Bandersnatch is a student-run newspaper at John Abbott College. It is published biweekly and is partially funded by the Student Activities Committee and by advertising solicited customers. Submissions are welcome and become property of Bandersnatch. Submissions must be sent via MIO through John Abbott College’s Omnivox to the respective editors, and must be in Microsoft Word Document format (.doc). All submissions must include the full name of the contributor, as well as the e-mail address if applicable. Bandersnatch reserves the right to reject submissions or to edit any submissions for length, legality, or clarity. Submissions should be a minimum of 250 words and a maximum of 500 words. Articles lower or above these parameters may be printed at the discretion of the executives. If you should have any questions or concerns, please contact us at our e-mail indicated above or visit us at the Bandersnatch office, located in the basement of Herzberg, room H-049 (located in Herzberg basement, in front of the Oval Cafe).

Executive Positions

- Sebastian Socorro: Editor-in-Chief
- Vanessa Marion: Assistant Editor-in-Chief
- Marc Randy: Production Manager
- Suzie Deschambault: Web Editor
- Maxim Maiore: Webmaster
- JJ: Office Manager
- Paola Peñate: Social Media Manager
- Position Available: Archivist
- Position Available: Photography Coordinator
- Position Available: Student Life Editor
- Michelle Akim: News Editor
- Position Available: Arts Editor
- Ryan Joseph: Entertainment Editor
- Position Available: Games Editor
- Position Available: Sports Editor
- Position Available: Opinions Editor
- Victoria Navas Via-Dufresne: Science & Tech Editor
- Logan Macdonald: Procrastinator Editor

Sections

- Student Life: 2
- News: 3
- Arts: 4-5
- Entertainment: 6-7
- Games: 8
- Sports: 9
- Opinions: 10
- Science & Tech: 11
- Procrastinator: 12
- Website Exclusives: 13

John Abbott College
21275 Lakeshore Road
Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue,
Quebec, Canada H9X 3L9
Office: H-049
Web: www.bandersnatch.ca
E-mail: bandersnatchpaper@gmail.com
Editors can be reached by MIO.
ORIENTATION DURING A PANDEMIC?
We made it work!
Chloé Lefebvre
Contributor

These times are extremely difficult for everyone, and it has been quite the adjustment period getting settled into an entirely new routine for online learning. For new students at John Abbott College, it’s a whole new world. With COVID-19 taking over our lives and a new school to get accustomed to, the way in which we are being introduced to CEGEP life has changed completely. Orientation is a rite of passage for new students. It’s where you get introduced not only to the school, but to your program of choice and the people you will be surrounded by every day for the next couple of years.

With mandated mask-wearing and social-distancing, meeting people can be quite a struggle. John Abbott made it work and accommodations were made so that new students could get their orientation day. We were able to meet other people in our programs through games and were grouped into small bunches of people when being given an introductory presentation to college life. Tours were distanced from other groups, and we were made aware of all the new precautions and rules of the college to keep both staff and students safe when spending time on campus.

Adjustments of any kind are difficult, but if we all cooperate and work with each other in an effort to keep both ourselves and the people around us safe and healthy, things will be back to normal before we know it.

Stay safe, wear your masks, and have a wonderful semester!

CHANGING HABITS
Chloé Lefebvre
Contributor

Everything is changing. Things change all the time, that is the way of life. But this time there are drastic changes around the globe in which every human being has to adapt to. The process of adapting to something involves losing old habits and gaining new ones.

Amongst teenagers, the thought of losing the habit of physically socializing with friends, doing sports, or simply being outside as much has probably passed through their mind often. When a regular part of you has gone absent, it could leave you feeling incomplete.

Before the pandemic, a regular day at school would require you to plan ahead to get in time for class and be more open and engaged with people around you. The rhythm of doing a lot helps with feeling more productive.

Presently, a regular day at school, or rather at home, can start out in your room and literally end in your room without you having to do anything but press on a button to join and watch a computer screen all day. Simple.

Classes at home may feel less rewarding and productive because we are not required to do as much. Those days do not have to be simple; it can be whatever you make it. You can develop new habits, such as, jogging in the mornings, baking bread every other day, reading a cozy book in the park, etc. Embrace the change and let it shape you into the best that you can be, not the worst.

SUJAC UPDATE

Hey JAC,

Welcome back! While this semester will be like no other, we are confident that you will make the best of it. To kick off back to school, SUJAC is hosting a movie night right here at school this Saturday, September 12, on the Football Field. Check out @instasujac for more information!

SUJAC, which stands for the Student Union of John Abbott College, is a student-run organization that advocates for student rights, supports student initiatives, and promotes Clubs and activities on campus. SUJAC is made up of all full-time students, an Executive team, as well as a Congress. Your 2020-2021 Executives are:

President Emily Thom,
VP Internal Théophile Bourgeois
VP Academic Samuel Wong
VP External Jonathan Sztainberg
VP Finance Molly Gunyon
VP Communications John Bedirian.

SUJAC’s duty is to serve its students, so if you ever have any questions, concerns, or ideas, we invite you to reach out by MIO or on social media! Also, feel free to call the SUJAC Office at (514) 457-6610, Local 3397, to make an appointment to drop by in person at Penfield-101.

Moreover, if you are interested in student life and want to have your voice heard, then we strongly encourage you to join SUJAC’s Congress. Congress Nominations are now open on the JAC Portal until Sunday, September 13 (noon until 11 pm), so be sure to submit your form on time! You can find the link to the Nomination Form in our bio on Instagram.

Finally, SUJAC is working hard to make CEGEP life more affordable for students. Until September 30, JAC students get 20% off school supplies and 5% off technology at Bureau en Gros. To access the coupon code, check out the link @instasujac.

Wishing you a great start to the school year,
Your SUJAC Executive Team 2020-2021:

President Emily Thom,
VP Internal Théophile Bourgeois
VP Academic Samuel Wong
VP External Jonathan Sztainberg
VP Finance Molly Gunyon
VP Communications John Bedirian
AMERICAN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION 2020

Nina Zezogolis
Contributor

This upcoming November, U.S. citizens will head to the polls to vote for the man who will be their president for the next four years. 2020 has been one of the biggest challenges for many countries, and the United States has struggled a lot during the last few months, undergoing stock market plunges, reaching top numbers in outbreaks, people losing their jobs and homes, etc. Many Americans have grown exasperated with the way the current president, Donald J. Trump, is leading the country, leaving them with only one thing to do: vote for who they believe is the right candidate to get them out from the entanglement of their country’s crisis.

This election cycle, on the Democrat’s side, Joe Biden (formally the vice president in 2009-2016) was elected to run for president. Biden then selected Senator Kamala Harris of California as his running mate.

Their key campaign issue is re-building the middle class: Biden is calling for transformational investments in America’s infrastructure. He plans to equip the American middle class to win in the global economy, reduce gas emissions to net-zero, and ensure that cities, towns, and rural areas in the United States win through what is no secret that this world wide pandemic has caused many academic institutions to rethink their method of teaching for the fall semester. American colleges and universities have been a major focus in the media due to the rapid spread of cases in the United States where American Universities, ranging from 5 000 to 50 000 students, are struggling to find an adequate and safe balance for the upcoming semester. How will they respect social distancing guidelines? How will dorm rooms and residences on campus function?

Public areas such as the dining hall, the laundromat, the kitchens, and communal bathrooms are high traffic areas that all student residents use. Many universities and colleges have been respecting social distancing guidelines and have entirely shifted to online learning while other academic institutions, such as Harvard, Princeton, and Georgetown are doing mostly online learning while still having a few classes on campus. Furthermore, the four main concerns arising from COVID-19 that are most common amongst parents, students, and faculty are academics, college dorms, student life, and health and wellness.

Many students are concerned that online learning may not be the best fit for them while others are concerned that virtual learning may kill all student activities and college social events that many sororities, fraternities, sports teams, and clubs usually participate in. Moreover, many college students are not respecting the health and safety regulations put in place by the CDC despite their colleges reinforcing these rules. Parties of over 100 people are being thrown and held both on and off campus. Students are forced to decide between reporting these parties to campus authorities or being loyal to their friends. As for international students, remote learning for them may mean attending an American college right from their home country.

Overall, the typical American college experience that one usually imagines may change drastically in the upcoming weeks and months.

Many of Trump’s 2016 voters are switching from red to blue after disapproving of their president’s way of handling the pandemic as well as other dire issues.

That being said, even though the numbers look in favour of Biden, many predict this election will be in Trump’s hands. Fears of a rigged election are growing more and more as the date approaches November. After the president refused to fund the USPS and started removing mailboxes, his chances of a second term greatly increased. Will the next President of the United States win through what some call electoral fraud? Only time will tell.

COVID-19’S EFFECT ON AMERICAN COLLEGES

Christina Blake
Contributor

It is no secret that this worldwide pandemic has caused many academic institutions to rethink their method of teaching for the fall semester. American colleges and universities have been a major focus in the media due to the rapid spread of cases in the United States where American Universities, ranging from 5 000 to 50 000 students, are struggling to find an adequate and safe balance for the upcoming semester. How will they respect social distancing guidelines? How will dorm rooms and residences on campus function?

Public areas such as the dining hall, the laundromat, the kitchens, and communal bathrooms are high traffic areas that all student residents use. Many universities and colleges have been respecting social distancing guidelines and have entirely shifted to online learning while other academic institutions, such as Harvard, Princeton, and Georgetown are doing mostly online learning while still having a few classes on campus.

Furthermore, the four main concerns arising from COVID-19 that are most common amongst parents, students, and faculty are academics, college dorms, student life, and health and wellness.

Many students are concerned that online learning may not be the best fit for them while others are concerned that virtual learning may kill all student activities and college social events that many sororities, fraternities, sports teams, and clubs usually participate in. Moreover, many college students are not respecting the health and safety regulations put in place by the CDC despite their colleges reinforcing these rules. Parties of over 100 people are being thrown and held both on and off campus. Students are forced to decide between reporting these parties to campus authorities or being loyal to their friends. As for international students, remote learning for them may mean attending an American college right from their home country.

Overall, the typical American college experience that one usually imagines may change drastically in the upcoming weeks and months.

Academic institutions are learning more and more that in-person learning may not be absolutely necessary. Certain schools might decide to fully become online schooling institutions.

The Coronavirus is leading the entire world in various directions; the way the world and its population react to it will determine these institutions’ best courses of action.
THE GALLANT SALMON
Nicole Widerlund
Contributor

In the dark depths of the sea there strolled three little fish with old and wise minds. Amongst them followed a big, young, and valiant salmon with not much more knowledge than a blank book.

While they were going about their day the most marvelous thing happened. They witnessed the light of Poseidon. The light was carried by one of His messengers, a tiny, agile, and colourful fish.

“It is said that they come to retrieve the courageous fish in the sea only to reward them with what they deserve”, explained one of the wise fish excitedly.

“And what would that be?”, asked the salmon. The three wise fish shared eye-contact and agreed on their silent conversation.

“You have been chosen, not because of your tiny mind but because of your gallant personality”, said one of the wise.

The salmon questioned no more for he was one tiny mind and they were three larger ones. Out the salmon went to expose his gallant personality to Poseidon. Up he went towards the light where he would receive what an uncritical and brave fish deserves, to be gutted in a sea of blood in the hands of the ancient god we call Poseidon.

FREE JUSTICE
Gursagar Singh
Contributor

I got no liberty
Stack in these chains
don’t mean that I’m free

I can’t breathe
I can’t leave
I got eyes
They only see the pain

What happened to us
U.S.
We tried
You said we were friends

I believed
Was intrigued
You told lies
More of the same
I can’t reach
Took a knee
To arise
Cuz I only had some change

Running out
Now I’m running out
To get shot down
I still refrain

But enough is enough
When you yell stop
Before I start speaking
I got a voice
I will not cop out

BRAID
Sophia Jeroncic
Contributor

Image Courtesy of Nicole Widerlund

Image Courtesy of Getty Images

Source: Getty Images
THE SLEEP
Sophia Jeroncic
Contributor

To sleep or to fall asleep?
I listen to the sound of the willows that weep,
And the sloshes through puddles from the frogs that doth leap,
A barrier bordering berries and bees,
Sheltering them from the bats up in the trees,
And the thorns on the roses gleam
In the moonlight’s high-lighting beam,
Such forbidden beauty I wish I could keep,
As I lie down to fall asleep.

ABYSSAL
Sebastian Socorro
Editor-in-Chief

Pressure pounding
Heart battering against my chest
I breathe out and sink into the deep
Light behind me dimmers
I love the endless dark yet fear it
Dive slowly into empty unknown
I’ve been here before
Drowned but I just can’t help it
What lies beneath completes me
Eventually I’m found
Gentle arms pull me deeper
Warmth in the frigid abyss
There you are
Eyes of a serene glow
A hungry smile on your lips

MORNING GLORIES
Juliana Bede
Contributor

To be happy is to seek the sunlight that filters through the vibrant leaves. Its beauty is held in momentary sight to which the passer it can only deceive.

To be happy is to count our blessings that burst like morning glories in daybreak. With passing hours we see new endings, But be it true: life’s charity is not at stake.

“To do more of what makes you happy,” they say. And yet, for many, the question bears pain. For upon our quest a blank canvas lay. But what lacks is colour; a tool for the brain.

Indeed, the discomfort we face lay in our illusion that happiness is an end, not the journey at play. A hill to climb is rather seen an intrusion over yonder a nearer joy, but all pleasure put astray.

And yet, the jovial symphony of sunlight do cast a waltz upon blossoms at peak. But blinded we become by a withering blight when gaze reach for sky; why heavens do we seek?

Human glory must rest within spirit’s scope like mountaintop firs so humble in size.

For every climb bring us nearer Heaven’s hope. And beyond each fall, let there be sunrise.
HAMILTON REVIEW
Alicia Gagné
Contributor

Alexander Hamilton, when America sings for you, will they know what you overcame? Will they know you rewrote your game? The world will never be the same, oh!

Hamilton: An American Musical
The Broadway show, written by Lin-Manuel Miranda, rapidly grew in popularity after its debut in 2015. The musical portrays the life of Alexander Hamilton, one of the founding fathers of the United States who fought for his nation and helped build it. By listening to it, I discovered the story of a man whose contributions to America were often overlooked and I wondered about the reason behind the ever-growing popularity of this show.

The musical takes place during a time we all know about: the revolution that led to the independence of America. It is the story of an immigrant who moves to the Britannic colony, hoping to find a better life. He fights to help America become the country it now is and risks it all to work his way up, obsessed with his legacy. Alexander was a bright man, but he was not perfect and the musical does a great homage to the person he was. This show, which contains a total of 48 songs, received 11 Tony awards. Many things help it stand out from other Broadway shows. The diversity of its cast makes it inclusive and Hamilton is targeted towards a wider audience than most of them. It is also one of the first musicals to include rap and hip hop in its songs.

Hamilton had the right ingredients to be a masterpiece, but even the best musicals can fail to become popular. Broadway theaters are rained in New York and the tickets for Hamilton cost more than 100 U.S. dollars. Few can make the trip or afford to go see the show, yet it managed to reach those who never saw it in person. How? The cast recording of all the songs is easily accessible and manages to take us on the journey of Hamilton through its music. I personally discovered this musical on YouTube, and I would have never listened to it had it not been so present on the internet. If I compare Hamilton to Hadestown, a Broadway show with incredible songs that are hard to find, we can see that Hadestown doesn’t have as many fans as Hamilton and the difference is easy to identify.

The musical includes incredible songs and compelling characters. It recently became available on Disney+, but the cast recording is still accessible on the internet. I would recommend anyone who has not listened to it to yet to do so because the story told through the music teaches us a lot and helps us understand the history of our neighboring country.

LUCIFER SEASON 5
Amélie Senécal
Contributor

If you’re a fan of the devil, then you surely know that season five (part one) of Lucifer came out on Netflix on August 21st, right around when school started up again. This was amazing news, fans rejoicing in getting to once again see the silly antics of our favourite mischievous devil. Was this season everything fans expected? (WARNING: SPOILERS WILL BE FOUND UP AHEAD)

Season 4 ended on the cliff-hanger that all fans dreaded. Chloe finally expressed her love for our charming devil, finally accepting the truth behind his identity, and he had to return to Hell and his army of demons. Talk about an absolute bummer. However, the newest part came out and boy oh boy, fans were certainly not forgotten. The first couple of episodes were a bit tedious, featuring the introduction of Lucifer’s not so dashing twin, Michael. The constant emphasis on and overuse of puns regarding Hell caused the beginning to be underwhelming, and honestly, almost disappointed me enough to justify not watching any more. And, well, Michael just isn’t Lucifer.

However, the grand return of our favourite king and the reignition of a burning love made this newest addition to the show the comical romance that we were all rooting for. With the introduction of shocking plot twists, Michael’s sinister ruses, the exploration of topics such as abandonment or the journey of the human psyche, passionate love and constant witty humor, fans were swept up in a whirlwind and they never wanted to leave.

NEED A NEW AUTHOR TO READ? TRY BOB GOFF!
Chloé Lefebvre
Contributor

Bob Goff is an American author who has written three books so far. His first book, Love Does, was released in April of 2012. It quickly climbed to the New York Times best sellers list, and all of the proceeds went into his organisation called Love Does, formerly entitled Restore International. It is a non-profit which helps to fight injustices around the world and provides education for children in under-privileged countries. So far, schools have been built in Uganda, Somalia, Nepal, Iraq, India, Congo, and Afghanistan. He works to free wrongly imprisoned boys in Uganda as well as fighting for justice for children there. He is a self-identified “recovering lawyer”, and currently serves as the Honorary Consul for the Republic of Uganda to the United States, which he agreed to almost by accident because he thought the request was a practical joke. He is an adjunct professor at Point Loma and Pepperdine law school where he teaches a class on failure. He has released two other books. Everybody Always, which was released in 2018, and Dream Big, released this year.

Bob makes an impact on his audience through the relentless love he shows people. Much of his novels are composed of personal stories from his rather extravagant life, and how he has moved through it with grace and kindness. Hearing about his life makes you want to change the world because of how excitement-filled it is. He got into law school without passing the bar (he talks about this in Love Does... it is quite the story). He practices law from his “office” at a bench on Tom Sawyer Island in Disneyworld. He works tirelessly to make himself available to his audience. He has put his cell phone number in the backs of all his books, and he never lets anyone go to voicemail.

Faith is talked about throughout all of his books because Bob’s faith informs the way he lives his life, but I would hardly call any of his books, maybe with the exception of the devotionals he wrote (called “Live in Grace, Walk in Love”), Christian books. He talks about his beliefs because that is what motivates him to conduct himself in the way he does. That being said, he is worth reading from regardless of your personal or religious beliefs. These books truly hold the power to motivate you to do the things you’ve always wanted to.

The conversational style of writing he has adopted makes his books quick and easy to read. Reading from Bob feels like you’re having a conversation with a friend. His books are essentially just a place where he makes the argument that we should aim to show relentless love to people, and how to go about doing so. He provides tangible examples from his own life and explains what he learned from the people who have made the most significant impact on him.

Overall, I would call any of his books a must-read. They’re worth picking up especially if you feel stuck and like you need a push into action or inspiration to go after the things you care about.
**MIDNIGHT SUN**

Paola Peñate  
Social Media Manager

If you are a late 90’s kid or early 2000s you most likely know the twilight movies, and maybe you even read the books. The twilight saga written by Stephanie Meyer struck the world with Edward and Bella’s vampire-human love when the first book came out in 2005. And two years later, the world was amazed by the first motion picture.

Rumors came around in approximately 2007 that Meyer was working in a book titled Midnight Sun which would tell the first encounter of Edward and Bella from Edward’s perspective. Midnight Sun leaked in 2008, and this action made Meyer stop the writing and publishing of the book.

However, it is never too late. As Meyer surprised everyone with a surprise publishing of the book 10+ years later. Midnight Sun came out on August 5th, 2020, and as a die fan of the saga, I found it fit to write a review of the book. When you first read it you are taken back to 2005, and live the fantasy all over again.

Edward’s first encounter with Bella is seen from another perspective, from a side of hate and even a thriller-like experience. Edward is overwhelmed with his thirst over Bella, he hates himself for having murderous thoughts towards her, and he hates her for making him have these thoughts. Nevertheless, this quickly turns into a love-hate relationship that everyone loves. Midnight Sun takes you back to your childhood, and into this fantasy world filled with some hints with reality that Meyer first created back in 2005.

If you love vampires, love books, or even just feel like reading something, go get a copy of Midnight Sun, you might be able to get a signed copy like me!

---

**ETERNAL SUNSHINE OF THE SPOTLESS MIND**

Jinha Suh  
Contributor

First premiered in March 19th, 2004, Michel Gondry’s Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind is the second most profitable film directed by Gondry today in his directing career. With its unique material and Gondry’s experimental direction method, it did not take long after its release to satisfy the majority of the audience and the critics.

For those who have watched the film, this film may seem to include a romantic cliché in the way that a man named Joel and a woman named Clementine, who take separate ways after getting tired of each other, decide to give another try to their love. However, unlike in other love stories, Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind does not show the process of the two falling in love and separating in order. It rather begins with a scene that is close to the ending, where Joel (the main character) wakes up in his room, feeling a little different than other days.

For those who are not a huge fan of romance, this film may not suit their taste. Nevertheless, Gondry’s attempt to incorporate science fiction and romance into one piece is certainly worth a try for everyone.

---

**THE SAVAGE SONG**

“A there is no such thing as safe.”

Afitap Ada Ergun  
Contributor

Victoria Schwab’s This Savage Song (2016) is the first book in the Monsters of Verity duology. Schwab’s instant New York Times bestseller is set in a dystopian world where violence breeds monsters. It revolves around the two heirs to the divided city of Verity, Kate Harker and August Flynn. Kate is human, but she wants to be as ruthless as a monster whereas all August wants is to be human. However, humanity is a luxury one can only afford when safe, and there is no such thing in the city of Verity where monsters are roaming freely. Some will eat you raw, some will drink you dry, and some will steal your soul with music.

Although a dystopia, the novel doesn’t feel fictional at all. The characters are very believable and engaging which is perhaps the biggest strength of the novel. That being said the storyline is hard to predict with constant turns, reveals and plot twists making it very hard to put down. More often than not, the storyline is overshadowed with unnecessary romance in Young Adult dystopias like This Savage Song (2016) which surprisingly is not the case! The lack of romance really shines the spotlight on the plot and the character development making the novel so much more realistic. The focus on the formation of a seemingly impossible friendship was a rather refreshing substitute for the ‘superficial love’ cliché.

Overall, This Savage Song (2016) is great if you are looking for an engaging, unpredictable, and original novel with a dash of blood.

---

**BIG SUMMER**

Bryanna Wallis  
Contributor

This book was a breath of fresh air for me during quarantine. ‘Big Summer’ by Jennifer Weiner is about a young social media influencer, Daphne Berg, who runs into her ex-best friend, Drue Cavanaugh, six years after their fight that ended their friendship. When Drue asks Daphne to be her maid of honor in her wedding, Daphne isn’t sure if she should let Drue back into her life.

When my mom first recommended this book to me, I wasn’t entirely convinced mostly because Jennifer Weiner is known for her light-hearted and ‘fluffy’ stories. As much as this was true, this specific book had so much more to it than I initially expected. Weiner did an incredible job of talking about delicate topics that are not talked about enough in books. She approached the subject of body positivity, connecting it to social media and how much young girls truly struggle in our society.

---

**WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9TH, 2020 | VOLUME 30, ISSUE 1**
CELESTE: A BEAUTIFUL EXPERIENCE

Logan Macdonald
Procrastinator Editor

Celeste is a platforming game created by Matt Makes Games which was released on January 25th, 2018. The story follows Madeline, a young woman who struggles with anxiety and depression, as she attempts to climb Mount Celeste in Vancouver Island.

The gameplay is very tight and responsive. Madeline has a dash she can use in the air and on the ground, which feels great to use. The best thing about the dash is that many of the stages use the dash to affect other objects in the levels or vice versa which gives the gameplay sort of a puzzle-platforming vibe.

One of the best aspects of the difficulty is how it weaves its way into the story. Madeline started climbing Mount Celeste because she knew it would be difficult. She wanted to overcome her depression and anxiety by finally fulfilling that promise to herself which is not an easy thing to do. In order not to spoil too much, Madeline is one of the most believable and relatable gaming characters ever.

There’s not much else to say, it’s impossible to do it justice just by explaining the game to you. Go play Celeste, it’s at a decent price and it’s just amazing.

BLOODBORNE REVIEW

Sebastian Socorro
Editor-in-Chief

As an avid fan of Metroidvanias and difficult fantasy games in general, it always astounded both my friends and myself that I was never a fan of Dark Souls. The world was large and free to explore, the customization options were vast, the combat was fluid and responsive, but it never seemed to click with me regardless of how many times I tried. I was automatically drawn to tanky shield builds and long-range sorcerers and wasn’t accustomed to rolling or parrying, so battles drew out and evolved into more of a test of the game’s engine than its mechanics.

That all changed when I tried Bloodborne. The fact that there’s only technically a shield (it’s a joke that’s only found beyond two bosses) and that the class customization is more streamlined seemed to be what finally made it click. The game also replaces said shield with a gun used for parrying and tweaks combat in general so it’s fast-paced, giving you the chance to regain life recently lost by hitting the enemy back.

At first I was drawn by its distance to Dark Souls; Bloodborne is set in a decaying pre-industrial society (aesthetically comparable to a gothic London) as opposed to a dirty medieval world, and this concept is explored to its fullest potential. Every new location seems to have been ripped right out of a concept art book and the corner of a street can just as easily lead into the alleyway you started with or the grandiose arena in which you fight that area’s boss. It’s a feat from the artists at FromSoftware that something as initially mundane as a bridge or a graveyard can be as memorable as they are. Even the soundtrack has tracks that differ from boss to boss and are as memorable and as equally praise-worthy as the visual art.

What eventually hooked me was its combat mechanics. The lack of shields or magic forced me to learn how to dodge and parry at the right times, and that led to learning how to manage my stamina properly. With the right tools at hand, Bloodborne is an absolute joy to go through. The game keeps throwing curveballs to make sure you’re always on your feet, and when regular enemies hit you it always feels deserved. Part of what makes the game work when it’s so intent on killing you is the fact that every time you die, you know that it’s on you and exactly why it happened. Knowing enemies could kill you in a few hits or ambush you if you’re not paying attention yet still managing to kill them instead gives off a sense of catharsis that’s rarely present in other games.

This aspect of Bloodborne (and Souls-like games in general) is made even stronger by its many bosses. Dark Souls bosses are known to be unforgiving and unrelenting. Bloodborne being no different. Every boss is first a puzzle to solve, then a test of the game’s mechanics. Every boss demands something different from the player and makes sure to surprise them as its health bar drops, ensuring that every boss fight is the grueling fight to the death that it’s meant to be. It also ensures that players are almost guaranteed to die repeatedly at boss fights, which (combined with the size of its sprawling maps) makes the game take even longer to beat.

Not wishing to spoil any of its surprises, it suffices to say that Bloodborne never lets up. It never takes its foot off the gas and instead ramps up near the end, making the bosses you fought at the beginning seem like innocent distant memories. Right before the grimy streets of Yharnam would start getting boring or normal, more areas open up to make sure you’re not feeling safe anytime soon. The enemies and bosses of each area are each markedly different, lengthening the game not by adding more of everything, but by keeping you uneasy without keeping you in the same state or same situations.

Bloodborne is an incredible game by any margin and is responsible for me finally getting into Souls-like games. Now that I know how a Souls-like is meant to be played, the other games in the series are immediately more enjoyable. However, even now that I’ve played other titles, Bloodborne is still my favourite. Its sense of style, music, and fast-paced combat simply can’t be found anywhere else.

Source: Celeste Press Kit

Source: Bloodborne Press Kit
**NFL KICKOFF UPDATE**

Cassidy Dora  
Staff Writer

As NFL kickoff approaches, we are finally getting a clear picture of how the season will turn out. With its last-minute roster addition and shocking cuts, we saw significant changes throughout the league. Let’s take a look at some of the most notable developments among NFL rosters this week.

In a quarterback-driven league, no position gets more glory and, at the same time, more criticism. For teams without a clear cut QB1, competition between quarterbacks in training camp is crucial to perfecting a team’s roster. After Tom Brady’s shocking departure from New England, the Patriots were left with a massive gap at quarterback. With Jarrett Stidham and recent addition Cam Newton on the roster, only one player can lead the team. This week, Patriots Head coach Bill Belichick announced that Cam Newton is the starting quarterback and team captain. Cam Newton has not played a full season since 2017 due to multiple season-ending injuries. There is no doubt that Cam Newton has plenty big shoes to fill in New England, but his leadership skills and dual-threat style of play will be fun to watch this season.

Cam Newton being named the Patriots’ starter is maybe only quarterback-related news we got this week. We learned that Dwayne Haskins earned the starting quarterback role for the Washington football team. Haskins won the position over Alex Smith and Kyle Allen. In addition, the Los Angeles Chargers head coach Anthony Lynn chose Tyrod Taylor for the quarterback position.

Lastly, Mitchell Trubisky was announced as a starter for the Chicago Bears in the most intriguing quarterback competition of all. Both Nick Foles and Mitchell Trubisky have their strengths and weaknesses with a very different style of play.

After being cut from the Jacksonville Jaguars, it’s no surprise that Leonard Fournette wasn’t a free agent for too long. The dynamic running back quickly found a spot on one of the best rosters in the NFL. Leonard Fournette signed a one-year contract with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. He will be playing alongside veteran running back LeSean McCoy, creating a dual-threat backfield. Fournette will be running in Bruce Arians offense led by legendary QB Tom Brady. This move brings the Tampa Bay Buccaneers one step closer to the Super Bowl.

Other significant cuts from NFL rosters include running back Adrian Peterson’s release from Washington, wide receiver Mohammed Sanu’s release from the Patriots and safety Damarious Randall’s release from the Raiders. Despite all three having an exceptional skill set, they are reaching the end of their careers due to their age. With Adrian Peterson being 35 years old, the future Hall of Famer may have difficulty finding a team as the second oldest active running back in the NFL. Thirty-one year-old Mohammed Sanu will also experience difficulty in having a considerable impact on any NFL team for the same reason as Adrian Peterson. All of these players are currently free agents and have not signed to any team.

**SPORTS PRACTICES AFTER COVID-19**

Vanessa Marion  
Assistant Editor-in-Chief

When COVID-19 quickly spread and everything quickly shut down, many athletes asked themselves; what now? Many school athletes play team sports, which leaves them wondering when they will be able to return to their beloved sport and under which conditions. No tackling in football and rugby? Or no slamming other hockey players in the boards? Though only three sports were named here, many thoughts similar to these are running through the minds of all team players.

Though there are still many things that are still up in the air and we cannot be certain when sports will return to playing regular games, slowly but surely these players can get back to doing what they love. Practices are beginning to occur for select sports in select places, but the transition into a COVID-19 friendly practice is being taken extremely cautiously.

As we still are in a global pandemic, all precautions will not be taken lightly. Players must stay six feet apart at all times, wear a mask, and use hand sanitizer and disinfectant when sharing anything. This may be disappointing to many athletes, as they are yearning to connect again with their teammates and play their sport how it is intended to be played. However, these gradual changes and respecting these restrictions will only help get back to regular games faster.

Your sport may currently be on a hiatus. Athletes may experience feeling lost without guidance, or unmotivated. Perhaps without the structured routine of practices or weekly chats with your teammate, your passion seems far away, but you will play again.

**NSWL UPDATE**

Michelle Akin  
News Editor

As some professional sports are only restarting, the National Women’s Soccer League is already looking towards their second major event of the year. Already having worked out good safety protocols such as the bubble concept, the NWSL was the first North American team sport league to resume competition when they had a tournament style Challenge Cup in July, hosted by Utah. With the Houston Dash eventually taking the title home, this event was unfortunately not at the height of the league’s capacity, with many high profile USWNT players not participating, and the Orlando Pride having to opt out because of a coronavirus outbreak among the team and staff.

Though during the Challenge cup, teams were expected to remain within a “bubble”, in order to reduce the risk of infection, for the fall series, the league’s nine teams have been separated into three groups that will play each other to limit travel. Over the course of seven weeks, the NWSL will play a total of 18 games. Same as the July tournament, Megan Rapinoe, one of the most high-profile players in the sport, has opted out of play for undisclosed reasons. Despite this, the season promises an action-filled few months, following Houston’s somewhat unexpected victory only two months ago. The inclusion of Orlando in this tournament will certainly shake things up.

On a final note, both the Challenge Cup and the fall season reaffirmed the popularity of women’s soccer in the U.S., which experienced a boom of viewership after the 2019 FIFA world cup. In the US, two new teams are expected to join the ranks of the NWSL, in Los Angeles and Louisville.
**OPINIONS Position Available**

**ERIN O’TOOLE**
Michelle Akim
News Editor

At the end of August, the highly awaited Conservative party elections took place. Following the defeat of Andrew Scheer by the Liberals last fall, the party leader stepped down despite the Conservative party’s success in the prairies and Ontario. After a long night of recounts and technical difficulties, Erin O’Toole, an MP from Durham, Ontario, was announced as the party’s next leader. Coming into the race a bit later, he wielded the advantage of a blank slate and a rather moderate platform.

Nonetheless, O’Toole differs from Scheer by the fact that he does have a platform to combat climate change. Even though he opposes the carbon tax, O’Toole hopes to present himself as a progressive conservative of some sorts — he proudly tells his promise to end the ban on gay men donating blood. Despite this, one should not be fooled by his unexpected liberal stances. The Conservative party still strongly supports Alberta’s oil industries, as the new leader’s platform still looks out for the wellbeing of them.

Furthermore, O’Toole has been particularly murky on his stance on the Black Lives Matter movement and women’s reproductive rights. He refused to acknowledge systemic racism in Canada out of fear of offending policemen and women, and his campaign website includes the worrying pledge to ensure that doctors have the right to practice according to their conscience and religious beliefs. This statement, when contrasted to the slow yet steady chipping away of abortions rights taking place in the United States, is certainly cause for concern.

As Trudeau seemingly makes mistake after mistake, the Conservatives coming into power seems more and more likely. Trudeau’s weakness on the international stage is obviously not ideal for a strong and united Canada, but O’Toole’s promise to “fight back” against foreign interests is hardly better. Canada’s next election rests on O’Toole’s success in capturing the public’s discontent with the current Prime Minister.

**“PLEASE TURN ON YOUR CAMERA”**

**Sebastian Socorro**
Editor-in-Chief

The phrase “Please turn on your cameras” is one of the vast majority of students at John Abbott College have probably heard already. With the advent of online courses, most teachers from all manner of classes have unintentionally banded together in the sentiment that students should keep their cameras on for their classes.

In essence, the reason for teachers asking for active cameras (sometimes demanding them) is fairly simple: seeing their students physically in their classrooms as they did previously is a luxury that they’re not automatically gifted anymore. Being able to see your students not only helps you make sure that they understand what you’re teaching, but also serves as a quick shortcut to make sure people are paying attention as well. As it stands, with muted initials all over a screen instead of a room of faces, sometimes it feels like you might as well be talking to a wall.

On the other side of the spectrum, however, it gives students the chance to keep their faces and homes anonymous. They would rather keep their cameras closed than show their bedrooms and it makes it so they don’t have to pretend to pay attention during class. Sometimes a student just happens to be too introverted to show their face, or perhaps they don’t want to admit that they’re using the lecture as a podcast while they have breakfast or play a video game.

Ultimately, having cameras on shouldn’t be a necessity, though it definitely helps. The benefits of a teacher seeing their students’ faces doesn’t necessarily outweigh the benefits a student receives from having their face concealed. It seems likely that those who used to sit at the back of the class would rather keep their cameras closed and vice versa.

**DISNEY CHARGED $35 FOR MULAN**

**Vanessa Marion**
Assistant Editor-in-Chief

When the live-action remake of Mulan was announced to release in March 2020, Disney fans all around the globe were ecstatic. When COVID-19 arrived, the due date was postponed, not once, but four times. Finally, this movie released on September 4th, but many are still skeptical of this new adaptation.

For many, Mulan (1998) was the landmark of their childhood. The first time watching this animated musical will always resonate with its fans. I still remember my first time watching Mulan: I was on a flight from Ottawa to London, and noticed that I had the option to watch it. I had never, but all my friends loved to occasionally start shouting the lyrics to “I’ll Make a Man Out of You.” I decided that this was a movie I should see at least once in my life. I sat there for an hour and a half and didn’t even see the time go by. I was encapsulated — it made me want to laugh, then cry, then smile. All around, I loved it. I then proceeded to continuously listen to that soundtrack for my ten days in Europe. Do I regret it? Not for a second, because now I know all the lyrics to every song.

Though many people surely watched it before the age of 16, even watching it now still brings the magical feeling of Disney. This led fans to wonder: could Disney recreate such an iconic film? Well, many say they failed.

They took out many aspects of the film that were beloved by fans. Firstly, the characters will not be performing songs. This left fans devastated as the songs were one of the most iconic parts of the film. In addition, Mushu, our favourite talking dragon was not featured, as well as the unspeaking lucky cricket. Li Shang was also removed, which caused a major controversy as he is one of the few bisexual men in Disney. Although this was never confirmed, we know that in the original film, he developed feelings for Mulan even though he thought she was a man named Ping at the time.

Another one of the biggest turn-offs was the price of Mulan (2020). They charged CAD $34.99, on top of having a Disney+ membership which costs CAD $8.99 a month. This is an outlandish price for a two-hour movie, as even most Disney movies cost downwards of CAD $25.00. Many people cannot afford this price for a movie and caused loving fans to be discouraged.

Now you may be thinking, well what does Mulan (2020) have? Though many things were removed, there still are aspects to be adored.

The director, Niki Caro, had a whopping budget of 200 million dollars, which is the biggest budget ever allotted to a female director.

There is also a new addition to the films, a phoenix who now watches over Mulan throughout the film. They also replaced the antagonist’s menacing pet hawk with a shape-shifting witch named Xian Lang, which is bound to add some flavour to the plot. Removing the music added a sense of realness and intensity, an understandable artistic choice.

Regarding the price, Mulan (2020) will be free for Disney+ users as of December 4th. To compensate for a 200 million dollar film cannot be easy, though I still believe there could have been a better option. As with the adjustments to the film and the price, they already lost many potential viewers.

Will I be watching this film? Yes, I am sure I will. Will I be paying an extra CAD $34.99 to watch it now versus December? No. Though disappointment still resonates in my heart, as they removed many of my favourite aspects, I do believe this film is still worth watching at least once.
BLACK HOLES: AN INTRIGUING FIND

Sophia Jeroncic
Contributor

In the world of science, there are always new discoveries to be made and new information to come to light. However, not everything is as mysterious as the spatial body nothing can escape from: the black hole.

On September 1st, 2020, word of a unique new discovery reached ears: two black holes, each with substantial masses, collided, forming a super black hole. The two black holes involved weighed 65 and 120 solar masses and upon collision, formed a super black hole 142 times the sun’s mass.

According to an article written by CBC’s Nicole Mortillaro, the collision was picked up on May 21st, 2019 by LIGO detectors and the Virgo interferometer in both the United States and Italy respectively. These detectors function by picking up on gravitational waves of high energy from events such as the merging of black holes or neutron stars.

What makes this discovery even more bizarre is that stars weighing between approximately 65 and 120 solar masses are theoretically supposed to destroy themselves when they die. The theory also suggests that stars around ten solar masses die in a supernova which can cause black holes, and stars more than 120 solar masses collapse immediately into a black hole. This means the black holes involved in the collision shouldn’t exist due to the fact that theoretically, their solar masses do not fall under any circumstance in which a black hole could be produced; they should have been destroyed upon the end of their stars’ lives.

This collision is something extremely unique and although the world of black holes is ridded with gaps of information, their existence is truly something out of this world.

NEURALINK UPDATE

Marc Randy
Production Manager

On August 28th, 2020, the nanotechnology company Neuralink held an hour-long livestream. In it, the advancements it had achieved over the past year were showcased by its founder and owner Elon Musk.

Neuralink was founded in 2016 with the objective of creating seamlessly implantable Brain Machine Interfaces (BMI) that would be used to cure paralysis and neurological diseases. On top of that, Elon Musk hopes that the BMI he company develops will one day allow humanity to harness the power of Artificial Intelligence and avoid a potential AI catastrophe.

The already existing BMIs include the Utah Array, which is the most commonly used BMI for recording large groups of neurons. The limitations of this array, however, are that the BMI is not integrated, but requires an external device to plug into the skull.

On top of that, the number of electrodes that are capable of sensing neurons in the Utah Array are only 128. Considering that the human brain has an estimated 86 billion neurons, an industry standard BMI like the Utah Array is a bit lacking if we want to observe as much of the brain as possible. Not to mention the size of the electrodes makes it difficult to be non-invasive.

In its presentation, Neuralink showcased the current version of its eponymous BMI. Named simply the (Neural)Link, it’s a coin-sized device meant to be implanted into the skull and transmit all recorded neuronal data wirelessly. The current prototype has a strand of 1028 electrodes, allowing it to record ten times more neurons than existing BMIs like the Utah Array.

Additionally, the size of these electrodes is so small (smaller than a strand of human hair) that they can be inserted between blood vessels. This allows the BMI to be non-invasive, at least in theory. The electrodes are so small that they require precision nearly impossible to get from a human surgeon. That’s why Neuralink is designing a robot surgeon arm to be able to insert the electrodes with the required precision.

The Link will not only be able to record neural activity, but it will be able to send electric signals to stimulate the brain. Which means that the implant will be able to send signals to the brain. This is how Neuralink hopes to cure neurological disorders and diseases. If the specific neurons were responsible for things like memory, then it could be possible to stimulate them in such a way to reverse the effects of things like Alzheimer’s disease.

Stimulating neurons has been done for several decades, but Neuralink’s device has much more potential as a new BMI with its seamless implantation and its many tiny electrodes. There are many ethical and security questions that come up with a device that can potentially rewrite the brain, but the potential to cure things like paralysis, Alzheimer’s, dementia, and depression is so profound it’s worth diving into those complications.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| INTRIGUING FIND | TYPEWRITERS TO LAPTOPS |

Victoria Navas Via-Dufresne
Science & Tech Editor

The development of technology over centuries has made information easily accessible to everyone. The concept of the typewriter was first thought in the early 19th century and envisioned a way of recording information without the use of a printing press.

In 1714 the ‘Machine for Transcribing Letters’ later known as a typewriter was patented by Henry Mill. The machine sought to make writing as clean as possible in order to keep records of letters. Although there is no evidence of any machine having been made by that year, another inventor, William Burt, took over the project and built the first Typographer in 1830. The governor surveyor had decided to build a machine to help in working faster, however that purpose was not fulfilled.

Multiple inventors tried to create a similar machine, but it was only in 1874 that Christopher Latham Sholes and Carlos Glidden achieved in creating the first commercial typewriter. Sholes also was the one to invent the QWERTY keyboard that is currently used.

The typewriter had become popular by the beginning of the 20th century, but it being a loud machine, many companies tried to adapt the technology to create a noiseless product. The Electromatic Typewriter was the first to effectively reduce noise, and it was bought by IBM in 1933. IBM then outed the IBM Model 01 in 1935 which had light keys and was electrically powered.

Later were created new models that introduced early versions of emails, and correction tape, which allowed for correcting mistakes without having to manually apply liquid corrector. Slowly typewriters started to be replaced by word processors, and later by computers.

The concept of the modern computer was created by Alan Turing in 1936. Turing proposed the creation of a “Universal Computing machine” which would be able to compute anything by following certain instructions. Following Alan Turings’ paper in 1936, he began to develop a digital computer with the National Physical Laboratory in 1945.

In the mid 1980s, portable computers started to gain popularity, and they are now with computers the main search engine for younger generations. Technology has brought us a long way, and we are now even able to attend classes and learn remotely.
MEMES
Alicia Gagné
Contributor

A CAT’S JOURNAL IN A PANDEMIC
Suzie Deschambault
Web Editor

Meowww! My life with what the humans call “Quarantine” was beautiful, meow, perfect, meow, awesome, meow, the best time of my life! My humans were at home all the time, ready to scratch me behind the ears, pet me, feed me, and play with me. Meooww. The best thing with a quarantine life, was that I was able to annoy my humans all day long. I disturbed countless times what they call “online classes” and “teleworking”, which, Meeooww, stopped them from paying attention to me. Grrrrr. I was able to sleep on the most comfortable thing in my life each day: MEOW! PAPER! MEOW!

Meeooww! Now, they are leaving the house again. GRrrrr. They are not ready to pet me, feed me or play with me whenever I want. They have to go to work, and even school sometimes. Grr. I cannot even annoy them all day or stop them from doing whatever they were doing on those “laptops”? Meoww, laptops’ corners are really useful when my nose itches. Even paper is not as often placed perfectly on the desk for my catnaps. My life is all miserable. GRrr! Again! GRrrrr!

My dear Journal, you cannot even imagine how I would like for “Quarantine” to come back. I would be able to cuddle my youngest human and discover the small world of “molecules” in what the human called “chemistry.” Meowwew! I love “Quarantine”, but I love, meow, “Summer” even more…

COMMUNIST DUCK
Logan Macdonald
Procrastinator Editor

When you are an essential worker, but you still have to deal with disrespectful costumers.

When you thought things couldn’t get any worse…

REJECTED HEADLINES
Sebastian Socorro
Editor-in-Chief

- Online martial arts classes recommend family as practice
- Chris Pratt reportedly big dweeb
- 4antastic trailer revealed
- Justin Trudeau impeached for sucking at Dark Souls
written by Corinne Le Quéré et al. and published on May 19th 2020 in the Nature Climate Change journal presents that the decrease in ground mobility lowered the amount of CO2 emitted across the globe by 36% in early April, while the reduction in aviation transportation brought a decrease of 60% of CO2 emissions.

The Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA) compared the values of multiple pollutants in February 2019 and February 2020 in China, and found that the levels of NO2 had decreased of 40%, the levels of CO2 showed a 25% drop, and the amount of PM2.5 had fallen by 33%. PM refers to Particulate Matter which the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency describes as “a complex mixture of extremely small particles and liquid droplets”. PM is dangerous to human health when the particles are smaller than 10 micrometers in diameter, and PM2.5 refers to PM of a diameter of 2.5 micrometers.

The amount of organic and inorganic waste has seen an increase worldwide due to the use of single-use products and medical products. Due to the high amount of hospitalizations worldwide, there has been an increase in the use of single-use medical products that have created a high amount of waste. “In Wuhan, China, what was originally a daily amount of medical waste of 50 tons has climbed to 240 tons during the outbreak”, says Justine Calma in her article published in late May on The Verge.

The new regulations set up in public establishments have also caused an increase in the use of PPE or personal protection equipment like masks and gloves. This PPE being a single-use product has accumulated into large amounts of waste globally. Many recycling programs that were in place pre-COVID-19 have been halted due to the sanitation regulations. Industries that had started or were already using reusable bags have retracted back to single-use plastic bags causing an increase in plastic waste everywhere.

E nvironmental concern has been a main topic in the past years, but following the closing of many establishments and the restriction of travel in multiple countries, many researchers have investigated how the SARS-CoV2 pandemic has impacted the environmental crisis. The pandemic has brought both positive and negative effects on the climate crisis, but the positive effects have been considered negligible in the long run so far.

One of the main causes of the environmental crisis is the accumulation of greenhouse gases (GHGs) like CO2, SO2 and NO2 in the planets’ atmosphere. Due to the restriction of activities and the closing of many establishments across the world, there has been a notable decrease in worldwide and local transportation. An article

Victoria Navas Vía-Dufresne
Science & Tech Editor

EFFECTS OF COVID-19 ON THE ENVIRONMENT

TO LOOK

Tammy Haddad
Contributor

I hadn’t heard of it till the masks first appeared. Covid I mean. Blue, green, pink, yellow, every face I saw was of the wrong colour. Nobody had told me about it for nobody wanted to talk to an old man in tattered clothes, a vagabond, a nobody. No one wanted to even look at me.

I learned about Covid through an overheard conversation. I mostly learned its name and the fact that it was “very dangerous and very painful. They say it can kill you”, which would explain why I wasn’t alarmed when the coughing first started or when the fever hit. Even when my throat grew sore, I didn’t consider that I might have Covid. I considered this illness to be a societal problem, and if society refused to be burdened by my problems, why should I be burdened by its troubles?

I was slumped in a nook near a church, counting the day’s work. People’s generosity had vanished since the masks showed up. Still, it was enough for bread.

I got to my feet, felt a smarting in my thighs, and plopped myself right back on to the dirt floor. I lay there for a minute or five, trying to will myself back up. It hurts so much.

I had been sitting all day, so why did I feel like someone had driven a knife through my glutes? I tried to get up a second time and failed. I was trembling from the effort and the fever. Everything hurt.

‘Very dangerous and very painful’, had said the man to his friend.
Could it be…?
I have to get to a hospital.

I pushed myself up to a sitting position which left me dizzy and winded. Nonetheless, I wasn’t about to give up. I had to reach a hospital.

Two breaks and twenty grunts later, I managed to stand on my two feet… …only to fall back down two seconds later.

I tried again once, twice, three, four, twenty times. Up, down, up, down, up I went until my muscles completely gave in.

Cheek to dirt, I lay listless.
‘They say it can kill you’, the man had also told his friend.
I sobbed a little.

I’m going to die, I’m going to die, I’m GOING TO DIE!
The sobs worsened.

That’s when I heard the steps. Youthful, energetic, muscular steps. Steps strong enough to carry me to a hospital. When the young man turned the corner, I extended a trembling hand towards him.

He glanced at me. Pity and discomfort crept unto his face.

“Hello…”

He immediately turned his face away, staring resolutely at the clear, sunny street before him as he walked past me.

I tried my luck with several other passers-by. Some screwed their eyes up, others down. A third group simply looked straight ahead, like the first man, but no one ever acceded me more than a glance.

When the pressure settled in my chest, I gave up altogether. I couldn’t have spoken even if I wanted to. The cough worsened, breathing became more of a hassle than what it was worth, and the fever got so bad I couldn’t stop shivering.

Many others passed by my soon-to-be cadaver and, as usual, no one looked.

For the umpteenth time, I heard footsteps come around the corner. My eyes were closed as I took in the sun, my last pleasure on this Earth.

Then, even that disappeared.

I opened my eyes to find a dirty-faced, little girl staring at me from above, blocking the sunlight. When she noticed I had roused, she grinned. A wide, cruel smile it was. She didn’t look upon me with warmth or pity. Her look was that of someone who knew how cold and unfair the world was, and had come to accept it.

Leaning down over me in her torn dress, she reached in my pocket, took the little money I had and walked away, leaving me, like the others, for dead.