



The Rambling **ROSE**

Clifton High School Pupil Newspaper



FIFTH ISSUE

MARCH 2024

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Foreword

Well, we have had sun, rain, hail, sleet, wind and snow in the last few weeks, which has resulted in a veritable scrambling of our brains! It has meant selecting appropriate clothes for the day ahead now requires degree-level knowledge of the movements of the Gulf stream. But never fear: if the meteorological shenanigans have left you too all in twist, I have just the thing for you - some calm, settled, time-out with the Spring 2024 Issue of our beloved Rambling Rose!

With this, our fifth publication, the Rambling Rose is now firmly rooted at Clifton High School. And in good time too, as steerage of our pupil newspaper now hands over formally to Arabella Williams and Jess White: a very warm, official welcome to them both. Having shadowed Aneline, they have already managed many discussions and meetings about the Autumn Issue and this Spring Issue. I have every faith in their passion and ability – they will be fantastic! To Aneline: we say thank you for the Direction that you have given the Rambling Rose, as well as the Love and care you've invested (not to mention hours – thanks also to Mrs W for stepping in a little bit! - Ed.). You can now step back, safe in the knowledge that your vision is in safe hands. Very best of luck for all your undertakings and please stay in touch: we keenly anticipate seeing your name in some journalistic publications in the future when we can say, "Is that Aneline Wood? We used to work with her; she founded our Pupil Newspaper!"

It is a pleasure to welcome back some old hands and regular contributors to this Issue: Aidan's chess challenge, Ted's music musings and Matthew's murderous mystery. We also welcome new contributions from writers across the senior school, covering a diverse range of interests from Arthuriana to Hardy, Gatsby, and female role models in the ancient world (a stunningly written synthesis of some incredible women); even a look at The Weeknd too. The Spring term is a notoriously short one – only about 10 weeks in total – and it is much appreciated that juggling life, school, coursework, homework, revision, sports, drama, music can make time tight. Writing for the Pupil Newspaper should always come from the heart and feel natural: a wonderful escape from the pressures of everything else.

'Grease' has just played out at the Redgrave to record-breaking seat sales: an absolute tour de force by every single member of the Clifton High community who was involved. Thus, it feels like a very apt moment as I wind up this Foreword to say to the Marketing Team that we are hopelessly devoted to you for your support. And to all the Clifton High School extended family: may those summer nights be with us soon; and may it not be rainin' on prom night for our Year 13 leavers when their day comes.

Good luck to GCSE, AS and A level pupils (and their families!) - wishing you all every success and luck for the future.

Mrs Pippa Lyons-White, Head of English

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LITERATURE

The Great Gatsby - 1925 Novella to 2013 Film Adaptation

The renowned novella 'The Great Gatsby' written by F. Scott Fitzgerald is not only considered a literary masterpiece, it has also been a contender for the title of The Great American Novel. As a writer, Fitzgerald has successfully portrayed the sophistication and prosperity of the early 1920s. However, can this literary classic be adapted for the big screen as successfully as it exists in print?

In 2013, a new adaptation of 'The Great Gatsby' directed by Baz Luhrman, (arguably an improvement on the 1974 film) was released, showing high promise for the historical romantic drama to be tastefully portrayed on screen, with award winning actor Leonardo DiCaprio as Jay Gatsby. Despite having mixed reviews when the film was released, it is argued by Prof. John Fraterrigo (April 10, 2022) that "the film does a solid job of accurately portraying defining aspects of the roaring 20s" including examples of historical events and entertainment such as jazz music, changing social attitudes and controversial fashion.



Living up to the glamour and lavishly described setting of the novella is difficult on screen. As Peter Bradshaw wrote in The Guardian, "The parties are logistically impressive, but Fitzgerald's disturbing sense that we are witnessing something like an American Weimar is not really there, and even the gushing, shaken-champagne-bottle approach

doesn't quite approximate the giddy sense that America really is where gigantic fortunes are suddenly and unfairly to be made." Although Luhrman can impress the audience with high-budgeted party scenes, Bradshaw describes the 'shaken-champagne-bottle approach' still doesn't heavily represent the heightened extremities of America's 1920s excesses. Yet, this can be easily imagined for a smaller price when reading the novella.

So, why would we want to watch this adaptation when we could read the book? What is drawing us in? The sensation of watching the effortless acting of critically acclaimed actors, with the bold glamour of flapper dresses and high-end estates is enticing. As an audience, you certainly receive what you've paid for in terms of budget. Additionally, the charming and yet exposed acting of Leonardo DiCaprio playing Jay Gatsby, proves to be a success at bringing Gatsby's nobility to life. However, this adaptation does lack a sense of vulnerability to some of the characters. In particular, "Tobey Maguire is miscast or misdirected, playing Nick as gauche, uncomfortable, unsophisticated, childlike – less an involved observer than an intruder," writes Philip French in The Guardian. Nick is portrayed as though he is less in control than in the book. This could be due to the adaptation beginning with Nick as a patient in a sanatorium, narrating as a form of therapy to a psychiatrist. Although this doesn't occur in the novella, it is an insight into Fitzgerald's personal history, as Nick is being treated for alcoholism which similarly Fitzgerald would be later in his life.

This speaks to the accuracy of the adaptation compared to the original novella. The producers included a new introduction to the story of 'The Great Gatsby' which gives an insight into Nick's recovery but this could have been necessary to cater to the modern audience. Otherwise, the producers have included all the crucial plots in the adaptation but left out some of the sub-plots to ensure the length of the movie is appropriate. On the other

hand, it can be criticised that, with the removal of some sub-plots, there may be fans of the book left disappointed by the adaptation. For instance, the romance between Nick and Jordan is removed, which makes some of the behaviour of the two characters towards each other less clear. However, all in all, I believe the important details of the main plot are covered so, from an accuracy perspective, the film is satisfactory.



You don't have to read the book, you can watch the adaptation instead. If you prefer watching films rather than reading, then I would agree you could get away with this adaptation, as it can be a more easily digestible form of media. Yet, personally, while watching the movie after I had read the novella, I found a deeper connection to the motivations of the characters and I found it more enjoyable. Is it possible to get away with watching the film without missing any important sub-plots? As explained earlier, this adaptation does miss a few minor moments with the removal of Nick and Jordan's brief romance. But that doesn't matter significantly, as the rest of the film is very similar to the original book.

This brings me to my final conclusion; watching the screen version only or reading the book first varies from book to book and film to film. Here are some examples of films which, in my opinion, you could watch despite not having read the book: Harry Potter, Percy Jackson, Pride and Prejudice, Romeo and Juliet. This mostly depends on how faithful the adaptations are to the original books and each individual's viewpoint.



LITERATURE

Tess of the D'Urbervilles by Thomas Hardy: A Shocking Tale of Love and Society

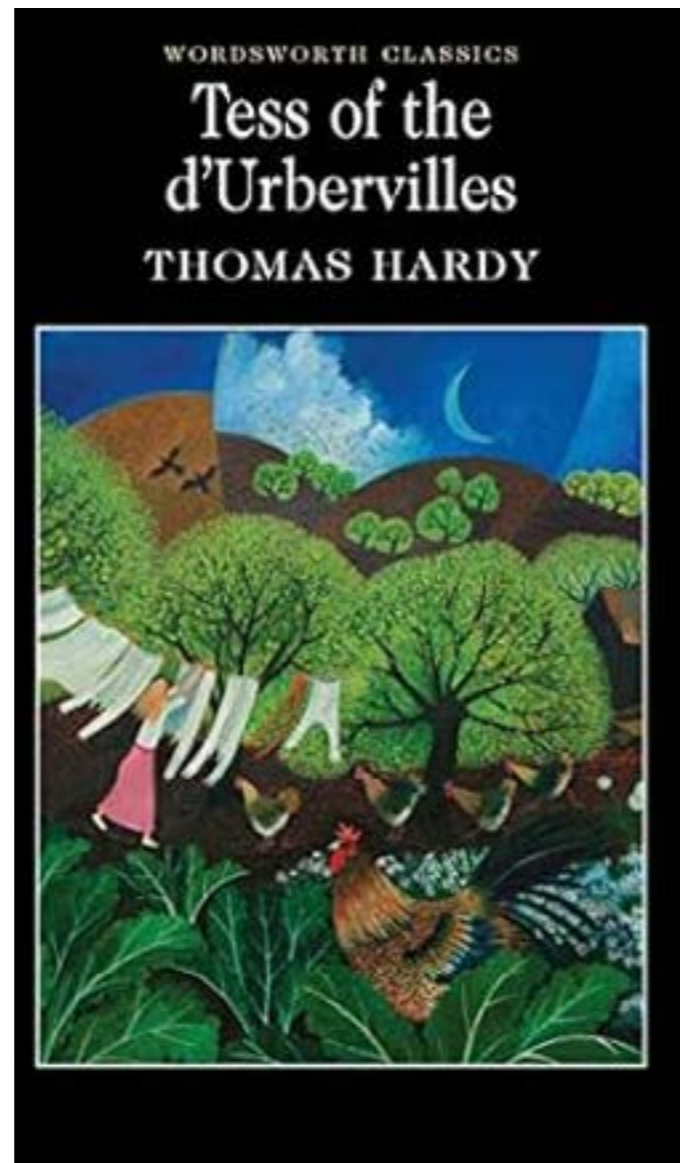
In Thomas Hardy's 'Tess of the D'Urbervilles,' readers are immersed in the picturesque landscape of 19th-century England, where the central character, Tess Durbeyfield, navigates the intricate webs of society and the intense realm of love.

At the beginning of the novel, Tess is introduced as a naïve young woman with limited knowledge and societal experience. At first, I found Tess relatively irritating and became easily frustrated with her inability to stand up for herself (although I felt immensely sympathetic towards her when life seemed continuously to deal her a poor set of cards). However, as the novel spans over several years, as a reader, I was able to see Tess's growth and begin to understand and almost relate to her. I can confidently declare that the 16-year-old Tess that we first meet in the book is a completely different person from the mature woman who concludes the story. After all the hardships she faces, if she didn't grow, in more ways than one, the novel would have felt pointless.

In short, I found it to be a difficult (and disturbing) read. The themes in this novel are extremely distressing, so much so that when it was initially published in 1891, it was published in a censored version, along with the serialised version. At just 16, Tess' innocence is stripped from her in more ways than one, and she spends the rest of her life dealing with the consequences. The tragedy is, she deserves none of it. The punishment she endures is due to no fault of her own, yet she must suffer alone.

One of the worst punishments that Tess is forced to face is the men within the novel. In a nutshell, despite claiming to love her, both Angel Clare and Alec D'Urberville act with little respect towards Tess. I had an inkling before reading that I would despise Alec and I foolishly hoped that Angel would be the leading man. I was so wrong! They are both awful. It is almost admirable that a man himself,

Thomas Hardy, is able to create such a pathetic and disrespectful show of masculinity. One aspect of books that readers (specifically of my generation) adore is romance. It has the ability to get you hooked in a book; The whole 'will they, won't they' is a classic to trap readers into a novel. Hardy somehow manages to incorporate this into his novel, except it is unbelievably obvious that Tess isn't fated for a blissful ending. We just feed into Tess' hopes for euphoria.



I will admit the novel is, at times, hard to understand. As it was published in 1891, Hardy's use of traditional and complex language can be challenging. This is why I wouldn't recommend it as a first read. However, I enjoyed the demanding nature of the novel as I found the writing style conflicting with the books that I usually find myself picking up to read. Additionally, at points, the plot caused me to feel a bit puzzled. There was one specific point where I had to google to check whether a particular event actually happened as it was only hinted at. Furthermore, there are a large amount of time skips within the novel which do make it a little hard to follow. But if all else fails, a little google won't ruin anything!

To conclude, this timeless classic brilliantly depicts the cruelty of society and takes readers on a perfectly curated journey of love, pain, and tragedy. The dark themes do result in the novel not being suitable for younger readers (most recommend the novel to 13+ years), however the story's thought-provoking aspects make it what it is. I personally really enjoyed the novel and became immersed within the world of 'Tess of the D'Urbervilles'.

Blurb:

"When Tess Durbeyfield is driven by family poverty to claim kinship with the wealthy D'Urbervilles and seek a portion of their family fortune, meeting her 'cousin' Alec proves to be her downfall. A very different man, Angel Clare, seems to offer her love and salvation, but Tess must choose whether to reveal her past or remain silent in the hope of a peaceful future. With its sensitive depiction of the wronged Tess and powerful criticism of social convention, Tess of the D'Urbervilles is one of the most moving and poetic of Hardy's novels."

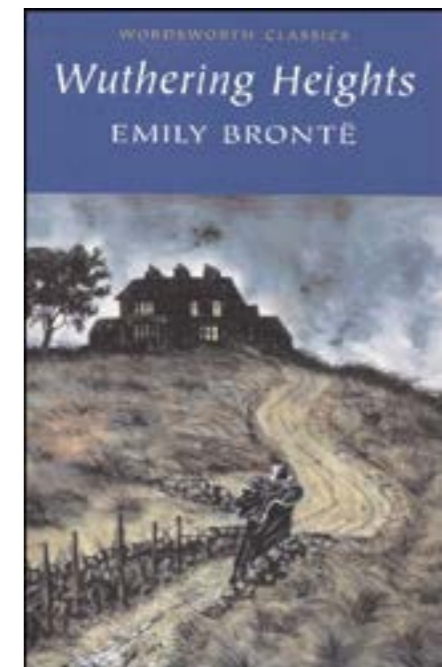
Reviews:

Goodreads: 3.8/5

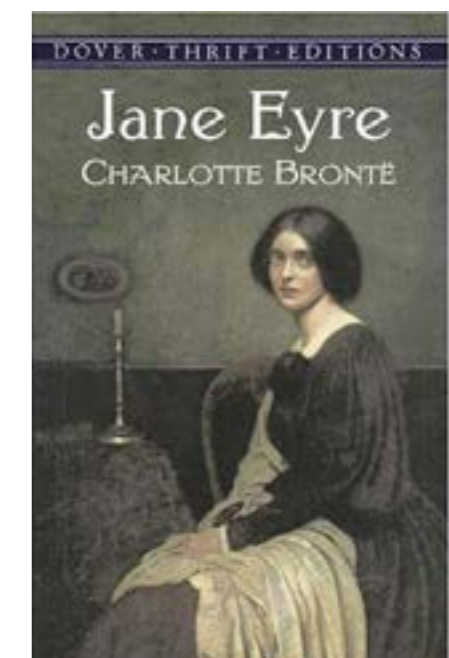
Amazon UK: 4.6/5

Below are some similar novels which you may also enjoy:

Wuthering Heights by Emily Brontë



Jane Eyre by Charlotte Brontë



MEDIA

Are Cowboys realistic? The history of gun slingers

Arguably the most famous era of American history, cowboys dominated Western cinema, culture, and media. But are the movies accurate? Is it possible to wield two revolvers and shoot 15 Yankees in a saloon? Is it true that cowboys robbed over 100,000 banks over 40 years? This article aims to answer these questions and reveal the truth about America's famous gun slingers.

How are Cowboys portrayed in the media?

Recently, Western movies have taken a back seat in productions; often doing poorly at the box office and being forgotten, such as 'The Ballad of Buster Scruggs', which didn't even release their box office numbers. This is a far-cry from the 1960s, with legendary movies such as 'The Good, the Bad and the Ugly'. John Wayne, Clint Eastwood and Henry Fonda are arguably some of the most famous actors in movie history. Nowadays, most people can hardly name a single 'Western' actor. This, unfortunately, has led to a decline in movie quality as most modern Western movies are forgotten almost as soon as they are released. The three modern exceptions include Django Unchained, Rango, and Red Dead Redemption 2. These three pieces of media single handedly keep the Western genre alive and are worth their own article, so I'll explain them briefly.

Django Unchained

Set in the deep south before the Civil War, Django is first seen along a line of other slaves being moved. He is then saved by Dr King Schultz, who makes a deal with Django – identify three wanted men in exchange for his freedom and \$75. Over time, the two bond over bounty hunting and, sooner or later, they are partners, making a small fortune. Soon Django reminisces about his wife, Broomhilda, and they devise a plan to rescue her. They go to Candyland where they meet Calvin J Candie. They plan to pretend to buy a mandingo fighter for \$12,000 (\$224,000) and then also buy Broomhilda as an escort. The plan goes south when

Candie's houseslave, Stephan, finds out about Broomhilda and Django's love for each other; and tells Candie. Candie is furious and forces Schultz to buy Broomhilda for \$12,000.

After they leave, Schultz shoots Candie, and is then shot by a henchman. This leads to Django going on a killing spree, shooting Candie's men, until he is captured. He is about to be tortured, when he is told he was to be "slaved off to a mining company". Whilst Django is travelling, he creates a story about being a bounty hunter, and convinces the slavers to let him use a gun. He shoots them, frees the other slaves, and goes back to Candyland. He shoots up the entire house and then leaves with Broomhilda on his horse, with an explosion behind him.



Django Unchained movie

Rango

Rango (voiced by Johnny Depp) is an imaginative chameleon who is thrown out of his terrarium and is stuck in the Nevada desert. He finds a town called Dirt where he takes on the persona of a hero, a gunslinger who could defeat "Rattlesnake Jake". Problems arise when Jake appears, and when there is a shortage of Water (Dirt's currency). Rango leaves Dirt after being called out for his lies and discovers

"The Man of No Name" (Clint Eastwood). He returns to Dirt with a single bullet to finish off Jake and prove himself a hero. The mayor of the town, John, took Rango's gun to shoot Jake and Rango, but Rango took the last bullet and destroyed the water bank, freeing the people of Dirt. The movie ends with Jake tipping his hat in recognition of "one legend to another".

Red Dead Redemption 2

After the disastrous failed robbery at Blackwater, Arthur Morgan and the Van Delinde gang find themselves trapped in a blizzard. After the blizzard clears, the gang travel the American West, encountering the real-life Pinkerton detective agency, Italian mob bosses, and a historic feud between two rival confederate families. During these, Arthur develops tuberculosis and (depending on your honour) he will either accept his death or fear it. The game dives into the psychology of Arthur Morgan, specifically his relationship with Dutch, the leader of the gang. He took Arthur in as a little boy and, along with Hosea, became a parental figure to him. After the robbery, Dutch became obsessed with "one last heist", which causes him to become less cautious and irrational (unlike his usual self). This results in Dutch abandoning Arthur for the army, leaving his other 'son' (John) behind and refusing to rescue John's partner, Abigail. After Arthur and Sadie rescue Abigail and John, they confront Dutch about his behaviour, which leads to a stand-off, although this is quickly diffused by the Pinkertons showing up. This causes Arthur to have a choice: either go back to get the gang's money or save John. After making his choice, Arthur fights Micah (a rat) and convinces Dutch to leave. How you die depends on your honour; if you have low honour, you'll succumb to your illness and, if you have high honour, you will be executed by Micah.

Do these examples accurately portray The Wild West? In short, no. The term 'cowboy' was used literally to refer to a "rancher who herded cattle". A day in the life of a rancher was: wake up, drink 2 pints of beer or equivalent, herd the cattle, milk the cows, fix the fences, maybe hunt if food in the house was getting low,



Rango movie



Red Dead Redemption 2 movie

drink some more, then go to sleep. Yes, it really was that simple. Ranchers rarely ever became outlaws, in fact, only eight banks were robbed between 1859-1900. In comparison, the peak of American bank robberies was in 1991, with just under 2,000 banks being robbed in a single year! This just goes to show how inaccurately the media has portrayed these quite boring ranchers.

Weapons used by Cowboys

One aspect accurately portrayed by the media is the weaponry that the cowboys often used. The history of American firearms is surprisingly complex; with Colt revolutionising the pistol with the experimental Paterson, the famous Navy revolver and the single action army pistol, all contributing to an era of famous firearms. However, most of these pistols were not for civilian use. For example, out of the 1100 Colt Walkers ever produced, only one was ever sold for civilian use. For the 1851 Navy revolver, out of 215,000, 42,000 were sold to civilians. These examples show the limited number of firearms Cowboys used. Most of the time, they were used

for home defence. The same goes for long arms, except for the shotgun; the shotgun was often used against stagecoaches. The term “sitting shotgun” was created as a term for people who sit in the passenger seat. They were used by some outlaws, such as Black Bart, but they were used for defence against robbers and other outlaws.

Conclusion

Overall, it is clear to see that the media portrays cowboys in a romanticised light, acting as daring gunslingers who rob for the American dream, men who (with a cigar in their mouth) shoot up a saloon because another outlaw looked at them weirdly. The reality is this is just not true. The truth is simple: cowboys were nothing more than ranchers, who herded cattle and drank (the average 15-year-old was drinking 5 gallons a year of pure alcohol*). While the stories of John Wayne, Arthur Morgan, and Rango may be our perceptions of the Wild West, the West was actually not so wild in real life.

*Resto NYC: What did cowboys drink a lot of whiskey



MUSIC

The Weeknd

The international sensation, Abel Tesfaye, known as The Weeknd, is number one in the world on Spotify, the most used music app in the world.



influenced by the people he saw on the TV and heard on the radio. When Abel was 17 years old, he was kicked out of school and was forced to go to another school on the other side of town. After 6 months he dropped out. Cleverly, he did crosswords to keep up his vocabulary. He convinced his friends to move in with him and then started to find a love of entertaining his friends. He started a rap duo and then subsequently began writing songs for a production company called The Noise. He produced an EP, which took its name from the production company. With his managers and creative director, he then founded a record label called XO and, shortly after, he adopted the name The Weeknd.

Awards and successes:

His first number 1 hit was the song “Can’t Feel My Face” from his second album, in August 2015, which was when his success first started to soar. His debut album, “House of Balloons”, had been released in 2011. His most successful song is “Blinding Lights”, which was released on 29th November 2019.

His accolades include four Grammy awards, twenty Billboard Music awards, twenty-two Juno awards, six American Music awards, two MTV Video Music awards and a Latin Grammy award. In February 2021, he performed at the American Super Bowl making over \$7 million dollars. He has also won a Guinness world record for the world’s most popular artist.

In addition, he has given large donations to charity and has been very vocal about social issues, establishing the XO Humanitarian Fund.

Abel was born on 16th February 1990 in Toronto, Canada. He is a singer, songwriter and record producer.

His parents, Samra and Makkonen Tesfaye arrived in Canada in the 1980s from Ethiopia. His father left their family when Abel was just two years old and his mother had to work seven jobs in order for them to be stable. Owing to his mother being extremely busy, his grandma also helped in raising him. Due to his Ethiopian ethnicity, he attended an Ethiopian Orthodox Church where he was first introduced to music. His idol and inspiration was none other than Michael Jackson, who became something of a hero to Ethiopian people through his song “We are the World”, which was dedicated to their nation. Young Abel couldn’t get enough of that song and it’s what helped him find his voice.

During school, Abel was in French immersion, he adored French and wanted to speak it all day. Growing up in Scarborough (in Toronto), he attended Samuel Hearn Middle School and started to find his love for R&B, listening to Missy Elliot and Neptune. He had no male role model at home and he was

MUSIC

Jockstrap Review

A few months ago, I was lucky enough to nab the last two tickets to see the final performance of Jockstrap's tour, at the Barbican in London. The fact that I bought them the morning after my very first encounter with the band and their debut album should demonstrate the sheer stylish and pointy force that runs throughout 'I Love You Jennifer B'.

What followed this split-second decision was a good few months of Jockstrap blasting through my headphones — not once did I get bored as I grew familiar with all the quirks of the chaotic yet cohesive sound of their discography.

This unity of madness and melody is explained by the makeup of the group, a coming together of Georgia Ellery and Taylor Skye, the former a songwriter, violinist, guitarist and member of the band Black Country, New Road, and the latter a producer characterised by oddball electronic beats. Take as an illustration of this a Jockstrap staple, 'The City', which begins as a warm and mournful piano ballad

before hazing up with electronics and suddenly dropping down into a solid beat and sporadic, crazy narrative. The duality of this song is a clear example of where the two musicians' respective styles clash and mingle in a groovy, scrappy way, enjoyable in its outrageousness.

In their debut album 'I Love You Jennifer B', though, the colliding asteroids of their talents have formed a more stable mixture, and exciting and hectic production is integrated more seamlessly into airtight songwriting. 'The City', in fact, has been reinterpreted into the standout Concrete 'Over Water', more haunting, more friendly, still spiralling but within itself. The ballad is set against a whimsical, wiggling backdrop which flows into increasing mayhem, pushed through by chants and underlined by sliding violins before the electricity dissolves into the thin water and night air.

Alongside this eerie quality runs a sort of tongue-in-cheek flirtiness, that's built not only into



Georgia's weird yet mundane lyrics and otherworldly yet totally local delivery, but also into the personality of Taylor's production. A perfect instance of this is the danceable Debra, the subject matter of the song being grief but the beat bouncing and the production placing a cheeky and distant little 'Hello?' at various moments. Seeing this song performed live proved no reduction of this iconic smirkiness, with an eight-piece strings section thrusting out sudden cascades reminiscent of Bollywood high-drama.

The pendulum between the two styles swings further to each side in each song. Where Taylor's production really takes over is 50/50, a sonically intense track that makes little sense and, with that, a whole lot of stupid fun. We start the song madly learning the vowel sounds with Georgia before these vocals are chopped and distorted to become part of the beat itself. It's impossible to sing along accurately but irresistible to try, a phenomenon evident in the final moments of the show in the rising, thrashing audience — a testament to the gorgeous power of the silliness of their symphonies. Jockstrap takes their art seriously, but not themselves — a perfect combo evident as well in the glittering Greatest Hits, which combines trip hop and a certain ABBA-esque quality with a wink.

Other tracks exhibit more of a pure focus on songwriting and more acoustic instrumentation, a

spectacle that seems especially true of Glasgow with streaming strings, playing cleverly with tension in the gradual rising arc of the steadily strumming guitars. Or of What's It All About? which hosts the more flowy and orchestral. Although, neither of these are without their iconic weirdness.

It was this consistency of style across the versatility of their sound that kept me so excited about Jockstrap's music, and when the day of the concert arrived, I was all the more enamoured. The scope of their soundscapes was made even more apparent and appreciated by the abundance of instruments on stage: a triangle of piano, harpsichord and electric keyboard surrounding Taylor Skye with the keys with which to unlock things, a drummer's domain snaring, booming, that strings section, Georgia Ellery's voice and guitar... After such an awe-inspiring performance, Jockstrap reminded us of how, behind it all, is mad fun, returning to The City as Georgia cracked eggs and danced barefoot and a gigantic mod-rock monster stomped onto the stage to the beat and summoned us out of our seats.



I'll leave it there for want of not giving it all away.



GAMES

Frank Marshall - The Gold Coins Game!

After you look at the title 'Gold Coins Game', you may be thinking that the game is about money. Well, you would be wrong! This is the name of a chess game played by Stepan Levitsky and Frank Marshall. The game was played in Breslau (now called Wroclaw) on July 20th, 1912, during the master's tournament of DSB Congress. The reason why this game is called the 'Gold Coins Game' is because according to legend, after Marshall's winning last move of the game, gold coins were tossed onto the board by the spectators, although this is contested by other accounts.

Frank James Marshall is Marshall's full name. He was born on August 10th, 1877, in New York City and died on November 9th, 1944. He lived in Montreal, Canada, from age 8 to 19. He began to play chess at the age of 10 and by 1890 (aged 13), he was one of the leading players in Montreal. Later, he became the U.S Chess Champion from 1909 to 1936 and one of the world's strongest chess players in the early part of the 20th century. Stepan Levitsky, Marshall's opponent, was born on 25th April 1876 in Serpukhov, a city in Moscow Oblast, Russia, and died on the 21st March 1924 in Glubokaya. He was a Russian Chess Master and is perhaps best remembered by chess players today as the loser in the 'Gold Coins Game'.

The numbers are shown according to the diagram below.



What did Marshall do? Here is the game:

White: Stepan Levitsky

Black: Frank Marshall Opening: French Defence

Tournament: DSB Congress XVIII 1912

1. d4 e6 2. e4 d5 3. Nc3 c5 4. Nf3 Nc6 5. exd5 exd5 6. Be2 Nf6 7. 0-0 Be7

Levitsky's idea is to make the black bishop move again.

8. Bg5 0-0 9. dxc5 Be6 10. Nd4 Bxc5 11. Nxe6

Pete Tamburro (a chess writer) is highly critical of this move, which exchanges the knight for the bishop, later saying "Marshall has an open line for his king rook, and he will threaten e5 with a beautiful centre" (the four squares in the middle of the board).

11... fxe6 12. Bg4 Qd6 13. Bh3 Rae8 14. Qd2 Bb4

Black pins the knight to White's queen (if the piece is pinned, it means that the defending piece cannot move out of an attacking piece's line of attack without exposing a more valuable defending piece).

15. Bxf6 Rxf6 16. Rad1 Qc5

Increasing the pressure on c3. Levitsky "figures that Black's threatened 17...Bxc3 18.Qxc3 Qxc3 would give him a lost endgame (the final stage of the chess game) because of the doubled c-pawns (doubled pawns are two pawns of the same colour residing on the same file* (file is used to state the column in chess) and in this case it is the pawns on the C column), so he decides to make his queen more active [with 17.Qe2].

17. Qe2 Bxc3 18. bxc3 Qxc3

Black wins a pawn.

19. Rxd5

White regains his pawn, because of the pin on the e-pawn by White's queen (if 19...exd5?? then mate follows: 20.Qxe8+ Rf8 21.Be6+ Kh8 22.Qxf8#).

19... Nd4 20. Qh5

A better choice would have been 20.Qe4 Rf4 21.Qe5 h6.

20... Ref8

Marshall doubles his rooks on the f-file, and, because he has removed the pin on his pawn, threatens 21...exd5. He also threatens 21...Rxf2 because 22.Rxf2?? would allow 22.. Qe1+ 23.Rf1 Qxf1#.

21. Re5

Levitsky moves his rook to a safe square and defends e1, but Pete Tamburro notes that 21...Rxf2 was still possible because 22.Rxf2 loses to 22...Qa1+. Marshall, however, had a greater treat in store.

21... Rh6 22. Qg5

The placement of the queen means White's g2-pawn is overloaded (overloading is used in chess to describe when the defensive piece is given an additional assignment which it cannot complete without abandoning its original defensive assignment) with preventing the knight fork (fork is used to describe when a piece attacks multiple enemy pieces simultaneously) 22...Nf3+ and defending the bishop, so Marshall wins a piece with his next move.

22... Rxh3! 23. Rc5 Qg3!!

Black moves his queen to where it may be captured three ways. Some annotators have even given this move three exclamation marks ("!!!"). Tim Krabbé (a Dutch journalist, novelist and chess player) considers it the third-most stunning move of all time. Black threatens ...Qxh2#. All three ways of capturing the queen fail, and other escape attempts fail as well:

- 24.hxg3 Ne2#
- 24.fxg3 Ne2+ 25.Kh1 Rxf1# (a back-rank mate, a checkmate delivered by a rook or queen along the opponent's back column)

- any move by White's rook on f1 loses to 24...Qxh2+ 25.Kf1 Qh1#
- 24.f4 (or 24.f3) Ne2+ 25.Kh1 Qxh2#



- 24.Qxg3 (relatively best) Ne2+ 25.Kh1 Nxe3+ 26.Kg1 (if 26.fxg3 Rxf1#) Nxf1 27.gxh3 Nd2 with an easily won endgame, or 26...Ne2+ Kh1 followed by moving the rook on h3 away.

0-1

Levitsky resigned (Levitsky lost the game by resigning verbally or writing it on the score sheet).

A normal chess game can be ended in three ways: Checkmate (when the king is threatened to be captured or has nowhere to escape), Stalemate (when both sides don't have enough pieces to threaten taking each other's kings), and Resignation (when one side resigns verbally or resigns by writing 0-1/1-0 or by circling the result on the score sheet). And this concludes the Gold Coin game.

FICTION



a CLIFTON HIGH PRIVATE EYE mystery

Having been dropped off at school at 7:41 am and having nothing to do until registration started, Amira found herself aimlessly wandering into the Rose Theatre, before turning her attention to the wall-sized mirror to her left. She had always liked mirrors. How simple a piece of technology they were to have been invented millennia ago, yet so functional to still be used today! More delightful still were antique mirrors- the fact that they were functionally the same as any £10 compact mirror, yet could still cost ten times more, fascinated her. And don't even get her started on the symbolic power of mirrors in art and literature. Amira smiled at her reflection as she mused on the wondrous prospect of moving on to GCSE English.

As she continued to stare at the mirror, though, she couldn't help but notice a movement in the reflection. She looked up, and, lo and behold, there was none other than a pair of legs dangling from the Rose Theatre ceiling.

It was at this point that the theatre door finally decided to close with a groan and a heavy thump and only then did the pair of legs realise there was someone else in the room behind them, and a head swerved around to stare at Amira from behind the ski mask it was wearing.

There was a brief moment of silence when both parties were unsure of how to react before they simultaneously took action. Amira began running out of the room, while the masked figure let go of the ceiling truss beams from which they had been hanging and dropped to the floor. Amira was halfway through the door when her pursuer grabbed her arm and yanked her to the ground. There was guilt in the

masked figure's eyes when they swung their crowbar at Amira's head, then panic when she ducked and the crowbar hit the mirror instead. Nonetheless, the figure persisted and, the second time they swung their crowbar around, the blow landed; Amira's head hit the floor.

As the masked figure dashed out of the door, the last thing Amira could think of before drifting off into unconsciousness was the crack that now ruined the Rose Theatre mirror.

"We'll find the person that did this," Mr. Gudmund comforted Amira. "In the meantime, we're gonna have to send you to the hospital now; you've told us more than enough information."

Amira nodded her bandaged head, and slowly stood up from the Rose Theatre floor, before looking back at the damaged mirror. "You will get that fixed, won't you, sir?" she asked.

"I promise," Mr. Gudmund said. "We've called the police, and after this fiasco is over, it'll be a mirror fitter that we'll call next."

A smile from Amira, then: "The police are getting involved?"

"Yes," Mr. Gudmund confirmed, "I recognise that it might be escalating things, but we can't afford to miss any important clues and allow more criminal activity to happen."

He paused sorrowfully before saying: "Not after this school has already seen three murders. So yes, the police are on their way."

"The police are already here," a voice came from

behind them, "but I'm afraid it's just me today."

Mr. Gudmund turned around, and saw Detective Sergeant Rosa Ryan walking up to him. He held his hand out in greeting, and she shook it.

"DS Ryan, good to see you again," Mr. Gudmund said. "Though, like last time, the circumstances in which we meet are most macabre."

"Macabre circumstances are what I deal with on a daily basis," she replied, "and this time I'm dealing with them without backup. HQ decided it wasn't worth continually pouring resources into the same school if there's no murder case, so they just decided to send their only resident Rosarian."

"Which is you," Mr. Gudmund pointed out. "But it is good, I suppose, that no one has died today. I have faith that if we work this out well, nothing else bad will come of this."

"That would be nice," DS Ryan responded, as Amira followed a school nurse out of the Rose Theatre. "So what's the situation?"

Mr. Gudmund told her what Amira had recounted to him.

"Interesting," DS Ryan said. "So there's something of worth in this ceiling that this masked tried to steal?"

"It would seem that way," Mr. Gudmund said, "seeing as they were brandishing a crowbar. But you raise a good point. What is there to steal here?"

The pair's heads aimed upwards to study the ceiling.

"I had considered maybe it was the stage lights the thief was trying to steal?" Mr. Gudmund suggested. "Those look expensive."

"Maybe the metal beams themselves," DS Ryan pointed out, "I've seen people steal for less."

"Whatever it is, it's something the thief clearly thought was worth risking their job to steal," Mr. Gudmund said.

"Do we have any suspects yet?" DS Ryan asked.

"Four," Mr. Gudmund said. "Mr. Pullian, a Drama

teacher; Miss Widowson, a Spanish teacher; Mrs. Quark-Mirku, a Sociology teacher; and Mr. Lemonby, a History teacher. But other than the fact that these four are all just teachers who happened to be in school at the time, I unfortunately have no other reasons to suspect them."

"That is unfortunate," DS Ryan stroked her chin pensively. "How come you suspect all these teachers but not pupils, though?"

"From my experience, pupils don't tend to go to school earlier than needed," Mr. Gudmund explained. "Not only do teachers do so much more, but we can also more accurately pinpoint which ones in particular were in school because of the need to use a staff ID card to enter the school. This meant the school office was able to compile a list of staff members who were in at the time of the crime. This narrows down the search and makes it more worthwhile to consider the teachers first."

"Obviously, some teachers may not have used their ID to enter because, say, someone held the door for them, or something. But seeing as Amira said she only spotted the thief at about 7:45, that indicates the thief should have been in earlier than that point. Therefore, they should have entered the school at a time when few people were going in and out, so it is likely that few or no staff members at all who entered the school up to that point did so without their ID cards, meaning our list of names is probably reliable."

"Fair enough," DS Ryan said. "So this list of teachers, are there just the four suspects on there?"

Mr. Gudmund shook his head. "I gotta admit, there were about a dozen names on there. But most of them were non-teacher staff who were either already cracking on with work and could prove that they weren't trying to steal stuff at 7:45 since they were busy doing their jobs, or who were grouped up in a school office with other people who could alibi for them. So, I narrowed the list down to just these four names - the only people who didn't fit the two criteria I mentioned."

"Clever," DS Ryan remarked. "Thanks for finding out so much information."

“Thank the school office,” Mr. Gudmund said. “They were the ones who managed to write up the list of names within 10 minutes of Amira telling us what she saw. I just did the narrowing.”

“Well, thanks to the school office, in that case,” DS Ryan said. “Right, well, if we can’t figure out what the thief’s after, then we’re kind of stuck. So maybe it’s time to start grilling our suspects. Perhaps the guilty one will reveal something about what they’re trying to steal that we don’t know.”

“Yeah, I guess speaking to the suspects would be our next best move.” Mr. Gudmund said. “Could I request something though?”

DS Ryan nodded, and Mr. Gudmund continued: “I was wondering if we should reveal as little information to the suspects as possible. As in, we shouldn’t even tell them the reasons why we suspect them. I know these guys: they’re smart, and (if they need to) they will be able to use the information we tell them to make themselves look as innocent as possible. The last time a murder happened in December, the murderer tried to use a piece of evidence we gave him to frame someone else. In June, from what I know, informing the suspects of new developments resulted in a complete breakdown of trust. And in March last year, we literally arrested the wrong person for a few minutes after the murderer exploited the information we gave her. We really have to learn from our mistakes and stop telling so much stuff to these guys. I just wanted to see if that’d be alright with you.”

“I suppose that could help,” DS Ryan admitted. “We had tried pursuing a policy of transparency so that the suspects could trust us and tell us more stuff. But it could be time to shake things up.”

Mr. Gudmund stroked his beard sombrely. “Yeah,” he said. “I just don’t want all hell to break loose and everyone to start pointing fingers at each other again.”

“Hey,” DS Ryan said, “chin up, man. We’ll ask each suspect some questions, and then we’ll probably be able to extract a confession in no time. It’s like you said: if we divulge as little info as possible, then this could work out.”

“Sounds like a plan,” Mr. Gudmund said. He rose to his feet. “I’ll go round-up those suspects.”

“And what about you, Miss Widowson?” Mr. Gudmund said. He, along with DS Ryan and the four suspects were sitting in the Head’s office. “Why were

you in school so early today?”

“Well, no reason,” Miss Widowson said. “I always try to leave the house earlier on Monday mornings. To beat the traffic, of course. I guess traffic was just exceptionally good today.”

“And what were you doing in school at about 7:45?”

“As the Head of Year 11, I had some year level assembly planning work to do.” she paused. “Oh, is that why you suspect me? Because I use the Rose Theatre a lot?”

“As we’ve already mentioned, we won’t be revealing more information than necessary,” DS Ryan said. “And we still have more questions to ask.”

Mr. Gudmund turned to Mr. Pullian.

“Mr. Pullian,” he said. “What were you doing at approximately 7:45 today?”

The Drama teacher drummed his fingers on his chair. “I have to say, I don’t really remember,” he said. Then, heaving a dramatic sigh, he said: “Look, fellas, I still don’t know why you won’t tell us why we’re here. We don’t even know what crime has been committed, or why we specifically are being questioned.”

“It would definitely help if we knew what’s going on,” Mrs. Quark-Mirku chimed in. “That way we can give you information much more effectively.”

Even Mr. Lemonby nodded. “Yes, just telling us the location of the crime isn’t gonna cut it,” he said. “At least tell us what happened.”

Tensions were beginning to flare. Mr. Gudmund could sense it.

“I’m sorry, guys, we can’t do that,” Mr. Gudmund said quickly, eager to diffuse the situation and move on. “Mr. Pullian, answer the question. What were you doing at 7:45 today?”

“I can’t remember...”, he said despairingly. “I think it was planning for the next school production or something?” He then changed the topic again. “Why are we doing this like a group discussion anyway? Shouldn’t police interrogations just be one-to-ones?”

DS Ryan shuffled in her seat. “We’re doing this together for your own benefit, so that you guys can corroborate each other or point out inaccuracies.”

“I don’t know how I feel,” Miss Widowson suddenly said, “about saying things out loud with a murderer

in the same room as me.”

And with that, a tense silence fell upon the room, as teacher looked at teacher, unsure which one among them was the one with blood on their hands. Mr. Gudmund looked at DS Ryan uneasily.

“Could we step out to discuss something, Detective Sergeant?”

“This isn’t good. Us not revealing the details of the crime has backfired. They’re assuming a murder has taken place,” Mr. Gudmund said to DS Ryan. “Which is a reasonable assumption, considering... well, the fact that it wouldn’t be the first time that that kind of thing has happened in the school.”

“In that case, then, I reckon we tell them about what happened in the Rose Theatre,” DS Ryan suggested. “Otherwise it would be quite emotionally tense for them, and that would just make it harder for us to get them to tell us information.”

“I completely agree,” Mr. Gudmund said. “But other than that, I think we should tell no more. Even if we think they’re lying, we should just play along as best we can.”

The DS paused in thought momentarily before saying “Very well.”

Mr. Gudmund nodded and went back into the office.

When the two got back in, the air of tension had been replaced by bitter arguing.

“I’m no murderer!” Mr. Pullian was protesting. “I’ve done so much for the school, from Games training to the school production. Do you really think I’d be capable of a betrayal of such proportions?”

“Oh, don’t be so dramatic. I’m not saying you’re definitely the murderer,” Miss Widowson explained.

“I’m just pointing out that you’re our most likely suspect and that we’ll have to take the most caution with you. Not only do you spend the most time in the Rose Theatre, but you’re also the most capable of using your acting skills to make yourself look innocent.”

Mr. Pullian opened his mouth to speak and Miss Widowson braced herself for a torrent of rebuttals when Gudmund cleared his throat assertively and all heads turned to him.

“I realise now just telling you the location of the crime isn’t enough,” he said. “So I’ll tell you about some other details too. First of all, it was not a murder that happened.”

Sighs of relief across the room.

“But it was a burglary,” he continued, “and there was a pupil involved.” He then proceeded to describe to the suspects what had happened.

“So you think that this masked individual is among us?” Mrs. Quark-Mirku asked when he finished.

DS Ryan nodded.

“And did no one see the masked person run out of the Rose Theatre, though?” Mr. Lemonby asked another question. “I mean, surely it would attract a lot of attention to come out sporting a crowbar in hand and a mask on your face.”

Mr. Gudmund shook his head. “It took just more than forty-five minutes for Amira to come to, so by the time she did, our thief was long gone. It was like they were a... phantom, that was what she described it as. Also, the very early time of 7:45 at which this burglary happened meant that, unfortunately, no one was around to witness them flee the crime scene.”

“What is there to steal in the Rose Theatre, I



wonder?” Miss Widowson mused. “Surely there are much more valuable things to steal around the school, like computers, I guess. Or iPads, maybe.”

“That’s what we wanted to ask you,” DS Ryan said. “Is there anything you can think of that could be worth stealing in the Rose Theatre specifically?”

Miss Widowson shrugged her shoulders. “I wouldn’t know. I haven’t been in that room in a while.”

At this, Mr. Gudmund frowned and turned to DS Ryan. Whispering into her ear, he said: “I don’t think that statement is true. As the Head of Spanish, Miss Widowson should have attended a meeting about a Spanish trip briefing in the Rose Theatre just last week. Something’s off. I think Miss Widowson’s trying to throw us off the scent and is therefore the guilty one.”

“Interesting. No point bluffing if you’re innocent, right?” DS Ryan whispered back. “Don’t confront them about this just yet, though.”

“What about you guys?” Miss Widowson was asking the other suspects. “Can you think of anything?”

Mrs. Quark-Mirku shook her head. “No, I don’t think I’ve been in the Rose Theatre for a long time either,” she added. “Not for a good few weeks, I think.”

What? Mr. Gudmund thought, and his brow furrowed twofold. He whispered to DS Ryan again. “Mrs. Quark-Mirku’s the organiser of our Model United Nations Society. She should be coming to this room every week: it’s where the club is held!” he said. “Why is she lying too? We better be careful with her.”

“I may have figured it out,” Mr. Pullian said all of a sudden. “What the thief was after, I mean.”

“What is it?” asked Mr. Gudmund.

“The school archives,” Mr. Pullian said.

There was a brief moment of suspense after the Drama teacher’s appropriately dramatic one-liner before Miss Widowson piped up: “What’s that?”

“It’s an archive room,” Mr. Pullian said. “Where we put old documents and stuff.”

“You learn something new every day!” Mrs. Quark-Mirku remarked. “What’s that got to do with the Rose Theatre, though?”

“The thing about the archives,” Mr. Pullian said, “Is that they’re constructed directly above the Rose Theatre.”

Mr. Gudmund and DS Ryan both shot each other a look. This was a piece of information they had not expected to learn from the suspects.

“Huh!” Miss Widowson exclaimed. “So maybe our thief’s trying to break into the archives room from below to steal some ancient treasures or something.”

“I’ve been to the archives room, though,” Mr. Lemonby said. “All that’s there are photos and historical papers. There isn’t any treasure to steal there.”

“Nonetheless,” Mr. Pullian said, “treasure of some sort seems the most likely thing for the thief to set their sights on.”

“Slow down about the archives!” Mr. Gudmund said. “We still don’t know for sure if there is treasure in the archives. Let’s not go down that route yet; let’s return to the questions.”

Despite saying that, he still leaned back towards DS Ryan’s ear. He felt the gaze of the four suspects as he did this, as if they were trying to eavesdrop. He made sure to lower his voice a couple more notches, just in case.

“If this theory about the archives is true, then we’ll need to investigate it later,” he whispered as quietly as he could.

“Yes,” DS Ryan agreed. “It might even be worth telling the suspects this to discourage the thief from trying to steal it a second time.”

She turned to the four suspects. “Rest assured, we will be looking into this theory after we finish with our questions. And if there is treasure in the archives, we will find it.”

“To be fair, though,” Mrs. Quark-Mirku said, “if it’s locked away in the school archives and no one knows what it could be, then surely it’s nothing tremendously important to us.”

“What are you suggesting?” Mr. Gudmund asked. He was aware that it could very well be the thief that he was speaking to. He decided to go accusatory to put pressure on her. “Are you saying we shouldn’t do any investigations at all?”

“No, no, no! Nothing like that. I’m saying, when you folks eventually find the treasure as part of your investigations,” she explained, “while it may be of some monetary value, it won’t have much cultural or emotional significance to us as a school. It’s not like the Beech tree, or anything similarly entrenched in the school culture. So I was just thinking: if this treasure

turns out to be some historic artefact, then it’s bound to be important to some other community. In which case it should be returned, like the way museums return artefacts looted from other cultures. Maybe this is just my sociology expertise speaking here, but that’s what I feel we should do.”

“Well,” Mr. Pullian spoke up. “If no one’s actively asking for it to be given back then, if we find it, I think we should keep it. Think of how much it would benefit our community! It would certainly spark the imaginations of the kids, and foster creativity, you know? It would be good publicity too, and a great source of school-uniting news, now that the school production’s over. I say once we find it, we should display it loud and clear.”

“Wouldn’t displaying it openly make it even easier to steal though?” Miss Widowson pointed out. “If it’s worth the effort to steal now, then it still will be if it’s just being showcased in the Main Building or something. No: we should keep it locked up; we should do our best to preserve it. And it will be worthwhile doing so. It’s like with languages, y’know? There are so many that are slowly dying out, but there are governments out there making the effort to spend whatever it takes to make sure a language doesn’t go extinct. I think historical artefacts... speak the language of the past, in a figurative sense, in that they help us to understand it. So yes, like actual languages, I believe as much work as possible should be done to ensure historical artefacts aren’t being taken away from us, and we should be hiding whatever treasures we have in a safer place.”

“But what’s the point of preserving it for such a noble purpose as you’ve described if no one’s there to look at it and study it?” Mr. Lemonby said. “I mean, as a History teacher, I certainly believe that we should be using historical objects to better ourselves. You know - finding out our roots, learning from the mistakes of our forebears, that sort of thing. But that’s not gonna work if we hide them under maximum security. Having said that, I’m still not convinced that the treasure is in the archives.”

Mr. Pullian turned to Mr. Gudmund.

“What do you think, sir?” he asked him. “If you will, reflect on your beliefs. What are your views on treasure?”

“Uh,” Mr. Gudmund said, “I don’t know. I guess selling any treasure we find would be a good way to benefit the community. Through a fundraiser

auction or something, for example.”

“That’s a pragmatic viewpoint,” Miss Widowson seemed to be taken aback by what he had said.

Mr. Gudmund shot her a look that was purposefully aggressive, keeping in mind that she could very well be the thief they were after. “It would be a good way to prevent theft. Can’t steal something that the school doesn’t have, eh?”

“Whatever we do with the treasure, that’s not our number one priority right now,” DS Ryan chimed in to change the topic. “There are still some questions left.”

Mr. Gudmund looked at his notes. “Right,” he said. “Where were each of you at about 7:45?”

“I was in the Head of Year 11 office,” Miss Widowson said.

“And I was in the Sixth Form Centre,” was Mrs. Quark-Mirku’s answer.

“As usual, I was in one of the staff rooms,” Mr. Pullian said.

“And you, Mr. Lemonby?” Mr. Gudmund asked.

“My office,” he answered, “where I remained until registration began. If it’s any help, from about 8:20, there were other teachers there that could corroborate my presence.”

Once again, Mr. Gudmund furrowed his brow.

“Something I said?” Mr. Lemonby was saying as Mr. Gudmund leaned into DS Ryan’s ear.

“Strange,” Mr. Gudmund whispered. “It’s a Monday. He should have been doing hockey coaching at the time. Is he bluffing too?”

“Very weird,” DS Ryan whispered back. “But unless three out of the four suspects are guilty, there’s no way all three are lying.”

“I agree,” Mr. Gudmund said. “But I still don’t trust these guys yet.”

“I have to say, folks,” Mr. Pullian commented. “Very mysterious with the whispering.”

“I agree,” Mr. Lemonby said. “And a little passive-aggressive too. It’s like you’re accusing us without telling us why you’re doing so.”

“Speaking of not telling us why... you still haven’t told us your reasons for suspecting us in particular.”

HISTORY

Female Role Models in the Ancient world

Unmasking remarkable women across ancient civilisations

In my previous article I wrote about the deeply rooted patriarchal and misogynistic attitudes which defined Ancient Greek society and how women were portrayed in light of this mindset; this article aims to shift the focus towards the positive and empowering narratives of some remarkable women from the ancient world. Ranging from the enchanting sorceress Circe to the formidable Amazonian Women, my co-writer and I aim to showcase how these women serve as enduring role models through their defiance to societal norms and their indelible mark on history.



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Greek Mythology retellings can be found in almost any bookshop you visit. Many of these retellings aim to rewrite the narratives of famous myths through a feminist lens and, as such, have resulted in the complete transformation of some notable characters. Take for example Homer's epic novels - like *The Illiad*- which have had multiple feminist retellings such as *"The Silence of the Girls"* (by Pat Barker) or *"A Thousand Ships"* (by Natalie Haynes). More relevant to this article perhaps is Homer's *"Odyssey"* in which Circe is often portrayed as both a sex object and a villain but is reintroduced, thanks to Madeline Miller, as a character of unparalleled defiance, resilience, and sharp wit.

Circe is a minor Goddess and enchantress in Greek Mythology and is a descendant from the Sun God, Helios, and the Oceanid nymph, Perse. In most accounts, like *"The Odyssey"* as mentioned previously, Circe is renowned for her vast knowledge of potions and herbs and her ability to transform her enemies, or those who offend her, into animals like pigs. The *Odyssey* ultimately portrays Circe as a woman to be feared - a villain. Miller, instead, portrays Circe as a multidimensional character who learns to harness her own power - both as a witch and as a woman.

Indeed, one of the primary ways in which Circe offers a compelling exploration of feminism - and female empowerment - is through her defiance, her refusal to conform to patriarchal norms; unlike many women in Ancient Greek mythology, who were often subjected to the whims of gods, Circe not only possesses innate magical abilities but actively refines and expands her powers. Her mastery of magic is not merely a means to an end but a tool for self-discovery whereby her ability to transform objects and beings is symbolic of her agency and power, and concurrently allows her to shape her own destiny. For example, in Miller's novel, there is an incident involving attempted sexual assault by Odysseus' men when they arrive on Circe's Island - Aiaia. The sailors, under the influence of Circe's magical potion, become aggressive and attempt to force themselves upon her. Circe, however, uses her magical abilities, as a form of self-defence, to turn them into swine. This event not only underscores the themes of power dynamics, autonomy, and the

Miss Widowson spoke up too.

"How are we supposed to help you if we're in the dark about everything?" Mrs. Quark-Mirku said angrily.

"Guys, please understand," Mr. Gudmund pleaded. "We'll clear things up for you when our investigations conclude."

But the suspects were having none of it.

"Tell us why!" Miss Widowson begged, while Mr. Lemonby looked as though he was on the verge of throwing a cushion across the room in frustration.

But instead of telling them, Mr. Gudmund and DS Ryan stepped out to discuss things again.

"Disastrous," Mr. Gudmund said. "That's what this is. We somehow managed to make them turn against us."

"To be fair, though, they were probably right," DS Ryan admitted. "We probably shouldn't have been whispering so much."

Mr. Gudmund sighed. "I guess so," he said. "I really thought the thief would be either Miss Widowson or Mrs. Quark-Mirku after it seemed like they were both bluffing but, now it seems as though Mr. Lemonby is doing so too, I'm not too sure anymore. Maybe it's me that's gotten things mixed up."

"Hear me out," DS Ryan said. "Perhaps it's just a bunch of misunderstandings, allowed to happen because of how little we're telling them. I think it's safe to say that our strategy of withholding information has failed. So maybe it's a balance between tactics we should be going for."

"Sounds good to me," Mr. Gudmund said. "Anything to make them trust us more. Having said that though, I do have reasons to suspect each of those teachers now."

"Let's hear them," DS Ryan said.

Mr. Gudmund nodded. "Both Miss Widowson and Mrs. Quark-Mirku could still be lying about not knowing about the school archives. This is because they both spend a lot of time in the Rose Theatre for year level assemblies and Model United Nations respectively, so the possibility that they're familiar with the theatre and the archives above, familiar enough to give them the confidence to burgle it, is very real."

"And Mr. Pullian certainly does know about the archives too," DS Ryan pointed out. "As he himself pointed out. I know it doesn't make much sense for him to voluntarily reveal this information if he's trying to hide it, but I think there's a possibility that he said that to misdirect us into believing he isn't the thief. He is a Drama teacher, after all. Therefore, this, combined with the fact that he is the one who spends the most time in the Rose Theatre and would probably know the most about potential treasure in the archives, makes him suspicious as well."

"Yes," Mr. Gudmund agreed. "And Mr. Lemonby's history expertise means he very well could know something about the archives that we don't. In other words, if there's treasure there, he might know about it and is just hiding his knowledge."

"So, put simply, all four of these suspects are either familiar with the Rose Theatre or the archives," DS Ryan said. "That... complicates things, but at least that gives us more justification to suspect these guys."

The arguments inside the Head's office had gotten louder again. Even muffled through the door, the two could tell they were getting heated.

"We'd better go back in before a riot starts," Mr. Gudmund said. He turned the doorknob, opened the door, and stepped back into the chaos.

Scan the QR code below to first vote on who you think the murderer is thus far, then continue reading on!



The Phantom of the Rose Theatre is a work of fiction. All names and incidents are used fictitiously and are in no way a reflection of actual events or persons.

consequence of disrespecting others, but more so serves as a catalyst for Circe's empowerment; her decision to use her magic defensively demonstrates her assertion of her autonomy, pragmatism, and establishes her as a character capable of defending herself. Perhaps one could consider Circe's magic as a metaphor for reclaiming control over one's life by setting boundaries, cultivating resilience in the face of adversity, and seeking empowerment through education and skill development.

As a whole, Circe emerges as a timeless role model to be celebrated and admired in the present day; Madeline Miller's transformative retelling infuses Circe with resilience, autonomy, and an unwavering spirit that resonates with contemporary audiences who, even now, need to navigate the complexities of modern society that still grapples with issues like gender, inequality, and rape. Circe's journey transcends the boundaries of mythology and stands as a testament to the ending strength and triumph that every woman carries within herself.

In the annals of ancient history, the Spartans have often been lauded for their valour in warfare and their distinctive discipline of their military state. However, behind the formidable ranks of Spartan soldiers is a society embracing an ethos of equality; under the visionary reforms of King Lycurgus (9th century BCE), Sparta manifested a radical departure from the conventional roles assigned to women in places like Ancient Greece. The women of Sparta, often overshadowed by their male counterparts, were paradoxically progressive for their time; in a world where gender roles were predominantly circumscribed, Spartan women stood out as unique agents of change as they embodied a level of autonomy and influence unparalleled in their ancient contemporaries.

Sparta had a groundbreaking education system which extended a standardised curriculum to both girls and boys alike; the fundamental idea behind this educational paradigm was to cultivate not only skilled warriors but also mothers, capable of shaping the next generation of elite soldiers. A quote demonstrating this belief by Pomeroy states that they wished to "create mothers who would produce the best hoplites and mothers of hoplites" (a hoplite was a Spartan citizen heavy infantry who fight traditionally with the phalanx

formation and with shield and sword). While men in Sparta underwent communal learning environments enriched with physical pursuits and military training, Spartan women – although also trained in athleticism – found themselves with more leisure time to delve into the realms of academia. The demands of war and military service predominantly fell upon men, granting the women the opportunity to engage in intellectual pursuits such as music, poetry, politics, and more.

This educational framework paved the way for remarkable figures like Queen Gorgo of Sparta (who was the wife of King Leonidas) to surpass traditional gender roles and wield an influence in the political sphere. Whilst Gorgo's exact role in Spartan politics remains ambiguous, some historical accounts suggest that female nobles in Sparta held significant authority on the Kings. A notable example is when, at only age nine, Gorgo astutely advised her father - the King Cleomenes - to reject a bribe from a foreign diplomat seeking support for a revolt; this early engagement in political attraction illustrated not only Gorgo's wisdom through her studies, but also the respect she commanded within Spartan society. Similarly to that example, Gorgo later was involved in a covert affair where she directed the recipients of a tablet to scrape wax off it and, by doing so, revealed a secret warning carved into it. Once again, this revelation suggests not only her ability to read (which was, in those times, an indicator of education) but also a deep understanding and knowledge on the secret mechanisms at play in political affairs - blatantly showcasing the depth of education and empowerment afforded to Spartan women. Gorgo's story is a reminder that intelligence, strategic thinking, and political acumen know no gender boundaries and I think her story (and Spartan society as a whole) can certainly inspire women in modern times to pursue education, engage in political discourse, and contribute to societal advancement.

Another fascinating feature of Spartan society is the discovery of one of the earliest expressions of female homoerotic sentiments which can be traced back to Alcman's maid song - a notable piece of Ancient Greek poetry often performed by young Spartan women. Composed in the 7th century BCE, these lyrical compositions celebrated the beauty and athleticism of Spartan women and reveal subtle nuances which hint at intimate connections

amongst the maidens. The significance of such a discovery lies not only in its historical context but also in challenging preconceptions about the expressions of love and relationships in ancient societies. The Maid Song offers a window into a world where same-sex attraction was acknowledged and, to some extent, celebrated within the cultural practices of Sparta. As such, in their defiance of quintessential conventions, ability to embrace diversity, and capacity to foster unity in their society, the Spartan women once again present themselves as role models to modern and ancient societies permeated with strict norms.

By limb-loosening desire,
She looked at me more meltingly
Than sleep or death;
She is sweet in no way ineffectually.
But Astymelosia does not answer me at all,
When she has the crown,
Just like a brilliant star falling through the sky
Or a golden bough or soft feather...
She advanced with striding feet...
The moist allure of Cinyras
Sits upon her maidenly hair...
Ah! If she should come closer and take
My tender hand, I would become hers.

Alcman – as quoted by Sandra Boehringer[56]

Whilst some works found in Spartan society hinted at the acceptance of diverse forms of love (as mentioned previously), Sappho's lyrical compositions boldly and explicitly venture into her own intimate expression of personal connections and more broadly address themes of love, desire, and human emotions.

The poet Sappho, or Psappha in her native Aeolic dialect, was born circa 620 BC on the island of Lesbos. There are numerous inconsistencies in sources about her life, but it is believed that she had several boyfriends, was married, and had a daughter called Cleis. It is notable that, during her adult life, she appeared to have run an academy for unmarried young women that was devoted to the cult of Aphrodite and Eros. Her poems were first collated in the third century BC. Most of her work was almost entirely lost and the majority of

the remnants survived through quotations found in other authors' work. This was until papyri containing fragments of her poems were discovered in 1898 and Egyptologists discovered papier-mâché coffins containing verse fragments by Sappho in 1914.

In antiquity Sappho was hailed as one of the great poets, being referred to by Plato as 'the tenth Muse' and often cited as 'the Poetess', corresponding with Homer who was called 'the Poet'. However, her poetry differed from Homer's epic narratives, with her verses speaking simply from one individual to another, mostly about the 'bittersweet' difficulties



of love. Sappho's poetry was written to be sung by a person accompanied by lyre, hence the name 'lyric' poetry. Furthermore, her vowel-rich melody, metrical complexity and innovation (it is believed she inspired the term "Sapphic" meter) shaped her spontaneous, direct and honest poems, fascinating readers in the process. In her writings about her daughter Cleis, Sappho expresses more than the love of a mother to her daughter. Erin Baldwin states, in her 2020 essay about Sappho, that 'by assigning a

value to Cleis, Sappho assigns a value to all women. She advocates for women's worth. She celebrates women's existence.' and concludes that Sappho might be called the world's first feminist. 'In a world dominated by male voices, Sappho spoke and gave voice to a silent realm of women.'

In contrast to this modern view of Sappho, her work was parodied by the New Comedy, the ancient Greek comedy of the 3rd century BC, as promiscuous and lesbian. This representation was so influential that it resulted in the actual term 'lesbian' being derived from Sappho's home island (Lesbos). Thirteen

centuries later, Pope Gregory burned her work for its immorality and many modern editors eliminated and changed works or lines in her poetry to avoid it being 'misunderstood'.

Sappho's themes of love, desire and beauty and the depiction of the emotional intimacy pushed the boundaries of societal norms. She is celebrated as courageous, independent and has become emblematic for feminists across history, inspiring untold numbers of writers.



HISTORY

Arthuriana: The Fascinating Retelling of the Tales of King Arthur

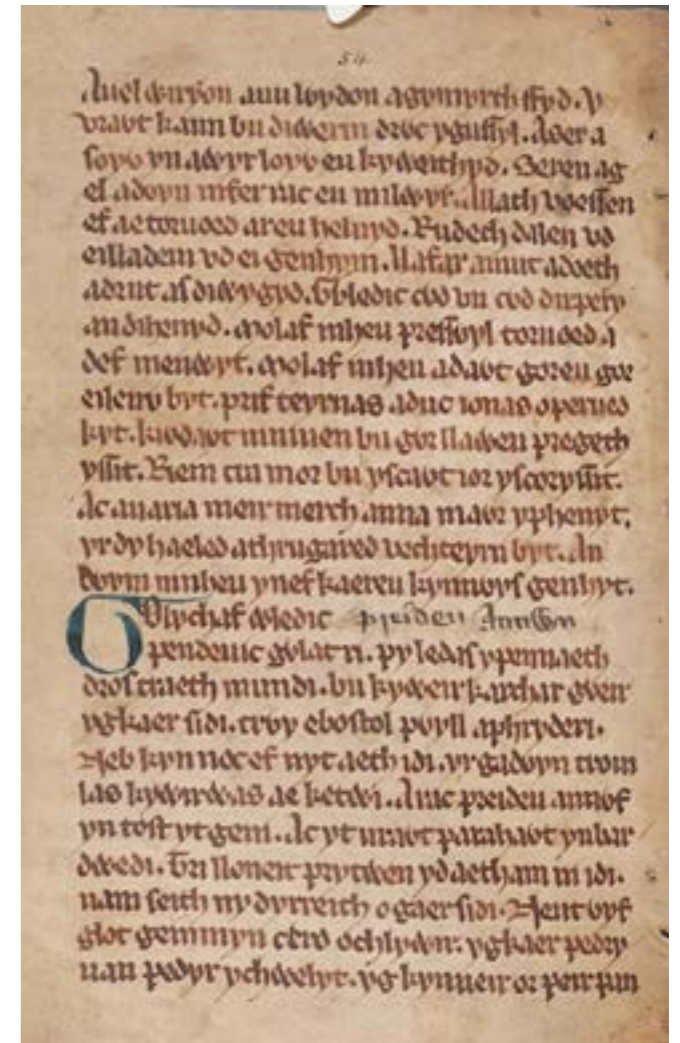
The tales surrounding the myth of King Arthur fill our TV screens, cinemas and libraries. Almost everyone will know the tale of Camelot, the sword in the stone, and the Knights of the Round Table. However, the stories of chivalry, magic and quests are far from the original plots. This article is an exploration into the way that the story changes, according to religious beliefs, societal norms, and the way literature and ideas were shared. It must be acknowledged before beginning that the legend of King Arthur is most likely fantasy. It could be true that, during the period after the Romans had left Britain, during a time of high illiteracy, a leader called Arthur could have emerged, but the most likely explanation is that stories merged over hundreds of years forming together to create the tales that we hear of today. Despite that, the story remains loved and its evolution continues to reflect our changing world in subtle yet fascinating ways.

Early Writings

The earliest we can trace the stories of Camelot is to Welsh poetry in the late sixth and early seventh century. It is thought that the tales originated as campfire stories, changing and being re-told for generations before this first written evidence. These poems tell of an English King, crowned just after the departure of the Romans from Britain in the early fifth century AD, who fought fearlessly against the Saxons, bringing England to victory. The poems of this origin are highly varied in content, especially when referring to the names of supporting characters and the locations in which the tales are said to have taken place, having gone through layers of retelling and editing, reflecting the oral tradition of the time.

Medieval Developments

The legend remained this way for around 700 years, until a Welsh cleric, Geoffrey of Monmouth, wrote the book 'History of the Kings of Britain' in 1136, detailing Arthur's reign as if it were history. Geoffrey, despite his intentions of being a historian, strayed more into the realm of fiction, embellishing and filling in the gaps of the previous stories with his own



imaginative tales. Most significantly, was the creative licence taken in introducing magic to the equation. For example, Geoffrey writes that the Wizard Merlin (the man who he suggests raised King Arthur), gained his powers when demons decided to wreak havoc on the world by placing a powerful anti-Christ into the heart of England. However, when Merlin was placed into the world, his kind-hearted mother decided to name him after her grandfather, thus ridding Merlin of all evil whilst retaining his magical powers. This of course is quite clearly fiction, perhaps inspired by the religious ideals of nature versus nurture and do-gooding to avoid the devil that the cleric may have believed. Despite all of the evidence that this was a fictitious retelling of the King's life, many at the time

and many in the high medieval period and beyond believed this to be fact, especially after the retelling in the 15th century through Thomas Malory's 'Le Morte d'Arthur', which signified the moment in which Arthur became a true English figurehead and introduced many of the key characters that are quintessential to the story today, such as Elaine (the unrequited lover of Lancelot). This evolving literary tradition was so important to England during this period that Henry Tudor named his eldest son Arthur in 1486.

The way that relationships are addressed in these Medieval texts is also a point of interest. The marriage of Arthur and Guinevere was quite clearly following the courtly tradition of marriage for status or political advantage. For this reason, infidelity was common on both sides of the marriage. A common misconception about the Medieval period from a modern perspective is that knights and nobles were all very chivalrous and appropriate. However, on the contrary, these texts, along with vast swathes of literature from the time, are surprisingly full of sex and scandal, almost completely bereft of the romantic tradition we think of now. The idea of love



was seen as weak in early Arthurian texts, so much so that the only couple seemingly truly in love in the texts, Eric and Enide, were ridiculed and Eric was teased for being gay for wanting to spend time with his wife instead of out on crusades. This attitude towards love, however, was to undergo a complete re-write under the work of the Victorians.

The Victorian Rewrite

The most drastic change to the tale occurred during the Victorian period, in which the publishing of Lord Tennyson's 'Idylls of the King' in the late 1800s removed the majority of the stories of promiscuity and brought in the romantic, chivalrous elements with which we so strongly associate the story today. Malory and Geoffrey both wrote about the marriage of Arthur and Guinevere as a strategic, almost business-like arrangement, as many marriages were at the time, a theme that clashed significantly with the Victorian ideals of marriage. Therefore, Tennyson frames the marriage as one rooted in true love, spending an extensive section of his poetry detailing the flowers at their big white wedding. This also cleans up the problem of the



previously discussed infidelity issues. Tennyson simply removes them, tidying all that was deemed inappropriate. The narrative around why Camelot eventually falls follows a similar pattern. While the original texts cite the story of Arthur accidentally sleeping with and having a child with his half-sister, Morgause, as the reason, the later retelling blames the fact that Arthur and Guinevere were married in May. In Victorian high society, "one gets married in June" (with May being a month of bad luck). Judith Jacob compares Tennyson and Malory's work, commenting on the way that pressures of Victorian society impacted his writing, arguing that "Tennyson, in attempting to pander to contemporary ideals and morals, diverges from Malory's more human characters and upholds a vision of purity and chastity so icily good that it becomes unbearable". By comparison with the Medieval approach to relationships in Arthuriana, discussed above, it is clear that the changes in societal attitudes towards love, sex and good virtue significantly impacted the literature of the period. As Jacob argues, this on some level takes away from the depth and charm of the original narrative.

Modern Interpretations & What Comes Next?

The last few decades have seen a renewal of Arthuriana through the creation of movies and TV shows. From the Disney children's classic 'The Sword in the Stone' to the hit shows 'King Arthur: Excalibur Rising' and 'Merlin', the classic tale has been written and re-written to fit our modern world and the way in which we now consume information. Some may see the sanitisation of the Disney adaptation and the dramatisation of the shows as a loss of the 'original' King Arthur, but this begs the question, what is the original? We don't have one fixed origin story, we don't know if the later additions were of histories retold and written or from the imagination. There is no one true origin of the stories of Camelot. The way that they have changed in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries reflects the way that Arthurian tradition has been for one thousand five hundred years. Just as Geoffrey did, just as Malory did and just as Tennyson did, these retellings keep the story alive, keep it aligned with the interests and expectations of a modern world, and keep developing this fantastic tale into one shaped by the hands of hundreds of people over hundreds of years.



DESIGN

Comic Strip Tutorial

Do you have an idea for a comic? Have you ever wondered how people go about making comic books? With a little practice, it is easy to begin making your own. To make a professionally published comic series, there is often a team of people working together — an author writing scripts, a team of pencillers, inkers, letterers and colourists, and an editor suggesting improvements. But if you want to try and make your own, don't feel put off. This article will hopefully show you how simple it is to write your own, but it's not a tutorial. These are more guidelines to help you get started. So, let's begin!

You can choose to go about writing comics in two ways — you can work alone, or, if you prefer, you can team up with a friend. One of you could write the script and the other could do the art, but how you want to split up the task of creating a comic is really up to you. A good way of writing a script for a comic is dedicating at least one page per panel (the boxes in a comic). Remember to mention the size, shape, content and dialogue in each panel, and you could create sketches for the artist to work from. Different styles of noting panel details will work for different people, so find one which works for your team. Once you send the script to the artist, keep in touch with them and their progress. From there, it's up to you both to edit together. When you both feel you have finished, you have several options. I'll tell you more about this later.

If you prefer to work alone, then you can have more control over the process overall. A good place to start is to note down the story arcs you have in mind and plan out your story. From there you can begin making thumbnails — rough sketches of each page of the comic, leaving gaps for dialogue. These can be as simple or detailed as you need them to be. Now it's time to start writing the comic!

I recommend using Procreate (a drawing app you can find on your School iPads) to make your final

product, because you can print it out or share it with people once you've finished it. I create the thumbnails/plans on paper, then copy them onto Procreate using a brush called 'Derwent' (double tap the paintbrush icon; it's in the list called 'Sketching'). Then I add a layer on top (To view layers, double tap the paper icon in the top right, then click the plus to add a new one) and start drawing the official version using either a 'Studio pen' or 'Technical pen' brush (this time tap on the list titled 'Inking'). To add text, click on the tool button in the top left, select 'Add text' and start typing. There's a font called Jack Armstrong BB (see the sample comic on the next page) which is used commonly in comics. Please note: this will add a separate layer. To move text boxes around, click on the mouse pointer icon and it will select the whole layer. Drag it with your finger, then tap the icon again to deselect it. Alternatively, if you prefer, you can handwrite it, but it takes longer and is trickier.

Now you have finished the outline, and you've added text, so what next? If you like, you can add simple shading, but otherwise leave it monochrome (like in the example on the next page). If you want to add colour, go for it! I recommend using a limited colour scheme and shading, otherwise you can feel overwhelmed and lose interest in your project. Keep it simple at first; you can always improve and change as you grow with confidence.

So, you've now finished your final piece. If you feel confident, why not try and publish it online or even submit it to the Rambling Rose newspaper? If you're not so sure, ask your friends and family to give it a read through and give some feedback. Or you can print yourself a copy, get a hot drink, and enjoy reading the product of your hard work!

On the next page is an example of a short comic prologue that I have written, just to show you how simple it can look.

