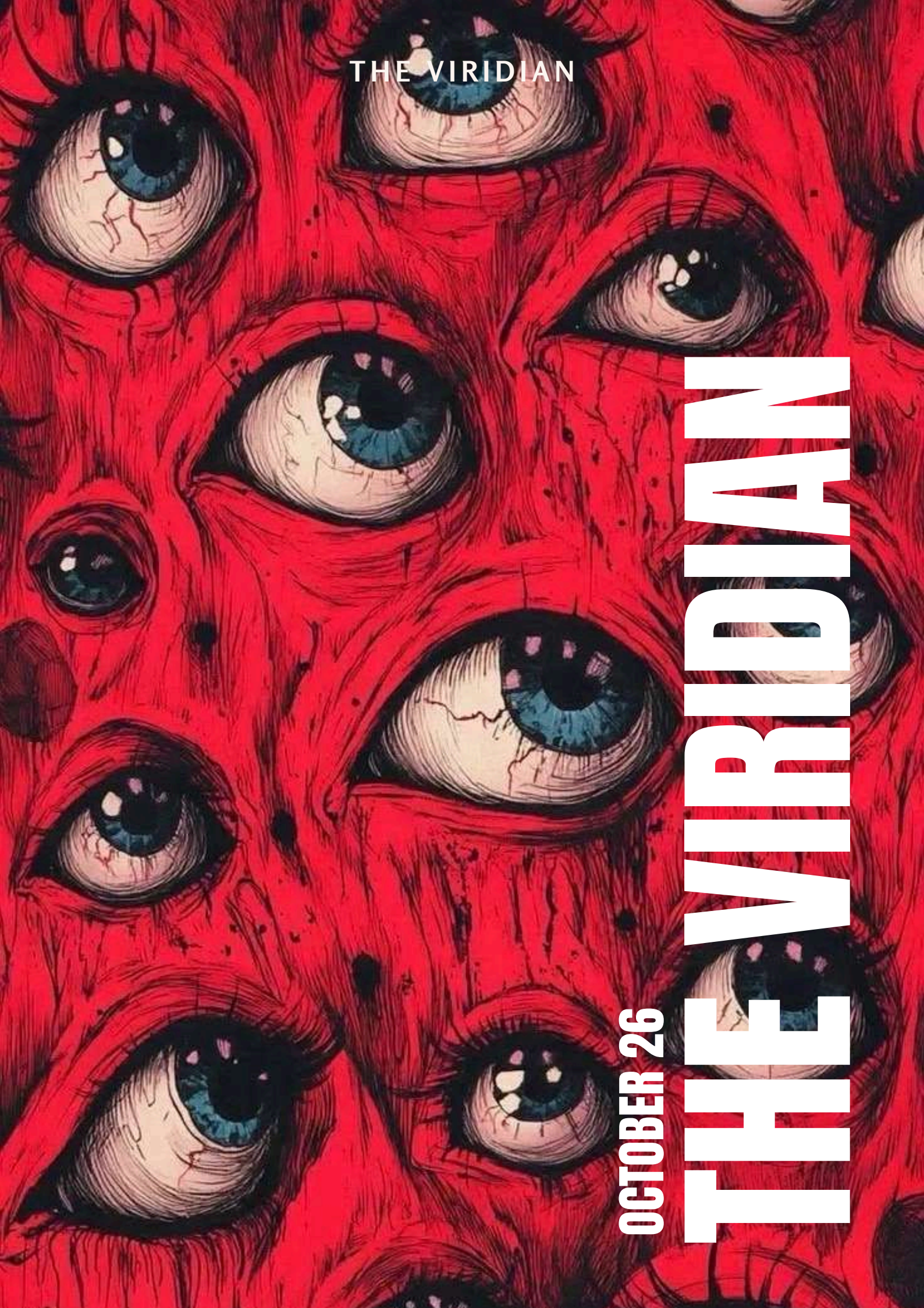

THE VIRIDIAN

OCTOBER 26

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THE VIRIDIAN



EDITOR'S WELCOME

BY STEPHANOS ARTEMIS

THE VIRIDIAN

Dear readers,

It is my utmost honour and absolute pleasure to welcome you to another year of *The Viridian*! Last season, we released seven spectacular publications, each unlike the others; this year, we have a multitude of surprises in store for our readers, ranging from new columns, a new aesthetic, and even new team members! After a restful yet fleeting summer vacation, our weekly team meetings have commenced, and our team is very excited to present to you our Halloween edition for October 2026!

This marks the beginning of my second and final term serving as Editor-in-Chief of this phenomenal magazine, and I am entering it full of ideas, excitement, and gratitude. Our aim in publishing The Viridian is to cast light on the talented students at our school. The Viridian is completely student-led, both in spirit and in practice; our team is composed of passionate students with a wide variety of interests.

In June this year, we said goodbye to some very special members of The Viridian, who have since graduated and begun the next chapter of their lives. Our team will never be the same – for better and for worse. It's now the beginning of a new chapter for The Viridian too: new year, new look, new us. In the October edition, you will meet the new members of the team, who you can look forward to getting to know over the course of this academic year and of those to follow.

As previously mentioned, the theme of the October 2026 edition is Halloween. We hope to deliver our opinionated analysis of the different aspects of this holiday in a way that engages all our readers. We wanted to embrace everything that makes this time of year so distinctive, and help you find comfort in the slightly unsettling.

This year, our primary goal is to expand our visibility in the school community and establish new, lasting traditions for The Viridian. We cannot wait to show the community what we have in store for this year… in terms of editions? Yes, but not only. What does that mean? Well, stick around and you'll find out.

Happy reading!

– Steph

THE TEAM



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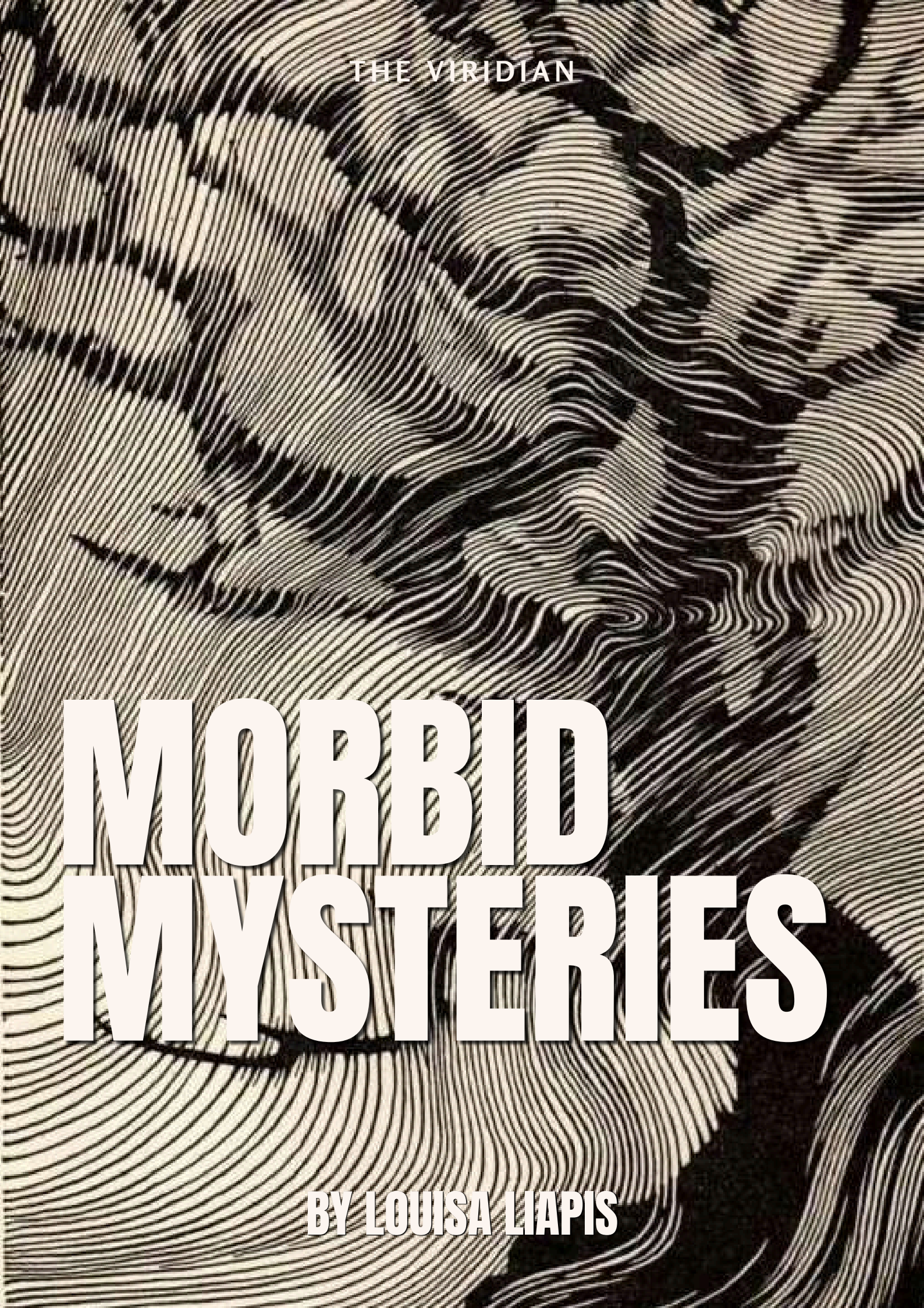

MORBID MYSTERIES

BY LOUISA LIAPIS



Boo! I'm back with more chilling stories that'll keep you up at night, I know you missed them. My name is Louisa and I'm thrilled to have my column 'Morbid Mysteries' as a vessel for all the gore and grime I have in store for you. Hopefully you'll enjoy them without too many frights!

HALLOWEEN COSTUME: PASTOR

Drowned out by dense swarms of elated children, under the guise of sombre cloaks and embellished masks was the horrific murder of a young, single mother, Rebekah Gay.
On Halloween morning of 2012, a concerned co-worker pushed through the decorative scarecrows outside Rebekah's home and made her way toward the front door, wanting to check on her after she had failed to show up to work. To her dismay, she was greeted by an empty home, occupied only by a lone purse on the counter. Frantic, she informed authorities who conducted a thorough inspection of the house, declaring there were evident indications of intrusion and struggle, including a secluded spot on the carpet that seemed to have been cleaned recently. Rebekah's car was also missing, solely to be found outside a near-by bar.

Shortly after the news of Rebekah's absence spread throughout the town, the local pastor John D. White readily formed a prayer chain for the 24-year-old. White had close relations to the family, having been engaged to Rebekah's mother and often having taken care of her 4-year-old son, Conway. Suspicious of his intimacy with the family, White became a chief suspect after both Conway's father and Rebekah's boyfriend had been vindicated.
Initially, White insisted he was innocent. In fact, he claimed he had been in her house earlier that morning to pick Conway up and had heard her yell at him from the bathroom to rest on her couch until her son woke up. Allegedly, White drifted off on the couch and by the time he had awoken, Rebekah had left the house. His story seemed plausible. He was even able to explain the scratch above his nose which was supposedly invoked by a broken shelf, justifying his narrative by showing police the actual shelf that had fallen.
Despite his seemingly indisputable innocence, detectives were obligated to carry out a more thorough investigation, including a background inspection. In doing so, it was revealed White had two prior convictions of femicide. In 1980, White lured his 17-year-old neighbour Theresa Etherton to his basement where he stabbed and choked her. Miraculously, Etherton survived the heinous act which resulted in White's first arrest, serving only 2 years in prison as he managed to get released via an appeal. In 1994, White was the principal suspect concerning the disappearance of 26-year-old Vicky Sue Wall. As there was a lack of evidence, White was charged on accounts of involuntary manslaughter and served 12 more years in prison. Church members proved to have known of his sordid past but decided to overlook it, wanting to provide a foundation through which he could repent and rid of his sins. As this was coming to light, investigators had uncovered a bag containing zip ties, a mallet, garbage bags, and women's undergarments in his home and a shattered necklace inside his blood-stained truck.





Unable to contradict the palpable evidence before him, White agreed to meet with the police after being informed that the corpse had likely decomposed rapidly under the conditions in which it was left and that, if he cooperated, he could potentially receive a life sentence in a prison where he would be isolated from the other inmates. Imminently, White confessed to the murder of Rebekah Gay explaining that the previous night, he drank around 4-5 beers and watched videos of corpses. Driven by unorthodox curiosity, Whiten drunkenly entered Rebekah's home and attacked her brutally. Before returning back to his home, White drove Rebekah's car to the bar near her house so as to stump detectives, after he had shoved her corpse into a garbage bag, which he then disposed of in a nearby ravine.

When the autopsy on Rebekah's body was performed, there were signs of sexual assault, as well as scarring around her neck. Rebekah's mother Sally Gay plead the court to "Show the same lack of mercy," to White as he did to her daughter, exclaiming "She was not [his] to take." In 2013, White was found guilty on charges of second-degree murder and sentenced to 56 to 85 years, though he committed suicide in his cell only four months after his conviction.

THE VIRIDIAN



THE FASHION FIX

BY NEFELI VASSILIOU

THE VIRIDIAN



Dear gools, gals, and everything in-between,
Welcome back! I hope you've missed me as much as I've missed you, and while I'm sure you all had fun this summer break, getting tanner and whatnot, I know it must've felt empty without your monthly fix (pun intended) of fashion content. Do not fret, we're back, and we're better than ever. I hope you find comfort, and hopefully a renewed appreciation for fashion, in my little fashion corner.

WITCH PLEASE - PUT THE CORSET DOWN

The spooky season is upon us yet again, and I'm part of the select few who have been planning their Halloween costume since August. Despite giving myself a generous head start, I've found that searching for inspiration has become increasingly difficult over the past few years. Costumes don't look like costumes anymore; they look like outfits – a process that has been coined the **"Corsetification"** of Halloween. It's less about transforming into someone or something, it's more about wearing something ever so slightly related to what you're going for, while doing the bare minimum for the sake of aesthetics, social media, and the algorithm.

This isn't necessarily because we've run out of ideas, but rather because the very definition of a "Good" costume has changed. It has to be cute, flattering, recognisable, trendy, Instagrammable, and, above all, socially legible. There's also the unspoken expectation that costumes should be more provocative, and there is one particular item of clothing that manages to tick all of those boxes: the corset.



It makes sense why the corset has become the centrepiece of the modern Halloween costume: it looks striking in photos, it's cost-efficient, and it pairs well with pretty much everything. The problem arises when virtually every costume on the internet becomes a variation of the same corset-and-skirt "Going-out outfit." This is when costumes become interchangeable – whether you're dressing up as a vampire, a nurse, Dubai chocolate, or a Labubu, I genuinely can't tell the difference.

The problem isn't the corset itself, it's that we're seeing solid-coloured corsets paired with a skirt, perhaps with a pair of animal ears thrown in for good measure. That's it. There's no real essence to it, no attempt to transform into anything beyond simply looking good in the outfit, and that has to stop.

We have to bring back shaming people for being basic. Wearing a plain corset during Halloween should be a fate worse than anyone knowing you regularly drink pumpkin spice lattes. You don't have to sacrifice looking cute, don't get me wrong, but this night shouldn't be turned it into another excuse to look effortlessly put-together.



So, if your costume could be worn to a cheeky girls' night out, with nothing more than a pair of heels and a change of accessories, please, think again. Halloween is your chance to be something you would never normally be. Think outside the corset, if you will.

The key isn't "Be completely original or else you're boring"; it's simply, to put some thought into it. Even the simplest costume can feel distinctive when you interpret it creatively. A little effort goes a long way: a pair of dramatic earrings, an obscure accessory, a wig, a ridiculously specific prop you find in the back of your grandma's closet can turn an otherwise mundane costume into something that actually feels like you. Pinterest is going to be your best friend here, so use it to find references, combine ideas and, most importantly, take inspiration rather than just copying the first costume that appears on your feed.

And before you rush to buy a completely new outfit, look through your own wardrobe. That dress you haven't worn in two years? You've got Lady Gaga. A blazer, and a tie? Congratulations, you're Elle Woods. Halloween doesn't need to contribute to another pile of clothes that will be worn once and proceed to be thrown in a landfill. Reworking pieces you already own is not only more sustainable, but it often makes for a much more interesting costume anyway. So, accessorise, experiment, and get creative – the holy trinity. You can still look cute, just make sure there's a little more to the costume than a corset and a skirt.

Halloween is supposed to be the one night when nobody questions why you're dressed as a giant piece of food, a fictional character, or a person from 100 years ago. Be creative, be whimsy, and be fun. Don't waste the holiday by looking like you're going to dinner.

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VIDEO ARCHIVES

BY SIMONA MITSI

THE VIRIDIAN



Happy Halloween to all readers and a warm welcome from your very own Video Archives (VA)! It's the academic new year once again but this time without VA's founding father, Noah (rip); although rest assured you guys are still in good hands. I am writing this small introduction to renew my pledge of devotion to upkeeping Video Archives nicheness while never giving into pure pretentiousness. Also, I am so excited to share many new recommendations with you all and rave about some of my favourite movies ever; truly, I couldn't think of a better way to spend my last year at The Senior School :)

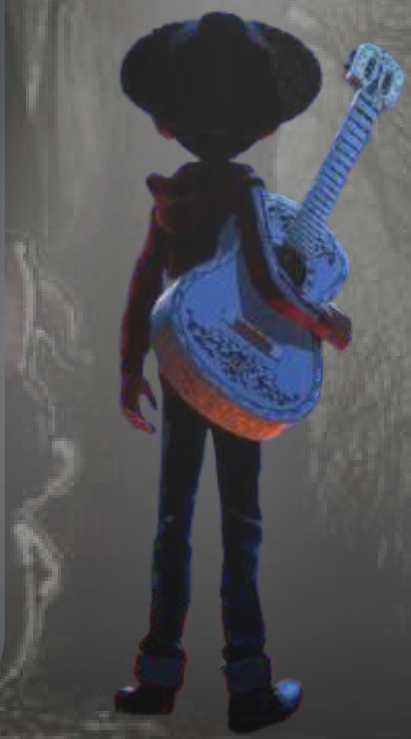
Although I was never a fan of Halloween, the season is upon us and celebrations are due, and truthfully, the mystery and darkness of this holiday will never cease to excite me. To fit in with the slightly unsetting atmosphere of dancing shadows, bloody makeup and lingering anticipation in the air, here are my animated picks that remind me of the spooky season's beauty:

Coco (2017):

A seemingly obvious yet untraditional option for a Halloween recommendation, Coco is the perfect animated film for non-Halloween enthusiasts like me. And yes, I know, a Disney commercial success doesn't align with the underground picks I tend to strive for, but I'll accept giving that up for Coco. In my opinion, Pixar really knocked it out the park with their utterly stunning visuals in this film as well as the tender, authentic plotline.

For those who haven't yet watched the film, Coco is an animated film following Miguel, a young Mexican boy, on his journey of self-discovery in the Land of the Dead. Behind the movie's exclusively bright neon colour palette lie themes of grief and family, as well as a poignant reminder of how different cultures embrace and celebrate some of life's most painful challenges.

Inevitably, the glamorization of Mexican culture to fit a child-friendly and commercial audience dilutes elements of Mexico's more rough, unromantic reality while nonetheless providing a thoroughly enjoyable and memorable watch.



The House (2022):

Unusual yet visually stunning, this Netflix original is certainly the more unconventional pick for this edition. “The House” is an animated trilogy comprised of three, 25-minute short films featuring the same ominous house in different dystopian time eras. As the separate plotlines unfold, unwelcome parasitical house guests abruptly transform the main characters’ lives into all-consuming, hallucinatory nightmares; forcing them to come face to face with their deepest fears and anxieties.

While I’m not sure that the creepy mix of childlike characters and disturbing storylines is everyone’s cup of tea, the sheer skill behind this intricately crafted production is admirable enough. Knowing how painstakingly tedious the stop motion animation process can be makes the result truly riveting and captivating.
And although the storyline became too unpleasant and weird for me at times, the prevailing sense of threat and ambiguity is precisely what led me to categorize this as an ideal Halloween movie watch. Still not convinced? Think of this as Fantastic Mr. Fox’s weird, creepy older brother and you’ll start to get the picture.



Extra series recommendation: Over the Garden Wall (2014)

Before concluding this article, I would like to briefly mention the mini-series “Over the Garden Wall” as an ode to my inner (Cartoon Network obsessed) child.

In my opinion, this is the perfect animated Halloween show for cartoon lovers and especially fellow Cartoon Network fans. In a strictly orange-grey palette, Over the Garden Wall follows the adventures of two young brothers lost in the surreal Unknown: a strange, whimsical forest where the pair surreally encounters various eccentric characters and enchanted creatures.

Of course, when I found out Over the Garden Wall was a Cartoon Network production, everything clicked as this beautifully animated series indeed gives off similar vibes to Finn and Jake’s infamous adventures, only in a strictly autumnal backdrop and folk-inspired aesthetic. These short 20-minute episodes make for a perfect lazy, rainy-day watch.

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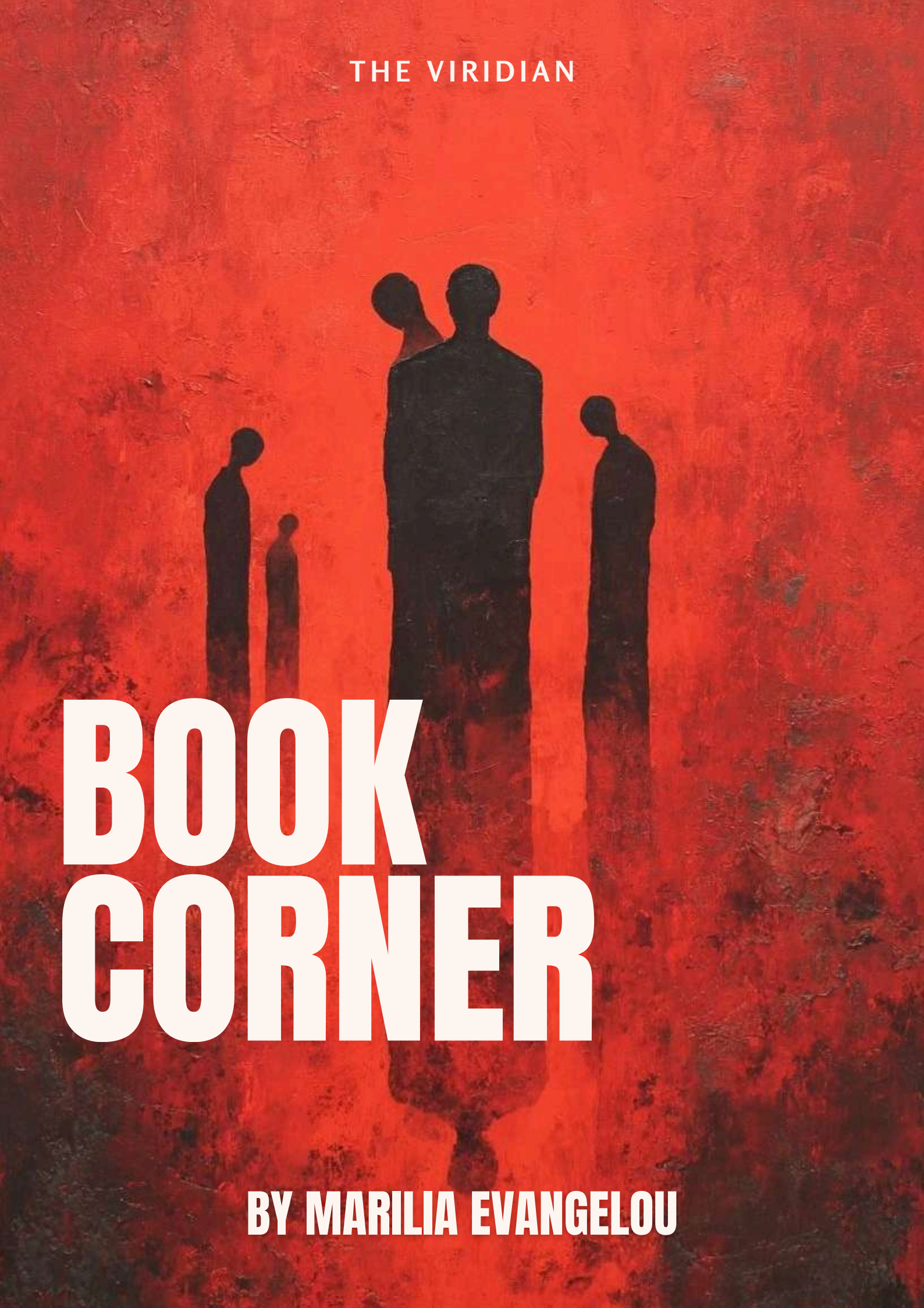


BOOK CORNER

BY MARILIA EVANGELOU

THE VIRIDIAN

BORN FROM A TROUBLED MIND



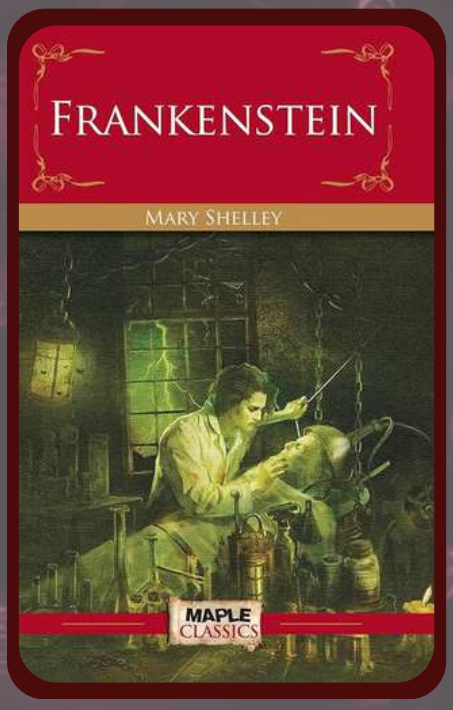
Hello, dear readers! You may remember me from last year's Arts column, but this year, I have taken over the Book Corner. Whether you're a dedicated bookworm or someone who considers reading the assigned chapters a personal attack, welcome!

I promise there are no cobwebs in this corner! As my close and personal friend William Shakespeare once wrote, **"Something wicked this way comes…",** though in our case something wicked this way reads.

AM I THE MONSTER?

FRANKENSTEIN

In the theme of Halloween, I wanted to write about the first gothic horror book I read, Frankenstein! Although there have been plenty of screen and stage adaptations of the story, nothing captures Mary Shelley's brutal awakening of the true monsters of the world we live in, at the ripe age of 17. She does so, through two very distinct lenses: the Creature's realisation of societal and structural prejudice, and Elizabeth Lavenza's realization of human injustice.



The Creature is the proud creation of Victor Frankenstein. A scientist not as mad or crazy as film likes to portray him, but more like a narcissist with a God complex in my interpretation. Victor attempts to disturb the natural life cycle by creating the Creature, who begins life neutrally: benevolent, curious, seeking affection like a child in an adult's body, and an innocent soul in a "Monstrous," figure. His awakening occurs as he learns language, reads books, and observes human families. However, instead of enlightening him, this information only exposes how fundamentally cruel and exclusionary human society is. His awakening is summarised by his famous line, "Sorrow only increased with knowledge," which illustrates that humanity will only ever see him as a "Monster" due to his physical appearance. Shelley uses the Creature to show how structural cruelty ruins purity and innocence, making the reader wonder, who's the real monster? The one that looks like one, the one that treated him like one, or the one that made him one?

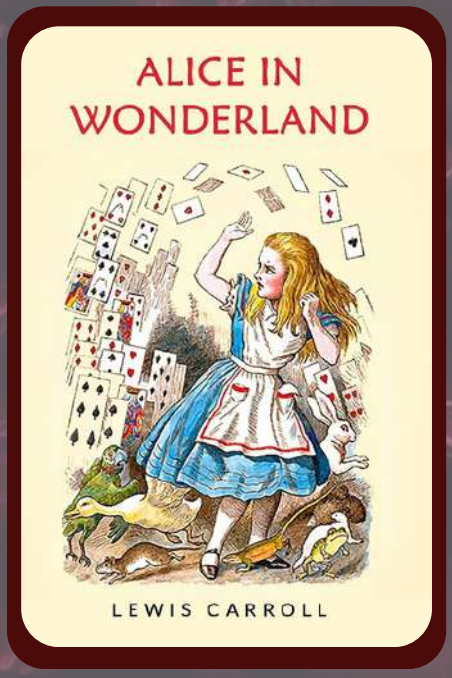
Moving on to Mary Shelley's second lens, Elizabeth Lavenza, or as I like to call her, the novel's moral conscience. When the Creature murders young William Frankenstein, Justine Moritz, a beloved servant, is accused. Elizabeth stands up in court and delivers a passionate and courageous speech to defend her loyal servant. As she horrifically finds out that Justin's confessed to a crime he did not commit, she quickly understands that the confession was nothing but a plea against threat of excommunication and eternal damnation by an oppressive religious authority. At that moment of the novel, Elizabeth and all of us with her, lose our faith in human goodness. Something far scarier than a crazy scientist and his monster.

ARE WE SURE ALICE WENT TO WONDERLAND?

ALICE IN WONDERLAND

We all love the stories we would hear as children, with the beautiful princesses and the knights in shining armour; my favourite one was *Alice in Wonderland*. However, if you trace back all these fairytales back to their origin, instead of dreamy and magical they actually turn out to be quite gruesome and horrifying. Alice in Wonderland was originally improvised by Charles Lutwidge Dogson (under the pen name Lewis Carroll) on a July 1862 boating trip for 10-year-old Alice Liddell and her sisters, then hand-written and illustrated as Alice's Adventures Under Ground before its 1865 publication. Although the text itself may seem like whimsical nonsense, it reveals disturbing undertones rooted in Victorian realities. So, prepare for your childhood to get ruined.

The character of the Mad Hatter and phrase "Mad as a hatter" stems from real life 19th century hat makers who suffered severe neurological damage, tremors, and psychological unravelling from inhaling toxic mercury nitrate used to cure felt. Other characters such as the Cheshire Cat, was originally a dismembered and then reconstructed cat, hence why in the animation of the tale, the character is depicted with pink and black stripes. The chaotic rule of the Queen of Hearts, "Off with their heads!" satirizes arbitrary royal authority and the true public executions and beheadings of 19th century Victorian society. To add, the Caterpillar's hookah, as seen in the original novel, and strange transformation hint the widespread Victorian opiate use.



As for Carroll himself, his lifelong fondness for photographing and reading to young children, particularly Alice Liddell, fuels modern debates regarding the boundaries of Victorian adult-child relationships.

If you're asking me, this version of Alice in Wonderland is more interesting but also much more terrifying than any other horror novel I have read. What do you think makes a novel truly frightening; the disturbing story it tells or the disturbed mind that created it?



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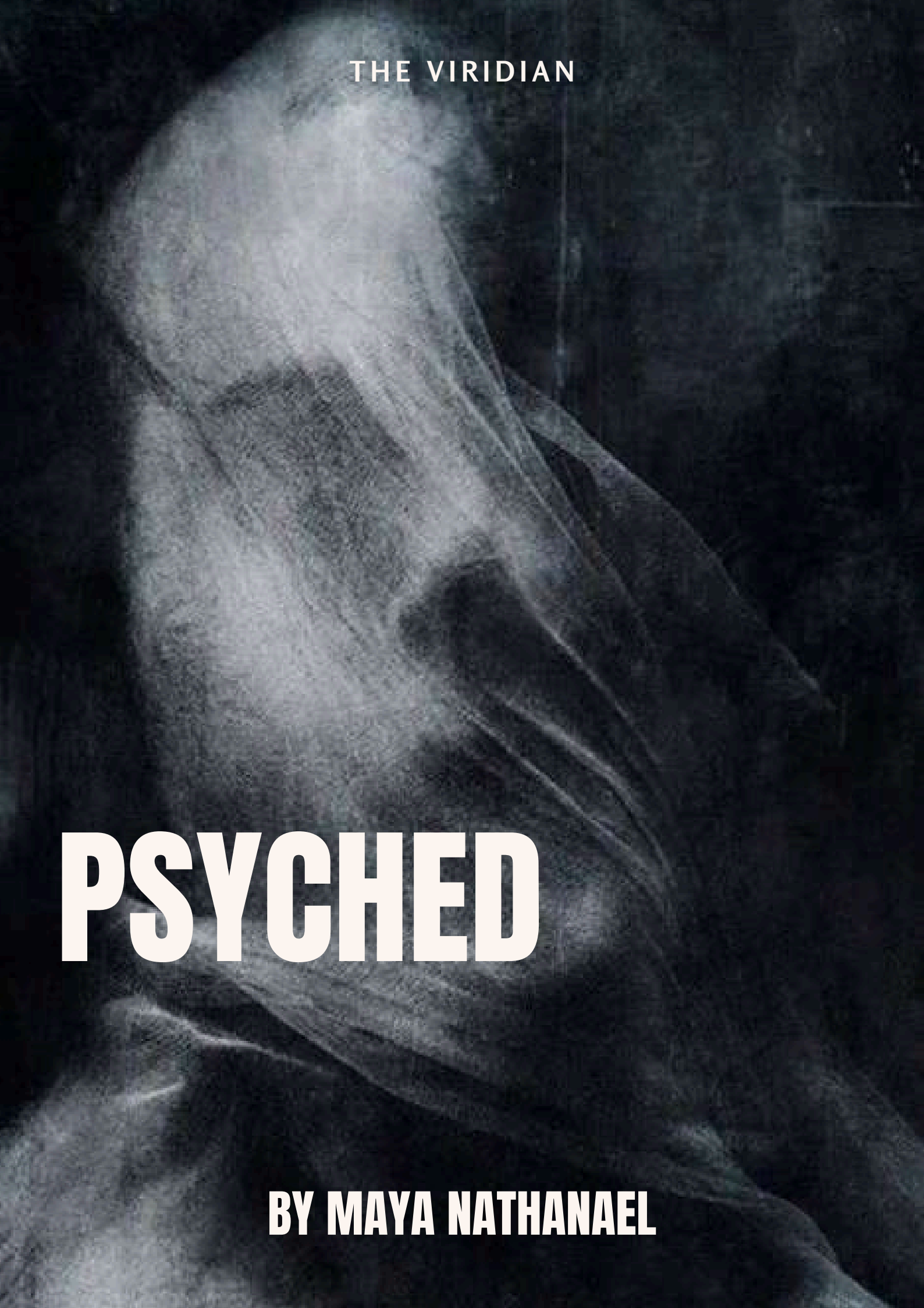

PSYCHED

BY MAYA NATHANAEL

THE VIRIDIAN



Hi everyone! I'm Maya, the writer behind the Psychology column. As someone who is endlessly curious about human behaviour and always observing the world around me, I hope my articles offer a sense of relatability while also sparking a little curiosity about why we do the things we do—because, let's be honest, people are fascinating (and occasionally confusing).

I like to imagine that other people are also centred by fear, panic, shame… guilt… sloth. Feel free to insert your own closet-filled, under-carpet-swept behavioural vices. Let's take a step back. FEAR. FEAR. FEAR. Become the fear as to feel no fear, but that's an idea for an entirely different article – if only we had the relative budget and insight to offer me a four-page spread.

Now, brace for the paragraph of the psychological psychobabble: the same way that (Spoiler!) love isn't real, fear is a function of the thalamus? In our brain, sending a signal to the amygdala? Which, in turn instructs the adrenal glands? To release adrenalin and cortisol, our stress hormones? Consequently, the servers of consciousness (prefrontal cortex) and memory (hippocampus) in our brain are tickled awake to register threat. Pain disappears by means of released endorphins, and you become involuntarily defensive. In this sense, fear is not the instructor of distress, but the possibility of security. The most glittering of our neuro-bodily mechanisms, I think. Feeling frightened in the absence of any real physical danger may or may not actually have its perks – can't live with you, can't live without you sort of situation. One such benefit is being granted the opportunity to express extreme emotions in a socially acceptable context. Bear with me and consider these contexts: visiting a haunted house, riding a rollercoaster, watching horror movies, bungee jumping, free falls. Driving without a licence. Midnight ocean swims. Waking up for school in panic because you didn't hear your alarm, only to realize there was no alarm; it's Saturday.



So now we know what happens when we feel fear; what happens next is you eventually come to understand that you are, in fact, not being hunted, which heralds all concern and paralysis that was once all you were, to be translated into a euphoric relief. That singular rushing of blood at first concentrated only in your chest, your centre, descends to spread and fill your whole body with life. Think of how brutal a horror film's scare would be if you couldn't find comfort in the hand you hold to overcome it, or how pathetic the act of skydiving would be if you couldn't then immediately say "Yeah, I've totally been skydiving." Essentially, if fear is the inhalation of alertness, then the cleansing of it is the exhale of the mind.

"'ON THE OTHER SIDE OF MAXIMUM FEAR ARE ALL OF THE BEST THINGS IN LIFE.' - WILL SMITH" - MAYA NATHANAEL

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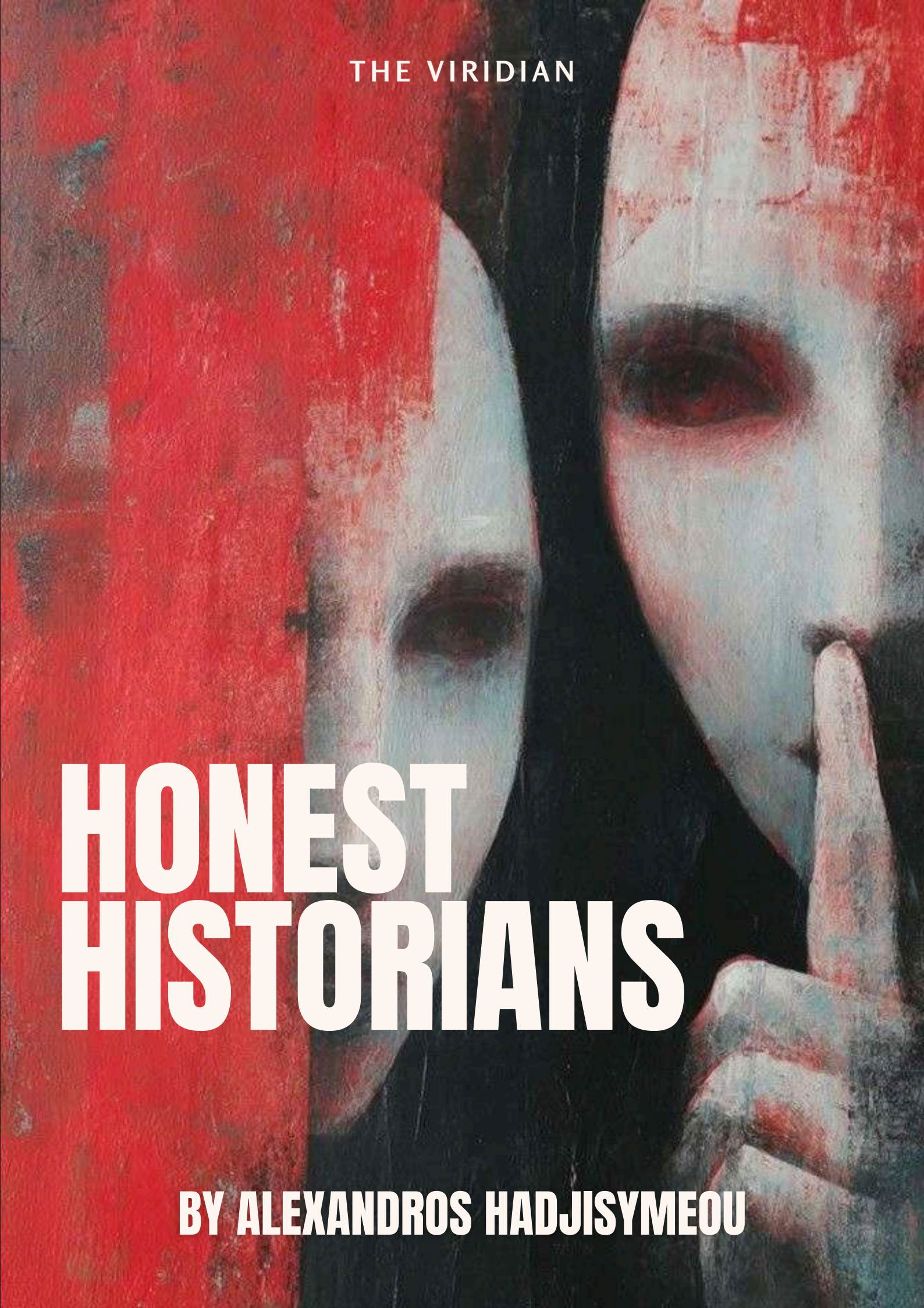

HONEST HISTORIANS

BY ALEXANDROS HADJISYMEOU

THE VIRIDIAN



What's up my name is Alex and I'm here to provide you with your monthly dose of really bad jokes and sometimes interesting articles and obscure historical events, via the "honest historians" column.

Since it is the spooky season, I thought I'd share with you a story that would give any historian a fright; that being the corrupt nature of the papacy and the weird and whacky stuff this one dude did because he had the power to do so.

But first, like any good historian we must supply our victims (that being you) with copious amounts of context which are almost never interesting and/or useful. When thinking about the pope nowadays we consider him to just be some guy in a tall hat preaching about peace and love. This was not always the case(foreshadowing)

Following the collapse of western Rome (hot take: the roman empire still existed in the form of the Byzantines but I won't get into that) in 476 ad, it passed through many Germanic kings, until some dude named Charlamagne (although the king of the franks), united the Germanic tribes into a singular country and named it the holy roman empire, since they believed to be the continuation of the roman empire (*sigh*). To add to this, it was quite ordinary for a pope to be remembered as a statistic rather than being remembered for anything. For example, in what is now called by some historians as the iron age of the papacy, between the years 896 and 904 there were 9 different popes. So, it is therefore highly likely that there was eventually to be a pope which was a bit out of the ordinary.

To cut a very long (and frankly boring) story short, after a long game of whack-a-pope (not my phrase), a guy named Formosus became pope in October of 891. The only thing you need to know about this guy when he was alive (foreshadowing), was that he was unpopular due to his unorthodox (see what I did there?) way he governed. For example, he used his role as pope in a more political way rather than a spiritual way. One thing to note is that although the pope held a lot of power over the people, the people also decided on the fate of the pope. In other words, if a pope was unpopular then riots and uprisings could force or pressure the pope to step down from his position. So, you can imagine that the outrage caused by our guy Formosus pressured him to step down. However, Formosus was too stubborn and hoped that the support of the holy emperor would allow him to remain in power.

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The candidate for holy roman emperor which Formosus supported lost to a dude named Charles the bald (yes really, that was his name) and therefore Formosus fled Italy. To cut a long story short (I'm starting notice a pattern), Formosus returned to Italy and was reinstated as pope. His reign didn't last very long as soon after he kicked the bucket.

Formosus successor, Stephen VI was a tiny bit unhinged in the way that he dug up Formosus dead body in order to prosecute it and for the now rotting corpse of Formosus to answer for some alleged crime he committed. It must stated, that a body that has been decomposing for 6 months is basically a skeleton with what looks to be wet paper towels all over it, in what vaguely resembles skin. So, what does Stephen VI do with a body that looks like a failed art project? He decides to put it on trial like any ordinary person.

Historical accounts describe the body being dressed up in ecclesiastical robes and being placed on a throne with an appointed cardinal hiding behind the throne and speaking on behalf of the rotting corpse of the previous pope. Accounts also detail that Stephen VI was on a continuous rant and tirade criticizing the policies and decision of the former pope, all while hurling insults and shouting a whole lot of nonsense. The frightened clergy that were subjugated to watching this circus were unable to provide a satisfactory defense, and thus Formosus was found guilty on all charges. What are these charges you might ask? Well, he was accused of perjury and violating the church canons. Since Stephen was robbed of the opportunity to execute the ex-pope, he believed that cutting off 3 fingers and throwing the corpse of Formosus into the river would suffice.

In life, you come to discover that the more you mess about, the more you find out. Stephen defiantly found as he was imprisoned and killed shortly thereafter. And for those asking his corpse was in fact not placed on trial.

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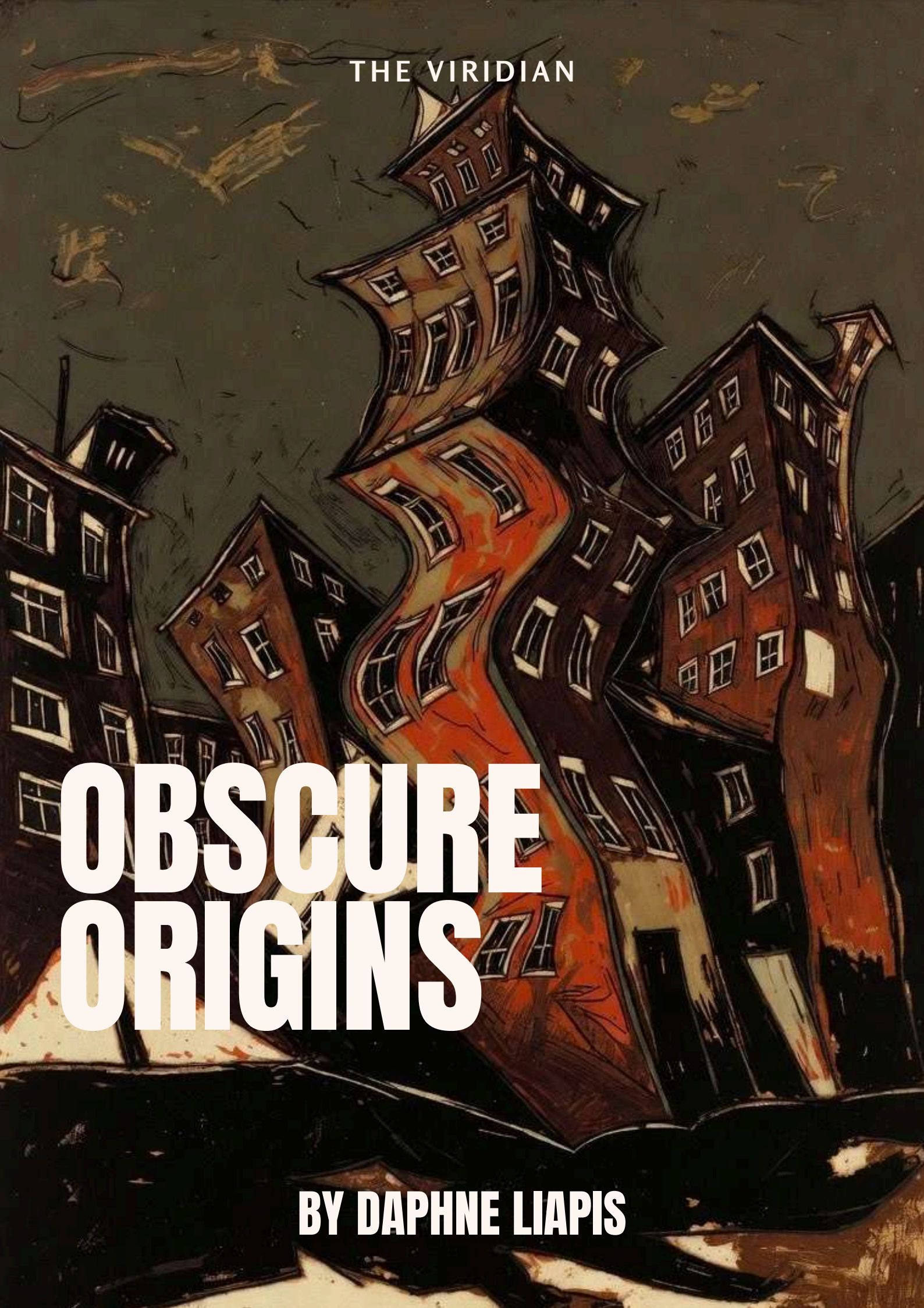

OBSCURE ORIGINS

BY DAPHNE LIAPIS

THE VIRIDIAN



Hello everyone. I'm so excited to be writing for the obscure origins columns this year! This column is a historical column that delved deeper into the stories of different historical figures. I hope to inspire you and allow to indulge in the infighting stories of many individuals who shaped the world

THE GRIM REAPER'S EMERGENCE

Halloween is shaped by gory figures that aim to scare evil spirits away. Many grotesque costumes have become symbols of Halloween, one of the most iconic Halloween figures being the Grim Reaper. But how did this image of death become such a popular Halloween symbol?

The Grim Reaper appeared firstly in Ancient Greece, from the personification of death in early Greek mythology. Thanatos (the Greek word for death, and the spirit of death in Greek mythology) was the personified version of 'Death', however was described as a handsome, tranquil figure that brought about peaceful death. On the contrary, this dark, eerie image of the Grim Reaper could have originated from Kronos (another figure in Greek mythology), who was the harvest God, and thus often depicted using a scythe to perform these agricultural activities. So, the iconic scythe that the Grim Reaper holds, could have been derived from here.

Another possible origin of the scythe as an emblem of the Grim Reaper could have derived from the 14th century. During this time, the majority of the population's main source of income came from agricultural production. As a result, many people spent their days working in fields, and one of the main tools they used to cultivate their land was a scythe. So, this could also be where the iconic scythe that the Grim Reaper is seen holding is derived from.

However, the physical portrayal of how we perceive the Grim Reaper today was also influenced by the epidemic of the 14th century. During the Black Death, medicine and technology were hardly developed, and people mainly relied on ancient medical practices which, in hindsight, probably affected people more negatively than benefiting them. As a result, in Europe alone, more than 30 million people died during the Black Death. To pay their respects, many artists painted skeletons to depict the myriads of decaying bodies that filled European cities. Usually, these were dark images, reflecting the somber and solemn situation that prevailed. Also considering that there were likely a lot of funerals that took place consistently during this time, the black attire typically worn at funerals, also became representative of the Grim Reaper, as one emblematic trait, is his dark-colored cloak.

Ultimately, although not directly related to the history of Halloween, the Grim Reaper has definitely become symbolic of Halloween's frightening and ghostly nature and has contributed to another terrifying Halloween costume for little children to wear and continue the tradition of using their masquerade to scare the bad spirits away.

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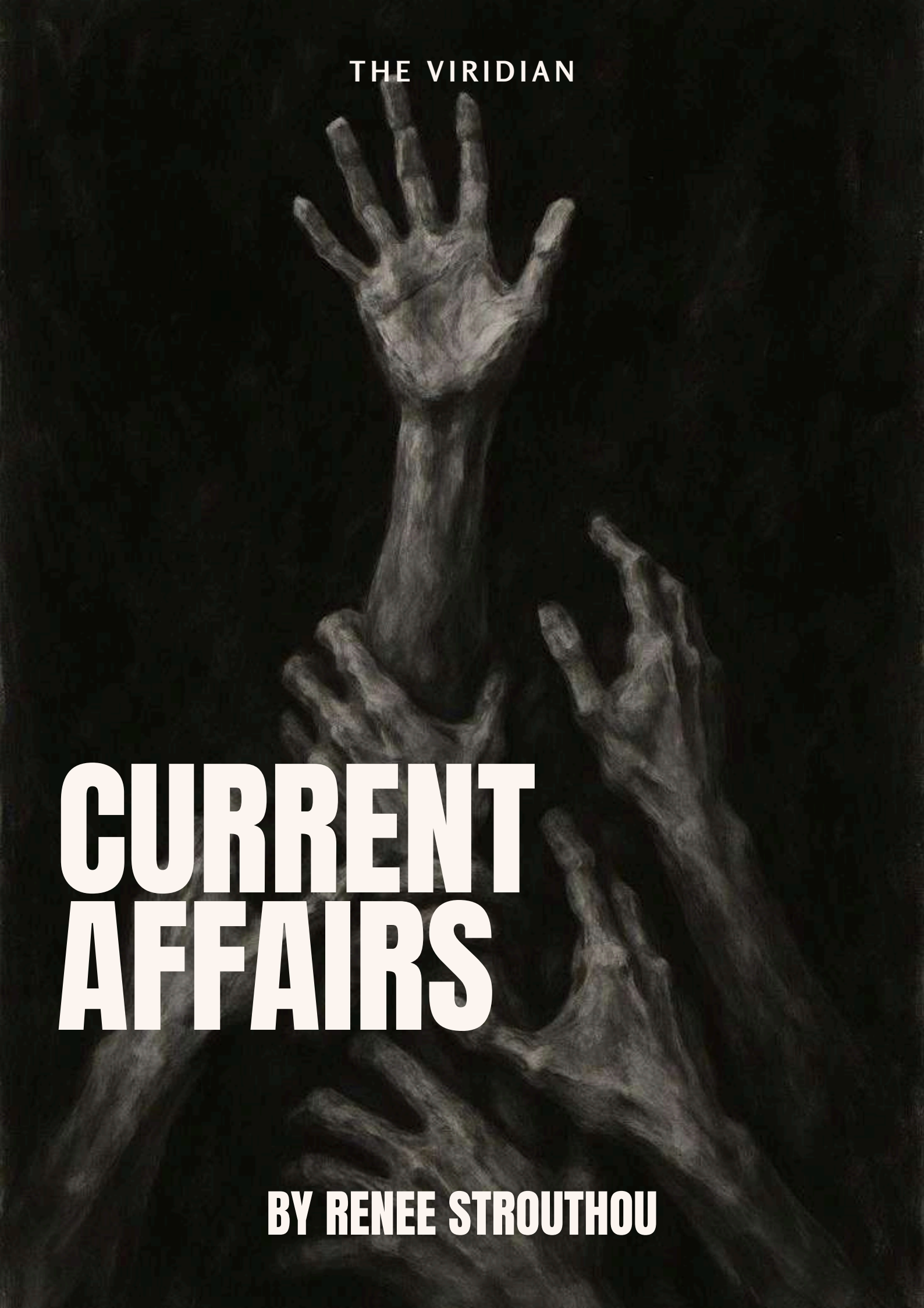

CURRENT AFFAIRS

BY RENEE STROUTHOU

THE VIRIDIAN

Hi everyone! My name is Renee and this year I will be bringing you the Current Affairs column. From major political developments to the latest global headlines, we will be exploring the evets shaping our world, breaking down stories behind the news and discussing why the matter. Hope you enjoy!



THIS MONTH'S HOT TOPICS

Welcome back everyone! If you haven't gotten the memo yet, summer is officially over, which can only mean two things: your tan is fading, and world leaders have gone back to giving us headaches. While you were busy savouring the holidays, entire arguments were taking place, tankers were exploding, and somewhere around the world a diplomat had some sleepless nights.

UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY OPENS IN NEW YORK

The UN's 81st General Assembly officially started as of the 22nd of September in New York and will continue until the 28th of September, bringing together leaders and representatives from across the globe. The annual gatherings allow each world leader to make their own statements, outlining their position and current priorities, while also responding to the biggest challenges faced around the world. This year, the major issues included AI governance, ongoing wars and conflicts, climate change and the future role of the UN.

GLOBAL WATER CRISIS WARNING

The World Meteorological Organization released new findings, while warning that recent trends may lead to serious problems in the future. This crisis has been brought to attention after 2025 was reported as "One of the driest years for river discharge" and over 2 billion people reportedly not having access to safe water.

TRUMP AND THE PRESS

President Donald Trump's recent clash with the media has become a legal battle. Trump banned CNN, MS NOW and Politico from the White House, after accusing them of publishing what was referred to as "Fake news."

However, the ban did not last for long. On the 24th of September 2026, a federal judge ordered the White House to restore the journalists' access, ruling that the ban was likely unconstitutional.

AI TAKES A SEAT AT THE UN

Artificial Intelligence has officially become a global security issue. On September 23rd, the UN Security Council held a major session on AI, bringing tech leaders into the same room as world diplomats. OpenAI CEO Sam Altman and Anthropic CEO Dario Amodei have warned about the increasing power of artificial intelligence and called on governments to work together to establish international safeguards for advanced AI.

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CYPRUS CORNER

CYPRUS AT THE UN

Cyprus found itself back under the international spotlight, as President Nikos Christodoulides addressed the UN General Assembly. As Cyprus marks its sixth decade as a member of the UN, the President used this opportunity to highlight the island's ongoing division and the need for renewed efforts towards a settlement.

REVIEW OF "GOLDEN VISAS"

According to Deputy Minister of Migration, Nicholas Ioannides, Cyprus plans to tighten its "Golden visas" programme as plans to join the Schengen Area progress. Authorities are conducting a thorough review of 12,000 passports issued since 2013 to ensure that their holders continue to meet the required conditions.

THE DEBATE

QUESTION OF THE MONTH: SHOULD SOCIAL MEDIA BE BANNED FOR UNDER-15S?

Cyprus plans to submit a bill to parliament in December setting a minimum age for holding social media accounts – a move already being adopted by countries around the world. The goal is to shield minors from harsh and inappropriate content that they may encounter when scrolling through social media.

"Platforms should implement appropriate mechanisms that recognise the age of the individual, be able to prove that the individual is beyond the age limit specified, without storing other personal data," states Nicodemos Damianou, Deputy Minister.

Supporters argue that the ban is the only real way to protect children from cyberbullying, addictive applications and mental health harms. Critics counter that social media isn't the only source of many problems that children face and call for a solution without a ban. Where do you land? And here's a harder question to sit with: what would your life look like without social media?

COMING SOON

September may be wrapping up, but October is shaping up to be a busy month in world politics.

October will bring fresh debates over artificial intelligence as governments face growing pressure to decide how powerful AI systems should be regulated and governed internationally.

The war in Ukraine and the crisis in the Middle East are expected to remain major issues for world leaders, and European politics continue to be examined under a microscope as governments tackle migration, energy security and economic pressure.


THE VIRIDIAN
HOT POTATO
BY RENEE STROUTHOU

INTRODUCING... HOT POTATO

Hot Potato **is home to our writers' hot takes and most current journalism. With a different writer each edition, *Hot Potato* is sure to have you hooked!**

Social media has become one of the defining features of modern life. From Instagram and TikTok to platforms such as Snapchat and X, millions of people use these networks on a daily basis to communicate, stay informed, and engage with global events. However, issues like misinformation and cyberbullying continue to escalate, heavily impacting young users. In response, governments around the world are turning to strict regulations and age bans as protective measures.

Following the footsteps of countries such as Australia and France, the Cypriot government decided to take measures into their own hands by proposing that the minimum legal age for accessing social media should be 15. The Action Plan for this was approved in September and in December, a Bill will be submitted in the House of Representatives where this new law will be debated.

This action has sparked controversy from people all over Cyprus, with some raising the question if a complete ban is the right decision or if there are other more effective measures that could be taken.

After an interview with our Headteacher, ***Mr. Hind***, and the Head of History, ***Mr. Antoniou***, we explored how this proposed legislation could affect students and whether restricting social media is the most effective measure to be taken. Mr. Hind acknowledged how social media has **"Great aspects as people can share news and create connections but often "write things without thinking,"** explaining how people's actions have resulted in many governments enforcing a ban. Additionally, when asked about the ban, he referred to it as a **"Good idea,"** believing it would take away the **"Pressure,"** that most young people feel **"Trying to fit in as an adult."** On the other hand, Mr. Antoniou, who believes that social media is not **"The genuinely democratic medium for exchanging ideas that it is often presented as,"** does not agree that the ban of social media would solve all problems, stating that **"The use of social media and its effects are largely consequences rather than the root causes for the problems we are observing in society."** Despite their differences in opinion, both found a common ground on the necessity for digital literacy. They emphasize how the most effective ways to address the risks of social media would be through education. Schools all around the world should teach students how to understand and critically evaluate digital content and understand algorithmic design rather than simply enforcing avoidance.

While the proposed ban is largely a political and legal decision, its potential impact on young people cannot be understood without considering the psychological effects. To explore this perspective, we spoke to psychologist ***Julia Kalagian***, who shared her professional opinions regarding both social media and the ban. According to her, there is not an **“Appropriate,”** age for social media, as this depends on factors such as maturity, self-esteem and impulse control. Mrs. Kalagian also explains how social media is one of the causes for stress, anxiety and creates low body-image but emphasises how the positives of social media should not be disregarded as it can help the young people with connection, creativity and creating a sense of belonging with each other. When asked about the banning of social media, she argues that **“A complete ban might reduce exposure to some immediate harms,”** but would not necessarily address the deeper psychological issues which lead young people to use social media in the first place. Instead, it was suggested that parents and caregivers, should help teenagers reflect on how social media affects their mood, sleep, self-esteem, and relationships rather than completely taking it away from them.

Although experts provide an important perspective on the ban, it is important to hear the voices of those who will be directly affected by the ban. Most students believe that social media has a **positive effect** since it allows them to communicate easily with the friends and become more aware of the events going on around them. It was also made very clear that they believe that the ban would not be effective as **"Most would find a way around it,”** proving that the efforts taken by governments would not be effective.

The debate is far from resolved. For countries all around the world, not just Cyprus, social media is not just a trend: it is now part of society and deep embedded into politics and affects many decisions that need to be taken. As the parliament prepares to consider the proposed legislation this year, the future of social media will clearly look very different.


THE VIRIDIAN
COMING SOON...
COLUMNISTS

INTRODUCING

ACHILLEAS



What's up?! I'm ***Achilleas*** and I've been given the privilege to write for the Viridian's Science column. As you can probably tell, I'm seriously interested in science and enjoy learning about ground-breaking discoveries made by scientists, both old and new. And so, my job is sharing these things with you so that you might see what I see in this incredible world of discovery and creativity.

OLIVIA



Hello, I'm ***Olivia***! I'll be writing for "Obscure Origins" as a shadower. History has been a lifelong passion of mine and I can't wait to begin. If you enjoy all things old and fascinating, then this is the column for you!

MAYA

Hi! I'm ***Maya***, I'm in Year 12, and I'll be taking over the Philosophy column! Even though I aim to pursue a career in medicine, I've always found myself pondering philosophical questions and dilemmas. My aim is to help each reader discover or connect with their own beliefs; share some food for thought.

So, whether you too find yourself questioning the meaning of life or have never thought of yourself as a "philosophy person", I hope my articles ease your hunger for deep thinking.



DANIEL



Hi everyone! I'm ***Daniel***, and i'm in year 11. I've been given this amazing opportunity to shadow Nefeli on the 'fashion fix' column, i've always been interested in fashion and exploring its aspects. I can't wait to work with her alongside the rest of the team.

ISABELLA



I'm ***Isabella***, the writer for the new column "A Green Spark", where I write to inspire hope!

I'm sure you've all had enough of depressing headlines, which is why I curate a monthly article of only good news. From rainforests regrowing to rehabilitated animals- a tidbit of environmental positivity nestled right between the pages of the Viridian.

ZOE



Hi everyone! I'm ***Zoe*** and I am so delighted to have become a part of the Viridian as your New Arts Columnist! Having been raised around art I find that it allows people to express themselves in ways they might not be able to otherwise, for whatever reason that may be. To me, it's as valuable as speech, it is a language in and of itself. Art plays an extraordinary role in humanity and is so vital to our personal, historical and cultural identities - not merely something we look at, theres always more to know! That is why I am thrilled to be bringing you the magnificent view into The World of Art in upcoming editions! But for now I'll leave you with a little mystery, see you soon...

STEPHANIE



Hi everyone, I'm ***Stephanie***. This year I'm lucky to have the opportunity to be a columnist for the Book Corner of the Viridian, I can't wait to explore all the many facets of literature and how they shape and affect our current world!

MATHEW



Hello everyone, I'm ***Mathew*** and I am incredibly excited to dive into the world of film with the viridan this year! Watching movies has always been one of my favourite past times and to share them with others brings me great joy. I hope you appreciate all that this column has to offer!

YIANGOS



Hello. I am ***Yiangos Peter Grimm***, and will be trying my absolute hardest to help Alexandros with the "Honest Historians" column. I will be his shadow.

ALEXIS



Hi everyone, my name is ***Alexis*** and i'm shadowing the column for current affairs. I have always enjoyed writing, and i've always had an interest in the world around us. From opinions to stories, internationally and in cyprus, the current affairs column serves an interest to all. Dont miss out!

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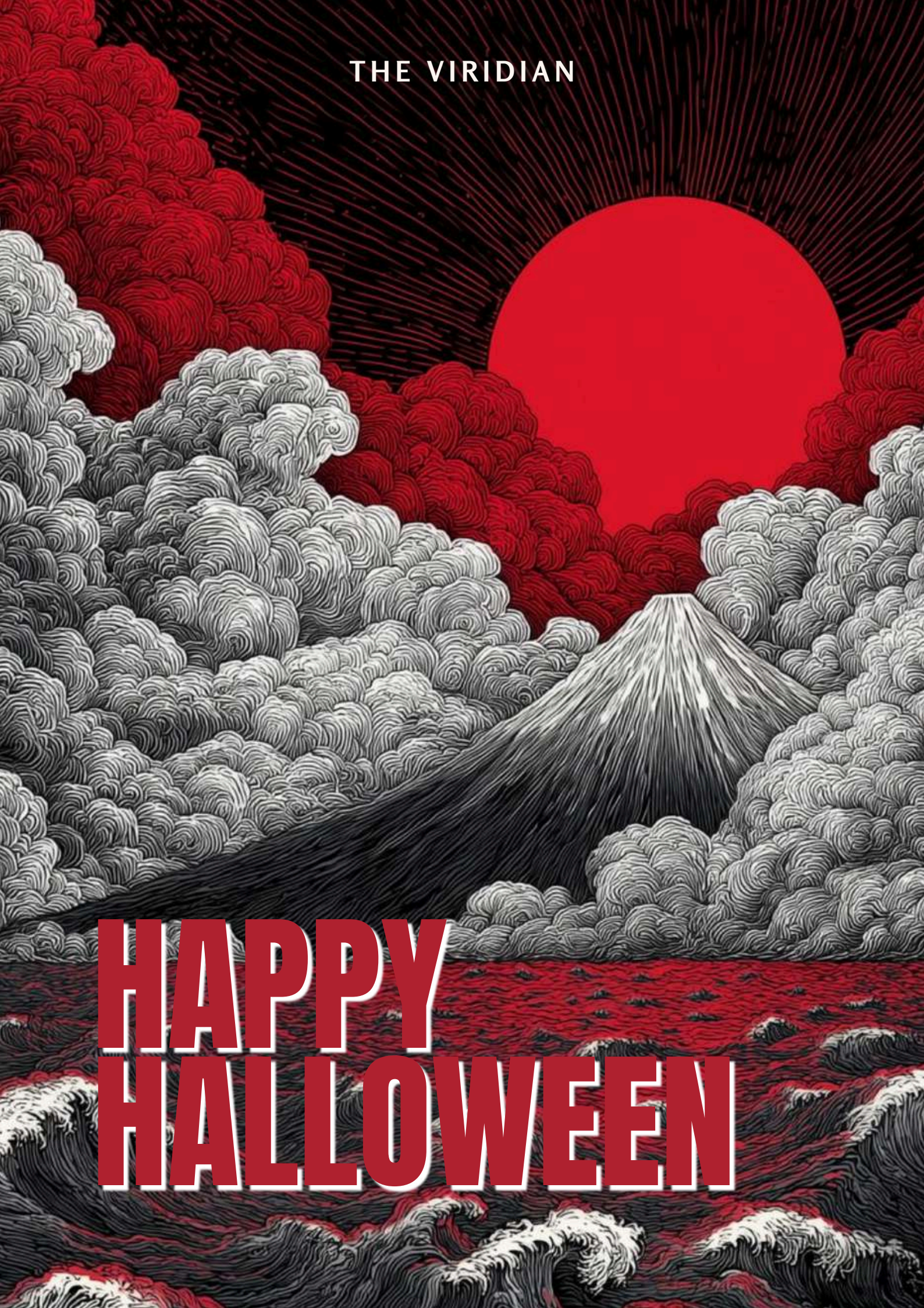



Thank you for reading thie edition of The Viridian!
Stay tuned for the next issue...

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