielding her face from the blazing blue sun. The front of her rose-colored dress was cut out making her boots and breeches visible. Her hair was cut short and wore small thin spectacles, on her hip was a wakazashi.

"You!" The man in the long coat came charging up toward her. "Argh... So you followed me even to this strange place." The man drew his scythe, rearing it back for a killing stroke. He swiped at the young woman and with the grace and speed of a falcon she dodge the fatal blow.

"Who are you? Why are you attacking me?" The young woman drew her wakazashi and squared away for an attack.

"Don't play dumb with me, Lilith. I know you're here for me." The man gripped his scythe tightly "And I told you, you can have me when I'm dead and buried."

"What's going on here, how do you know my name?" the sun glared off of the young woman's wakazashi.

"Don't be playing dumb with me girl," The man squinted as the glare from her sword beamed in his eyes. "Noir Lingua, devil of the seven seas, you've been chasing me for five years."

"Look, I don't know who you are but if you attack me again I'll have to defend myself."

The sand whirled around the two combatants as they both dug their feet into the ground.

"Fine by me," The scythe tore through the air and connected with Lilith's wakazashi, their eyes locked, both casting an unbreakable gaze.

"This is the last time you trouble me, wench!"

"I don't know what you're talking about," her look was puzzled.

The clashing of steel caused small sparks to fly, Noir's eye's cast a murderous gaze. At that moment Noir jumped back from Lilith who prepared to launch herself at him.

"Wait," Noir put up a hand in protest.

"What do you mean wait, you just attacked me?"

"I'm sorry, I see in your eyes, you're telling the truth."

"Obviously, although I see why I would be chasing you, you're crazy!"

The pair heard a loud explosion coming from the north; the red and orange flames could be seen in front of the setting blue sun. The force of the explosion sent sand into the air and caused it to rain down on them.

"C'mon," Noir ran toward the area, which the explosion came from.

Lilith followed Noir as the pair a trekked up the sand dune in front of them; at the top they saw four figures squared off against each other.

Lilith and Noir slid down the Dune to get a better look at the four combatants.

Shouting was heard coming form the four. "You Chinese think you're so great, you were not so great when the Mongols invaded you," Shouted one of the men who wore a fox mask and a straw hat, he held a strange crossbow in his right hand.

"You Japs aren't just stupid, you're crazy! We were never invaded by the Mongols!" A man wearing an armored vest yelled at the man in the fox mask as he drew two daggers from their sheaths.

"Yeah, I mean how could those barbarians even approach the great nation of China," the man standing next to the one in the armored vest added before taking a swig of the gourd at his side.

A samurai standing next to the fox masked man held a bow pointed at the man with the two daggers. "I don't care where you two came from! I'm no going to stand here and allow you disrespect our great country."

"Hey you four!" Noir yelled as he came sliding down the dune. "We were wondering if you could tell us where we are before you kill each other."

"Maybe you can tell us, pirate," The fox masked man said as he turned his cross bow on Noir.

"Look we don't want trouble. We just wanna know where we are," Lilith said as she walked up behind Noir with her hand on her wakazashi.

"She one of yours, Jap?" the man with the gourd asked.

"No I would have remembered her" The fox masked man said as he held his grip steady at Noir.

“Hey mask man, point that thing away from me!” Noir yelled as he clutched his scythe.

“Oh yeah? Or what?” the masked man teased with bravado.

“Or this.” Noir reared his scythe back as if to throw it.

“Stop!” Lilith’s voice echoed across the desert. “We don’t want any unnecessary battles, just information.”

The blue sun began to set as the red moon crept into the sky. A frozen air swept across the wasteland, sending a chill through the spines of all who felt it. The wail of strange animal was carried upon it.

“I think we should discuss our whereabouts somewhere... more sheltered, less out in the open.” The man in the armored vest sheathed his daggers. “Before we met the Japs, we caught sight of a forest. We should head there.”

“Sounds good,” The man with the gourd turned and walked toward a black patch that was barely visible in the distance. The crunch of the leaves stirred as the sounds echoed through the forest.

“Pretty quiet for a forest.” Stating the obvious, the man in the fox mask stopped and looked at the darkness stretching in front of the travelers.

“Seems like a good enough place to set up camp,” the pirate dropped his scythe on the ground and sat down.

“Indeed it is it’s almost directly in the middle of the forest” The man in the armored vest rubbed his chin as he surveyed the white trees in front of him. “Odd. Everything here is... different then China”

“I’ll say! No restaurants, nowhere to get alcohol, no brothels, nothing” the man with the gourd, tried to drink the last drops of wine in it. “So are you two from here?”

“Uh no we’re from the west” Noir looked at Lilith “She’s from Europe, I’m from Africa”

“Yes, I’m Lilith Oya, I’m a bounty hunter and he is Noir Lingua, he’s a pirate, I think, he says I’ve been chasing him but...”

“How can you forget that time? The battle in Venice, remember?”

“Uh, no...”

“I hate to break up your little reunion, but can we get some heat here? Don’t you Chinese usually carry fire and stuff?”

A spark was heard and a flame ignited right in front of the masked man’s face. “You mean this?” The man with the armored vest held out a red stick with flame at the tip.

“Hey, watch that thing!”

“Well, I guess it’s only right that we start introducing ourselves then “I shall start, I am Shi Tain Ning, but Shi is fine,” Shi stuck the flare into the ground.

The bright flame illuminated the faces of the travelers.

“Kitsune-sama is what I’m called.” The man removed his fox mask to show his face. “But you may call me Kitsune, I’m a lord from Japan.”

“Lord of a floating rock, how amusing,” chuckled Shi.

“Hey, watch what you say,” Kitsune put his mask back on.

“Or what?” Shi gripped his dagger.

“Fellas, there’s no need for fighting, calm down.” The man with the gourd stood up in an attempt to separate the two.

“And what’s your name?” Lilith looked at the man with the gourd in wait for reply.

“My name is... not important now, lets just...”

“He is Wong Fei Hong,” Shi looked at the beggar and rubbed his chin.

The beggar looked at Shi, his eyes peering up from his gourd. “Humph, why’d you have to give it away?”

“I don’t see what the big deal is,” Lilith spoke as she turned toward Wong, the flames cast a gentle glow on her face.

“He was the most skilled physician in China, but was a heavy drinker, and gambled quite often, it seems the rumors of your money squandering were true.”

“Oh, why do you have to rub it in?” Wong grimaced.

“And what about that guy? Does he talk at all?” Noir points toward the samurai with the battered armor.

“I’m Nakamaru Riku, and yes I do talk, but only when necessary.”

The leaves around the campsite crunched and light taps could be heard on the floor.

“Lilith,” Noir stood up slowly and held his scythe at the ready.

“I know” Lilith motioned to the other to rise slowly. Just then a man wearing priestly garb and a woman in a long white dress came running their way.

“Ok, who are you and what do you want?” Noir kept his eyes on the priest realizing he was clutching a long sword with the shape of a cross.

“Excuse me, but who the fuck are you to ask?” the priest shot Noir a hard look.

“Forgive him, sugah. It seems they don’t teach mannas in seminary school, ahm Adelaide and this is Shinn, a priest with the foulest mouth ah ever did see.” Her accent was that of a bubbly southern belle.

“Ok, so why did you come running up here?”

The loud drumming of footsteps could be heard in the distance as the vibrations caused the travelers to jump.

“Oh yeah, that would be It,” Shinn stumbled back as the vibrations shook his footing. Out of the sea of trees emerged a

giant made of flesh and encased in stone. Its eyes were feral and in its hand was great oak. It walked until it noticed the travelers, turning its head towards them, it bellowed and winded up to strike the party with great ferocity.

The eight people scattered as the giants club hit the fire and dented the floor.

"Is everyone alright" Lilith looked around at her comrades.

"Fine," Adelaide rolled back "Give me cover!"

"What the fuck do you mean give you cover?" Shinn shouted as he ran away from the attack.

"I think she means distract it," the fox Lord drew his cross bow and fired a few shots to no avail.

"Nice going, fox boy," Shinn taunted from behind a tree.

"Well at least I'm not running away, Mr. Priest," Kitsune rolled behind a boulder, barely missing decapitation by the great oak. "And where's the beggar?"

The ground shook as the oak in the giant's hand made contact with another tree.

"Damn that almost caught me," Wong ran toward the tree, which Shinn was hiding behind.

"Oh no, this is my hiding spot get your own!" Shinn began push Wong from the tree.

"Noir, Shi, lets distract this thing," Lilith flipped in the air over the giant's head. The giant's eye rolled to the back of its head as it watched Lilith in flight, while rammed her wakazashi into the giant's eye with a blinding flash. "That's one."

The giant stumbled and hit two trees, slightly bending them.

"On it," Noir reared back and flung his scythe at the giant, it was flung with such strength that it appeared to be a gleaming steel disc, which sliced two trees in half and imbedding it in the giant's side.

"I'm up," Shi retrieved a large colorful stick and lit it, "Hey giant, catch," Shi hurled the flaming stick at the giants leg, upon impact it exploded leaving the giant off balance.

Noir pulled the wire connected to the middle handle of the scythe, wrenching it from the giant's side.

Adelaide reached under her dress and retrieved a small pistol, then ran up the oak tree, to the giant's left arm and to its shoulder. "And here's two," A shot was fired.

The lumbering behemoth hit the ground with a thunderous impact, roared loudly and died.

Dust from the impact began to settle and Adelaide slid off of the giant's body. "See? Piece of cake." She smiled as she dusted her self off.

"I do agree," Lilith sheathed her wakazashi and walked around the giant.

Noir held his scythe and smiled at both girls, as Shi rubbed his chin and nodded in approval. Kitsune, Shinn, and Wong were all left speechless with mouths wide open at the two young ladies triumph.

"Damn, did you girls do that?" Shinn ran up to the two with a look of disbelief on his face "So it is true, Lilith can fly."

"I didn't fly..." Lilith raised an eyebrow "I'm nimble and I can jump very high,"

"No, you just flew," Shinn traced her arc in the air, "And that lighting, you used to blind the giant was amazing."

"I didn't fly, that was just a very high jump," Lilith retraced her arc, "And the 'lightning' was just speed and a sharp wakazashi."

Shinn turned to Noir "And Noir, I guess those stories of you destroying that mountain with your hands were true, I mean you cut those trees in half"

"Uh, those tress were already broken, I just slashed them" Noir scratched his head "And I didn't move mountains, it's called cannons and gunpowder"

"You guys are really something" Shinn went on "I'm happy you two are... Hey where's Riku?"

"Hey guy's I think you better look at this" Riku pointed toward a large gray spire in the stretch of desert which lay before them.

"What the hell is that?" Shinn yelled.

"Well what does it look like" Kitsune said, "It's a pagoda"

"It's a spire" Shi looked at the twisted pillar with a distant focus "I'm not exactly sure where we are, but I know this, it's not where we belong"

"Well obviously" Wong hoisted the gourd over his shoulder and walked to the edge of the forest.

"Are you guys sure it's safe going there, I mean it looks creepy" Adelaide frowned as she stared at the distorted formation.

"Only one way to find" Noir turned and walked toward the edge of the forest.

Everyone with the exception of Shi followed, as he was lost in deep thought.

"You coming?" Lilith looked at him while adjusting her spectacles".

Oh, yes, sorry" Shi and Lilith ran to catch up with their companions.

The red moon shone down on the spire, the centerpiece of the desert. In it, the travelers hoped to find some answers as to why they are there and possibly a way back to their homes.

.....To be continued

# Denial

by Kevin S.P. Mamakas

Room moves in different directions.  
I walk from the room to the shower.  
Man walks into bathroom door.

Walls around the room spin.  
I must have slipped on the carpet.  
Man walked too much to the right.

Man turns the doorknob on.  
Why is the shower not working for me?  
House has morphed.

Man didn't have his glasses on.  
House looked the same through them.  
I can't see the difference.

I turn on the hot water.  
Shower shoots water bullets.  
Man's stomach implodes.

I should've just vomited.  
Man held in beer-saturated food.  
Curtains are steel.

Man knocked down the curtain.  
Gravity pulled man to the floor.  
I must have slipped on the soap.

I'll just take a shower later.  
Man turns off the tormenting water.  
Bathroom is shrinking.

Man puts on his clothing.  
I couldn't get it all in my mouth.  
Funnel leaked beer all over them.

I have to go home.  
Man gets in his car.  
Car is in control of the man.

Man wakes up to see a car crash.  
Shadows are beating the man.





# A Night Poem

By Kevin S.P. Mamakas

Do not read this poem in the morning.  
It should be read by insomniacs.

This poem can not be discussed in the morning.  
Only the sleepless can understand it.

Do not examine this poem in the morning.  
The moonlight shows the meaning.

This poem is not a poem in the morning.  
The sunlight creates artificial meaning.

Do not try to interpret this poem in the morning.  
Only the shadows of night can wake it.

This poem has no emotion in the morning.  
It cries when the moon overshadow the sun.

No heart, no flowers,  
a simple pinewood box;  
brass trim, velvet inside.  
A crystal chandelier  
hangs with only four bulbs.  
Plush folding chairs,  
footsteps on carpet,  
one mourner, she comes,  
eyes only showing  
from under the hood  
of her satin robe.  
Tinny music plays  
from hidden speakers.  
An unsigned guest-book  
on a marble table,  
no pen to write with.  
She kneels and prays,  
her words cascade  
a temporary fog.  
She pulls her hood down,  
bestows a final kiss,  
and closes the lid.

## Bloodless

By Richard Fedey

The wind raves through midnight streets,  
freezing like the blue light of a strobe,  
prophesying, and I hear the message:  
in the gales and lulls it smells like snow.

Clouds with gray wings rally like bombers  
to drop their payload on nameless towns.  
And on the ground I open my mouth  
to receive the first flakes while plows idle.

The first salvo tastes black as frostbitten flesh,  
and shovels, scrapers, ice-picks, and rock salt  
(the counteroffensive) are cleaned and ready,  
racked by doors with martial precision.

## Tundra

By Richard Fedey



Snug Harbor fountain Staten Island NY © Alicia Rebelo

## Shell Game

by Richard Fedey

Shuffle.  
 Under yellow.  
 An opening oyster,  
 flawless pearl  
 on coral flesh.  
 The oyster is savored.  
 Kindle.

Shuffle.  
 Under orange.  
 Amphorae of wine,  
 painted by Bacchus  
 the color of ardor.  
 The wine is drunk.  
 Aflame.

Shuffle.  
 Under red.  
 A lotus after rain,  
 petals flaring,  
 seed pod tumid.  
 The lotus is plucked.  
 Blaze.

# Baby Blues

by Daniello Cacace

The pasty white ceiling and the fluorescent lights were all that Alice Warren could see from her current position. Not that she cared anyway, for at the moment she was preoccupied with other things.

“Push!” Shouted the doctor. “Push!”

“You’re doing great, just a little more; and don’t worry, your son is going to be fine” whispered a kind nurse, reassuringly.

“Push!” repeated the doctor. There was a brief silence, then a painful wail, then a second joined in shortly after.

“Congratulations, it’s a boy.”

*Finally* thought Alice, as a circle of doctors and nurses gave her the usual flattering remarks on what a great job she did. The sounds of the baby’s crying had finally stopped and Alice, now exhausted, was anxiously waiting for the moment she could hold her newborn son.

“He looks very healthy,” said the doctor “Ten fingers, ten toes, and...oh.”

“Oh? Oh what? What’s wrong?” Alice demanded as the doctor approached her.

“I’m sorry, but they’re blue.”

“No! That’s impossible. Everyone in my family has brown eyes, even my other children have brown eyes; there’s no way they can be blue.”

“I’m afraid there is, Mrs. Warren. You see, the gene that produces blue eyes is submissive, where as the brown gene is dominant. However, even though the brown gene is more likely to appear, as long as you and your husband have the submissive blue gene it’s possible for you to have blue-eyed children. Now then, I’m sure you know the law.” His voice was calm, like he had given this speech a thousand times before.

“No, please don’t take him from me! He’s my only son!” Tears streamed down her face as she pleaded with the doctor.

“I’m sorry, the law is the law, this is what must be done, besides, you can always have another.” Still wearing his face-mask, Alice could only see the doctor’s eyes. And while his tone said I’m sorry, his eyes said nothing. He instructed the kind nurse, whose name was apparently Susan, to take the baby to the euthanasia ward. Alice was panicking at those words, but what could she do? Perhaps stall, but for what?

“Wait, please. Can I at least hold him for a while?” pleaded Alice, her face distraught.

“Very well, five minutes. I have to go prep for another delivery. Susan, take the baby when she’s done. Oh, and Mrs. Warren, try not to get too attached to it.”

The rest of the staff exited along with the doctor, leaving Alice and the lone nurse together. She embraced her creation before its inevitable destruction, thinking of what could have been. She replayed the delivery in her mind, looking for the moment where everything went wrong.

“Do you love your baby?” Asked Susan, who had up until that point remained silent, no doubt respecting the moment.

“Of course I do, What mother doesn’t love their child?”

“Do you want your son to die?”

“Of course not! What sort of question is that?”

“Your son doesn’t have to die.” She had leaned in, now speaking in a soft whisper.

“But, the law says...”

“I know what the law says.” She interrupted “What do YOU say?”

*Is she serious?* Alice lay in a state of shock at what had just been offered to her.

“If your baby stays here it will surely die. At least with me it has a chance to live, I can get it out of the building and take it to a safe place. He may grow up never knowing who you are, but isn’t that better than the alternative?” Alice scanned Susan’s face for any sign of deceit. Her eyes seemed sincere, though oddly shaped, like they were too large for her head.

“Before, during the delivery, you said something to me. You said he would be alright, that my son would be fine. Can I ask you, how did you know it was going to be a boy?”

“The same way I know now, that if you trust your son to me, he’ll live.”

“Oh, I get it now, you’re one of them aren’t you? You’re a blue, but your eyes, they’re brown, how?”

“Ocular Surgery; Lets just say these aren’t the eyes I was born with. Now will you trust me? We haven’t got much time.”

“Yes, please, and could you have them send my husband in.”

“Of course, but you must promise me one thing, you can never tell anyone about what we spoke of.”

“Ok, I promise.” Tears still running down her cheeks, she handed the baby to Susan with a final kiss goodbye. “Before you go, there’s something I always wanted to know. What’s it like to know everything?”

“I don’t know. We blues don’t know everything. We don’t pretend to; we see only what we choose to see, and today I

chose to see your son. He's going to be very special, that much I do know." Susan shrouded the baby in blankets and just as she reached the door, she turned around, "By the way, what's his name?"

"Virgil."

"Virgil, that's a nice name." She exited, clutching the baby tightly. Susan hurried down the corridors and into the laundry room where she met her accomplice. Not a word was uttered, but both knew exactly what to do. The baby Virgil was handed off to the man as though it were rehearsed a hundred times. He concealed the baby in a laundry cart beneath some more blankets and made his way out the door. The baby still shrouded, he loaded the laundry into a truck and made an odd gesture to the driver. He seemed to understand and drove off with Virgil, safely tucked away in his cargo.

Alice was still sitting in the delivery room, contemplating what to tell her husband when he arrived. Suddenly, a blur of a man hurried through the door with unmatched zeal. His face was plastered with a huge grin and his eyes opened wide with anticipation; though this expression didn't last long when he realized his wife was all alone and without the baby.

"Bobby honey, sit down, I need to tell you something," Alice's voice still trembled from crying.

"Oh no, what's wrong?"

"It, um, it's a boy, and...well" she sighed greatly, "Blue eyes."

"But how? Where is he now?"

"They took him already, barely even let me say goodbye."

They both wept, holding each other in their arms; Bobby, never to know his son, and Alice, bearing the truth as only a mother can, with a smile, and a bit of hope.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Virgil Ashmore, give back Penelope's pencil."

"I don't have it, Miss Hewitt."

"Yes you do. Why do you insist on lying? You know very well that I can see everything you have done, are doing, and will ever do in my classroom yet you insist on testing me every step of the way."

"Well, maybe tomorrow will be different."

"It won't be, I checked. Now give Penelope back her pencil and settle down. Today I have a very important lesson for all of you."

Virgil pulled a bright green pencil out of his pocket, gave it back to Penelope and took his seat, which was usually in the far corner away from the other children. Though it really wasn't much of a seat. Like the rest of the things that belonged to the community. It was at one point thrown away in the trash. The metal legs were slightly bent and it was quite uncomfortable, plus the lumpy floor of the caverns in which they lived made sitting still almost impossible. At least they had electricity, thanks to a few generators they managed to find in an old power facility. Life was rather difficult in their commune, but at least they were living.

"The Venerable Ragnall feels it's important for you children to learn the events which brought about the near extinction of our kind. Personally I feel that you are all a little too young for this, but apparently 13 is good enough for Ragnall and he's never been wrong before so who am I to argue? Anyway, it all began around 120 years ago in the election of 2012..." Virgil closed his eyes and listened to the story being told to him, in his mind's eye he saw the scenes she depicted as though they were happening right in front of him.

In 2012 the idea of politicians in politics had become an obsolete notion. At the time, elections were won not on the candidates' views, but by how much money they had in the bank. Washington was overrun with entrepreneurs and business tycoons only interested in fueling their companies. On November 6, 2012, Dario Gerik, president and CEO of Renu-tek, a leading pharmaceuticals corporation was elected president of the United States. During his 4-year term, President Gerik managed to add his latest product to a list of nationwide mandatory inoculations. Kamilah, as the company called it, was proven to actually enhance a human being at the genetic level. The drug would replicate and latch itself onto a subject's DNA, actually altering it to make them, in a word, perfect. But there was an unexpected side effect; Kamilah became so infused with the person's DNA that it was passed on at birth to the children. In a few short years the percentage of babies born with genetic defects reached an astounding .02%. Another 2 years after that, Kamilah was being used on a planetary level. The biggest surprise was yet to come.

In 2025 the first signs of what Kamilah had truly done to people first became noticeable, although strangely enough, it seemed to only affect those with blue eyes. The new symptoms included precognitive ability, clairvoyance, and in some cases, short range telepathy. Though scientists were certain this was the work of Kamilah, they were baffled as to how it worked or why it only affected those with blue eyes. At first the power was totally harmless, only activating at random times. The blues, as they came to be called, began to focus their powers as they got older, slowly getting better until the first sign of trouble occurred.

During one cold October day, a record 1.4 million people all won the lottery at the same time. The jackpot was divided and the winners received their check for \$28.57. The following month the winners reached 1.8 million, and the month after that hit 2.5 million. After the third time, the states unanimously agreed to cancel the lottery system and as a result of the loss in revenue, they were forced to raise sales taxes to an incredible 20%. All of the blame for which, went directly to the blues. But this was nothing compared to what followed. Soon the blues had grown up, and they turned their abilities toward business. They excelled at first, and going into business with a blue seemed like a sure thing, perhaps too sure. They relied on their gifts too much and as a result, disaster struck. The worldwide stock market crash of 2033 was the final straw in an already unstable econo-

my. It plunged the world into decades of depression. People had lost everything; businesses, and even entire countries went bankrupt. And at the center of it all, were the blues, the cause of all misery. Even in the midst of a depression they managed to use their talents to live comfortably.

Drawing to them all the envy, fear, and suspicion embedded in the hearts of mankind, the world focused its hatred on one thing, destroying the people known as the blues. For as long as they lived, it seemed man would only know suffering. The year 2068 was not a pleasant one, although the world was slowly recovering from their crisis, it had already taken its toll. Lack of resources had set back technological, medical and social advancements by 60 to 70 years. And with the limited amount of funding the world managed to collect, they instituted an act, which came to be known as "The Great Banishing". It was now illegal to have, or to associate with anyone who had blue eyes. All violators of this new law were either imprisoned for life, or simply executed, though the latter was more common. No one had the funds necessary to contain the millions of blues there were sure to be.

"Yes Penelope?" The sound of Miss Hewitts voice snapped Virgil out of his daze; he looked around to see Penelopes hand waving in the air.

"If blues could see the future, then why didn't they see what was going to happen to them?"

"That's a good question, unfortunately no one really knows, but I suppose its because the early blues had a great deal of hubris. They thought nothing could hurt them as long as they had their gift, however, there were those who foresaw the coming events and planned ahead. Ragnall for example is responsible for everything around us. If it weren't for him, I'm afraid none of us would be here right now. Ah, speak of the devil." Just as she finished her sentence, a rather frail looking man had entered the schooling area; undoubtedly this was the Venerable Ragnall. While Virgil had never seen him, the things people said about him were most definitely true. For one, it looked like he had gotten dressed in the dark; with emerald green corduroy pants and a bright yellow tee shirt that said "Lefties do it Right." His appearance was obviously comical but no one dared to laugh or even crack a smile, everyone just attributed this odd fashion sense to the fact that Ragnall was blind, has been from birth.

A roar of laughter emanated from the far corner of the classroom: apparently Virgil couldn't hold in his amusement any longer.

"Virgil, Show some respect!"

"Why so angry Miss Hewitt?" asked Virgil "Didn't you know I was going to do that?"

"I...well, just be quiet!" Miss Hewitt's look of surprise had grown even larger at the sound of a new voice joining in the laughter. It was Ragnall: laughing as hard as a 97 year old man could laugh.

"Ten years," he managed to say between fits of laughter, "It's been ten years since I started wearing these ridiculous clothes, and you my boy are the first one to ever laugh at them openly. You see, 10 years ago I came to the conclusion that no one around here really laughs as much as they should. So I wore these clothes in hoped that it will make a few of you giggle. But you, you have made me very happy, and now I can die in peace." With that being said he clutched his heart and fell over onto the ground with a thud.

"Ragnall!" shouted Miss Hewitt as she rushed to his side to examine him, she cradled him in her arms and began to weep softly.

"Boo!" Shouted the not so dead Ragnall. The startled Miss Hewitt let out a deafening scream and dropped the poor man in the floor. "Oh come now Rebecca, your losing your touch, that's twice now today that someone was able to surprise you. Well, down to business." Miss Hewitt still remained on the floor, with her hand clutched over her heart, almost ready to die herself. "Virgil Ashmore, if you would come with me please?" Virgil rose and followed Ragnall out of the area. At first they passed the time with small talk until Ragnall felt they were far enough away from anyone who might be listening.

"Virgil, there is a matter I would like to discuss with you, but you must promise me that you wont go around telling anyone what we spoke of, alright?"

"Yes, sir."

"Promise?"

"Yes, I promise."

"Good, now you don't have to say anything if you don't want to, but at least hear me out first. When you were born, one of our disguised members rescued you from a fate most terrible, as was her job. However, I'm afraid to say it is rather impossible to save everyone as we did you, so it becomes necessary at times when a decision presents itself to, well, choose. It is an act of God to choose who lives and who dies, and a terrible burden to place on those charged with the task of saving the infants. On the day you were born, two other babies were also born, with their fate already sealed the moment they opened their blue eyes. That day, the woman who saved your life, saw into the future of those 3 infants and deemed you the one who should live. I am sorry to say I can't reveal what events lie in store for you, this is a journey you must make by yourself, just know, that you are indeed special. So I ask you now, will you embrace your fate?"

"If it's my fate, do I have a choice? I suppose everyone has a choice, but then again, who am I to disappoint? If I have the power to do something great in this world, then why pass up the opportunity. So yes, I'll do my best. Whether I succeed or fail, at least I can say I tried."

"Excellent, trying is all that we ask. If we don't try, nothing would ever get done, now let us return to your class, perhaps we can try for a third on dear Rebecca."

To be continued...

## Sleepless Wanderer

by Erik Erkman

In dreams reality  
 Nature's wrathful beauty  
 Empowers  
 Even the strongest will  
 Detering the knowledge of eon's past  
 Youthful immortals who have  
 Outlived nations long forgotten  
 Underlings of eternity  
 Time without meaning  
 Ill-gotten gains quench  
 Nocturnal hunger  
 Awaken...When forever comes

## Bloody Tears

by Erik Erkman

Each tear is a drop of blood  
 Each drop of blood is a word on paper  
 Each word is a portion of my anguish  
 When the last word is formed by the last bloody tear  
 My soul will be gone  
 And there is only one person who can return it to  
 me  
 And she may never do that  
 I wander  
 I slip  
 I sink  
 I drown  
 In my pool of tears  
 She will not give me her hand  
 A voice in the back of my mind  
 From the darkest corner of the world  
 Beyond the looking glass  
 Asks me to listen to him  
 Asks me to trade places with him  
 I ignore his plea  
 Because he does not exist  
 And eventually neither will I  
 I will be the voice calling out  
 And I will be ignored

## From a Clouded Mind to a Cafe Napkin

by Erik Erkman

When cometh dusk  
 Tortured souls fade  
 Elegy of the masses  
 Prolongs infinity  
 Opinion is fallacy  
 Truth in lies  
 Definition of suffering  
 Derives from the claim  
 That truth is lies  
 Feelings are fallacy  
 Solitude  
 A tear in eternity  
 Tomorrow comes today  
 The end is but a breath away  
 You cannot kill what is dead  
 But you can do far worse  
 By giving it life  
 And taking it away

## Fight Club

by Noodlez

We have front row seats to destruction  
 guns, bombs, revolution  
 2 sides to each man  
 we can't stop this confusion  
 we've been locked into doing  
 things because were tempted by their bad  
 and pulled in  
 by their goodness  
 saying all it took to find freedom  
 was by losing  
 all hope?  
 winning or losing doesn't matter  
 is one thing that we don't all know  
 some save now  
 because 2morow we could be all broke  
 but some spend it all in 1 night to call hope  
 as long we consider our self's healthy  
 why compete with someone else  
 thinking their more wealthy?  
 but we fight to the end,  
 agree with our enemies and we fight with our  
 friends  
 some can't deal with the fact  
 we can't be alright to the end  
 so we go till we can't stop  
 if it's your 1st night, it's only right  
 to fight till you can't stop  
 lett it goooo  
 first rule, don' t talk if your part of the mess  
 because the start of one's stress  
 is the spark in onc's flesh  
 nothing is solved, but nothing matters  
 it's all about ur capabilities, not who's bones  
 are shattered  
 our great depression is the life where we're  
 owners  
 we slowly learn we're not gonna be rich  
 like they told us  
 we slowly realize we're in their palms and  
 they hold us  
 so we continue to grow up  
 and continue to own up  
 to what fight club would want to see  
 so we show up

## Reasons to Sleep

by Noodlez

to start a new day  
 havin no control  
 right after your toothpaste  
 crawl up in a hole  
 to be ready for tomorrow  
 passin out  
 won't allow me to feel sorrow  
 no dowt  
 give me a pillow to borrow  
 I need to build stamina and strength  
 because I woke up real early today  
 maybe I drank too much  
 or was it I also smoked a dutch  
 there's nothin else to do  
 there's noone in my bed to screw  
 have no reasons to get up  
 because I can't keep my head up  
 all those r just sometimes  
 you want me to be true?  
 the reason I sleep is  
 to wake up and see you  
 I'm Tired  
 I'm tired of this tie and this suit  
 i'm trying to get loose  
 i'm tryin to get high with my troops  
 why i can i ride without the tires  
 on my ride commin loose?  
 but i'm never tired of making tunes  
 i'm tired of having my head fucked up  
 it's either from someone or from drugs  
 what's the fuzz? Wheres the buzz?  
 i guess ur tired of seein me try to come up  
 i'm fired right now, even tho i got alotta sleep  
 i'm tired of starving for 20 years, i gotta eat  
 i'm tired of eating, but i'm still hungry  
 i'm tired of everyone asking me for munchies  
 i'm fired.....

## After The Last Fright

By Professor Cate Marvin

I carved upon my desk unsayables,  
 He drank until he vomited on himself.  
 Eavesdropping, the others resisted sleep.  
 The house knew the pain of sun on lacquered floorboards.

I carved it with the tips of scissors.  
 A door creaked; he hung his head into the room.  
 Please, the others cannot sleep.  
 The shingles twitched like skin beneath moonlight.

I spent the afternoon at a movie theater.  
 He staggered through brush towards a pay phone.  
 The others continued searching the streets for him.  
 The house held the moon above it, it was that imperial.

I recall the room was empty when I came in.  
 He was arrested at the QuikTrip while calling collect.  
 Frantic, the others circled the block again.  
 The house was ghost white, older than the dead.

I needlepointed for 72 hours straight.  
 He claimed the whole situation humiliated him.  
 Relieved, the others asked if I'd seen him around.  
 The house shuddered, No-o-o-o.

The house winced, winked its blinds.  
 The house whispered I should stay inside.  
 The others flew out the doors and into their cars.  
 The others slammed their cars into deer and cried.

## Irrelevant

By Servete Kolar

I have,  
 Through each mark and scar,  
 Built upward and onward,  
 A vision  
 Held together by twine.  
 A portrait of what...  
 Can't you see  
 The familiar lines that stare and move,  
 The trembling words  
 Assembled and left hanging  
 Upon a piece of string  
 Borrowed from a child's kite.  
 It has been there all this time  
 Look at the scrawled lines  
 The glaring red, the misguided translation,  
 It has always been there.  
 Still, if you would humbly excuse me  
 I have exaggerated the figure, and turned it before you.  
 I have built upon its reality  
 To make it real to you.  
 Still all you see is the thread,  
 And you forget how long it has held me so.



# Untitled

by Marty

Fuck CSI  
There I said it  
Fuck thier lack of counsiling  
And fuck thier tuition hikes  
And fuck the CSI  
Security who ride bikes

Fuck that beaming  
smoke-stack  
by Victory Bl.  
which is a mystery  
to each student  
one and all  
And fuck the Nyburg  
guys who roam the halls

Fuck CSI  
Oh yes fuck CSI  
Fuck thier lack of  
parking  
And fuck thier  
incompetant staff  
Fuck every student  
follower who dresses  
alike  
Someday you'll be the security guys  
riding those bikes

Fuck the Bursar  
and fuck the Hub  
Fuck the administration  
and fuck parking ticket stubs  
Issued by our fellow students  
who are jerk-offs I must say  
They give us tickets every  
fucking day

Fuck the lousy Security  
and fuck student ID's  
Fuck the gym class'  
and hidden financial fee's  
Fuck CSI in the summer  
it's festering with killer bee's  
Fuck CSI in the winter  
it's covered in snow  
except the one fucking day  
You don't have to go

So yes fuck CSI  
I'll swear it Until  
The day I fucking  
Die



# Serpentine Magazine

Art  
Poetry  
Stories  
Photography  
Graphic Arts  
Interviews  
Articles  
and more!

Want to see your work published? Just send all  
your submissions to

Serpentine Magazine

Email: [magazine.serpentine@gmail.com](mailto:magazine.serpentine@gmail.com)

Office: 1-C 225

Mail Box: Student Government Office 1-C 207

# All About Us



## Elizabeth D'Ambrosio AKA Lilith Oya

is graduating CSI with a degree in English Writing, although drawing is her first love. Most of her aspirations include breaking into the comic book and video game industries. Her hobbies stretch far and wide from acting, to gaming, to sewing, and sports. More of her art can be found at DeviantArt.com under LilithOya.



## Daniello Cacace

is an English Writing major here at CSI. He discovered his talents in writing here at the college where he originally wanted to be a science major. In his free time he plays Maplestory, an online MMORPG\* and Soul Caliber III for PS2.

\*Mass Multiplayer Online Role Playing Game.



## Alicia Rebelo

is a 20 year old English major seeking the perfect career for her many talents. Even though she's an English major, her artistic passion is graphic artwork and layout making for websites. She can't live without her anime, video games, and the MMORPG Maple Story. Her Ice/Lightning Mage "pwns" you all. She'd like to thank God for putting up with her screaming and ranting., her parents for being there, those who gave her the opportunity to work with this magazine, her laptop, and the entire staff of Serpentine Magazine.



## Andrew Fattorusso AKA Lord Fox

is a Computer Science major at CSI. He enjoys a good game of cards and getting his ass kicked in Tekken by the other staff members of Serpentine. His nickname, Lord Fox, was giving to him by his greatest teacher for his bold actions, clever thinking, and his ability to adapt to most situations. He honors her teachings by bearing the title. If you wish to comment on his works, he can be contacted via email [thefoxwings@aol.com](mailto:thefoxwings@aol.com).



## Erik Erkman AKA Connor Boww.

A rose by any other name would still wither and die. A poet, however, may be known by several names, and even years after his corpse has fully turned to dust, those names will still be remembered. The written word is the key to immortality. So, you see, a poet by any other name will never truly die.

## Richard Fedey

is a twenty-four year old Philosophy and English Writing major. Born and raised on Staten Island, he has been writing for six years and enjoys reading in his spare time. The most prominent influence on Richard is Aldous Huxley, who taught him to question. This writer's humble wish is to be read. "I am not important, but my work is." - John Doe, Se7en

## Dennis Lowry

is a strictly black and white artist, relying solely on black pen and marker as his tools - he doesn't use pencil. His influences come from real world models (including himself) and anything relating to the horror genre. He dislikes how Soul Caliber III's AI has only two difficulty settings: "off" and "FUCK YOU."

# Glossary for Literature Section

- Cover Done by Lilith Oya  
Page 2 Staff  
Page 3 Staff and Contributors  
Page 4 An excerpt from "The Liaisons of Utopia: Chapter 1 The First Battle"  
By Lilith Oya  
Page 6 "The Vengeful Fox" By Lord Fox  
Page 7 "The Desert Flower" By Lord Fox  
Page 8 "Swim" By Lisa Roberts  
Page 9 "The Cheaters Delight" By Lisa Roberts  
Page 11 The Poetry of Evan Perez  
(*Blood Skies, Eternal Star, Forever Inlove, Cry for Me*)  
Page 13 "Barren Chronos" By Ra'chaun Rogers  
Page 16 "Denial" by Kevin S.P. Mamakas  
Page 17 "A Night Poem" by Kevin S.P. Mamakas  
"Bloodless" and "Tundra" by Richard Fedey  
Page 18 Snug Harbor Fountain taken by Alicia Rebelo  
"Shell Game" by Richard Fedey  
Page 19 "Baby Blues" Daniello Cacace  
Page 22 The Poetry of Erik Erkman  
(*Sleepless Wonderer, Bloody Tears, From a Clouded Mind to a Cafe Napkin*)  
Page 23 "Fight Club" and "Reasons to Sleep" by Noodlez  
Page 24 "After the Last Fright" by College of Staten Island Professor Cate Marvin  
"Irrelevant" by Servete Kolar  
Page 25 Untitled by Marty  
Page 26 Submit Now or Die, Please  
Page 27 Bios  
Page 28 This Page  
Page 29 Photo by Roger Matthews  
Page 30 Poster





SHINJI  
2006

