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FRANKEN ISSUE



# LETTER FROM THE EDITORS



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"It is true, we shall be monsters, cut off from all the world; but on that account we shall be more attached to one another." - Mary Shelley, Frankenstein

Hey Freeple! (Free Press People),

First of all, we'd like to thank you so much for supporting our publication by even holding this issue in your hands right now! We, quite literally, could not exist without your continued support and your creative submissions!

Within these pages, you'll find a patchwork of poetry, art, collage, creative fiction, horror stories, and film criticism that grapple with Halloween's general topos and what it means to inhabit this liminal space—a night where we can embrace the facets of ourselves we typically hide and transgress normative boundaries. You may be wondering why we've chosen Frankenstein's monster as the crux of our Halloween issue.

Shelley's original vision of the creature has been adapted, reworked, parodied, and revitalized since the novel's publication in 1818. The thread stitching these iterations together is audiences' sustained identification with a supposed monster. He's an initially kind, curious person who is rejected on the basis of appearances alone, a story that resonates with those of us who exist in some way incompatible with white, patriarchal norms. This issue embodies the idea that the Frank-en-body offers opportunity for self-identification with monstrosity. We invite you into this grotesque landscape not just to observe, but to engage with and embrace the exquisite, monstrous body and its composite parts.

We are so grateful and inspired by our contributors, and of course indebted to our amazing executive board members who've worked tirelessly on this issue. We hope you enjoy the Franken issue—and perhaps take from it a new perspective on spooky season!

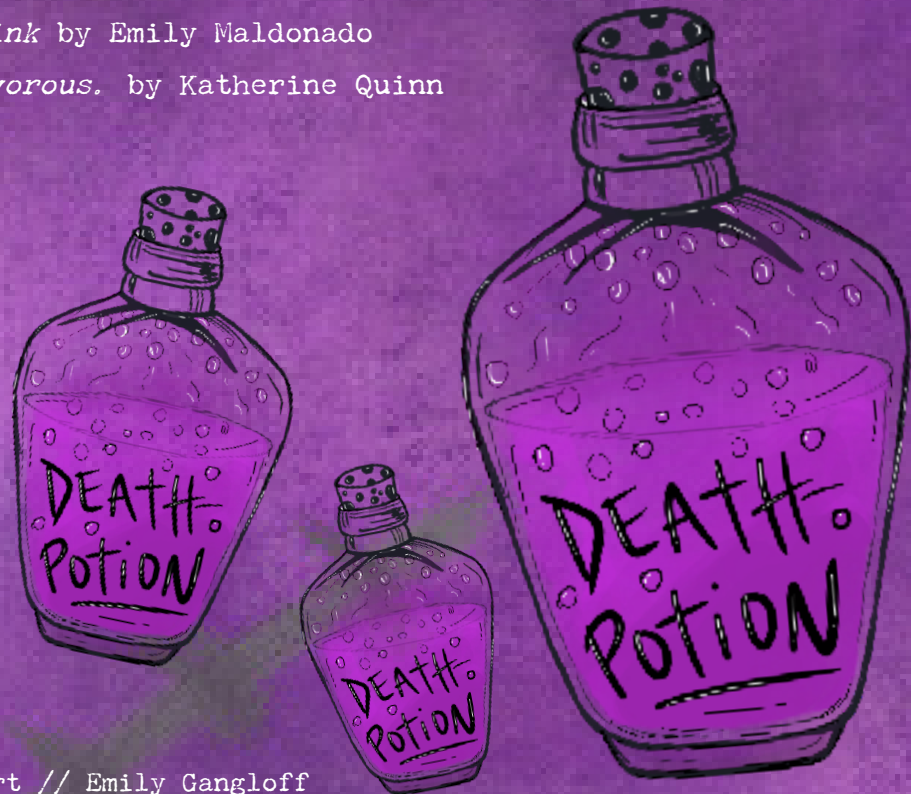
With love,  
Emily, Sydney, and Rosa  
Publisher and Editors of Free Press Magazine

To see this issue in full, vibrant color, visit [binghamtonfreepress.com](http://binghamtonfreepress.com)!

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

3  
f  
r  
e  
e  
p  
r  
e  
s  
s  
t  
h  
e  
f  
r  
a  
n  
k  
e  
n  
i  
s  
s  
u  
e  
2  
0  
2  
2

- 2 Letter from the Editors
- 4-5 Meet the E-Board
- 6-7 Monster High Quiz by Ariel Hochman and Lora Kaganovsky
- 8 Collage by Kayla Huang
- 9 *Bridgers on a Bench* by Sydney Newton
- 10-11 *Taste the Rainbow* by Sam Bunk
- 12-13 Halloween Makeup and DIY Costume Ideas,  
submissions by Ariel Hochman, Lora Kaganovsky
- 14-15 Art by Mia DeGeorges
- 16-17 *By Bread Alone: A Marxist Analysis of The Witch (2015)*  
by Joe Raskind
- 18 Tattoos by Emily Gangloff
- 19 Anonymous Housing Horror Stories
- 20-21 *Women in Horror: Recommendations from the Global Screen*  
by Rosa Sicks
- 22 *The Rink* by Emily Maldonado
- 23 *carnivorous.* by Katherine Quinn



Art // Emily Gangloff



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# WHICH MONSTER

## WHICH GHOUL ARE YOU?



**It's your first day at a new school and all you want to do is make some new friends and join a club! Where do you go first?**

- a. I go to check out what sports teams the school has!
- b. I love fashion so I'd find the fashion club!
- c. I find it more worthwhile to meet my teachers first and foremost.
- d. I am pretty shy so I just pray someone will come up to me.
- e. Being the leader is important to me so I try to find a club where I can easily assume an important role.

**You go to the cafeteria for lunch. What's your go to?**

- a. I grab the biggest, rarest hamburger I can find.
- b. Whatever the vegetarian option is.
- c. Whatever I see first, I'm not picky.
- d. French fries, chicken nuggets, anything fast and microwaveable.
- e. A fresh fruit salad.
- f. Macaroni and cheese! Even the school cafeteria can't mess that up.

**What's your favorite subject?**

- a. economics
- b. creative writing
- c. algebra
- d. I believe there is something to be learned from every class.
- e. geometry
- f. history

**How do you act when you have a crush?**

- a. I rarely have crushes so when I do it's hard for me to deal with it.
- b. I try to be super flirty but often end up falling on my face!
- c. I don't have crushes.
- d. I never say anything and just pine.
- e. I'm pretty good at flirting so I've never had any problems while having a crush.
- f. I treat them the same way I'd treat anybody but internally I'm freaking out!

**What do you wear on the first day of school?**

- a. Something cute but still functional and easy to move around in.
- b. A cute matching set with tons of accessories that I've planned weeks in advance.
- c. Just a normal pair of pants and a shirt.
- d. I'm already nervous enough so whatever I feel most comfortable in.
- e. Anything that will turn heads and make everybody notice me.
- f. A simple summer dress.

**Which field trip are you most excited for?**

- a. zoo
- b. theater production
- c. science laboratory
- d. arcade
- e. botanical garden
- f. museum



# if you got:

**Mostly A's:** you're most like Clawdeen! Clawdeen is fierce, confident, and extremely loyal to her friends. She can be quick to anger when she feels like someone is treating her friends or family unfairly. She is extremely independent and resourceful. She also is very athletic and good at a multitude of sports and never afraid to try anything new and take charge!



**Mostly B's:** you're most like Draculaura. Draculaura is extremely friendly and outgoing and spreads her positive energy to everyone around her! Draculaura is a little ditzy and can be quite clumsy. She is also the most emotional of all the girls, often crying easily and having the most crushes.



**Mostly C's:** you're most like Abby Bominable. Abby was raised with short and strong words and is fierce, confident, intimidating, and often headstrong. She doesn't tolerate any rule-breaking unless it is for the greater good. Although she is known for her bluntness, Abby when you allow her to open up to you, she will show a warm side of her, cuddly and cheerful even, in her own way, with a dry and dark sense of humor that reassures she tries hard to fit in and that her toughness isn't all of her.



**Mostly D's:** you're most like Ghoulia. Ghoulia is intelligent, shy, and a very hard worker. Although she is very quiet and prefers to stay in the background, she excels in all her interests and is considered to be the smartest ghoul in school. She is extremely loyal to her friends and is a great listener.



**Mostly E's:** you're most like Cleo De Nile! Cleo takes pride in being popular and often comes off as being selfish or conceited but deep down, Cleo's a very caring, kind, and thoughtful ghoul who cares about her friends. Although she puts on a confident demeanor, few know her confidence is not as solid as she makes it seem to be: she struggles with the insecurity of not being fit for leadership.



**Mostly F's:** you're most like Frankie Stein. Frankie is optimistic, positive, kind-hearted and always gets along with others, although she is naïve. Frankie is aware of her flaws and embraces them. She loves her friends and they are the most important monsters in the world to her. She is nice and outgoing, and likes to try new things.



Free Press the Frankenstein Issue 2022

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your thoughts bigger in  
tones. Healing doesn't

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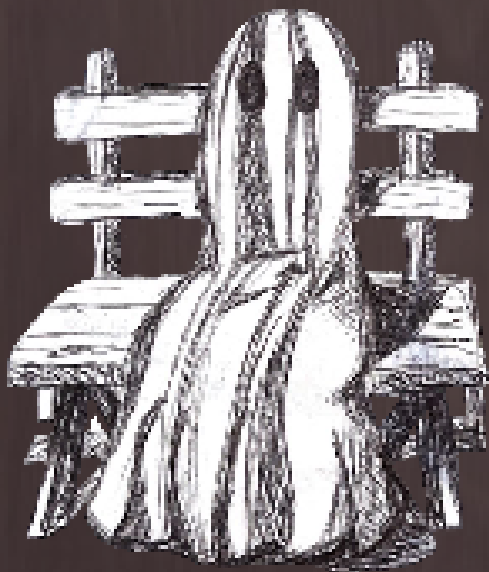
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# Bridgers on a Bench

by Sydney Newton



Art // Sydney Newton

Your memory, ugh  
I could scream to drown-you-out  
Instead I'm silent.

I sit with your ghost  
Miss you like a little kid  
But I let you go.

You faked it every  
Time; hardly felt anything-  
Let go, like you did

But it doesn't work  
Roll the windows down, I'm too  
Emotional; and

I'm just a stranger  
In the Alps, I'm not all right-  
It's motion sickness.

# Taste the Rainbow

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It was October 31st, 2009. The autumn leaves no longer danced in the wind. Now they lay, carelessly waiting to be obscured by the silk snow. They crunched as we ran through them, our parents yelling: "Walk! Stay on the sidewalk!" We didn't turn our heads, we didn't listen. We all had an understanding that this was our last year.

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My sister, Riley, was Rapunzel. She wore a turtleneck and leggings under her purple dress, despite her pleas. My mother's hands pulled a hat onto her head as she walked out the door. I had learned over the years: if your costume is warm, you won't look so fucking stupid dressing for the weather. I pulled on my favorite pair of Nike black sweatpants, my Jordans, and the black zip-up Mom found at Walmart. She had meticulously ironed bone patches onto it. She drew dark circles around my eyes with her eyeliner and shaded them in with eyeshadow. She didn't have black so she took the deepest purple she could find, and pressed hard. She probably wondered why I still wanted to go. She probably thought making Riley come with me would make me reluctant. I couldn't fathom not doing this tonight — fear knocked at the back of my throat and circled around the top of my head like a crown. I wasn't ready to keep growing.

Sarah Fitz lived down the street from me. When Riley and I stepped onto our front porch I caught a glimpse of her red hair, barely standing out against the brick house. She was dressed as an angel, her whole

friend group was doing it. She ran up to meet them, pillowcases of candy already swinging by their sides. I made Riley wait as I ran inside to swap my plastic pumpkin for the pillowcase sitting on my bed.

We walked up the driveway and met Sarah in the middle.

"They have FULL size candy bars," Sarah said to the girl next to her. A smile spread across Riley's face as she ran up to the front door. By the time I made it up, Riley had gotten a full-size Snickers bar, and all that was left were fun-size Whoppers.

"You should've run. They still had some for the kids behind me," said Riley.

"It's okay," I said. "I'm too old for this anyway."

"I'm never gonna be too old," said Riley as she pulled down the Snickers wrapper and stuffed it into her mouth. As we continued walking, a trail of candy began to shape before us. A little Tootsie Roll, then bright pink bubblegum Laffy Taffy, grape Jolly Ranchers... and then I spotted it. A full-sized Skittles.

"Oh. My. God," Riley said as she stared in awe at this miracle. They were our favorite because they had always been Dad's. She went to grab it when I put my hand out in front of her. I looked up to see Sarah skipping and swinging her candy bag in a circle, a hole in the bottom.

"It's hers," I said.

"So? She lost it."

"Soooooo, let's give it back?" I said. Riley rolled her eyes as I

grabbed the Skittles.  
When I looked up, Sarah was gone.

"Where'd she go?" I asked.

"Oh no, she's gone? Darn it," Riley said, reaching for the candy.

"No. We have to find her and give it back. It's hers." Riley looked confused and hesitated to follow me when I walked forward. I know it wasn't a big deal, but my feet trudged forward, floating like I had just climbed a staircase.

As quickly as Sarah had appeared, she was gone. We circled courts twice and crossed the street, hitting every house. Riley ran up to the doors to get her candy while I stayed back to listen and search. My eyes flickered across the moonlit neighborhood, getting caught in glimpses of red hair and angel wings. I stared into windows, analyzing shadows to see if one of them moved like her. I closed my eyes honing in on the voices of people around me, to find a voice as smooth as hers. A voice that felt like drinking chocolate milk. I kept the candy in my pocket, rubbing my thumb against it to reassure me it was still there. I wondered how long her hand had lingered there first.

Riley was tired and wanted to go home. Her plastic pumpkin was filled to the brim and couldn't hold any more candy, even if she wanted it to. I succumbed to her request and felt my heart sink as we started to head home. I never let my senses settle, in case Sarah was still out, too. We reached home to see Mom handing out candy to a group of trick

or treaters. I had been on such high alert for the past hour that I didn't realize who it was until I heard her trickle of laughter, filling my stomach with the sweetest essence. Riley ran up to Mom and began showing her what she had gotten. I stayed at the end of the driveway.

"Sarah," I called out. She turned her head and kept walking. So, I called again. She turned around to face me while her friends kept walking.

"I think you dropped this earlier," I said.

"No way!" she said, grabbing the Skittles from my hand. She scoffed in amazement. Blissful surprise curled the corners of her mouth. "I can't believe you brought this to me. I was so upset when I saw the hole. These are my favorite," she said pointing to the now safety-pinned pillowcase.

"Mine too," I said. She opened the Skittles and ate one, then took a step forward and cupped her hands around the side of my face and pushed her lips to mine.

"Thank you," she said, turning and running to catch up with her friends. I walked to the front door in a daze, pushing my lips together to taste the cherry she left behind. I ran into the bathroom and splashed water in my face to remove my skeleton circles. I pulled down my hood and let down my thick long brown hair — feeling as though I were a trick, and Sarah a treat that could only be mine on Halloween.

*by Sam Bunk*

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# THIS HALLOWEEN - SKIP AMAZON!

WE ALL LOVE TO DRESS UP FOR HALLOWEEN  
BUT THE HOLIDAY COMES AT A HIGH COST TO OUR PLANET.

when it comes to costumes and clothing, 60% of fabric fibers are now synthetics derived from fossil fuels. these fabric fibers do not decay if they end up in landfills (as 85% of them do).

approximately 7 million costumes are thrown away each year which equates to 83 million plastic bottles.

## SO, HOW DOES ONE PARTICIPATE IN HALLOWEEN IN AN ETHICAL WAY?

although the statement “no ethical consumption under capitalism” is definitely accurate, it does not mean that we shouldn’t be mindful of our consumption. even if there is no way to participate in Halloween completely “ethically,” there are still many steps one can take to lessen their negative impact - namely, to stop purchasing your costumes from Amazon. From union-busting to humans’ rights violations to influencing government policy to destroying small businesses, Amazon covers every base and it’s about time we stopped relying on it so much.

*some tips to keep in mind:*

- raid your friends’ closets!
- if you do buy new clothes for halloween, try to buy items of clothing that you could wear for other occasions as well
- use your surroundings to your advantage! have some fake vines hanging in your room? try incorporating them into your costume!
- don’t be afraid to go for a “basic” costume - just give it your own twist! (ie a swamp witch instead of just a witch)
- choose costumes that use simple clothing but are elevated by make-up instead
- thrift thrift thrift!

all thrifted clothing and accessories





## BY BREAD ALONE: A MARXIST ANALYSIS OF THE WITCH (2015)

by Joe Raskind

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“And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.” — Matthew 4:3-4, KJV

Much as a lens bends and refracts light to enlarge an image to one’s eyes, so does ideology contort the shape of all natural and social phenomena that the human mind experiences. This is a fundamental tenet of historical materialism. Friedrich Engels, in his *Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*, declares that “according to the materialist conception, the determining factor in history is, in the final instance, the production and reproduction of immediate life.” Engels, in a letter to a J. Bloch dated September 21, 1890, later clarifies his point: “The economic situation is the basis, but the various elements of the superstructure---political forms of the class struggle and its results...and even the reflexes of these actual struggles in the brains of the participants, political, juristic, philosophical theories, religious views and their further development in to dogmas---also exercise their influence upon the course of the historical struggles and in many cases preponderate in determining their form.” His comments give full life to the dynamic at play in determining the seemingly arbitrary ways in which people perceive the world.

There’s a certain unease that takes hold once one comes to

terms with the material conception of history. How can one ever wrest total control of what one is thinking if all thoughts are conditioned by one’s historical context? Marx’s famous line from his writings on the Coup of 18 Brumaire begins to sound less like an ominous forecasting of would-be political events, and more like a scream that cuts across the dead of night: “The tradition of all dead generations weigh like a nightmare on the brains of the living.” At no point can we detach ourselves from our historical past; we’re tethered to it as if by an indestructible umbilical cord feeding us the old mythologies of days past.

Robbert Eggers is a filmmaker who, whether he recognizes it or not, fully understands human knowledge as something conditioned by historical limits. This is made evident through the fact that his 2015 film, *The Witch*, comprises dialogue that the film claims to have “[come] directly from” “written accounts of historical witchcraft, including journals, diaries and court records.” In order to get into the mindset of his fictional English-American settler family he had to dive deep into the firsthand accounts of 1640s New England and discover for himself the various fears and neuroses summoned up by the Puritans of that era. Uncritically taking the morals and peculiarities of contemporary society and applying them backwards to an historical past would do nothing but crack the temporal looking-glass and corrupt his subjects’ psyches.

The film opens with William, the patriarch of the family of six, defending himself against the village tribunal, booming the words, “What went we out into this wilderness to find? Leaving our country, kindred, our fathers’ houses. We trevailed a vast ocean. For what? Was it not for the pure and faithful dispensation of the gospels and his word?” The question goes unanswered, but providing one would grant valuable insight into what follows in the film. It behooves us to remember how Engels stressed that the superstructure of society, which includes “religious views”, can “preponderate in determining [the] form” of how class struggle plays out. Here we see the skeletal outline for why our family has found themselves on New England soil.

Although the film provides no timeline for when the family arrives in New England, we can safely assume they journeyed over sometime in the 1630s, a popular time for Puritans such as themselves to do under the Eleven Years’ Tyranny of King Charles I. England by the end of the 17th century was still a predominantly agricultural country with most of its inhabitants living in the countryside producing primarily for personal use; however, between the 15th and 17th centuries England began to see the development of bourgeois commodity production. As early as the 16th century “land was beginning to become a commodity, bought and sold in a competitive market.” As

the economic base of England morphed with time, so did English morality. Where once it was considered cruel and inhumane to raise rents and shake the foundation of the, then thought to be timeless, relationship between lord and serf, now members of the burgeoning bourgeoisie did everything in their power to compensate for a steadily rising inflation.

A revolution in the political economy of English society begat a revolution in English morality. This shift in morality necessitated a shift in the English religion: in comes Puritanism. Puritans preached exactly what the bourgeois class valued: "thrift, sobriety, hard work in the station to which God had called a man...with no extravagant enjoyment of the fruits of labour, and unceasing preoccupation with duty to the detriment of 'worldly' pleasure." Puritans embodied the class which took direct aim at King Charles, and were promptly punished for it. William and his brood come to New England to shed the old feudal ways of the English monarchy and participate in a new society structured with a proper bourgeois mindset.

The film masterfully puts the viewer in the religious mindset of its characters by forcing the spectator to see the world through their eyes. The audience experiences the world in a pre-Enlightenment, anti-scientific alienation. The world is not made of matter, but of godly or devilish energies. Infant death is witch's thievery, sickness is a witch's kiss, an abused girl's grief is relieved not by a simple extrication from the family unit, but by acceptance into a witch's coven. A failure in the crop which

castrates William's position as sole-provider is nothing less than God "showing [them] more of his grace", a beaming light of divine punishment.

The religious garb lasts only so long. The moment William recognizes the crop is garbage he surreptitiously sells his wife's heirloom silver chalice, and begins to discuss doing the same to his eldest daughter, Thomasin. The proto-bourgeois subject turns family treasure into money, "nothing is immune from this alchemy, the bones of the saints cannot withstand it, let alone more delicate [consecrated objects, beyond human commerce]". What was once holy melts into the commodity, regardless of whether the outward form maintains its sanctified rhetoric. "The religious world is but the reflex of the real world."

Eggers' film teaches that human consciousness is conditioned by historical circumstances. The modern subject perceives the world differently than the pre-modern. The idea of a trans-historical perception is ideological pabulum, a smokescreen to unconsciously inject the oddities of our day into the oddities of the past. The Witch's Puritans are much like the "sorcerer" of modern bourgeois society that Marx described in the Manifesto "who is no longer able to control the powers of the nether world whom he called up by his spells". But these spirits are distinctly historical and have been wiped away with time. We must recognize that the ghouls of capital who come "dripping from head to foot, from every

pore, with blood and dirt" are no different than the witches of the 17th century imagined by the Puritans--they are transient phantoms which prop up a society that "is no solid crystal, but an organism capable of change". Only when the proletariat rise in revolutionary action against their oppressors can humanity begin to vanquish the monsters who eternally haunt the corners of their mind.

<sup>1</sup> Friedrich Engels, *Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*, p. 71

<sup>2</sup> Friedrich Engels, *Engels to J. Bloch In Königsberg*, September 21, 1890

<sup>3</sup> Karl Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*

<sup>4</sup> Robbert Eggers, *The Witch* (2015)

<sup>5</sup> Christopher Hill, *The English Revolution, 1640*, p. 15

<sup>6</sup> "Prices rose all through the sixteenth century; between 1510 and 1580 food trebled in England, and textiles rose by 150 percent.", *ibid.*, p. 15

<sup>7</sup> *ibid.*, p.32

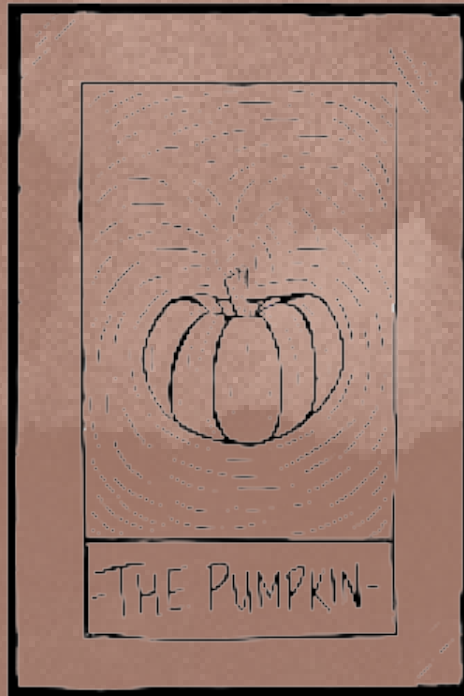
<sup>8</sup> Karl Marx, *Capital, Vol. 1*, p. 229

<sup>9</sup> Karl Marx, *ibid.*, p. 172

Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*

Karl Marx, *Capital, Vol. 1*, p. 926

Karl Marx, *ibid.*, p. 93



Hi Friends, :)  
I designed these tattoos for anyone to use! Feel free to use the designs or take inspiration from them.  
Love,  
Emily Gangloff





My first year here, I lived in a single in a suite full of people I didn't know. One night I came back really late and noticed there were fingerprints and handprints on my window. I've never seen them there before so I just figured someone was playing a prank on me or they were on the outside of the window. I woke up the next morning and saw the prints were actually on the inside of the window in my room and none of my roommates had gone in there as we barely knew each other. I still don't know what happened and how they got there.

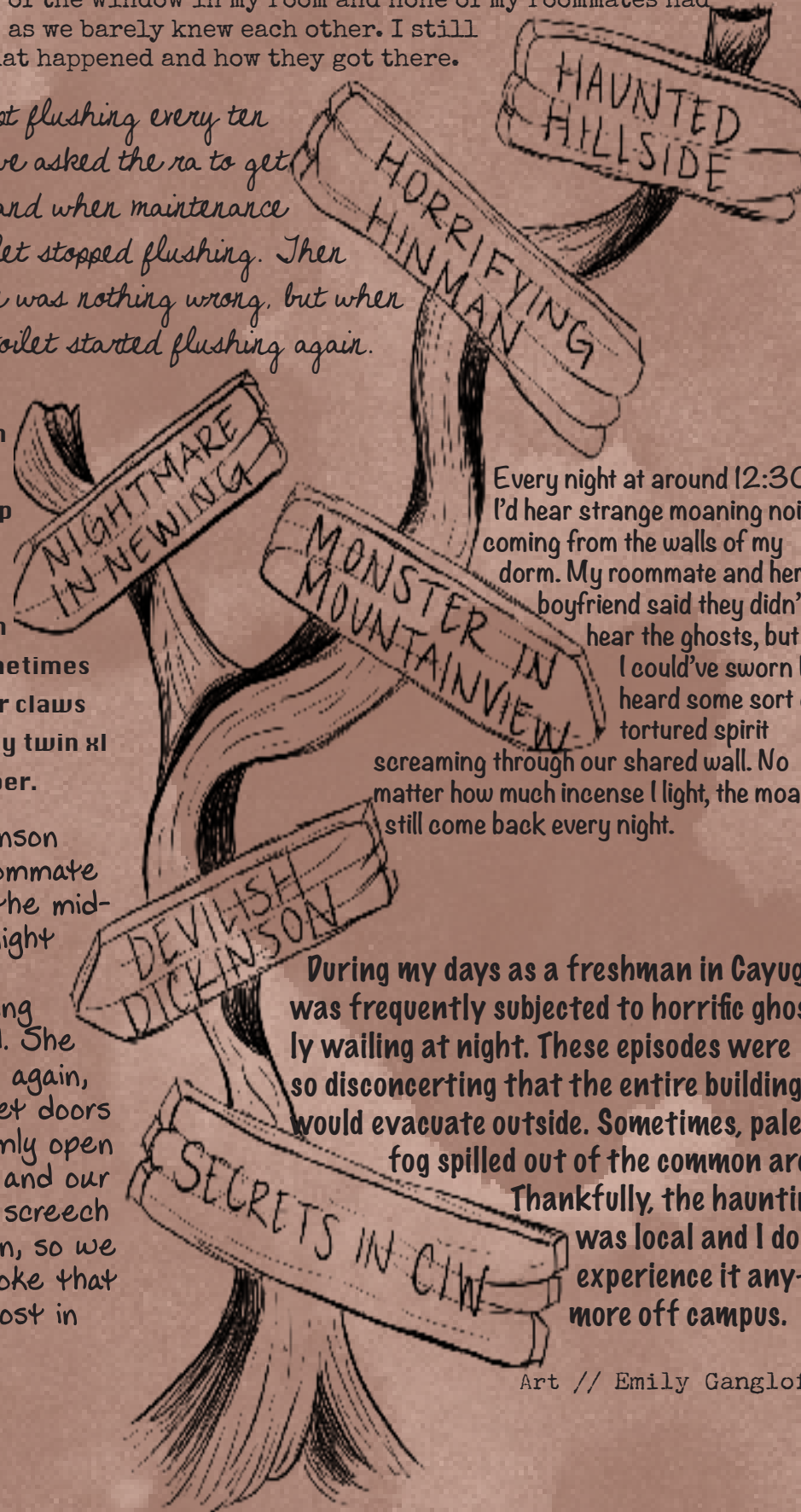
*Our toilet kept flushing every ten minutes, so we asked the ra to get maintenance and when maintenance came, the toilet stopped flushing. Then he said there was nothing wrong, but when he left, the toilet started flushing again.*

When I lived in Newing, I would wake up to what sounded like rats running in the walls. Sometimes I can feel their claws digging into my twin xl mattress topper.

In my Dickinson dorm, my roommate woke up in the middle of the night to a hooded figure hovering over her bed. She never saw it again, but our closet doors would randomly open all the time and our vents would screech for no reason, so we started to joke that we had a ghost in our room.

Every night at around 12:30, I'd hear strange moaning noises coming from the walls of my dorm. My roommate and her boyfriend said they didn't hear the ghosts, but I could've sworn I'd heard some sort of tortured spirit screaming through our shared wall. No matter how much incense I light, the moans still come back every night.

During my days as a freshman in Cayuga, I was frequently subjected to horrific ghostly wailing at night. These episodes were so disconcerting that the entire building would evacuate outside. Sometimes, pale fog spilled out of the common area. Thankfully, the haunting was local and I don't experience it anymore off campus.



Art // Emily Gangloff

# WOMEN IN HORROR:

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**DISCLAIMER:** As this is a list of horror recommendations, each film deals with heavy themes and depictions of violence. Readers with specific triggers are advised to research films thoroughly before watching.

## *Eve's Bayou* (1997)

dir. Kasi Lemmons

A coming-of-age Southern gothic tale set in an affluent 1960s Louisiana community, *Eve's Bayou's* sparse horror elements cement its position as a critically-acclaimed drama with serious staying power. In standard gothic fashion, ten-year-old Eve Batiste recounts the slow-crawling emotional degradation of her family to its grisly end. Horror fans seeking rampant bloodshed and jumpscars might turn their nose up at the movie's insistent focus on domestic life and the inner worlds of children, but they would be missing out. Drawing upon Southern spiritual traditions, Lemmons glosses the concrete terror of the secrets hidden at the heart of the Batiste household with measured injections of magical realism, at once forcing us to confront the imperfect nature of memory and imbuing us with the kind of dread familiar only to children confronting the end of life as they've always known it.

## *Black Christmas* (1974)

dir. Bob Clark

A landmark in Canadian horror as well as a proto-slasher that predates *Halloween* by *four years*, it's difficult not to consider this movie the genre-defining film that could have been. The premise is a classic one—a house full of sorority girls are picked off one by one by a creep holed up in the attic. *Black Christmas*, however, serves as a breath of fresh air in its divergence from dated generic tropes. The film lacks a pattern characteristic to other slashers of the 70s and 80s wherein the chronology of female victims is determined by their level of promiscuity, thus condemning women who openly express their sexualities. In fact, this movie will do you one better: The protagonist has a decently written subplot wherein she seeks an abortion, and the narrative doesn't vilify her choice. Many critics hesitate to call the film feminist, faulting its depictions of violence against women. If that kind of imagery makes you uncomfortable, this is one to skip. However, if you're interested in seeing what the director of *A Christmas Story* (yes, really!) did with a holiday-themed horror, give it a try.

## *Eyes Without a Face* (1960)

dir. Georges Franju

After a car accident disfigures Christiane, her father, a premier surgeon, enlists the help of an assistant to lure pretty college students to his estate in the Parisian suburbs with aims to graft a new face onto his daughter's scarred visage. Franju's attempt to balance the schlocky commercial success of British Hammer horror with elevated aesthetics and complex thematic overtones pays off wonderfully. Indebted to the writers of French thriller *Les Diaboliques* (another must-watch) and *Hitchcock's Vertigo*, *Eyes* boasts an expert command of suspense, lulling viewers into a medically-induced haze before jolting them awake on a cold operating table. The film has been subject to countless interpretations, ranging from commentaries on patriarchy and the regulation of marginalized bodies to French reflection upon the horrors of their imperialism in Algeria. Whatever you take from it, the film's haunting score and the visual of Christiane's imploring gaze peering out from her doll-like mask will linger long after the credits roll.

# RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE GLOBAL

by Rosa Sicks

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## *House* (1977)

dir. Nobuhiko Obayashi

Seven schoolgirls visit an aging aunt's haunted house in the countryside. A testament to Jordan Peele's claim that horror and comedy are closely intertwined, *House* masterfully balances its juxtapositions, eliciting equal parts giggles and shrieks. Drawing inspiration from his daughter's childhood fears, Obayashi highlights the horrific in the quotidian, turning pianos into carnivorous beasts and clocks into fountains of blood. It's tempting to write off *House* as a goofy Scooby-Doo caper, especially because the main female cast is sorted into comically neat character archetypes. However, the film is distinctly self aware and invites viewers to belly-laugh at the restrictive norms for female characterization that pervaded the horror genre in the 70s. This metatextuality is always simmering beneath the film's surface, breaching the screen during moments that layer techniques found in the early silent *cinema fantastique* of Georges Méliès with technological capabilities of the decade. Dazzling sequences that parody the contemporary media landscape prevent us from becoming lost inside the spectacle by reminding us that this movie, like all others, is indebted to a rich and rarely uncomplicated social history of film.



From *House* (1977)

## *A Girl Walks Home Alone at Night* (2014)

dir. Ana Lily Amirpour

The extreme success of Taika Waititi's *What We Do in the Shadows*, the fizzling *Twilight* Renaissance, and that one Nosferatu reference from *Spongebob Squarepants* all hint at a cultural turning point for our fanged friends. Once an offensive kaleidoscope of societal Others, vampires attained their horrific status as anti-Semitic, homophobic, and/or Orientalist caricatures preying on "polite" (read: white, probably straight) society. As evidenced by the above examples, horror is an incredibly self-reflexive genre, and there is plenty of space for reimagining classic spooks. Amirpour bites off a sizable chunk in her crowd-funded debut feature, in which residents of a decaying town find themselves at the mercy of a toothy vigilante skateboarder who targets abusive men. Marketed as the first Iranian vampire Western, *A Girl* is one promising Frankenstein's monster of refashioned genre staples. This beast—a film that oozes equal parts nostalgia and novelty—is impossible to abandon in Ingolstadt. Heavy on the vibes, this one leans into its seductive soundtrack with visuals that dissolve on the tongue: a tantalizing stare, a street illuminated by a sole lamp, a cloaked figure receding into the shadows...

From *A Girl Walks Home Alone at Night* (2014)



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# 22 The Rink

By Emily Maldonado

Art // Emily Gangloff

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Here lies the Cedar Street roller rink  
It's certainly seen better days  
A once opulent exterior now cracked and withered  
Due to a stray cigarette's blaze

For such a long time it's remained vacant  
Frozen in a mystical year, decades-long forgotten  
With no living soul having set foot inside  
Expect the occasional opossum

However, during tranquil nights  
When the sky is clear of clouds  
Throughout the dilapidated structure, you'll faintly hear  
the sound of wheels rumbling across the empty grounds

A peek through a cracked window will reveal  
The root of this perplexing noise  
You see a translucent sheet with eye holes  
Balancing in chalky roller skates, trying to maintain their poise

Shortly after, more apparitions appear  
And pluck pairs of skates from the shelves,  
They daintily dust off the grime and cobwebs  
Trying hard to avoid getting any on themselves

Donning their skates, they glide across a decaying hardwood floor  
swaying with the breeze yet looking so sublime  
The sight of them swirling looks very reminiscent  
Of someone's laundry that's flown off a clothesline

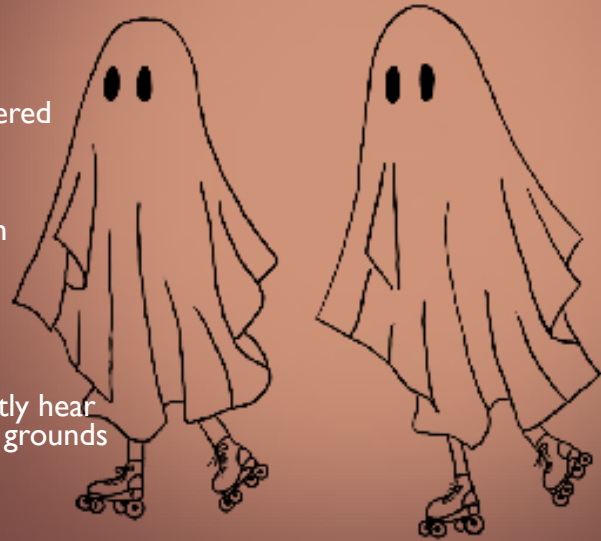
Two ghosts drift across the rink  
Holding onto one another to stay upright,  
Twirling each other under the warm glow  
Of the mirror ball, refracting violet beams of moonlight

Some ghosts are surprisingly nimble  
Perhaps avid roller skaters in a previous existence  
While others tumble onto the floor like bowling pins  
Quickly picking themselves up, I admire their persistence

But no matter the skill  
Of the specters in skates  
They all express their spirits freely  
And move in their own style of grace

They skate until the rising sun impedes  
On their twilight celebration,  
The phantoms know their fun is ending  
So they return their skates to their original location

With the bright sun enveloping the rink  
So marks the end of the specters' four-wheeled follies  
Hopefully, they'll return someday,  
Meanwhile, it's nice to know that ghosts have hobbies.

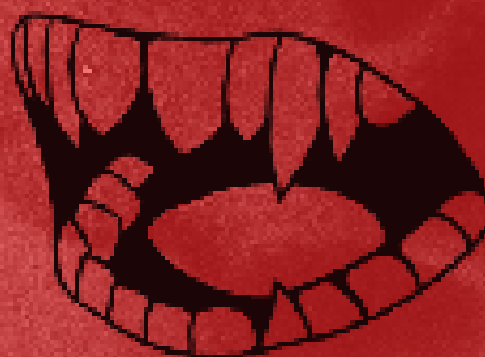


## carnivorous.

by Katherine Quinn



The memory is tough as chewy meat-  
 Red and brown and undercooked  
 Dull light buzzing on kitchen tile  
 I'm trying now  
 To gnaw my way through it  
 It's raw.  
 It's rare.  
 It's bloody.



I'm dicing up the beefy bits.  
 The times I really smiled  
 Through every hearty bite  
 And never choked on the fatty parts  
 Or the sinewy ligaments of the body.

But every slaughterhouse has a jar full of cancer.  
 The discard pile of the eyes and teeth.  
 That I dared not touch with tepid hands.  
 But now that I'm older,  
 I delight in the masochism of poking through memory after memory  
 Straight off the chopping block  
 On the lonesome kitchen floor.



