

THE VIRTIDIAN

THE VIRTIDIAN

NOVEMBER 2024

09

HALLOWEEN EDITION

THE VIRTIDIAN

INDEX

HAUNTED HOTELS

DANAE KARTOUDE

MUM... I WET THE BED

PAYLOS BISMAL, PHILIPPOS CARNETRO LEAO

IN THE SPOTLIGHT: IOANNIS LIVANOS AND ALEXA MICHAEL

REBECCA PETROU

THE PUMPKIN REGATTA

MIKAELLA VAN ZUTPHEN

VIDEO ARCHIVES

NOAH NATHANAEL

TRICK OR TREAT, PEOPLE!

STEPHANOS ARTEMIS

GUESS WHO

CHARIS CHRISANTHOU

BOOK CORNER

SOPHIA DOMBO, ANNA PAVLOWITCH

MORBID MYSTERIES

LEONIE WEIDERUD

DISOSSTATION

NATALIE HICKMAN

THE LAYOUT

EMILY KYRTAKIDES, SYLVIA MICHAELIDES

SOCIAL MEDIA

SYLVIA MICHAELIDES, NEFELI VASSILOU, SELINA ELIA

EDITED BY

STYLIANA AVRAAMIDOU, MR. ANTONIOU

THE VIRTOTIAN

HAUNTED HOTELS

WRITTEN BY

Danae Kartoude

THE VIRTOTAN

This time last year we questioned if witches are real. But what about ghosts? Though our witch stories were based far away in Salem, our ghost stories stand a lot closer to home, at the infamous abandoned hotel in Prodromos called Berengaria.

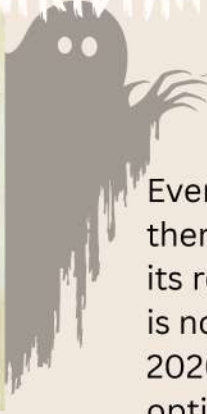
The luxury hotel opened its doors to visitors in 1934, hosting recognisable figures such as Winston Churchill and King Pharouk of Egypt. Evidently the hotel's mesmerising location and traditional products, such as tea and wine, attracted influential figures from all over the planet. For nearly 50 years, the hotel served as a beacon of luxury in Cyprus, attracting much-needed tourism to our island. That was until 1984 when the hotel unexpectedly closed its doors. The hotel officially and formally shut its doors to the public due to income shortages particularly after the lack of tourism due to the Turkish invasion of 1974. That being said, it has been suspected that the hotel shut down due to much more sinister reasons, with many visitors, both local and international, calling it haunted.



The rumours started when the original owner of the hotel passed it to his three sons. The competition between them to gain the most of the hotel's success led them down a spiral of greed and jealousy. Ultimately, all three brothers died under extremely questionable and mysterious circumstances, leading to arising suspicion in the village. The following hotel manager is said to have taken his life within his office, adding fuel to the already widespread rumours of curse.

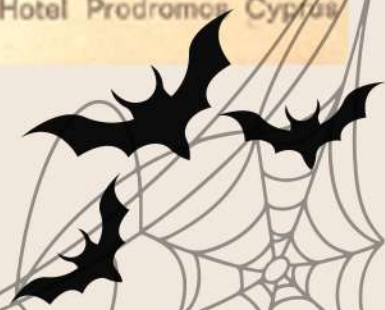
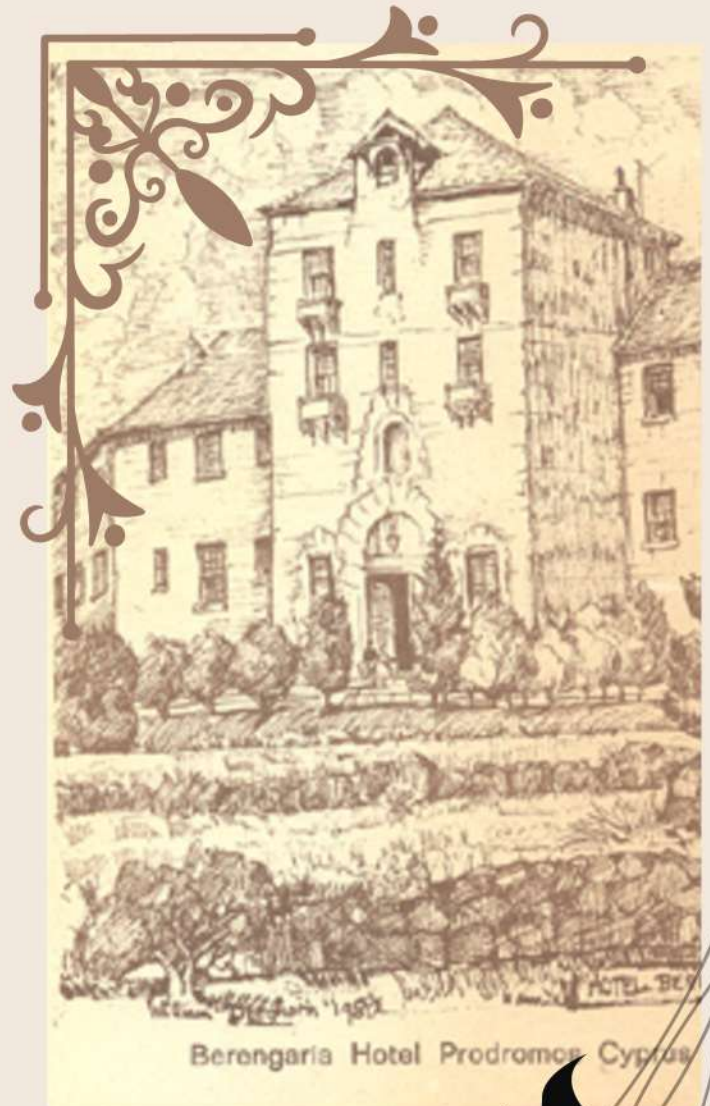


THE VIRTOTAN



Ever since the hotel closed its doors, there has been continuously no hope of its reopening until the hotel was sold and is now being renovated for its opening in 2026. The hotel's reopening brings optimism to Cypriots, hopeful of restoring the hotel to its former glory. Cypriots as well as international mystery enthusiasts hold their breaths as they await the hotel reopening, almost hoping for another mystery to occur.

It is said that two female ghosts also haunt the hotel, searching for revenge. One of the girls allegedly drowned in the swimming pool of the hotel during its operation, and she still roams its now empty halls. Another girl, a mysterious and unknown figure with distinct black hair, said to be a hotel guest, wears white linen, and has also been seen sitting by the hotel's windows at sunset. Some have even claimed that this figure has faded in and out of sight right in front of them, adding to the otherworldly reputation of the hotel. Such sightings have never been factually confirmed but many thrill-seeking tourists and locals alike would visit the hotel searching for these spirits. Despite the mysterious circumstances of the hotel's closing, Berengaria never stopped acting as a Cypriot landmark, with tourists flooding to it continuously both during the time it was abandoned and even now when it is being rebuilt. Even with its gates sealed and a prominent "DO NOT ENTER" sign, people's curiosities lead them right into the eerie halls of the hotel, either in hope of encountering a spirit or simply uncovering part of the hotel's history.



THE VIRTUOLAN



**MUM...
I WET THE BED...**

WRITTEN BY

Paulos Kismal

AND

Philippos Carneiro Leao

THE VIRTOTIAN

Boo! Got you! Did you perhaps feel... scared? Did you perhaps feel... fear? Well, during Halloween season, this is a feeling we either learn to embrace, or hate! While we all know that watching a scary movie, and frightening our friends are all part of the Halloween spirit, none of that would be possible if we were fearless, or rather, incapable of feeling fear. So, the real question is, what is fear?

Like most emotions or responses our body has external stimuli, fear is an evolutionary response that our brain causes when faced with a potentially endangering situation. By causing us to feel fear, we are forced to act in a conservative and protective way thus increasing our probability of survival. Basically, if we are put in a position where we are threatened and may potentially die, our body causes us to feel fear, so that we remove ourselves from the situation!



But how does our brain actually cause this? As soon as we recognise a potentially or actively dangerous situation, a small organ within our brain, called the amygdala, gets to work! It alerts our nervous system so that we are put into high-alert and reflex 'mode' so that we can quickly and effectively deal with any dangers. Additionally, hormones such as cortisol and adrenaline are released. All of these factors cause our heart and breathing rates as well as blood pressure to elevate, and even our blood flow changes, where more blood is redirected to the limbs, in an attempt to fully prepare us to start fighting and throwing punches if necessary!

All of these factors put together constitute what it is to feel fear, but past that there is a psychological aspect, where as soon as we begin to 'sense' fear, we undergo considerable behavioural changes, where we are more prone to being aggressive, or act in a way unusual to our character. This of course is reserved for cases when we are in actual danger, as opposed to feeling fear from a movie.

Unlike most important holiday seasons, Halloween doesn't have a menu, so here at the science column, we decided to make one!



THE VIRIDIAN

THE OLEANDER PLANT

An evergreen bush-like plant found in warm and tropical climates. Interestingly, the plant looks attractive at first glance; with its neon-coloured 5-petalled flowers and pleasantly smelling stems, it looks a perfect candidate for a lovely bouquet but upon closer inspection or research you would find out that it is incredibly fatal to humans.

Even though it is the most poisonous plant in the world, due to its appearance the Oleander is a popular potted plant, you might even find one in your garden.

Easy for a salad!

Oleander plants are exceedingly noxious to humans, even 1 full leaf is enough to kill a fully grown adult. The plant consists of toxic cardiac glycosides like Cardenolide Oleandrin that slow down the heart rate causing low blood pressure, it will also make the person feel quite weak. Next is blurred vision and intestinal failure until death, the symptoms will be noticeable within 1 hour of ingestion.

DEADLY NIGHTSHADE (ATROPA BELLADONNA)

A shrub, normally found in temperate Europe. This plant has dark green leaves, large purple bell-shaped flowers and it produces a sweet but mortal fruit; a purple-black berry that unfortunately has an uncanny resemblance to currants and blackberries. An unsettling fact about the Nightshade is that it belongs to the nightshade family Solanaceae, this family includes tomatoes, potatoes and even aubergines. So it wouldn't look out of place a nice home cooked meal.

The Atropa Belladonna is incredibly poisonous, 10 berries are considered a fatal dose for an adult human, it contains two main harmful chemicals, solanine and atropine. These target the heart and nervous system to shut down the human system. Known symptoms include hallucinations, sweating, dry mouth, enlarged pupils and even slowed breathing.

Would make for a spectacular dessert!

Lastly, we offer:

DUMBCANE

WATER HEMLOCK

GIANT HOGWEED

CASTOR BEAN

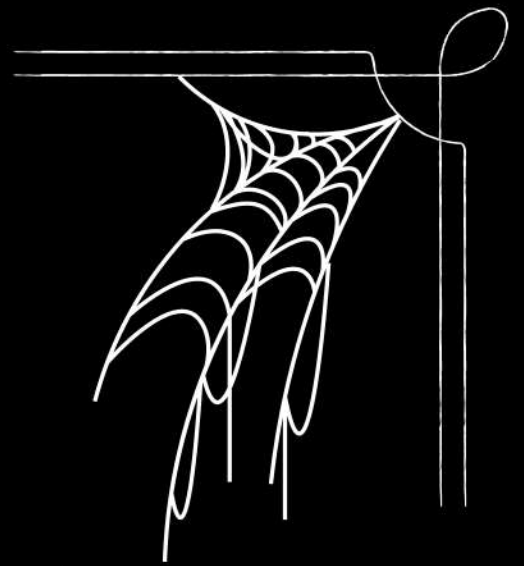
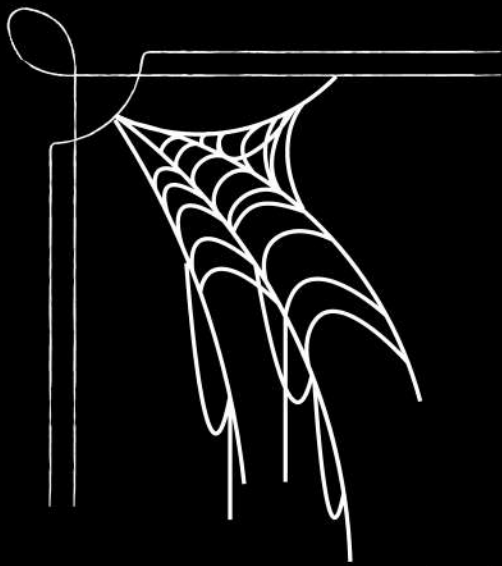
POISON HEMLOCK

WOLF'S BANE

Thank you for reading this edition of the Viridian's Science Column and I hope you learned why you get scared, and definitely what NOT to serve to trick or treaters, unless you really don't like them...

Now be honest, did I get you at the start?

THE VIRTUOSIAN



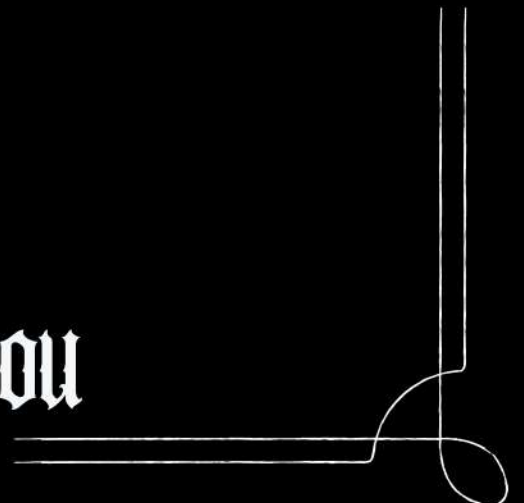
IN THE SPOTLIGHT

IOANNIS LIVANOS &
ALEXA MICHAEL



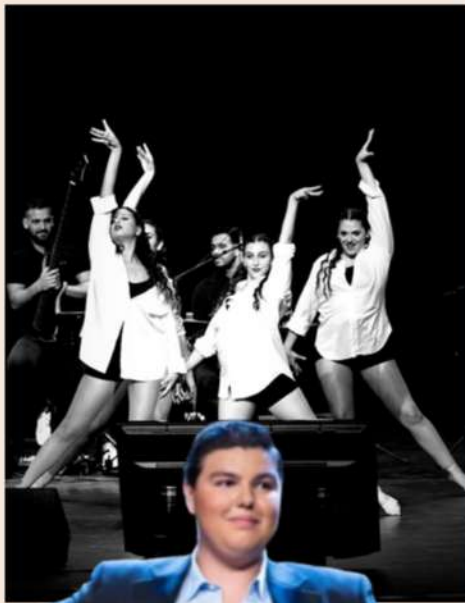
WRITTEN BY

Rebecca Petrou



THE VIRTUOSIAN

A lot of us have big aspirations, far-fetched goals we aspire to reach, plans that fuel our passions. For some of us these ideas remain just a dream. But for others, their dreams become reality; they work hard to achieve these goals and accomplish big things not in the 'far-fetched future', but now, today. Two of our very own Year Eleven students Ioannis Livanos and Alexa Michael are examples of people who do not give up on their dreams and have worked tirelessly to present their musical talents to the world, acting as what I believe to be a great inspiration to many young, aspiring artists and singers.



NOVEMBER 8TH, 2024



On the 8th of November, Ioannis performed his production '**Musical Journey**' at the Strovolos Municipal Theatre which he described as a '*dream come true*'. In the performance, the audience was taken through a cross-cultural celebration, bringing together sounds from around the world. When the project was first proposed by the municipality, a literal musical journey came to mind, and after extensive research and his deep love for global music, Ioannis decided to explore the musical heritage of Italy, Spain, France, the United States and Greece. Each performance piece reflected the essence of these countries, immersing the audience into an experience that 'brought people closer to cultures they may not know well'.

As with any large-scale performance, a lot of meticulous planning has gone into each element of the show, from dancers to the orchestra; Ioannis managed to create a '*vivid display of global artistry*'. A maestro skilfully led the orchestra as dancers brought the '*heart of each culture to life*' on the night. Ioannis shares that stepping into this project required going out of his comfort zone, but though challenging at times the process was extremely rewarding and made easier with the '**unwavering support of friends, family and mentors.**'



THE VIRTUOTIAN

Only two days later, on the 10th of November, Alexa took the stage of the Nicosia Municipal Theatre, opening for artist Nama Dama in the Nicosia International Festival.

Alexa shares how:

‘As a new generation female artist, my goal is to bring a fresh perspective to the music industry and contribute to a dynamic musical landscape that reflects the diverse experiences and voices of young people today.’

Alexa displayed a repertoire of her original songs, also debuting her new single ‘Crush’, during the performance. Her music is an authentic mix of ‘deeply personal narratives and universally relatable themes’ with hopes of her work speaking to ‘anyone and everyone’ particularly young audiences.



CRUSH, ALEXA MICHAEL
OUT NOW!



NOVEMBER 10TH, 2024



Looking Ahead

Alexa’s goals include releasing her own album in 2025 as she continues performing and writing to **‘experiment with different styles’**.

She feels extremely grateful to have begun her music journey at such a young age and considers herself ‘lucky to have some of the best professionals’ by her side as she creates her music and does what she loves. Live performances such as this one has allowed her to learn so much and further develop her passion for her music.

Both Ioannis and Alexa have shown that with dedication and courage, dreams can indeed be brought to life. Their passion, commitment, and drive serve as a testament to the power of young talent and ambition. From Ioannis’ international celebration of music to Alexa’s raw, authentic storytelling, both performances were shining examples of creativity and self-expression. As Ioannis and Alexa continue to develop and explore new musical paths, they remind us that the journey to realize our dreams begins with hard work, persistence, and the support of a community that believes in us.





THE VIRTUOSIAN

THE
PUMPKIN
REGATTA

WRITTEN BY

Mikaella Van Zutphen

THE VIRTOTAN

In 1996, a man named Wayne Hackney would revolutionise modern transport as we know it with one of the world's most spectacular innovations: pumpkin kayaking. The nature of this sport is relatively self-explanatory: it involves carving out a gigantic pumpkin, precariously placing it on a body of water and rowing your way to safety.



Later renamed “Pumpkin Regatta”, the sport gradually evolved into an event of immense importance in regions such as Nova Scotia, North Carolina and North Dakota. The most well-known of these events, however, undoubtedly takes place in the small town of Kasterlee, Belgium.

Since 2008, the town has held an annual festival that involves a series of pumpkin-related activities, including pumpkin shuffleboard, pumpkin art competitions and, of course, the Pumpkin Regatta. This fall-themed event brings together people from all around the world, who share the common goal of celebrating the versatility of the quintessentially autumnal vegetable – the pumpkin!

Perhaps the best aspect of this Pumpkin Regatta is its sustainability. Its organisers place particular emphasis on raising awareness of pumpkin wastage; an average of sixteen million pumpkins are wasted each year after Halloween. From there, they're put into landfills where they decay and release methane, greatly contributing to global warming. In Kasterlee, however, the pumpkin rinds are dried and made into fertiliser, so that environmental consequences can be minimised, and the pumpkins can be put to renewable use. The seeds are stored for the following years' harvest, and the cycle continues.



The Pumpkin Regatta is the ideal example of an all-inclusive sport. People of all ages – and, frankly, of close to zero athletic ability – are welcome to try their luck in Kasterlee's annual pumpkin race!

THE VERIDIAN

VIDEO ARCHIVES

SCARY
MOVIES TO
TERRIFY
YOURSELVES
WITH THIS
SPOOKY
SEASON



WRITTEN BY
Noah Nathanael

THE VIRTOTIAN

We're back, costumes are frantically being made, trips to Jumbo are becoming more frequent and with each added month I am becoming neurotically paranoid with university research which is very very scary. So! In an attempt to normalize these feelings, here's the definitive list of equally scary movies to terrify yourselves with during this spooky season.

BONES AND ALL

2022, DIR. LUCA GUADAGNINO

Timothee Chalamet eats people in this movie.

In short, it's an intimately violent, coming-of-age, cannibal, romance, odyssey, set in the backroads of contemporary America. Deep breaths. Now, dealing with a subject matter as bestial and unsettling in nature as this is, it'll have you wanting to crawl out your own skin within the first ten minutes. So if you're looking for something to make you squirm and pray for the end credits then this is it. But! I think what makes this so good is that once you get past a superficial viewing, you could conceptualise the metaphor of cannibalism in so many ways: queerness, drug addiction, gender.

The malaise of being is exposed here so sensitively, and the irony is literally dripping from my fingers as I type the word 'sensitively' but it's true.

Guadagnino isn't romanticising cannibalism or posing it as some grand justification because at it's core, *Bones and All* explores forbidden and fated love, and everyone will resonate with it differently.



It's a movie about the places you run away from but can never manage to escape. Horror and romance are blended together so seamlessly through its breathtaking score and cinematography that you're immersed in the story completely, being complicit in murder one second then intrusive in intimacy another. Shout out Taylor Russell. You can't help but watch, adding a voyeuristic aspect to this film in the best way possible. It's honest, it's devastating, it's authentic, it's the weekend. Watch this movie and have a good time. Stay tuned for the valentines edition where I talk about a film by the same director unknowingly starring a real-life cannibal.



THE FLY

1986, DIR. DAVID CRONENBERG



Jeff Goldblum transcends man.

After fulfilling his life's work (and purpose) in materialising the dream of teleportation, reclusive scientist Seth Brundle inadvertently mutates himself with a fly, victimising the audience to witness the inhuman aspects of human behaviour which succeed it. We see firsthand Seth's erratic projection of masculinity, a drug to him, and question if it is symptomatic of the transformation or if that toxicity was repressed inside him all along, holding up a mirror and asking us the same thing about ourselves. In the same way *Bones and All* blends horror and romance, *The Fly* blends horror and tragedy. It takes physical and psychological decay to be an allegory for disease, offering a timeless meditation on humanities capacity for creation and destruction.

Hideously, all of this is articulated through marvelous stage pieces, tearing down plasticised notions of beauty, and displacing the fatal flaw of imagination for reality. 'The Fly' – king of subtext everybody. I've had enough though, there's only so many fancy arthouse connections I can make before admitting how absolutely vile, disgusting and wretched this was to watch. It ruined my night. You might enjoy it, but it ruined my night. There's a maggot baby at some point. I genuinely couldn't tell you when solely because I've suppressed so much of the second half. Despite this, what redeemed it for me slightly, just slightly, is that love interest Veronica finally answers the universal dilemma– at what stage of insect metamorphosis is it socially acceptable to leave your partner?

**"I'm an insect who dreamt he was a man, and loved it.
But now the dream is over, and the insect is awake"**



SHAUN OF THE DEAD

2004, DIR. EDGAR WRIGHT

Moving on from those two absolute monoliths of body horror, I'll digress to something more light-hearted. In my third endeavour of breeding genres, we've got the undoubted pinnacle of horror and comedy. I kid you not I have watched this movie six times. To visualise it for you, in one scene the main characters beat a zombie to death with pool cues in sync to 'Don't Stop Me Now' by Queen. That one scene honestly eclipsed the entirety of Bohemian Rhapsody for me. Peak cinema.

THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE

1974, DIR. TOBE HOOPER

Remember when Joey was reading *The Shining* in 'Friends' and he got so scared that he put the book in his freezer? That's the exact type of delirium you'll experience while watching this movie, absolutely iconic.

THE VIRTIDIAN



Trick or
Treat,
people!

WRITTEN BY

Stephanos Artemis

THE VIRTOTAN



Now that it's Halloween season, everyone is in the mood for mischief. Since I wanted to be on topic, I have generously decided to grace you with a spooky article, written by none other than yours truly.

Is it really something scary though? Or are you just being superstitious?

Other than a Stevie Wonder hit song, a superstition is usually an irrational belief in the supernatural, in other words, believing that something beyond the physical realm such as a spirit will influence one's life based on an action that is carried out or an event that takes place. This influence can be good or bad, and will alter the future outcomes of the person. But what constitutes a superstition? Well, a superstition can technically be anything, as long as there is a deep-rooted fear or hope that the future will change. It doesn't even have to have a strong, justifiable connection to the situation: it can be unprovable, or even easily disproved, yet people still believe in it.

LET'S LOOK AT SOME EXAMPLES.



Imagine that you are in Europe in the Middle Ages.

One night, ye cannot sleep in ye ol' bed, so ye decide to go for a walk when, all of a sudden, a dark, mysterious creature emerges. Its eyes, two chartreuse daggers, making you freeze with fear. Then, it meows. Indeed, the fear of black cats is, in my opinion, the textbook definition of a superstition.

Originating in European folklore from the Middle Ages, the growing number of black cats in cities worried people, as they were seen as evil, and could be linked to death. Half a century later, people still believe in bad luck if a black cat crosses their path.



Three-hundred years later, across the North Sea, on the island of Ireland, the Celts were celebrating Samhain, the festival marking the end of summer, and the beginning of harvest season. As time passed, Samhain came to be known as All Hallows' Eve, or otherwise, Halloween. Aside from dancing awesomely, the Celts had another tradition - vegetable art. As strange as this might sound, it originated from the tale of Stingy Jack, a mischievous man who died after a life of lies and tricks. After his death, in his passing to the afterlife, he was given some coal to cook his turnip. Since then, people carve faces on all types of root vegetables and leave them outside their houses with a lit candle inside, in an effort to scare off any lingering spirits, such as Stingy Jack's. Around a century later, when many Irish people immigrated to the USA in the 1800s, they brought the carved harvest with them. At the time, pumpkins were cheaper and not as difficult to carve, hence birthing the modern-day superstition of Jack-o'-Lanterns. For more Irish lore, don't forget to check out Leonie's Morbid Mysteries!



THE VIRTOTAN

A more universal example would be the full moon. With ancient roots, this superstition is one of the most popular in the media, being one of the typical settings of gothic, horror, and thriller stories. It is thought that peculiar, inexplicable things happen when there is a full moon. Dating back to Proto-Indo-European mythology, werewolves have become a classic motif in scary stories. Disguised as regular people, werewolves metamorphosed once a month into vicious canines when the moon was full. Another popular superstition linked to the full moon is connected to the witches and the practice of dark magic. Especially during the Salem Witch Trials of 1692, people have historically been suspicious of the abnormal. The full moon was thought to be the 'witching hour', when supernatural activity was at its peak.



And what would this article be without a section on the number thirteen? The infamous number thirteen has grown to be widely-feared. Having origins in various mythologies and folklore, such as Norse and Western, thirteen has been strongly linked to bad luck. Thirteen even has a phobia named after it, known as 'triskaidekaphobia'.

Think about it - the number twelve is thought to be perfect for many reasons, such as the fact that there are twelve months in a year. The fact that thirteen is one more than twelve could symbolise misfortune. Modern superstitions have come as far as omitting the number thirteen in an elevator, fearing a catastrophe.

WITH THAT, I WISH YOU A VERY HAPPY HALLOWEEN ...

KNOCK ON WOOD! 😊



THE VERDIAN

GUESS WHO

HALLOWEEN EDITION



**MAKE YOUR
GUESSES ON
OUR
INSTAGRAM
AND STAY
TUNED FOR THE
REVEAL!**



IF YOU WERE PLACED IN A 'FREAKY FRIDAY' SITUATION WHICH OTHER TEACHER WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO SPEND A DAY AS?

"Mrs Kasparides. She looks like she's got it all figured out. And English Lit looks like a fun subject to teach for a day."

ARE YOU MUCH OF A HALLOWEEN ENJOYER YOURSELF?

"I can't say I am."



WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO PURSUE TEACHING THE SUBJECT YOU TEACH?

"It's always been my passion, there was never any other option in mind for me."

SAY YOU HEAR A NOISE IN YOUR BASEMENT: ARE YOU HEADING TOWARDS THE NOISE, IGNORING IT, OR HIDING UNDER THE COVERS?

"Towards the noise, definitely towards it. Especially if it's disrupting my sleep."

WHAT WOULD YOU TITLE YOUR AUTOBIOGRAPHY?

"Lost in the Woods. Volume 16"

HAVE YOU EVER PARTICIPATED IN ANY HALLOWEEN ACTIVITIES/TRADITIONS, IF SO WHAT ARE YOUR FAVOURITE ONES?

"Never. Maybe someday...."

WHAT VILLAIN OR MONSTER DO YOU CONSIDER AS MISUNDERSTOOD?

"I like to believe they're all misunderstood. I love when they flip the stories in movies and you understand the villain's side."



HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOURSELF USING THREE WORDS ONLY?

"Weird. Creative. Compassionate (unless you're late or miss a deadline.)"

FAVOURITE HALLOWEEN COSTUME YOU HAVE EVER PULLED OFF, AND WHAT IS A COSTUME YOU WOULD LOVE TO TRY

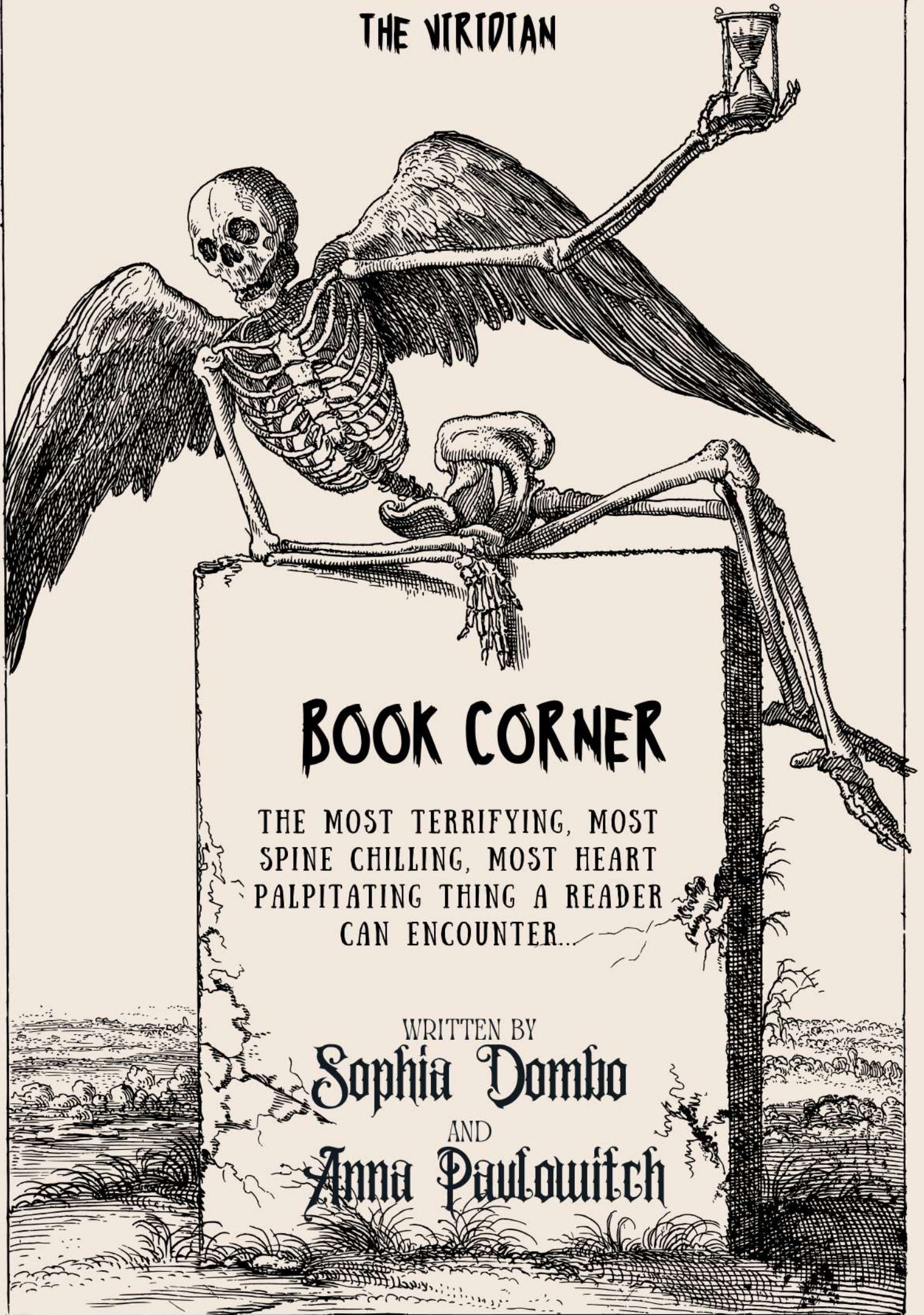
"Don't do costumes. But when I was a kid I was the yellow Power Ranger and that was very cool."

ANDDD FINALLY WHAT MONTH IS YOUR BIRTHDAY?

"August"

BOO!

THE VIRTOTIAN



BOOK CORNER

THE MOST TERRIFYING, MOST
SPINE CHILLING, MOST HEART
PALPITATING THING A READER
CAN ENCOUNTER...

WRITTEN BY

Sophia Dombo

AND

Anna Paulowitch

HALLOWEEN

BOOK RECCOMENDATIONS

Have we all noticed the chill in the air? The desire to pull on a cardigan? The cheeky hot chocolate making its way into the Friday night bedtime routine? I definitely have and if I didn't know better, I'd say we're in it: the best time of the year. Aka October-November-December, aka autumn, aka winter, aka 'tis the season. Apparently, tis also the season for dressing up and scaring people for candy which personally is not my thing so instead of giving you spooky, scary book recommendations I am going to talk about the most terrifying, most spine chilling, most heart palpitating thing a reader can encounter: The Commitment Book.

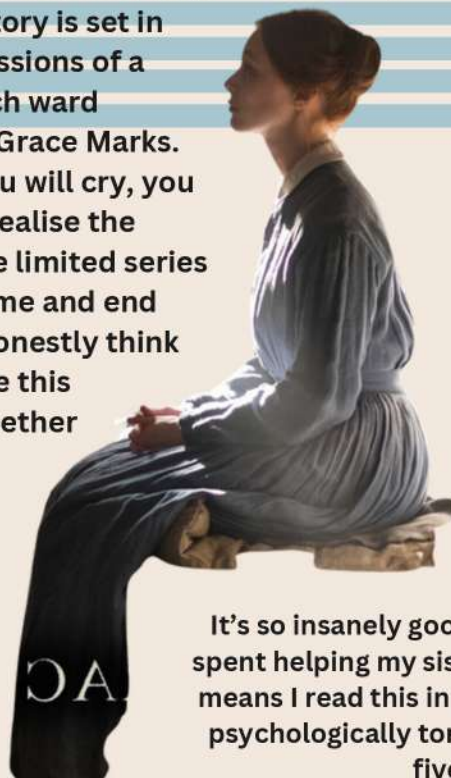
For all those who don't have the distinct and singular pleasure of knowing me personally, The Commitment Book(TCB) is the term I use for the arduously long book (rules say 450 pages minimum) that I choose to read within a year. Now, considering that autumn/winter is when I read most, TCB is usually an end of year ordeal and usually consumes my very being from the second we hit the first of October. So, I'm going to cut to the chase and give you my favourite long book TCB contenders. Here we go.



ALIAS GRACE MARGARET ATWOOD



Atwood is insane and I adore her. To put it very very simply, this partially true story is set in 1840 and follows the therapy sessions of a convicted murderer turned psych ward patient turned innocent victim, Grace Marks. You will laugh (momentarily), you will cry, you will be left speechless, you will realise the actor playing the therapist in the limited series adaptation is incredibly handsome and end up watching the whole thing. I honestly think anyone and everyone would love this book because the mystery of whether what Grace is saying is true is so incredibly gripping while the complex layers of narrative due to the ambiguous nature of Grace's real voice makes for a story that can be enjoyed by someone simply reading for pleasure and someone ready to analyse.



Margaret
Atwood
ALIAS
GRACE

From the author of *The Handmaid's Tale*
"Outstanding" *Sunday Times*



It's so insanely good that I read it in six days. Four of which were spent helping my sister move to another country, which basically means I read this in two days. This is a book that doesn't cease to psychologically torment you, and for that reason alone it's a full five-star, hall of fame, gold-award winning read.

RAPID FIRE TCB
RECOMMENDATIONS THAT I'VE
ALREADY REVIEWED PREVIOUSLY
AND DON'T WANT TO BORE YOU BY
REPEATING:



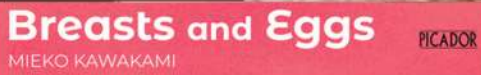
A Little Life by
Hanya Yanagihara
(of course)
720 pages



The Secret History by
Donna Tart
(again, of course)
559 pages



Anna Karenina by
Leo Tolstoy
(no, I haven't read it.
Divine intuition.)
964 pages



Breasts and Eggs by
Mieko Kawakami
(currently reading, currently loving)
440 pages, 10 short but a slight
bending of the rules is admissible

GIVE US YOUR OWN
FAVOURITE SPOOKY
BOOK RECS ON OUR
INSTAGRAM!

PACHINKO

MIN JIN LEE

Truthfully, I haven't read this one. 'But how can you recommend a book without reading it?' I'm divinely guided when it comes to books, that's how. Honestly though, the reviews for this book are the quality endorsement I need because I have not heard a single person say a bad thing about it. It is a saga of a story, an odyssey of a journey, and completely and entirely something I am considering having as TCB this winter. The story follows teenaged Sunja and how her decision to reject being bought by the married man that gets her pregnant and marry another instead has a ripple effect of consequences that entangle her and generations after her into a whirlwind of events.

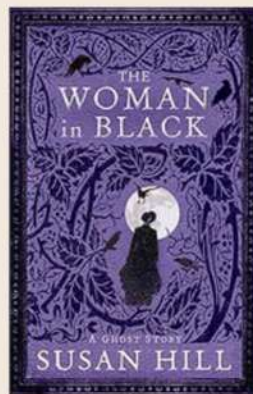


Despite my inability to follow instructions when it comes to these recommendations, Anna managed to stick to the theme and read an actually Halloweeny book, so if spooky, scary, eerie, gothic reading is what you're looking for, she's your girl.

NEW ADDITION: ANNA'S REVIEWS

Hi, I'm Anna, and I guess you could say that I like books. Sophia has very kindly given me space on her column, so watch out for my own monthly reads!

My bookworm tastes vary, from classics to whodunnits, so that means you will hopefully eventually find something to your liking.



THE WOMAN IN BLACK

SUSAN HILL

If gothic horror is your cup of tea, then grab a blanket, put the kettle on and take a seat by the fireplace – you're in for a treat. A novel that warms the soul but chills the spine, *The Woman in Black* is set among the marshes of the English countryside. Arthur Kipps, a young solicitor, pays a visit to the creaking mansion, Eel Marsh House to sort out the affairs of its former inhabitant, the late Mrs Alice Drablow. But once there, he discovers a lot more than a pile of papers, as he begins to understand the warnings of the villagers about the house's haunted past. Disembodied screams, swirling mist, a ghost dressed in black, what else could you possibly ask for?



THE VIRTOTIAN

MORBID MYSTERIES

Whispers from the past



WRITTEN BY

Leonie Weiderud

THE VIRTOTIAN

UPON ENTERING SPOOKY SEASON, I THOUGHT WE'D DIVE INTO SOME SPINE-CHILLING OLD LEGENDS...

THE REAL STORY BEHIND CORALINE

'Coraline' is undoubtedly a 'go-to' as Halloween approaches. However, both the book and film's inspirations come from an unsettling place, surprising some that even animated flicks like Coraline have connections to reality. While one can attribute the 'Other Mother's' existence to Lucy Clifford's writings, Gaiman also drew parts of the story from a chilling legend, spotlighting an older woman on the outskirts of Gaiman's home county of Hampshire, UK.

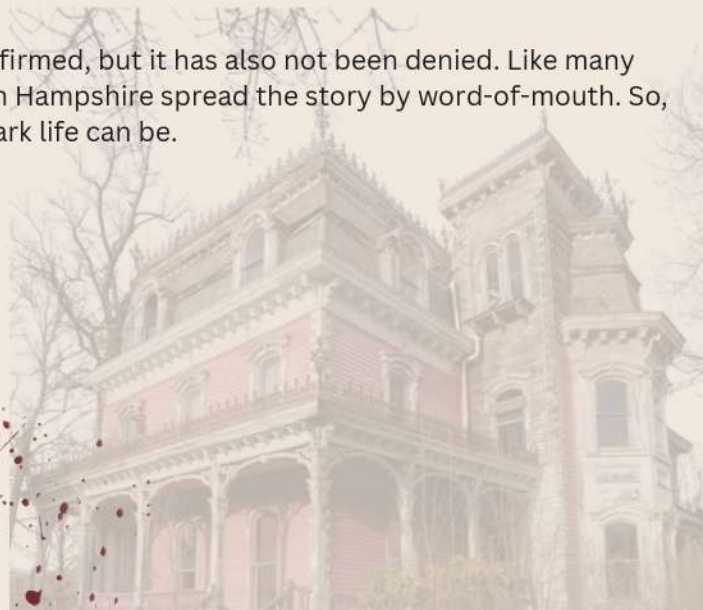
After the death of her son and daughter-in-law in a terrible fire, and the miraculous survival of their newborn daughter, the old woman took in her orphaned granddaughter. As time passed, the girl was never seen going out to play, perhaps as an overreaction from her grandmother in fear of losing her too. She was instead kept locked up, with no one permitted to come near the house, causing the old lady to earn the nickname "The Bad Mother".



The locals soon began gossiping about the house and its inhabitants. The mystery drew in the village children, who decided to prove their courage by entering the house one night, hoping to meet the enigmatic girl. But when they made it inside, they found no sign that any child had ever lived there; no clothes, no toys. All they found was an old crib. Inside, they found the corpse of a baby, almost completely burned, with buttons sewn in place of her eyes, and seams stitched across her mouth.

The little girl never survived the fire, but her grieving grandmother clung to the baby's body as if she were alive, unable to let go of the doll in which the soul of her granddaughter lived. The children ran away, terrified, and after telling their parents, the old woman was admitted to a psychiatric hospital, where she remained until her death.

To this day, the disturbing story behind Coraline has not been confirmed, but it has also not been denied. Like many local legends, it is hard to trace the story's origins, as folks living in Hampshire spread the story by word-of-mouth. So, perhaps it will always remain a terrifying tale, reminding us how dark life can be.



LIVED ONCE BURIED TWICE

Tucked away behind residential streets in the heart of Lurgan, Ireland, lies the centuries old Shankill Graveyard, where amongst the wrought iron gates and sinking tombstones, one can find Margorie's resting place, the woman who was buried twice.

Margorie McCall was born in the late 1600s, in Lurgan. When Marjorie fell ill in her early adulthood, her husband was beside himself with worry. Sadly, Margorie succumbed to her bout of fever, and was pronounced dead when she would not wake, and hastily buried for fear of her fever spreading.

That evening, before the soil had time to settle on Margorie's coffin, grave-robbers paid her a visit, in an attempt to steal a valuable family ring that she was still wearing. Working under cover of darkness, they grappled in the dirt, and when unable to remove the ring, the robbers decided to cut the finger off.

However, as soon as blood was drawn the lady awoke, sat bolt upright, eyes wide, and wailed like a banshee, leading the terrified grave-robbers to flee. Margorie got out of her grave, dusted herself off and stumbled the short distance home.

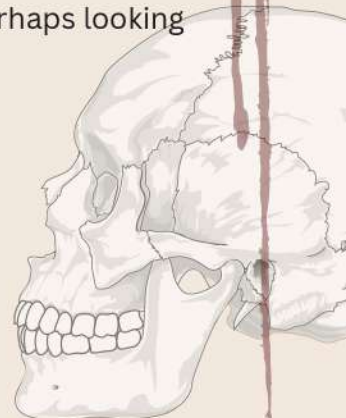
Upon hearing his wife's knock at the door, Mr. McCall said to his children: **"If I hadn't buried your mother, I would swear that was her knock."** When he opened the door, he saw his 'late' wife, dressed in her burial clothes, dripping of blood from her almost severed finger, and very much alive, he fainted and dropped dead from the shock.

Legend goes that Margorie went on to re-marry and have more children, before dying of old age. She was returned to Shankill Graveyard to be buried once more and to this day her gravestone still stands. Bearing the inscription: "Margorie McCall - Lived Once, Buried Twice".



Despite no official records being found of her marriage or death, she is still remembered by the townspeople of Lurgan today, and it is said that on occasion she can be seen wandering Shankill Cemetery, perhaps looking for those who wronged her.

Stayed tuned for our next edition (out next month!) where I thought we'd dive into a tremendously concerning choice of decorations...





THE VIRTOTAN

DISSOCIATION



WRITTEN BY

Natalie Hickman

THE VIRTUOTIAN

Psychological disorders and general mental health is usually and unfortunately represented in the media in a stigmatized way. Specifically, dissociation is a common thing all humans have but can sometimes form into a more severe condition which tends to be misrepresented.

WHAT IS DISSOCIATION?

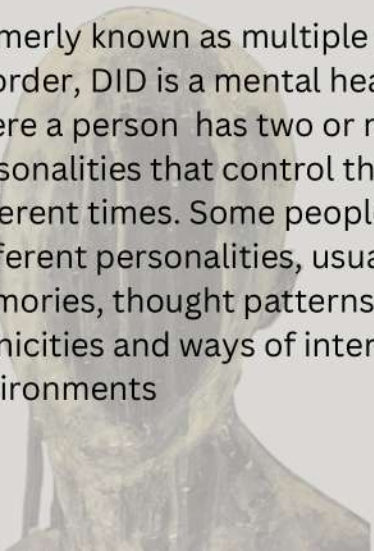
Dissociation is a spectrum. Dissociation is defined as a separation of some aspects of mental functioning from conscious awareness, leading to a degree of mental dysfunction or to more severe mental conditions.

At one end, is the everyday mild dissociation that all people have experienced in their lifetime. Daydreaming is one example, where individuals imagine scenarios, reflecting on the past whilst doing boring and monotonous tasks, to serve as a mental escape. Zoning out is when people who lead busy and stressful lives often miss out on pieces of a conversation or movie. Most impressively, highway hypnosis, the phenomenon of reaching a destination without remembering the journey, shows the brain's ability to perform tasks unconsciously.

Now moderate dissociation can include the feeling of being disconnected from one's own body usually during highly stressful situations, usually feeling like they are observing their reality from a 3rd person perspective. This is often temporary. On the other end of the spectrum, pathological dissociation can manifest in more debilitating forms, often linked to trauma or neglect. Many people who suffer from these disorders may have gaps in memory due to amnesia, which is the mind protecting the body. Examples of these more severe mental health disorders are complex post-traumatic stress disorder (CPTSD) and poly fragmented dissociative identity disorder (DID)

DID'S REPRESENTATION IN FILM

Formerly known as multiple personality disorder, DID is a mental health condition where a person has two or more separate personalities that control their behavior at different times. Some people may experience several different personalities, usually referred to as alters. Each identity may have different behaviors, memories, thought patterns or expressions. The identities might have different gender identities, ethnicities and ways of interacting with their environments



THE VIRIDIAN

In media, Split is a known psychological horror about a man who suffers from DID and has 24 alters. In the movie, the audience follows the journey of Kevin, who has DID, and a psychologist who is trying to understand the complexity of his symptoms. Usually, people that form such severe forms of dissociative disorders are due to **stressful situations, trauma, and abuse**. Hence the psychologist in the movie is trying to discern why his mind has created these different identities in order to help him combat the stress that comes with amnesia. However, due to the harmful representation of DID in the movie, the movie strays from raising awareness about the disorder and helping Kevin, and instead takes the entertainment route of murder, suspense and intense dramatic music.



Creating a fear and false pretense around people with DID having different dangerous alters that can cause harm, which in some minority cases may be true, but are people that are no more violent or dangerous than the general population.

Directors have a profound ethical responsibility to represent mental health conditions accurately and sensitively as media plays a crucial role in shaping public perceptions of mental health disorders, often serving as the primary source of information for many individuals.



NOVEMBER 2023

REMEMBER THIS?

CELEBRATING TWO YEARS OF
THE VIRIDIAN
HALLOWEEN EDITIONS!

THE VIRIDIAN



**Thank you for reading this
month's edition!
Stay tuned for our tenth edition,
out soon!**



FOLLOW US ON INSTAGRAM!
@SENIORSCHOOLVIRIDIAN



FOLLOW US ON TIKTOK!
@THESSVIRIDIAN

