



Year 9 Creative Writing Pathway 2025-26

Journal No. 1

Edited by

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The Candle

By Mia Allen

A dark unusually cold room awakes, the smell of death is so unforgettable yet so unimaginable. There's a dim light, a candle, burning away over time in the darkness, like its life is fading. The tall stacks of books sit there, lonely. Staring in desperation, waiting to be read one... last... time. A tall ladder sits there, breaching into the darkness, trying to escape this endless spiral. As I walk closer to this dim light, this feeling floats through me. Why is there a candle still lit here? The books are untouched, there's no work or a sign of anyone being here, just emptiness.

Reflection

By Minnie Carlier

The antique mirror hung in the attic, its ornate frame tarnished with age and neglect. It had been a family heirloom, passed down through generations, but now it sat shrouded in dust, its reflective surface clouded and obscured. My grandmother had always warned me about it, whispering tales of a malevolent entity trapped within, waiting for a chance to escape. Naturally, I dismissed it as superstition, an old woman's fancy. Until I decided to clean it.

As I wiped away the grime, the mirror began to clear, revealing not my own reflection, but a distorted, grotesque visage. Its eyes were black pits, and its mouth stretched into a horrifying grin, revealing rows of jagged teeth. A wave of nausea washed over me as the figure in the mirror reached out, its spectral hand passing through the glass, grasping at my throat. I recoiled in terror, stumbling backwards, but the hand followed, its icy grip tightening around my neck.

I clawed at the hand, desperate for air, but it was no use. The figure in the mirror was growing stronger, its presence filling the room with an oppressive darkness. As my vision began to blur, I saw the figure step out of the mirror, its form solidifying, its eyes fixed on me with malevolent glee. It was a creature of nightmares, its skin pale and decaying, its limbs twisted and contorted. With a final, agonizing gasp, I succumbed to the darkness, my soul claimed by the entity in the mirror. The mirror now reflects a new prisoner, forever trapped within its glass, waiting for the next unsuspecting soul to set it free.

Longing

By Savannah Corney

Ever since I was a child, I had always been chatty. But, ever since my mum passed I don't speak anymore. Dad became an alcoholic due to the pain in his heart, he hasn't been the same since the accident and he blames me for everything. Most days, he's passed out on the sofa with bottles of beer surrounding him. On other days, he shouts, swears, and eats. Whenever I try asking him if he's okay, he tells me to go to my room and stop being a bother. He makes me feel worthless, like I am a pig, like I'm a nobody. I do everything for my father, but yet I get nothing back. I'm 16 with a part-time job just to pay the bills for my father's home. Every day I get to work and greet customers with a welcoming smile but I never get one in return.

I've had enough of living like this.

Jungles

By Nazarii Dvorianskyi

A long time ago, there was a little boy named James. He had no family. He was a little boy in an orphan home. No one noticed him, and in his lonely life there was one thing that made him happy—exploring places that weren't touched by humans.

20 years later

The once-little boy grew up and became a grown, independent man. At first he was struggling to find a job and an apartment, but then he found his dream job. He got to explore places that weren't touched by humans. One day he found a long-not-seen place. It was the jungle.

Lingering Fear

By Ellie-Rose Gleed

In the depths of a forgotten asylum, where shadows danced on crumbling walls, there existed an entity. It had no name, no form, yet it was. A presence that seeped into mind, spreading tendrils of madness like a dark stain.

It thrived on fear, growing strong with each shattered sanity. The entity whispered in the darkness, its voice a cold breath on the nape of the neck, echoing in the chambers of the mind.

No one knew where it came from, or how to stop it. Some said it was born from the collective terror of the asylum's former patients, others that it was a doorway to a realm beyond human comprehension.

Extract from *Sagittae Maliedicto*

By Jonathan Gomez

The moonlight cascaded over the gloomy treeline, its thick branches blocking its reach while the air seemed to feel like it was a thick bog that you couldn't get out of. The cracked ground had no life, if it did, it would have been sapped by greedy jade vines and moss that wrapped around the trees and stone. Slowly eroding till it was no more. The darkness followed the dilapidated ground, sheltering whatever may be in. It was quite cold that night. Maybe things would've ended differently? Maybe not. But you cannot deny the ugly eyes that would stare you down. Its breath breathing down your neck. Apollo, why did you trap it here with us? Why would you keep that here? Apollo, why have you failed us?

The air felt as thick as bog as Joe descended deeper into the dark forest. "I gotta get my teddy bear!" Joe shouted, thinking no one would hear him and he was right no human being would hear him but... they heard him. He went deeper into the abyss of a forest but as he was walking, rustling of leaves would follow him. He looked back and there it was, in all its glory or darkness really. It looked like a human. Maybe it was human? Whatever happened, it was a human no more. Its yellow skin seemed to peel or rot of its body, and its mouth stretched to the ground. Its finger turned into forever bleeding claws and spine elongated to a height no human could master. The flesh around the legs looked like they were about to rot off completely and an extra rotting eye that looked like it was forcefully inserted into the head. Its bleeding beady eyes then looked at Joe.

Betraying Temptation

By Alexia Gowling

The river hid the magic from the people, it caused everyone to spiral into a darkness that was hard to escape. It caused night terrors for the children and something far worse than the darkness they were already in for the adults. This thing caused them to be happy all the time but their mind tried to kill them, it attacked them, it destroyed them from the inside out. Taking every last thing they had until it became too much. Too much for them to handle. The river controlled everyone and everything, it forced the monsters into their minds. Every star that littered the sky was the soul of someone the river had taken, the only lights in the darkness. And that's how the stars betrayed the sky.

Nostalgia

By Livi Hall

The woman looked down into the water below her. A little girl stared back at her. The young girl had happiness beaming all over her face and the woman looked back with soulless, dark eyes. Mascara stained her face black, her cheeks were bright red and puffy. A picture of a girl fell from the woman's pocket and landed into the water below. The same little girl that was staring back at her. It was her. She was reminded of how she used to be happy and so full of life and now she was just a body with a hollow inside, suffocated by her own mind.

The Mirror Knows

By Lilly Jacobs

In the hush of a room where moonlight spills,
Stands a mirror, quiet with secrets it distils
Not hung for vanity, nor trimmed with gold,
But carved with silence, ancient and cold.

It does not flatter, does not lie.
It watches you pass, it watches you cry.
It sees the mask you wear each day,
And the soul beneath all worn and frayed.

You stand before it brushing your hair,
But it sees the thoughts you wouldn't dare,
The ache in your chest, the dreams you hide.
The child you were, still locked inside.

It remembers the nights you danced alone,
The whispered prayers, the broken tone.
It holds your laughter, your rage, your grace.
And every version of your face.

It watched you grow, then watched you break,
It saw the choices you couldn't make.
It saw the love you gave away,
And the words you never found to say.

Getaway

By Skyla Jewell

Music drifts through every moment, colouring life in its own quiet way.
It rises in peace or heartbreak, a voice that never seems to stray.
A sound that gathers around your thoughts, a calm you wish could stay.
Because music is the hidden path that leads you gently far away.

It reminds you you're not alone, even when the world feels grey.
New notes open doors inside you, lighting corners where shadows lay.
A feeling you can't explain, carried by the words you play.
A heartbreak echoes in a song, guiding you through another day.

To some it's only a noise, but to most it's the strength that holds the fray,
A place to shout your lungs out or breathe your heavy thoughts away,
A rhythm that lifts you up again, steadying the things that sway,
A quiet anchor in the chaos when life refuses to obey.

And when the music softens, it lingers like a memory you replay,
A thread sewn through your story, woven tighter every day,
A voice that never takes too much but gives you space to find your way,
Music is, and will always be, your everlasting getaway.

The Spark

By Hazal Leylek

I looked out into the sunrise,
The pearly yellow caught my eyes.
I felt free like a bird
and without saying a word,
I slowly laid and put my head down
And looked at the fluffy cloud.

The windy air blew at my hair,
but I was too busy being tired to care.
The smooth breeze slowly went away
and I could see a flock of birds sway.

I turned my head to face the sun
but I never realised soon there will be no fun.
When I closed my eyes,
I began to hear cries.

It was disturbing and loud,
but I later found
A scorching building covered in flames
and then I heard screams of pains.

Santa's Arrival

By William Marsh

The boys sat around the fireplace, hands outstretched towards the flames. It was Christmas Eve and everyone was excited for what Santa would bring. He looked at the clock: 20:00PM. His mother shortly after came into the room. "It's time for bed" she said, "you don't want Santa to skip our house because we're not asleep do you?"

"No!" said the boys before running up the stairs on their hands and legs.

One of the boys knew that Santa wasn't real but the younger one didn't so he went to him and asked, "James, do you want to leave a trap for Santa so we can see if he really came?"

James's face lit up with excitement, "Yes! Yes! Let's do it!" he cheered.

So off they went taking flour and laying it down next to the fireplace, leaving a plate of milk and cookies and setting up a camera to "catch him in the act". Once James was asleep the older brother went to the flour and stepped in it wearing his dad's old work boots, and took bites out of the cookies making sure that there were some crumbs left, and drank all the milk, and he took a large red coat that was definitely too big for him and walked past the camera they had set up making sure to say ho ho ho. After all this he was so tired he slumped into bed and fell asleep. The excitement on his brother's face when they went downstairs made him want to do it all again.

Poverty

By Braden O'Neil

A teenager called Ben, who lives in London, has to decide whether to go to school or fall into a life of crime. This all started on a cold rainy Sunday night, school started up tomorrow when Ben got to his mum's flat and noticed the eviction letter stuck on the door. He walked to the window and didn't see his mum's car, he took his phone out and tried ringing his mum- but no answer. The poverty stricken estate is what he calls home, but he doesn't know about life outside of the estate. With poverty banging against the door, he called the one person who could help him with money- a kid named Gareth. But Ben didn't know what he was getting into.

Contrast

By Ivana Onianwa

The screams echo as they create ripples in the ever glowing sea. Bullets float across the setting horizon as they hit their targets, the guns held by the betrayers and helpless. Having to rebuild what we call society once again after such a bloodbath, having to be a hassle to start again once over. That flower stands strong as the wind sways it to the rhythm of the gunshots. Witnessing the whole scenario as it would and could do nothing but be a bystander.

Extract from Never Apart

By Zara Panopio

Context: A summoned doppelganger goes too far in his eyes

When the copy left the study, Ray followed it into the narrow hallway, his hand trembling with the force he gripped the knife.

The blade plunged into the clone's throat, causing it to stumble forward, hands against the wound as blood spilled down its fingers in red streaks. Inevitably, Ray Prather's anger sharpened into something darker.

Rain battered against the windows of Thornwraith Manor. Lilith and her "husband" sat at his study desk, looking at plans for the future. Ray stood in the doorway, unseen. His vision tunnelled around her, then around the intruder who replaced him.

Lilith laughed softly, and for a moment it broke him out of his haze. But the more he listened, the more he realised: she was laughing with the clone. Laughing with the lie.

Relentlessly, he drove the knife in and out of the clone's back, making sure to pierce its heart and lungs. Ray wrenched the knife free and laughed as the copy collapsed onto the stained wooden planks.

A blood-curdling scream tore through the air behind him. He couldn't tell whether it came from Lilith, or from somewhere deep inside his own mind.

It Lurks

By Yasmin Pegg

It lurks. That's all people think they do. But no: they do much more. I ran until my legs throbbed in pain, not stopping until I found safety behind a thick tree. Tears mixed with sweat on my forehead. The Creature was approaching. I shut my eyes tightly as it growled and thrashed, tearing up anything it could find. It had one goal in mind. That was to kill me. Its head shot over as quick as a lightning bolt. I'd messed up. The blood drained from my face as I looked at the stick I had just stepped on and cracked in half. My breath shook as I suppressed a cry, I looked up at its soulless white eyes, the dark eyebags around them made it look even more horrifying. Again, I ran. I got my foot caught in a bigger tree's withered roots. I didn't bother trying to untangle myself yet as I couldn't hear The Creature's distorted sounds. I thought I was safe. But just as I had let out a shaky breath of relief, I felt a cold, wrinkled and wet hand touch my cheek. The sharp claws brushed my cheek as the blood smeared onto my face. I. Was. *Done*.

The Myth: The Crooked Man

By Anna Prus

Long ago, a myth was created to scare people into being safe at night. But the thing they feared most became a reality. The Crooked Man was once just a tale: yet soon he took the role of a demon terrorizing the earth. July 21st marks the day a tragedy scared the townspeople. The streets were filled with a cold breeze that entered every house. The stars illuminated the sky but beneath this peaceful mask was something truly horrifying. The story claims a young boy roamed the streets before midnight trying to find his parents. Little did he know The Crooked Man was stalking him and was watching his every move. The Crooked Man is described to have a tall, skinny form with his arms and legs bent backwards. His head stretches off his shoulder and dangles there permanently. At midnight the boy was approached by The Crooked Man and he snatched him down to the depths of hell. The residents heard the blood-curdling screams of the young boy. They knew the rules. Now you know the story, it's time to learn how to survive. Avoiding him isn't simple. Remember to always lock your doors and close all blinds. If he sees you or you see him, protect your family and say your goodbyes. Do not investigate any screaming outside from 12:00am to 5:00am. If your door handle begins to shake and you hear banging on your windows, do not hesitate to take your family into a basement or closet. He can get in. We wish you all a safe night as we continue our attempt to find this creature from hell. We will update you if anything new occurs. Thank you.

The Glass of My Mind

By Maddison Santos

I went to work carrying a glass of water—clear, full, and steady. As I walked inside, someone bumped into me, and a small ripple leapt over the edge. Just a splash. They apologized, and the surface stilled.

At my desk, I set the glass down. My colleague appeared, flustered, saying they had forgotten to send an email and asked if I could take care of it. As they hurried off, their feet brushed against my desk. The glass shuddered, and more water slipped out. They didn't turn back. The glass settled at half full.

Later, my boss approached, voice sharp and cracking like thunder. Accusations I didn't deserve shook the desk, and the glass toppled. Water rushed across my papers like a tiny storm. My boss walked away without a word. The glass, set upright again, was nearly empty. A thin shimmer clinging to the bottom. Almost gone.

I picked it up and carried it with me. In the lunchroom, another worker noticed the hollow glass in my hand. She asked gently if she could hold it. I wasn't sure why, but I let her take it.

She spoke softly—words like warm hands on cold shoulders. Then she walked to the sink, turned the tap, and let the water rise once more, filling the glass halfway. She handed it back with a smile that felt like sunlight finding a crack. It wasn't full, but it was more than before. I was more than before.

When I finally went home, I glanced down and realized my hand was empty. The glass had never been real. It lived only in my mind—a vessel for the weight I carried, the way the world sloshed against me.

Invisible to most.

But not to everyone. Some people can see the glass you don't hold. Some people care enough to fill it.

The Fallen Angel

By Alicia Simm

I rose up and stood like an angel in the breeze. I couldn't live knowing she would be haunting me for the rest of my life. She didn't deserve me. Bruises cracked into gashes as I bent my knees and that was the first and last time my heart stopped beating forever.

Weapon

By Cora Tromans

The worn gun shook in my cowering hand. It would take all of my fingers to count how many times it has been used. Why is it different now?

The light quickly faded and I retreated to my temporary home. I gathered up my stuff knowing I won't be able to stay long; not after this.

I stepped outside into the starlight and breathed in the humid March air. It is spring now - the light will last for years. I hid and crawled, I climbed and ran just to get away. The gun still lay in my hand, softly by my side. Other kids have toys that they have had since 3 but I have my gun. A gift on my 4th birthday.

I have used it too many times; my mother before me had used it like it was her hobby.

I didn't grow up with funny cartoons booming through the TV. I grew up with booms of guns and loud cries.

Our Home

By KC Wilson-Sweet

The paper was damp,
the building was quiet,
the curtains still flowed,
the heater still mumbled,
the clock still ticked.
Yet no one was home.

Frozen Lake

By Keira Winter

As I walked across the frozen lake, my wallet fell out of my pocket, but I didn't realise. I had gotten to the other side of the frozen lake then I looked back and saw my dog running across it. He ran so fast that the ice collapsed. I ran to go save him until I saw my wallet but I couldn't choose. Would I rather save my dog or my wallet? I rushed over to my wallet before it fell. Then I rushed to get off the ice. A kind lady rushed over to save my dog.

The next day goes past. I saw the same lady who had saved my dog. She had light brown hair, and perfect brown eyes. I waved at her but she looked and didn't wave back. She walked over as I tumbled towards her. She said, "How could you let that dog freeze to death?". She walked off and I chased after her. She walked into a building with security guards and they didn't let me go past.



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