

Junior Division, Prose

Kathleen O'Rourke, Gander

**Living in a Dead Girl's Diary (an excerpt)**

It began at the church hall just across from the primary school. She was there with her theatre troupe, waiting to be let inside off of the cold front steps. The world felt dull and dark, clouds coating the sun like ink blots on paper. She tried to make small talk with the other students crowded around her but was simply ignored.

Upon closer inspection, she noticed the hum of the conversation was not English. They were making noises; abnormal, inhuman. The sound... it was guttural and filled with hisses and grunts. She became increasingly frightened. She began to yell at them, tears welling up in her eyes. None of them would listen to her.

One by one, silence fell upon them and the look of life on their faces faded out. Tears began to fill their eyes, soon spilling down toward their chins. Only they weren't tears. Not really. They were black. The colour of asphalt, printer ink, or a dark, abandoned building. Gray stains remained on their cheeks as they silently sobbed harder and harder.

Their bodies began to contort and morph out of their human state. The girl was horrified and tried to back away down the stairs. The others followed, no longer human. Their heads had become bare skulls, stripped of flesh and mouthless. They tried to talk, but without their mouths, they only made noises. It was like they were speaking through gags.