

VOLUME 22

WINTER 2023

ENGLISH

BREAK

INCLUDING;

**POEMS
SHORT STORIES
ARTICLES**

**"A FAREWELL
TO ARMS"**

**A STORY OF LOVE
AGAINST THE WAR**

**HIGHER EDUCATION
TIPS**

YOU WILL READ;

**"FOUR
SEASONS"**

**"WRITERS
WHO WERE
TOO
SIGNIFICANT
FOR THEIR
TIMES"**

**"I, ME,
MYSELF"**

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World War I. American gun crew from the 23rd Infantry, firing a French 37mm cannon in World War I action in Belleau Wood. June 3, 1918.

TABLE OF CONTENTS



A Farewell to Arms

04 By Fatemeh Sadhezari, article.

I'll Get Over It

06 By Ilgar M.B.i, poem.

Writers Who Were Too Significant for Their Times

07 By Niloo Khosravi, article.

The Truth

10 By Ilgar M.B.i, poem.

All That Fall

11 By Nilofar Fallah Kheirkhah, article.

Symbolism and Allegory in “The Picture of Dorian Gray”

13 By Sama Ashoori, article.

The Sickness

17 By Madi S., short story.

I, Me, Myself

18 By Saba Khatibi, impression.

The Urge to Depart

19 By Ilgar M.B.i, poem.

Four Seasons

20 By Fatemeh Babai, poem.

Below the Cedar Tree Lies a Trouble

21 By Hanieh Zare Soheyli, short story.

The Road Not Taken

23 By Atousa Mirzapour, article.

The Folk of Air; Introduction

25 By Ghazal Nasiri, article.

You

26 By Saba Khatibi, impression.

Higher Education

27 By Arefe Amini, article.



STAY INSPIRED

"NEVER STOP CREATING."

HRM Lusitania steered by tug boats at a New York City pier. March 6, 1914.

ENGLISH BREAK

صاحب امتیاز: انجمن علمی-دانشجویی زبان و ادبیات انگلیسی دانشگاه الزهراء (س)

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Design Concept

DULCE ET DECORUM EST

"If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood
Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs,
Obscene as cancer, bitter as the cud
Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues,—
My friend, you would not tell with such high zest
To children ardent for some desperate glory,
The old Lie: Dulce et decorum est
Pro patria more."

-Wilfred Owen

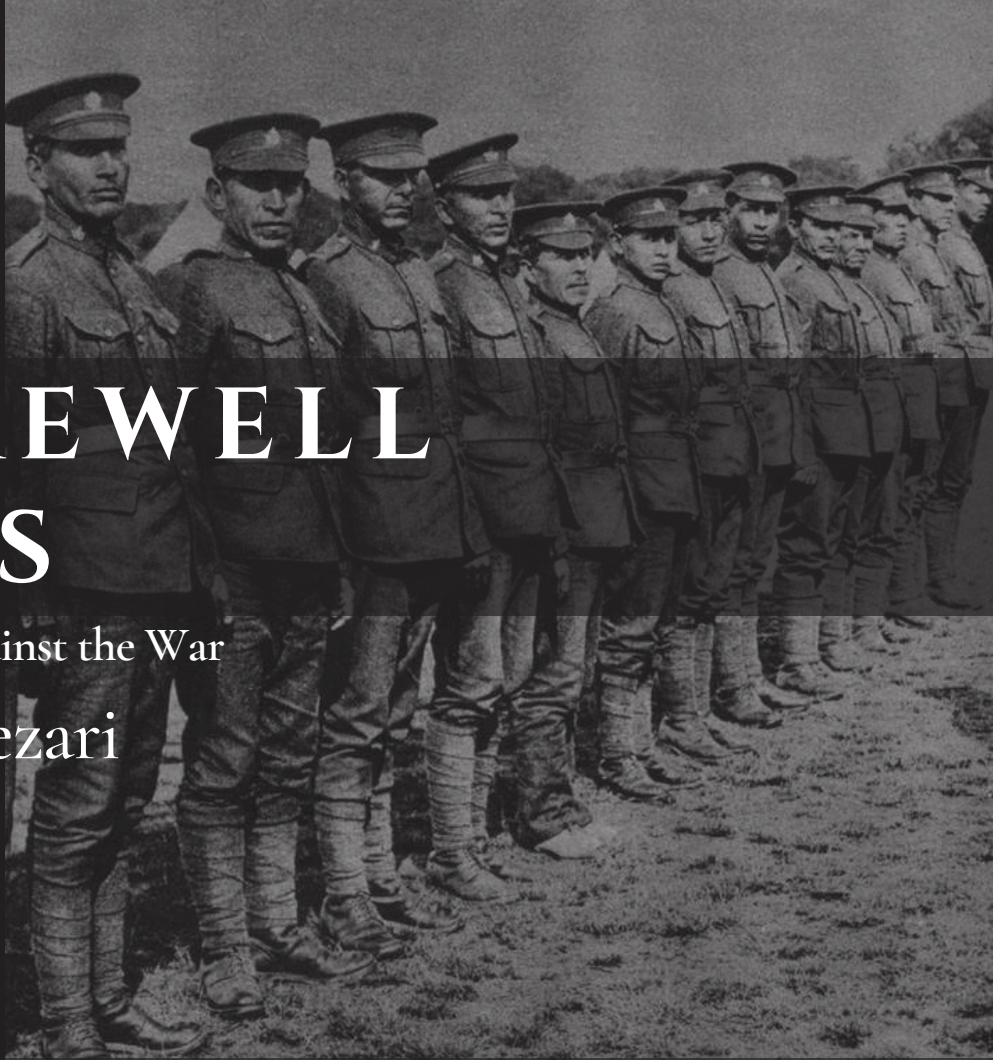
In undying memory of the unanswered shouts of pain, unbidden wails of grief, undesirable howls of loss, unbearable roars of anger, unheard trembles of fear, and unaware breaths of death of miserable hearts throughout the wars in history.

-Raha Fazlollahei

A FAREWELL TO ARMS

A Story of Love Against the War

By Fatemeh Sadhezari



Mohawk Indians serving with the Canadian Corps on the Western Front in World War I.



Honor guards firing salute at the burial of Brigadier General William Mitchell. Feb. 23, 1936.

Politicians decide, papers are signed, soldiers are ready to fight, armor on, buttons pressed, guns shot, airplanes fly, bombs come, and lovers cry, what is crueler than an unwanted war? A great face of the Lost Generation, Ernest Hemingway, wrote one of his most iconic autobiographical novels in 1929, a story of war, love, and loss, a story of how love gives life and how war ruins it all, *A Farewell to Arms*. He is known for his great sense of realism and wrote the novel inspired by his personal experiences through the first world war and that's why this story of war is not only about how it hurts society physically but how it hurts people's lives, souls, and destiny brutally. The American lieutenant, Frederic Henry, works as an ambulance driver in the Italian army; he falls in love with Catherine Barkley, an English nurse during world war I. Here is where the story begins with the sweetness of love and how this love smiles at the new couple in the darkest days of the war, the sad truth is that war doesn't like smiles.

Wars have always been a brutal truth about human life, and war literature tries its best to show how this dark, gloomy, and nasty side of humankind affects people and their lives. A Farewell to Arms portrays a different face of war from other works of war literature. Writing on the personal effects of war, Hemingway gives his readers a new, exciting, and attractive experience of reading war literature. It's important to know how war affects people's personal lives and how it changes them profoundly and for a long time. Hemingway tells us the story of a couple full of love, hope, and dreams for their future love life and how they hardly try to run away from the war and live a free life far ways from countries fights and the "Arms" but end in loss and despair after doing nothing wrong. As if the war is following them wherever they go and kills their happiness indirectly even if they are kilometers far from the war. A quote by Henry to Catherine, while he is lying beside her and thinking of how the world is fighting against them and their life, shows how love fights against the dark brutality of the world and how this may end in loss and sorrow for those who choose love. It's not fair to ruin the beauty of the plot by saying it all so finish this article and give the novel a try.

"If people bring so much courage to this world the world has to kill them to break them, so, of course, it kills them. The world breaks everyone and afterward many are strong in the broken places. But those that will not break it kill. It kills the very good and the very gentle and the very brave impartially. If you are none of these, you can be sure it will kill you too but there will be no special hurry."

—Ernest Hemingway, *A Farewell to Arms*

I'LL GET OVER IT

Not that it's the end of the world;
But every now and then,
I sit and ponder.
There's a lot of my truth, I've told.
About my dying nights, when and where.
I've stood still and wondered:
Do these birds sing to me?
Does this sky stay blue for our sake?
Was that poem addressed to you and I?
Should I clip my wings or shall I remain free?
Should I right my wrongs or keep making the
same mistake?
I asked the bird, but she chose to fly.
No answer or response.
No utterance of a word of advice.
Just soared into the wind.
Will I still talk after my renaissance?
Will I still not make any sense?
Have I always sinned?
Not that's it the end of times,
But it does startle me.
I am in love with no lover.
Will my poetry's memento be
buried with mine?

If I stop breathing will the sea recall me?
As a forgotten blue, a misunderstood color.
I'll get over it;
Just give me a minute or five.
In this dream I can fit;
I just need to languish;
A rose not meant to survive;
Not bought for love,
But abandoned in the sea.
Not meant to fly above,
But to drown,
To set the blue free,
To be me.
I just have to sit.
Don't worry!
I'll get over it.
I'll get over it.
I'll get over it.

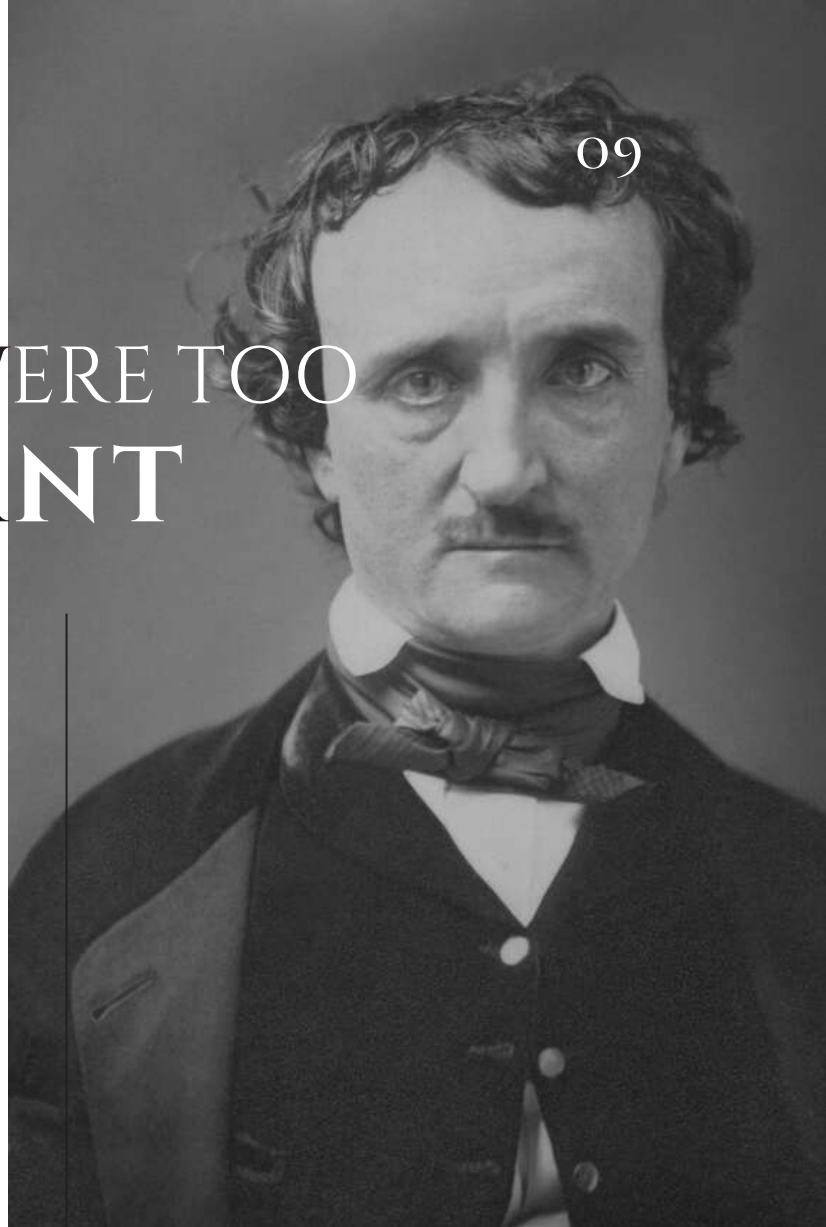
BY ILGAR M.B.

WRITERS WHO WERE TOO SIGNIFICANT FOR THEIR TIMES;

The Rationale Behind the Posthumous
Fame of Edgar Allan Poe and Franz Kafka

By Niloo Khosravi

Have you ever felt lonely and trapped in the ongoing maze of life? Have you been aloof not only to the people around you but to your own soul? Have you ever wondered to what end your life is going end? These questions concerned the two outstanding literary figures of 20th-century literature, Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849) and Franz Kafka (1883-1924), whose struggles were beyond any of their contemporaries' comprehension. The two authors whose artistic activity was distanced more than half a century from each other and rose to the literary era from disparate continents possessed similar bonds in some hectic aspects of their lives.



1849 "Annie" daguerreotype of Poe

Despite being known as the most powerful literary influencers of the time, Poe and Kafka achieved little fame in comparison to what they actually deserved. Some relate this to the tragedies that shadowed their lives; some, on the other hand, consider the people whose short-sightedness blocked the artistic creativity of the authors. The present article, however, investigates that the two artists' misfortunes in life had deeper roots that could only be unraveled by the passage of time.

“Rich Dad, Poor Dad”: family constraints as the first block. Many people consider having an affluent family a virtue that few people possess. Poe might have had the same feelings as well. Being banished by his father from a very young age while having no one to look up to for support, Poe seemed to be always after someone’s love or care. Even after living under the guise of his new father figure, he had to overcome obstacles to pursue the artistic

career he always desired. Without the tiniest glimpse of support, both financially and spiritually, Poe decided to drown his miseries in heavy drinking, not only in private times but in society. This habit created a picture of Poe in the community, as a drunk and rascal man, whose mental stability and, eventually, the validity of his works, came under question by the people. This reason was enough for Poe’s rivals to use his weak spots against him and destroy his public image even way after his death by undervaluing his works and blaming him for living a tragic life that was not caused by his own faults. On the other hand, Kafka could claim to have his share of a prosperous family, who could support him financially and provide him with the best educational facilities. However, as the eldest son of a successful merchant, his father had heavy expectations from Kafka that one day he pursue the family business instead of wasting his life on unprofitable fields like literature. This unpleasant hindrance postponed Kafka’s artistic journey and eventually led to the inner conflict he suffered for the rest of his life.

In every layer of his social relations, he felt a dead-end in communicating with people and believed there was always a determinative force that was present only to block his artistic progressions and add bitterness to his life. Due to the authority of his family, Kafka usually ran out of time and was unable to find any empty time out of his work to pursue his literary passion therefore, by the time of his death, most of his masterpieces were already unfinished. It was only after his death that his unfinished works were published by his most intimate friend, and reached Kafka to never-ending posthumous fame.

Being different isn’t equal to being loved. The familial tensions in Poe and Kafka’s lives were influential in the views these authors nurtured about their societies, as well. As an unfortunate author who experienced poverty, orphanage, and depression, Poe experimented with matters not a lot of writers of his time experienced. By his adultery, he was already aware of the dark side of each human being. His works were considered as a mirror that reflected each person’s possible depravity and revealed the unpleasant truths people hardly accept.



Kafka in 1906

In addition to his views of human beings, Poe's perspective was also distinctive in evaluating works of art. As a literary reviewer, he often attacked works which did not follow the code of aesthetics. Influenced by romanticism and admiring beauty in literature, especially poetry, Poe believed a poem need not be didactic but should be praised for the mere beauty it holds within. Hence, his harsh criticism of others' works often ended in conflicts and made lifetime rivals who could do anything to make Poe's name be forgotten in all literary circles (Baym 533). Kafka's conflicts with the literary circles of his time also aroused from his unique views about literature and society. As an intellectual with different views about life, he was often neglected by his community, and taking sides with certain political and social units made some literary scholars distance him from the main circle. These eventually led Kafka to feel like a stranger who could not find a place to plant his roots in. The struggles and a continuous feeling of unhappiness are evident in Kafka's works, where a man strives for the ultimate meaning of humanity and his life.



Triangle Shirtwaist Factory interior, with destroyed sewing machines, gutted by a fire that killed 146 on March 15, 1911.

Final point;
Dying nameless, rootless, and banished is one matter, but rising to ever-lasting fame is another thing. The question is, which one do you prefer to experience in your life? No one can make a definite conjecture about whether Poe's or Kafka's souls are happy in another world. But what is evident is that both artists were shattered by body and soul by the time of their death through the neglect of their families and societies. What if they could be celebrated as they deserved?

What would happen if they could live longer and create more? It seems, however, to gain the names they own today, both writers had to sacrifice the dearest things in life to preserve their immortality in the present world literary canon.

Reference

Baym, Nina, and Robert S. Levine, eds. *The Norton Anthology of American Literature: Eighth International Student Edition*. WW Norton & Company, 2011.

THE TRUTH

God I feel like crying.
No tear's in my eyes.
At least I'm trying.
At least I'm breathing to get by.
When will I watch the sunset?
When will I watch the sunrise?
A prison of thoughts, a rotten mindset.
The memories that disguise.
Was I happy on the swing set?
Or did she yell at me out of despise?
not noticing it back then; I bet.
But now the memory within me it lies.
I've been in this room for too long.
I don't remember the city's sound.
I haven't seen Paris, Berlin, or Hong Kong.
I'm just here; meant to be around.
Tell them I said hello, to those who live.
Tell them she's making sure birds sing.
Rivers flow, flowers grow, in dreams we still believe.
I'm scared the winter won't sleep in the spring.
God I feel like melting in my bed.
This silence's been here for a while.

Like poetry on a blank page, in my head.
Like that dead meaningless lie of a smile.
God I feel like vanishing with the wind.
Like the songs I loved and now I forget.
Like Lucifer and Eve, I have sinned.
Like Orpheus, I looked back, I regret.
Broken bones were never pinned.
I can still fly, I just need a safety net.
I still see the sun, but a little dimmed.
I have a backpack.
I haven't altered my will yet.
No sweat!
I'll desert, listening to
"The night we met"
"I'm not the only traveler
Who has not repaid her debt"

BY ILGAR M.B.

Reference

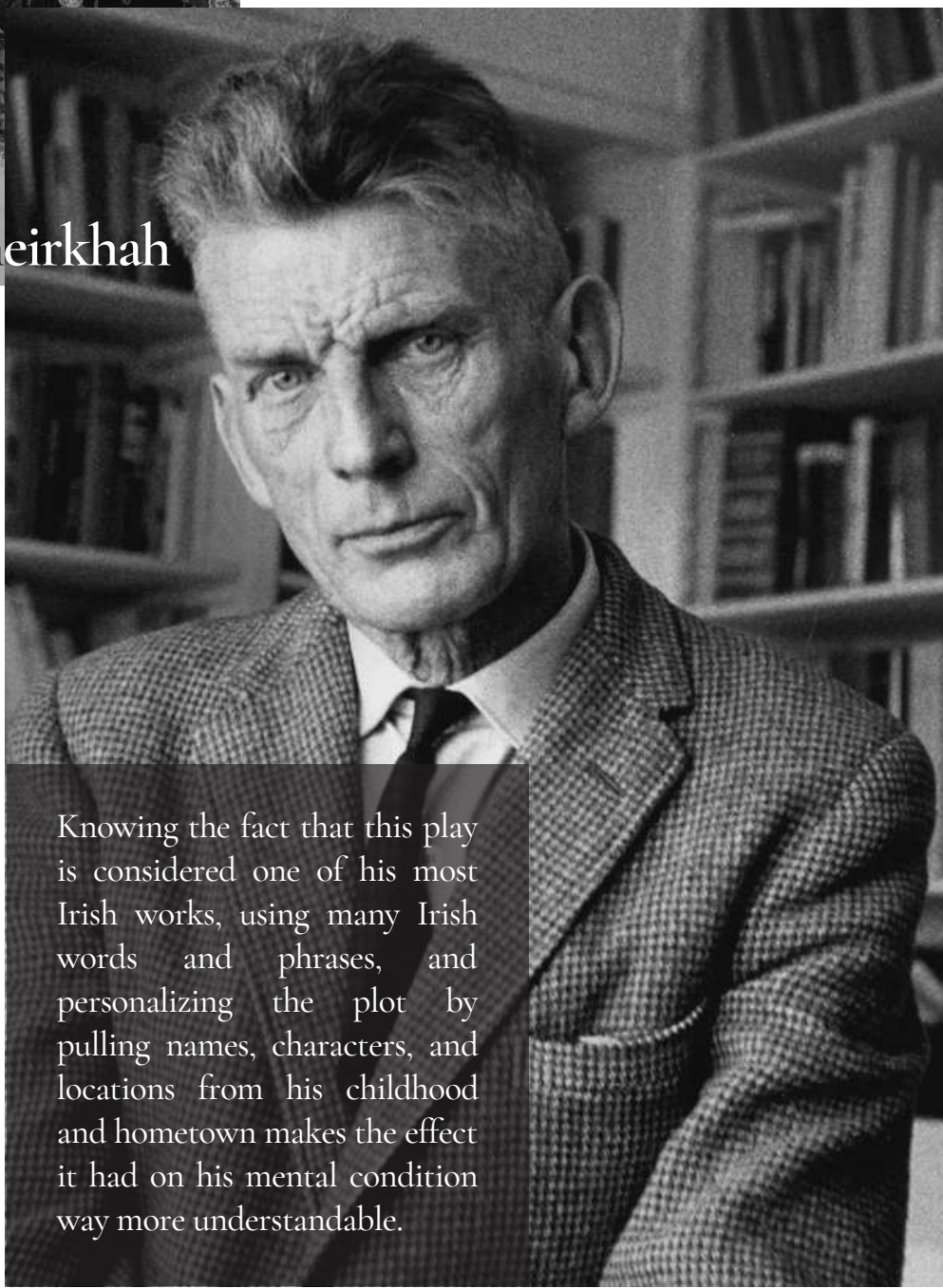
Beckett, Samuel. All That Fall. 1957.

ALL THAT FALL ;

A REVIEW ON SAMUEL BECKETT'S
RADIO PLAY

By Niloofar Fallah Kheirkhah

Samuel Beckett wrote “All That Fall” in 1956 as his first out of the few works for radio, following a request from BBC. It was written in English and later translated into French, revised by Beckett himself, as “Tous ceux qui tombent”. The one-act play, though brief and quickly written, was so deeply personal to the Irish author that put him in what he called “a whirl of depression”, a mental state that left him no option but to cancel all his appointments and stay indoors for a week as he felt “wholly incapable of facing people”.



Knowing the fact that this play is considered one of his most Irish works, using many Irish words and phrases, and personalizing the plot by pulling names, characters, and locations from his childhood and hometown makes the effect it had on his mental condition way more understandable.

The story takes place in a suburban atmosphere, beginning and ending on a country road, with characters full of silence rather than words. The main character, Maddy Rooney, who is known to be Beckett's first female central character, is an old, childless woman, plodding down the country road toward the station. She means to meet her husband there, as a birthday surprise. Mrs. Rooney is gloomy, distressed, and impatient. Suffering from rheumatism, she has no way but to move at a difficult and slow pace, resulting in having to cope with encounters she may or may not tolerate. She keeps mentioning how she is no longer able to keep going, to carry on, only that it takes her a few moments to get up and continue her journey. All the conversations she holds with people are accompanied by a silence mid-sentence as if she is unsure of what she states. She is unhappy with having to communicate and even her choice of words happens to bother her as soon as the words leave her mouth. She would rather stay at home but having to hear the redundant same statement from somebody else makes her furious. She laughs and it takes her seconds to remember how miserable she

feels. Having lost her little girl plays an important role in her misery. Dan Rooney is a blind man. Mrs. Rooney's act of service evokes no feeling of joy or gratefulness in him. All he can think of and look forward to, as the old couple walks back home, is to sit by the fire while listening to his wife reading his favorite book to him. He declines every attempt of Mrs. Rooney to act intimately and affectionately, giving a clue that his actions might be one of the reasons for the unhappiness his wife feels. He forgets about his own birthday, whether the day has passed and even his age, wondering if he has reached a hundred years yet. If one thing he can never tolerate, it is children. The question he later asks his wife, whether she had ever wished to kill a child, further proves the point, and foreshadows the consequences of being childless on his mental state. He wonders why they never take a seat in the middle of their journey back home, then thinks it might be because they are fearful that they would never be able to get up again if they did so. To quote Albert Camus, "Men are on two sides, those who experience absurdity and decide to end their lives, and those who experience it and choose to stay alive."

It is safe to say "All That Fall" is a story of people who can be put in a third category. Those who experience absurdity and let it take over their lives; people who would rather sit and watch their lives going by and wait for death to finally occur than do any other activity that is a sign of life. Death is a part of their everyday lives. The dark footprints death leaves behind never truly vanish from their lives. It can be found in every little moment and place. Schubert's "Death and the Maiden" is heard right where Mrs. Rooney starts off her journey with a neighbor running over and killing a hen and someone else wishing for his death to happen right after having recovered from a severe illness. Death keeps occurring every day in short encounters and conversations and the only thing lowering the dark and bitter tone of the whole play is the simple ridiculousness of every character and occurrence. In the middle of a conversation with her husband, Mrs. Rooney recalls a memory, a lecture she was given by a doctor about a lost patient. When she asked about the patient's cause of death, he answered: "The trouble with her was that she had never really been born." And never being born is what makes death closer than ever.



SYMBOLISM AND ALLEGORY IN OSCAR WILDE'S "THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY"

By Sama Ashoori

Oscar Wilde's novel, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, was originally published in Lippincott's Monthly Magazine in 1890 and then in book form in 1891 with six additional chapters. This novel turned out to be one of Wilde's masterpieces and a great example of late Victorian Gothic horror. This article gives a summary of the novel, discusses the symbols that appeared in it, and explains what they represent.

The story is about a young man named Dorian Gray, whose beauty and charm seem to never fade as the years are passed. Everything he does, every sin he commits, and every immoral action he pursues leave not even a single mark on his physical appearance. Everything starts when Basil Hallward, a painter, introduces Dorian Gray to another friend of his, Lord Henry Wotton. The moment Lord Henry meets the young boy, he grows an affection towards him. He starts to influence Dorian and advises him to always seek life's pleasures and new sensations. When Basil finishes Dorian's picture, the lad is amazed by his youth and beauty and wishes that he could always stay young, while his portrait is the one that ages and decays. He claims that he is willing to sell his soul for that wish to come true, and by saying those words, it's as if he made a deal with the devil. After a romantic tragedy with Sibyl Vane, an actress with whom he falls in love for a short time and causes her to kill herself after abandoning her, Dorian spots horrifying changes in the picture. He has realized that the portrait is a mirror of his soul and shows the results of every mean behavior he develops. Satisfied by this unbelievable phenomenon, he continues to follow all manner of sensations and pleasure without worrying about aging anymore.



Movie still from *Dorian Gray*, Ben Barnes, 2009, directed by Oliver Parker.

At the climax of the story, when Dorian shows Basil his picture and sees his reaction, he stabs him to death and gets rid of the body by blackmailing someone he knew to use his help. Dorian is drowned in sin until the day Sibyl Vane's brother gets accidentally shot at one of Dorian's shooting parties. He decides to reform his character after that accident and tries to become a better man, hoping for the picture to improve. But when he finds out that it has made everything even worse, he attempts to destroy it by plunging a knife into the painting.



"We are punished for our refusals."

– Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*

The symbols in this novel are various. Some of them are recognizable and can easily be interpreted, while some others need deeper pondering. Here are some examples;

The picture: The picture of Dorian Gray is the main symbol in this book. It is a representation of Dorian's soul. It decays with each evil sin he commits. Dorian usually felt proud and satisfied about the changes in the picture at first, but as time went by and the picture became more corrupted and uglier, something started to bother him. It reminded him of who he was because it was the true image of his character. We could assume that it was somehow little sparkles of conscience.

Flowers: A great number of different flowers are mentioned in the book; such as rose, lilac, thorn, laburnum, narcissus, daisy, ivy, clematis, and many others. Flowers are thought to have an important role in the novel because, in the Victorian era when the book was written, the language of flowers was very popular in society. This language is spoken by selecting specific types of flowers with associated meanings to express feelings or wishes. Therefore, we can assume that Wilde used these flowers in his novel to tell us a little more about the characters or even about future events. Laburnum could represent Lord Henry Wotton, for instance. As mentioned, his presence was associated with laburnums in the beginning.

“Lord Henry Wotton could just catch the gleam of the honey-sweet and honey-colored blossoms of a laburnum (1)”. This flower symbolizes pensive beauty. It is an important flower for it helps us understand his character better, because of its poison. Like the laburnum, Lord Henry is a poisonous person. He is poisonous to Dorian because he was the one who influenced him and led him to be willing to make a pact with the devil to sell his soul and stay young and beautiful forever and have his portrait decay and age in return. He was the one who brought out the worst in Dorian and let him drown in sin and immorality. As another example, the rose is a symbol of passion, love, and desire.

“The heavy scent of the roses seemed to brood over everything. (22)”. In this part, for example, roses could stand for the three men’s desires. Lord Henry’s to deceive Dorian, Dorian’s to be always young and beautiful, and Basil’s to be loved by Dorian.

The yellow book: Lord Henry gives Dorian a yellow book that changes his life. It is about a young man who pursues every new aesthetic sensation in life. Dorian buys multiple copies of the book, rereads it, and lives its philosophies. This book, which he carries with him almost everywhere, represents the influence Henry has on Dorian.

Wilde’s way of using symbols is smooth and admirable. By spotting the symbols and thinking about the meanings behind them, it will be easier for the readers to communicate with the writer’s mind thus, they will understand the story better.

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McPherson Library, Special Collections,
University of Victoria, PO Box 1800, STN
CSC, Victoria BC, V8W 3H5, Canada



Movie still from *Dorian Gray*, Lord Henry Wotton (Colin Firth) showing Dorian Gray (Ben Barnes) a mirror, 2009, directed by Oliver Parker.

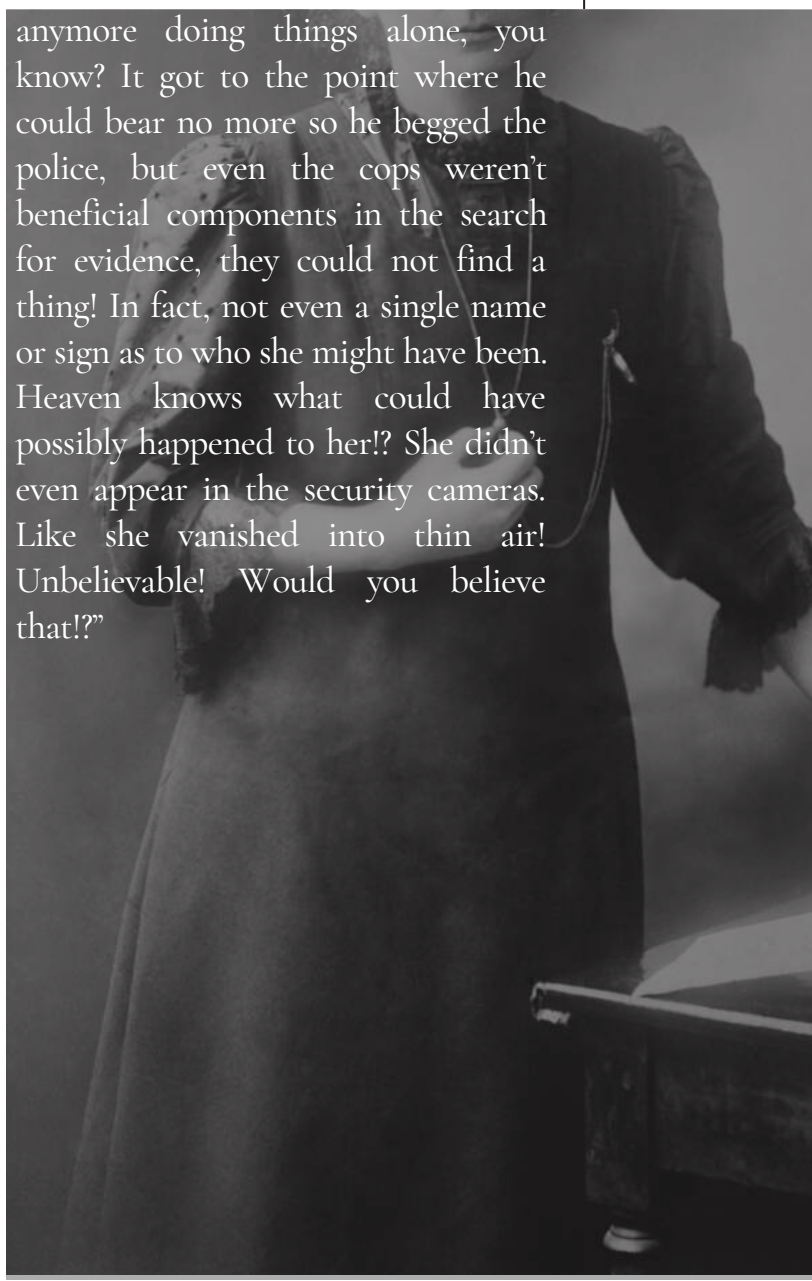
English Break

THE SICKNESS

“So I had this distant cousin,” started the middle-aged, gray-haired lady in dark beige, biting a piece of apple pie, “he had achieved so much but is being kept in an asylum in North Carolina now,” “Oh my!” blurted out the ginger lady in white, appalled. “Yes yes, poor young lad.” Continued the gray-haired lady. “Whatever happened to him!?” Asked the ginger lady curiously. “Oh dear it’s a long story, everything started when he met this beautiful young woman in his office near Greensboro, or so he said. Complex psychology stuff never makes any sense to me but apparently, she was diagnosed with some sort of disorder. I don’t quite remember but it was a bad one. She would arrive at his office at exactly 3:33 p.m. every Tuesday. Getting off an all-back antique vehicle. Wearing a long thin black satin dress with lace. Black stilettoes. Always veiled. The duration of their sessions would be 33 minutes exact. Every single time! would you believe that?! He said she felt a little tad off at first but they happened to bond pretty quickly. After some sessions, he advised her to undergo surgery as a preliminary to her final medications and she trusted him fully.” The gray-haired lady stopped to take a sip of her English tea to soften her throat. “What kind of surgery?” asked the ginger, biting and chewing on a piece of apple pie. “Something related to the brain I think. But things took a turn for the worse. One snowy cold winter night, she took her own life. Stuck knitting needles into her eyes. Pierced right through her pupils. Straight to the brain! Only 3 days. Would you believe that?” the ginger lady was too stunned to even breathe a word, sipping on some tea, eyes stuck

on the older woman sitting in front of her, she raised her cup, signaling the gray-haired lady to continue, and so she did, “He thought it was some sort of evil scheme plotted against him, but he had no evidence. He blamed himself for the young woman’s horrific demise, his heart ached through day and night, more than he could endure. But the hospital staff weren’t helpful at all. They kept saying they never had anyone similar walk into the hospital, let alone under the knife! He was so consistent with his seeking for evidence, he searched everywhere, and asked everyone he could think of, but without any achievements, he slowly realized he couldn’t maintain his mental state anymore doing things alone, you know? It got to the point where he could bear no more so he begged the police, but even the cops weren’t beneficial components in the search for evidence, they could not find a thing! In fact, not even a single name or sign as to who she might have been. Heaven knows what could have possibly happened to her!? She didn’t even appear in the security cameras. Like she vanished into thin air! Unbelievable! Would you believe that!?”

BY MADIS.



I, ME, MYSELF

By Saba Khatibi

The main reason for our problems is that we assume our perception is equal to reality, and we give credit to our thoughts. This is how the human being is. I thought I knew her, but I was mistaken. She was struggling with self-doubt and a sense of not being capable enough. I reproached her over and over and time after time. I told her she should be grateful. She was suffering. She was in great pain. She had faith in everything they said about her. She was me. I looked in the mirror and all I saw was vulnerability. What could I do for her? How could I love her the way that she deserves? I didn't know. I just knew a few things about her. I knew she was afraid to be. I knew she loved all beautiful things. She adores auroras, sad prose, poetry, music, and nature. That was her whole existence. I looked in the mirror again, and I thought that I couldn't recognize her anymore. It was irritating to be in my own head. I didn't want to associate with her inasmuch as we were bullets in each other's wings. I looked in the mirror with bleary eyes. It was stereotyped, but we only had each other. Therefore, why am I my own worst foe? I was losing her and I didn't want to. I needed a paradigm shift. I looked at her again. She was flawsome like a broken vase, but if you are broken, you do not have to remain broken. It was abrupt, and it spurted like a flame in her mind. I wanted to get to know her more, and she wanted to heal. Isn't it a beautiful word? Heal, heal, heal. Her paradigm shifted, and then she began to scream, "I deserve more." She was like Savanna since she had an intimacy with fire. Fire burns and torments the Savanna and helps it to bloom. I was bloomed by my own griefs and quarrels. In the end, I would like to finish my passage with Camus's words: "At a certain level of suffering or injustice, no one can do anything for anyone. Pain is solitary."

THE URGE TO DEPART

Not that I hate the sun,
But I don't mind the rain washing me away.
Not that I can't die with a gun,
But the river can persuade me today.
I can leave
In the nice and the easiest way.
Not that I can't forgive,
But I beg to gain all these hard feelings.
I prefer to let it maim me with meanings.
Not that I hate the lyrics of songs,
But I crave melodies the most.
There's nothing wrong,
But right has been silent for long.
And I would like to make a toast,
To me,
My nights,
And my dying candles.
To see,
My darks and lights,
And everything I can't handle.
Not that I would like to go,
But this path has been unfriendly.

I don't but I also know:
Farewell's pleasant,
To those kind and deadly;
To those who awaken a soul.
Now that our hearts are getting cold,
Let me wrap it up.
You see,
I am getting old.
My hair is still brown,
But my thoughts wish to drown.
Tonight,
I still love the sun and its gold,
But I am the one who's getting old.
Not that my legs can't walk,
But it's time for my wings to talk.
It's time for the poetry to be worse.
It's time for me to let go of this curse.

BY ILGAR M.B.

FOUR SEASONS

I was looking into his eyes, his deep, determined, reminiscent eyes that suddenly not myself anymore but him I was:

I was born with the sound of the cracking ice. The 4th day of March began my life.

In honor of spring's glorious voice and happy birds soaking in her beauty, stood I.

May came and I learned to speak with the murmuring flowers teaching me how.

The nymphs danced and I too danced so grand.

July's sun burned and shut her arrow at me hot. Summer began and burned I.

I saw the furious hornets of August and delivered flowers' sweet talk to them although they were not so kind.

September arrived with his fierce thunder and disappointed farmers from what they asked.

But autumn was here hopeful and aloft.

There was a joyful harvest with dancing and celebrating so hard that came a sweet slumber after all, and there was the ultimate breaking dawn.

Severe cold of the winter, there was.

The thing that made me to stick to nothing but quiet fire.

I was Antonio Vivaldi!

And it was his melodies that passed through my soul and life.

BY FATEMEH BABAI

BELOW THE CEDAR TREE LIES A TROUBLE

Hanieh Zare Soheyli

Looking from the window of the car, everything was as dreamy as he had always imagined. The whispering redundant rustle of the leaves was only audible whenever the daytime traffic petered to an almost stop while green leaves of old trees, now tinged with orange and gold, were visible from everywhere. The quiet streets of his peaceful city were now crowded with a flood of students starting their first day of school. As soon as he kissed his father goodbye, it started to rain and he was pleased with his wise decision of taking his colorful umbrella with him. From where he stood, the school building represented those old creepy paintings in grandma's room. He remembered grandma saying "stay out of trouble" and felt proud of himself for being granny's good boy as he didn't see that "trouble" coming. Within a couple of seconds there he was, dirty and wet on the ground, hit by another boy. The trouble helped him get on his feet, looking ashamed, his eyes fixed on the ground he whispered: "I'm so sorry mister, I was afraid I might be late". Not giving him enough time to prepare an appropriate response, the boy left him in a blink of an eye, while wondering why he was called a mister. he class was a hazardous combination of all those chemical elements you would never dare put together! A group of boys was bullying a fellow

classmate by stealing his glasses and laughing as he was looking for them. Some girls kept gossiping about their seniors and their hairstyles while he was still in shock, wondering how others can get along with each other so easily he was alone, drown in his little corner of the world. "may I sit here?" he looked up to see the face of that trouble he had come across a few minutes ago. "yes, of course, you can!" as the trouble sat down, he collected his notebook and pencil case to give him space. Stopped along the way by his voice "there's no need to do that, I have none of these... fancy things you have." He looked at him again, this time noticing his little bag looking... empty. "but you should have notebooks and stuff, this is a real school, right?" he was shocked, maybe he was hard on himself, misunderstanding the concept of going to school. The trouble smiled sadly "don't worry, I have a notebook" he put a little notebook on the table, like the ones used by others to practice painting, his friend-to-be classmate possessed a thing he was even ashamed to have in his room! He wanted to be clarified, he demanded to know if his world of priorities, belongings, and values was doomed to crash or not. But the moment he put his feelings into words the teacher arrived and the cloud of his doubts faded. "perfect timing".

The boys didn't communicate till lunchtime when William sat in a little corner to eat his biscuits. He wasn't seeking attention when he realized Edward was right in front of him with his lunchbox, looking as if he was asking for permission to join him. Will lifted his eyebrows "go on, sit" and soon was accompanied by Ed, playing with his biscuits reluctantly as he could feel the smell of warm noodles tickling his nose and an empty stomach.

For a moment, he hated himself, his situation, and his older brother for leaving him like this. Tommy said he would always protect him no matter what! but apparently, he had lied again, just like how he had lied about being ok with working nonstop and how he wasn't exhausted to take Will to the park. Tommy never returned home and left Will alone. Anger and hatred ran through his veins like a disease and his desires possessed him. Had it not been like this, he would have been Ed, eating "food" instead of a "snack". He was lost in agony until Ed took a strange device in his hands and stuck it to his lips, inhaling deeply. "what's this? Some kind of dessert before lunch?!" he tried his best to convey the sarcasm effectively, failing as Ed breathlessly stated, "it's an inhaler, for my... breathing". Will felt ashamed and said nothing more. Instead, he spent his break time staring at his shoes as he kept imagining those delicious noodles finding their way into his empty belly. The following month passed as Ed and Will got to know each other better, creating a significant bond while sharing their weird stories, scary adventures, mysterious dreams, snacks, and noodles. At some point, they started protecting their little corner of the playground like a holy territory, and soon enough the tumbledown wall was colored with their sweet innocent wishes. They made themselves home and Ed finally realized his safe place was right below the old cedar tree, leaning against that creepy wall, eating biscuits before his main course. Nothing was more pleasant than doing their homework when drops of water from last night's rain made their writings look like a wild hungry bear. Through their conversations, Will realized Ed had heart surgery recently and all he could retell were: Ed borrowed a young man's heart. This left him wondering who had volunteered to

his life for the sake of an old grandma and a young father. After some time, he felt the need to tell him about his brother but never got the chance. On a nice rainy afternoon, Ed said goodbye as usual, smiling as he walked to his father and left, never coming back. He left Will wondering what went wrong. Will spent the whole semester sitting below that cedar tree doing Ed's homework knowing Ed had already been expelled. He kept his fancy lunchbox as a promise that one day, he'll return. After graduation, he started writing about a boy named "trouble", Hoping his books will track Ed down. He also wrote letters to him, revealing how he gained fame and respect as a writer, and how Ed influenced him and changed his life. He became a famous writer telling stories under Edward's shadow. The autumn breeze having a way of moving his hair, the ground washed by the rain, and the leaves dancing and surrounding him were already a faded memory. William walked looking for a familiar face, not counting on recognizing anyone though. His Alzheimer defeated him finally, and he wanted to check on his old paradise one last time. Seventy-eight years had passed, and there was no sign of the school left behind. All he could see was that cedar tree, still strong, waiting for Will and Ed. He smiled remembering those good old days vividly. Going forward, he buried the old lunchbox, containing all his letters. Will left his heaven not knowing what happened to Ed. He never realized Ed was forced to leave because his father thought William got close to him intentionally. He never knew it was his brother's heart beating in his chest. And now his letters were resting in the ground, just like his brother's heart did seventy-eight years ago.

THE ROAD

NOT TAKEN

By Atousa
Mirzapour

The poem "The Road Not Taken" by Robert Frost was first published in August 1915. It is a narrative poem with the rhyme scheme of ABAAB. The poem is about a speaker who has come over a fork in a way within the woods. The speaker is alone during this time and is uncertain about which way to go and tries to examine both ways. The poet, Robert Frost, delicately arranged the words to create the most appropriate tone. He used literary devices such as allusion and symbolism to help the reader effectively imagine the situation. Therefore, the reader can identify himself with the speaker.

*"Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;"*

The atmosphere of the poem is full of doubt and regret. The poetic use of the colors is symbolic, like the word "yellow" in the first line, which creates an atmosphere of remorse. It even sets the tone of indecision in the poem. One can see regret in the title, The Road Not Taken, which indicates that the speaker thinks about the path he did not take more than the road he picked. The word "sigh" in the last stanza is the most significant sign of regret in this poem. Moreover, the tone creates an emotional roller coaster to which the reader can relate.

*"I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference."*

The lines mentioned above are the core idea of what one can call existentialism, the concept of men who are born and die in a craziness called life with no savior.

In the poem, the diversion between the lines symbolizes real-life situations where you have to choose a path, not knowing anything about the consequences or even the opportunities you lost by picking another one. Everyone is obligated to make decisions by his will. As Jean-Paul Sartre says, human beings are condemned to be free. Human beings are free to choose, but this freedom does not necessarily bring happiness, because they would feel the burden of this heavy responsibility forever. The speaker says, "yet knowing how way leads on to way," which shows that each fork will lead to another one in life, and this is a constant process for the vulnerable man in the middle of life.

*"And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back"*

The poem is symbolic and allusive. The forest is a common symbol in the literature that represents the place where social laws would no longer apply, where the nature of human beings is there to obey. The nature and essence of life are full of unfulfilled desires that a person could not follow because of the shortage of time in life. The speaker knows no one is to blame, so he constantly mentions, "I took the one". The forest can also be the symbol of the unknown and the moment everyone finds himself in the middle of the unbeknownst world where he should blindly choose between two things even though he has no idea how his life would have been if he had chosen differently.

To sum up, it can be argued that the poem uses all symbolic terms and colors to portray the idea that the speaker and, in general, human beings are all alone in the middle of the unknown life, struggling to make a good decision. Hence one can say that this poem allusively depicts the idea of Existentialism.



Anglo-Indian cavalry in the desert on the Tigris River in Iraq during World War I.

THE FOLK OF AIR;

INTRODUCTION

By Ghazal Nasiri

"What they don't realize is this: Yes, they frighten me, but I have always been scared, since the day I got here. I was raised by the man who murdered my parents and reared in a land of monsters. I live with that fear, let it settle into my bones, and ignore it. If I didn't pretend to not be scared, I would hide under my owl-down coverlets in Madoc's estate forever. I would lie there and scream until there was nothing left of me. I refuse to do that. I will not do that."

Elfhome, faerie realm, is made up of four islands. Insmire, Insear, and Insweal create an outer circle with Insmoor in the middle. All three islands are connected by half-submerged rocky paths and stones large enough that it's possible to leap your way from one to the next. Faeries are twilight creatures. They wake up when the shadows grow long, and go to sleep before the sun rises. Faeries make up for the inability to lie with a panoply of deceptions and cruelties.

They are masters of twisted words, pranks, omissions, riddles, and scandals. They are known for their revenge upon one another for ancient, half-remembered slights. Storms are less fickle than they are, and seas are less capricious. Jude was seven years old when her parents were murdered, and she and her two sisters were stolen away to live in the treacherous High Court of Faerie. Jude grows to love and fears this mystical world. She channels her fear into anger because as she says being angry is much easier. *"Instead of being afraid, I could become something to fear."* Despite her not being magic, she yearns to find herself a place in the high court because if not there she can't belong anywhere else. *"Of course, I want to be like them. They're beautiful as blades forged in some divine fire."* In folk of the air, Holly Black builds a perfect love-hate relationship between Jude and Faerie. She defies them in every way she can.

She defies them in every way she can. She carves herself a place in feary and changes feary so that it becomes easier to live in for mortals. *"I don't yearn to be their equal, in my heart, I yearn to best them."* The Folk of the Air series is easy to read and a fun journey. It is quotable and heartbreaking. It is political, less magic, but fully fantasy. You should read the series because you want to be enthralled, and fall for characters who have no business being so confident. This book series is filled with twists and turns, as well as the development that solidifies characters by taking their base states and making them stronger. Things that are weaknesses and flaws are addressed and taken to grow from, and it is for that reason that I recommend.

Reference

Black, Holly. The Cruel Prince. London, England, Hot Key Books, 2018.



YOU

By Saba Khatibi

I was thinking about the blissful moments in my life. What makes the moments blissful and rapture for me? Poetry, sad prose, cheesecake, the sound of silence, the smell of soil after rain, you, you, and you. I was sitting on the bench on the rooftop. The air was full of dust and my heart was full of doubts. I was looking at you. I was looking at all of your details: your eyes, your laugh, your new haircut, the way you were telling your high school story, the way you were looking at me like we had a secret language, the way you were moving your hand while talking, the way you were coughing and making a joke about us sitting in that weather. I didn't feel the dust. I didn't feel the icy wind. I didn't feel the war that was going on out there and the air was no longer frosty and smoggy because you were by my side. You were like an antidote to the bite of my pain. You were a plot twist to the story of my life. You sat next to me, gave me your jacket, and held my hands. I hugged you and the dust in the sky turned into stars and fell on our heads like rain. It felt like summer in that wintry weather. We played Delicate by Taylor Swift. It is our song. Delicate like you, delicate like me, delicate like our hearts. I was nagging about acne on my face. You laughed quietly, poured me some tea into the cup, and told me that I am like a beautiful painting to you that you like to look at forever. I was about to say thank you for helping me to love myself more and to be a better person, but I didn't. Kafka once said "You are the knife I turn inside myself; this is love", but I disagree. I think I side with Camus because, as he said, I found with you a life force I'd thought I lost. Now I can tell you thank you for being the one who gives joyous moments to my life.

Alexander Graham Bell and Mabel Hubbard
Bell, Canada, 1898.

HIGHER EDUCATION

By Arefe Amini

Having aimed to admit to a university of repute for higher education, a considerable number of candidates are obsessed with ranking best in the university entrance exam. This is more tangible among more determined students. While believing that as a determined student, you are more likely to ensure desired results compared to those graduates who have distanced themselves from the academic world, as a Ph.D. student in TEFL, I would like to share my own experience as well as what I have acquired based on the interviews with the previous university entrance exam candidates for the sake of my university projects.

- Create an organized, albeit realistic, study schedule, while bearing in mind that an effective study plan outlines study times for all courses, encompassing both general and specialized courses, simultaneously.
- Arrange weekly schedules. This way you could reflect on and evaluate your work and consequently readjust and tailor your following study plan to your strengths and weaknesses at that time.
- Study the original sourcebooks. While not only does studying the items included in the previous exams provide test-wisness, the benefit offered to multiple-choice test takers to advantageously respond to test items without necessarily possessing the subject matter competence (Gibb, 1964), it also helps candidates familiarize themselves with the nature of the items, studying merely test books does not suffice to score over your opponents in a subject.
- Do not shelve the vocabulary section of GE (general English) due to any excuses. The inevitably complex and laborious nature of the sources is what causes a great number of candidates to ignore this section; however, were you among those few candidates investing in such a segment, you would definitely be privileged over the majority.
- Having monitored those social networks managed by field experts, prioritize piles of study sources based on their significance. Thorough and repeated studies of one source of high importance are more beneficial than deficient studies of several sources.
- Do not postpone planning for the university entrance exam to the last semesters of your current university programs. Believe in “the earlier, the better”!
- Attend at least some mock exams administered by an institute whose sample of test takers is representative of the main exam population.

By the way, it is worth keeping in mind that, a great many variables such as academic backgrounds, personality factors, learning styles, and degree of mental preoccupation could account for the diversity of the results among individuals even following the strictest study plans.

Reference

Gibb, B. G. (1964). Test-wisness as secondary cue response [Doctoral dissertation, Stanford University]. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global.



Dulce et Decorum Est

Bent double, like old beggars under sacks,
Knock-kneed, coughing like hags, we cursed through sludge,
Till on the haunting flares we turned our backs,
And towards our distant rest began to trudge.
Men marched asleep. Many had lost their boots,
But limped on, blood-shod. All went lame; all blind;
Drunk with fatigue; deaf even to the hoots
Of gas-shells dropping softly behind.

Gas! GAS! Quick, boys!—An ecstasy of fumbling
Fitting the clumsy helmets just in time,
But someone still was yelling out and stumbling
And flound'ring like a man in fire or lime.—
Dim through the misty panes and thick green light,
As under a green sea, I saw him drowning.

In all my dreams before my helpless sight,
He plunges at me, guttering, choking, drowning.

If in some smothering dreams, you too could pace
Behind the wagon that we flung him in,
And watch the white eyes writhing in his face,
His hanging face, like a devil's sick of sin;
If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood
Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs,
Obscene as cancer, bitter as the cud
Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues,—
My friend, you would not tell with such high zest
To children ardent for some desperate glory,
The old Lie: Dulce et decorum est
Pro patria more.

By Wilfred Owen

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ENGLISH BREAK

The Scientific Association of English Language and Literature of
Alzahra University

