



Welcome to *Wordsmyth*!

Welcome to the first issue of *Wordsmyth*, a creative writing magazine that showcases the best writing from Years 7-9, whether poems, haikus or short stories. Prepare to plunge into the depths of personification, and discover brutal battlefields, daring detectives, and gloriously engaging description.

Why not try these original new pieces coming from young writers your age?

You, too, have a chance to see your best writing in this magazine. Simply type it up, and send it to c.bond@warwickschool.org.



Also, look out for future *Wordsmyth* competitions!

Anyway, enough of the procrastination and delay: we hope you enjoy this, our first issue.

Paul Cooley, Editor

Fog

I was woken by the freezing cold and the rats nibbling on my toes. This was the fifth night I'd slept in this part of town. It was about 6.30 in the morning. Well, that's what Big Ben was telling me but it could be different because thick fog was clouding my view. I looked up and saw some buildings looming over me. I couldn't make out their smaller features because the fog was deceiving my brain via my eyes. The buildings looked as if they had been chopped up and clumsily put back together by a four-year old.

When I breathed in, the cold air felt sharp in my throat just like when you breathe in after having a strong mint. It smelt like a fresh stream, which was odd, because London usually smelt like cigar smoke. I couldn't hear anything apart from the muffled chirp of pigeons having their breakfast of mouldy

bread. I sort of lived like a pigeon, picking up other people's rubbish and keeping it as my treasure. I could still taste the stale bread from last night's meal.

I stood up. I had pins and needles in my leg because I had been sleeping on a step and it had been in an obscure position all night. The fog felt damp on my fingers and face. It was strange that no one was out and about yet, when usually the business men and market traders were frantically running around going to work.

I think one of the reasons I like the fog so much is because it disorients me, which distracts me from the fact that I have a horrible life on the streets.

By Henry Kennedy

Victorian London

The dark, damp alley loomed ominously in the gloom, pigeons cooed continuously on the hard slate roof tiles. Church bells rang out in the silent night air, as the choking stench of factory fumes and tobacco filled the night. Fear of pickpockets was in the late travellers' minds, as thieves crawled on the roofs and in the claustrophobic sewers. All was quiet, and windows were dark. It was midnight in London.

My footsteps rang clear off the pathway, and an insidious decay invaded my nose as it wafted over the city. Muddy water ran down the street by my feet, like a stream, or a small river. Moonlight shone down like the aura of a powerful deity, reflecting off the dark windows and shone all around: relief from the everlasting darkness. The sharp tang of choking smoke hit my taste-buds like a bomb, as I drew closer to the industrial district.

The intricate streetlamps let out a dim glow from their low wattage bulbs. My legs were slowing down as they reached their destination: 37 Mulberry Street.

The paper in my hand dug into my sealskin glove. I gazed up at the magnificent house, wishing I could have had a house like that. Briskly, I pushed the letter through the intricately designed slot and started to head for home. The sun was just rising and it was a crack in the sky, like a burning fireball that had just emerged from the fiery pits of hell.

As the sun rose, people started pouring from their houses, and windows started lighting up to end the penetrating darkness. London was emerging from the thief ridden night to the sophisticated, modern day. The city was

waking, and that was the time for me to leave. I shuffled through the crowds, brushing against the people of London. Many types of coat hit my shoulder - fur, cotton and, for the wealthy citizens, silk. The paving stones were worn down as Time recorded its own journey. It was a beautiful day - the sun shone relentlessly, and there was not a cloud in the sky.



By Alex Bosworth

The Escape

The antelope sensed danger before he saw it. It lifted its head from the watering-hole and peered around cautiously. For a few seconds everything was still. Not even the faintest rustle in the bushes. But then it happened. Three African hunting dogs leapt from the long, spindly grass. Immediately, the antelope sprang up and started tearing away with the African hunting dogs in hot pursuit. The antelope could outrun its pursuers in a short distance chase but the hunting dogs had better stamina over longer distances.

As the sure-footed Antelope made its way around the watering-hole, two more African hunting dogs charged out of the bushes on the water edge. It was now five against one and the antelope was running out of options. With one hunting dog closing in on one side, the watering-hole on the other, three more giving chase behind and one coming round the other side of the watering-hole to head it off, the future looked bleak. There was only one realistic course of action: keep up the pace and hope that the dogs will give up.

Suddenly, another hunting dog pounced from behind a tree and locked its jaws into the antelope's back. The dog was heavier than the antelope and tried to bring it down. It was now time for a desperate last act: Spontaneously, without warning, the antelope swerved to the right, the hunting dog, who had been practically hanging off the antelope's back, trying to wear it down, was thrown head over heels onto the dusty ground. The antelope, meanwhile, had plunged straight into the depths of the watering hole, it resurfaced immediately and swam straight to the middle, where it was deepest and trod water. The other dogs were grouped together hungrily in anticipation of their next meal and were sitting on the shore, waiting patiently for their prey to tire and swim to the edges of the watering-hole. Suddenly, on the breeze came the calls of more hunting dogs. They had made a kill and were calling for the others to come and join the feast. Reluctantly, the dogs on the shore trotted away leaving the antelope very relieved, and thankful to have got away with its life.

By Anthony Hargett

The Pet Shop Escape

Life as a hamster was always boring in the pet shop, always stuck in the same, small glass enclosure, spinning round and round and round in a wheel. All the other hamsters either got used to it or they were taken away by a human. Urgh, that name always meant bad things to us hamsters. For all I know, they could be torturing all the ones that were taken, Jim, Gregory, even old fat Bob. So ever since day one, I have been trying to find ways to escape this blasted pet shop so as not to be taken by a human.

The normal food round came by, a nice juicy carrot, when I noticed something different. The human feeding us was someone I didn't recognise. Well, whoever they were, they didn't close the enclosure door, which was pretty much a one-way ticket out of the enclosure. I bolted through the door, the taste of carrot still floating in my mouth, and a sense of pride rushed through me. I was out of

the enclosure! The table that the enclosure was fairly high from the ground, but after finding a conveniently placed ramp from the table to the floor, I was scuttling across the floor. Then...

'Hey, Drew's running across the floor!' boomed a voice.

A human!

I ran as fast as I could, as all eyes in the shop turned towards me. I could hear a few of the other hamsters from the enclosure shouting, 'Yeah, go Drew! Run for it Drew!'

The door opened, as another human came in. I saw my chance and seized it. Blasting through the human's legs, I just managed to squeeze through the door. After many, many days of boredom, I had escaped.

By Danji Ward

Resurrection

Eight thousand and seventy-five of us stood in strict formation. Staring out at the expanse of soil surrounding us, we waited, every single one of us never stirring, but patient, and still. Even the horses that loomed above us were motionless, like statues. My heavy armour compressed my body, causing my feet to sink into the ground, like a sack of stones sinking in a vat of treacle. A shroud of wind whipped around my ankles, and behind us, the sun shrank behind the imposing stone structure in front of which we stood resplendent. The peak

detail from the bold studs on our gleaming weapons to the proudly worn, elaborate hair. Although every one of us was similar, not one of us was identical to any of the thousands that waited tensely in front of the imposing pyramid that caused even the sun to cower. Finally, I caught a glimpse of movement, out of the corner of my eye - a procession, emerging into the fading light from the now occupied tomb.

They hurried away, leaving us still stationary,



of the building blocked out a large segment of the sun's bright sphere, giving the impression of a slice missing from some cake made of golden sunbeams. I stared unblinking at the many thousands in front of me, noting every

still offering protection against some unseen force. There we continued to stand. Rain poured from the skies, wiping away our bold colours, trickling down our heads slowly to the moist ground. Over time, some of the

others surrounding me began to tilt forwards in the mud, unnoticed at first, and unable to correct their posture. At last, one of our number teetered forwards, then finally fell, with a resounding crack against the stony figure in front of him. A hairline fracture raced through their bodies, encouraged by the thunder and rain, until they both fell, motionless to the ground. No stir came from the surrounding spectators, no one hurried forwards to pick them up, and there they still lie. For many restless years, we stood, our splendour fading with every year that passed, until nearly every single figure lay sprawled in the sucking mud beneath our rigid feet. Then came the moment when I too toppled like a

felled tree to the clay-strewn ground. The years passed as we lay there, immersed in the rising mud, until, finally, we were abandoned, forgotten. The sound of scraping came echoing through the soil, and beams of light darted among the diminishing mud, until finally, my frozen face met the first jet of sunlight in many thousand years. I felt myself lifted out of the earth, and set down, upright at last. Around me, many strange people dug through the dirt to find my fellow soldiers. So here I stand, to this very day, transported far from home, displayed as one of many statues-one soldier in an army of terracotta.

By Paul Cooley

The School

Sailing into the horizon our school is a speedy, spray laden ship.
The teachers are anchors steadying the boys through life's dips.
Our headmaster is a captain navigating us on our travels,
Making sure that none of us completely unravel.

Paperwork shall be a piece of cake,
Let's hope we've listened in class for all our sakes.
Debate and discussion keep us late up,
Thankfully it was all a storm in a teacup.

My classmates are stars shining bright above the sea,
Who knows what any of us will grow up to be.
I am a lion in battle roaring to win,
Being at school is where my adventure begins.

By Flynn Jamieson

WWI Story

Bullets. Bombs. Shouts. My head was spinning. A chill, unbearable, climbed up my legs, fixing its position on my back, sending my spine numb. Each of my feet were sodden, about to fall off. Each weary stumble brought more pain. My leg was in spasm and I knew my time was up...

Suddenly, I awoke, finding myself in an unfamiliar place. A desk to the side of me, a woman dressed in her uniform, engrossed in what she was doing. Every now and then I heard a faint tap on a typewriter and a shout through a headset. I lay on a flat board layered up by many sheets. Upon me was a cotton duvet. My leg was held up, up from the bed. A board overhead read Hospital-Ward 92. I felt my leg. A horrific pain leaped from my limb and a huge gauge became visible. I was scared, the most scared an 18 year old boy could ever be. With all my might I sat up, arousing the woman that was hard at work. She came over and said something that my brain could not process. I knew they were kind words, words of support but I was too weak to think.

Helplessly, I flopped back onto the mattress and laid my head down to rest. I moaned and shrieked. The nurse rushed over, helping me sit up once again, this time assisting me to a drink. It was a drink which relieved me of some pain.

Then, a man rushed in. He held a pistol as if he had an intention to attack the patients. The nurse yelled and raised her hands. My pulse was racing and I sensed the nurse's was too. I noticed, that he had a different uniform compared to the rest of my regiment, however, it was not the uniform of the Axis, I

knew that, but it was sort of a homemade, aspiring soldiers' uniform that would be used for an event at nursery. I had never seen the man before, but he had a cocky, mischievous look about him. By my judgement, the man was not a man that wanted to make people happy, but a man who wanted to bring suffering to others. He had a thin face that was littered with stubble, his eyes were narrow as if drawn on with pencil. In his mouth he had a pipe in which an unpleasantly aromatic smoke filled the room. It made the place clammy, dangerously so. The wounds of the soldiers' would become contaminated with infection, creating more pain and hassle.

The nurse was whimpering, tears streaming down her face, landing with a splash onto my coverings. The man said, "I am James. I am from the 10th brigade of Royal Warwickshire."

I relaxed as the man laughed. It was a laugh of strength. A laugh which a villain would utter at the end of a successful life-long plan. The nurse beside me had stopped whimpering but tears continued to stream down her face. He looked up, surveying the mess he had caused. "What you looking at weakling?" he howled. I could not do anything I was too weak. He left, leaving an air of discomfort and menace behind him. Slowly, the nurse resumed her tasks.

During the next few weeks, my health improved and unfortunately, I got back into the fight.

Throughout my life this moment has stuck with me and not since have I seen or heard of

this horrible man. Experiences like these, in the war are of those that I do not wish to repeat. They are grim, horrific and overwhelming. Bombs were at the heart of the warfare and my flesh somewhere in there too.

By Ben Bryan

The Ambush

A vast open landscape, littered with corpses stuck on the grim barbed wire that ensured neither side could move more than ten feet towards the opposition. Every day at the same location many people die, many of whom will never be remembered for their acts of bravery in such harsh conditions. Many men put their lives on the line just to be remembered, but sadly only a few ever were.

The wind was blowing fiercely and the rain was lashing it down, many frozen figures stood there shivering in the wind. All of them wished they were back home by the fire in the nice warm comfort of the living room. But they knew that the only way out was to injure themselves and none of them wanted to return that desperately. Tanks crushed the soft, crumbly ground as they slowly crept across the landscape towards the enemy only to find out seconds later that there was millions of landmines beneath their tracks.

Major Will Young stood solemnly watching the scenes unfold in front of his grim, uncaring face. He had seen nightmares every normal person is scared of but he had come through untouched. But if anything the experiences had given him superhuman

abilities; he was the first under-21 to win a sharpshooter competition and he was the only major to be 20 years old. His commanding officer, an idiot called Sergeant Buckley, had given him direct orders to send his troops into battle under cover of Sergeant Kramer's sniper squadron. He knew it was foolish but orders are orders (as they say in the army).

He was watching his second-in command tell the troops to prepare for the charge, when suddenly a cry went up from Sergeant Kramer that his snipers could see that no-one was in the enemy's trenches and that he should advance towards their trenches and occupy them. Instantly a web of doubt began to grow in Young's mind. He knew that this was very unusual for the Germans but he sent his troops towards the trenches to assess the situation and see if there was a trap waiting for them.

Two hours later, they returned safely and reported that the trenches had been completely deserted. Will Young still had doubts about it being a trap because he constantly watched out for the unexpected. He knew in his mind that it was a trap but couldn't figure out why he was so suspicious.

As he watched his men disappear in the far away mist, it came to him and he ran.

He ran like he never ran before but even then he knew he was not going to make it. He started to shout, "It's a trap, It's a damn trap", his men in front of him still couldn't hear him as the started to climb down into the once-filled German trenches, he knew it was too late to save them. He stopped in his tracks. He could hear gun fire. They had been ambushed. And they had been killed.

He knew it from the very beginning but he just didn't realise it. The fact that the Germans had abandoned their trenches was so unexpected that he should've stopped his troops at the start but he had foolishly obeyed orders that he should have ignored. It was his fault that his team were dead and it was also his fault that Sergeant Kramer was getting executed publicly. He had lied about his team reporting that the trenches were empty and had also faked the order from Sergeant Buckley. He must've also bribed the three soldiers that had reported that Sergeant Kramer was right. Will Young's mind clouded with rage, at Kramer and at himself for being so stupid.

As he undertook the depressing walk back towards his trenches he just checked something. He checked that his Glock 19 (a very effective killer of men) was reloaded. He

took a silent vow that he would never let himself be fooled so easily. He muttered the words in his head that he was going to scream to Kramer; Die you filthy liar, Die! He climbed over the trenches and walked towards where he knew Kramer was.

As he saw Kramer he reached into his pocket. Kramer was talking to three men in Young's squadron, the same three that reported that Kramer was telling the truth. "Liar, you filthy liar!" Young screamed at Kramer as he drew out his pistol. Bang! Bang! Bang! Kramer's body fell to the floor with a thud, three bullets through his head. Young then repeatedly shot the three who lied to him through the head. By this point Sergeant Buckley had come racing to see what the shots were about. He instantly leapt through the air and rugby tackled Young. While asking Young why he had shot the four men, Young had looked stunned and had said, "They killed my team". Young was then taken to hospital and was then demoted for killing without permission of Buckley.

Young never recovered from the experience and had been sent home to Scotland and live a normal life. He had trouble sleeping at night because he just heard the sounds of his men screaming in the trenches.

By Joe Coley

Darkness-Prologue

The bullets rained down on our helmets; mud sloshed around; the putrid smell of corpses enflamed my nose. The bombs plummeted down as if Satan was falling from the sky. The bodies of men had the breath sucked from their lungs. It was a blood bath, a lie. This was not the war we had been promised; the food, the fun, the games, all of it, lies.

More bombs fell down, craters were made, limbs flew off bodies right before my eyes, then a thunderous crack came from the sky, a colossal German plane flew right above our heads, dropping small canisters. They were like ferocious fireworks. My brother was distracted a fatal mistake for seconds later, I felt warm wet blood on my face, he was on the floor, his lifeless eyes gazed up at me, his body was unmoving, his limbs prostrated. A pool of blood was now forming from where the bullet had penetrated him. Within seconds the consanguinity of a lifetime had been broken.

BANG! Light exploded from the canister, violent shockwaves rippled through the ground. The Earth stirred, waking from eons of sleep. I was thrown backwards, my hand went instinctively behind my head, as if to protect it, only when I hear the sickening crack of bones, do I realise that it was a mistake. Yet my hand did not stop my head from any trauma, when it was smashed against the sandbags. My protection had become my slayer. My ears rung, my vision went blurry but I was still able to catch a glimpse of my mangled leg. My limbs lost all feeling, and then I collapsed right next to my brother's corpse.

My eyes opened to see the first crack of dawn, the sound of the larks was muffled, my eyes stung, my hand leaked a crimson red, I adjusted myself so I was sitting against the trench wall, well what was left of it. My eyes portrayed true horror, a scene of carnage and destruction.

The trench was silent, nobody was in sight. The soft brow mud turned a deep vermilion red. I could see the footprints of the many who had run away, the ones who didn't littered the trench. My eyes darted about, they grew heavier by the second, my brain had lost all control over them. The guns doubled and so did the horrors, my hands started to shake, I went clammy. My mouth went dry and course, a low heat sat in the back of my throat. My eyes burned from the back, they were in so much pain, my eyes started to see blood, twisting, writhing, contorting blood, it was like a dream and like any, I experienced the 3 seconds after a dream when you can only see darkness, but what I didn't know was that this darkness would last an eternity.

Darkness, all I can see is darkness, it shrouds me, it holds me captive, prisoner. I concentrate to break the shackles, but no luck. I come to the realisation: I'm lost, I'm trapped. There is nowhere I can go, nothing I can do.

I freeze with fear as I hear footsteps. A million questions race through my brain. Who? How? What I am going to do? In panic I rush for my gun. The footsteps sounded like death had taken human form, he was there in the

background... but he was there inevitable, inescapable.

I search now, more frantically. My head twitches, a writhing in pain, trying to make sense of it all. The footsteps get closer, ever nearing, the slush of the mud was an uncomfortable sound my ears reacted differently. I punched the mud in frustration, specks landed on my face and trickled down like tears. "this is it", I thought to myself. I was helpless, facing death, but ...as a hero?

No, it was a lie. I was scared, frustrated, I didn't want to die. I was a coward. I started to crawl away I was like a wounded dog limping

when the unmistakable shape of a gun chilled my head sending shivers down my spine. I was so petrified warm liquid soaked my trousers it smelled vile.

My hands slowly raced towards my head as an act of surrender. The gun vibrated a simple single click sealed my fate. "This" was "it". His finger rested on the trigger, he whispered two words of remorse. "I'm sorry".

The finger moved...

By Arjan Paneser



Hitler as a Young Man

It's another deadly night in the trenches. The British and the French had driven the German line back. There are deaths every second and many more injuries. It is freezing cold the men in the trenches are freezing to death as well as barely being able to see. There is no joy in fighting just pain, death and pure misery.

In one trench stands a young man with an old scuffed rifle in one dirty hand, he is around the average height 5 foot 10 maybe 11. He has a distinctive moustache and stubble. His uniform is scruffy and his laces are lost. He shoots his gun every so often taking a moment to think after every shot his name is Adolf Hitler. He watches every bullet that flies over his head and thinks in his head, "Das könnte mich oder einen meiner Freunde treffen." Meaning that could have hit me or one of my friends later that very day one did as Adolf's childhood friend Hubert ran out onto no man's land. Hitler never got chance to ask him why he did it just happened.

Adolf sank to the bottom of the trench and burst into tears as he had just lost a great friend, he also knew Hubert's parents very well and what this would be like for them. Adolf's sadness turned to rage and he swore to get revenge on the British. He grabbed a gas grenade and chucked it at the British hoping to kill the killer of his friend.

Adolf stopped. His hunger for revenge and food took over him. He knew Hubert had a picture of his family which he knew they would love to keep. Hubert kept his food and drink till he got really hungry which rarely ever happened. Adolf decided that he was going to run onto no man's land but this time he knew why. He was going to grab the body of his best friend and run back to the trenches. He didn't think that night so he did it.

He jumped and ran with all his might. A bullet put a hole in his left trouser leg but no damage was done. He stumbled over a tree branch and fell. He was knocked out. He woke up later and looked at his watch. He had been asleep on No man's land for 2 hours untouched, unharmed. The only problem was that his gas mask was lying in front of him and ground had turned yellow. Then the ground had started to rise. He started to cough then stutter. He then realised that it was gas not the ground. He started to feel really dizzy and spun round in circles. Then he shouted out the words, "Gott rette mich," meaning god save me.

In the British trench stood an amazing man with a kind heart. He saw Hitler choking to death in No Man's Land but he had hope. He pointed his gun at Hitler but he didn't shoot...

By Kane Cuming

The Death Threat

The story I am going to tell you must be the most mysterious and scary mystery that I have ever had to solve in my career and that is why it has to be my favourite. It was a drizzly April morning and me and my friend Jeff Stevens were sipping on two piping hot cups of tea whilst watching the daily news. It was at the end of a news story about a pop star's house being broken into when a loud knock came from the door. I rose from my seat and walked over to the door and opened it. The figure at the door had a big coat and hat on masking his appearance. The only thing that could be seen was his eyes which looked in a state of shock and panic. I was stunned at his appearance and it was an awkwardly long time until I got over my shock and asked as to what he came here for. He didn't say much but, in a stutter, he said, "May I come in and speak to Stevens and you."

"Of course," I replied as I led him down the corridor and into the warmth of the living room where Jeff sat in his grand armchair. He stood as we entered. He ushered the man onto the elephant grey sofa opposite him. "Please tell us your story and don't leave anything out, all the details are crucial to us being able to aid you and solve your problem."

"I assume, that once I put my hood down you will already know part of my story...however the news never picks up on all the facts" as the figure pulled down his hood, I could only just stop myself from gasping out loud. The pop star who we had just seen on the news, Ben Thatcher, sat in front of us. "We have indeed

in fact just a minute ago was your story on the news channel we were watching" Stevens replied in such a relaxed voice it sounded like he had expected the arrival of this famous singer." However, I am sure that there are many more details that we need to know from you personally so please tell us the exact story..."

Ben took a deep breath and began his story. He told us that when he woke up in the morning and walked into his on suite there was some writing scrawled on his mirror in a blood red pen. The words "Confess to the world or your death will come. Sooner than you think..." He told as that yesterday he released his newest song it's only raining, and it had already sold 300 copies however there was a few people who didn't like it. The band named Black Hearts did not like his song and him because they believed that he had stolen the lyrics from them. Suggesting that they were to blame however Ben swears he didn't copy him. He says that he is extremely worried that if we don't find them first, they will find him...and kill him. However, it is not as easy as it looks as no one apart from the band know the location of their house. That is why he wants us the best of the best to track these killers down.

The first thing that me and my friend both agreed on was that we should go to his house and inspect the crime scene for any clues that would help us track them down. We asked Ben if he could take us to his house and he said that we could come this afternoon as in

the morning he had a press conference. As he left, he said he would book a taxi for us to take us there. After Ben had left, me and Jeff went to the library to check if they had any information of the history between Ben and Black Hearts. They also used the computers to check as it was a wider source of information. All they found was about how they were rivals and that Ben had apparently stolen their song.

When the sleek black taxi pulled up in front of our house, we were just about ready to go. I had filled my pockets with all the things I thought we could possibly need, and Jeff had found his magnifying glass, notebook and pen. As we climbed into the taxi and took our seats, we were embraced with the luxurious interior. With White leather seats and foot wells that seemed to go on for ever they had a small insight into a pop star's day to day life.

As we rolled up to the gates of his mansion and parked next to a huge marble fountain the sheer scale of the mansion took my breath away. As we got out and strolled up the driveway our driver knocked on the huge oak doors Ben himself answered the door and as he led us inside the light seeped through the doors making his combed blonde hair glisten. He took us up a huge wooden spiral stair case and showed us down a long, carpeted hall into the bathroom. I had never seen such a huge bathroom in my life. It had a shining, white marble floor, a shower, bath and a huge framed mirror on the opposite wall. Jeff walked over to the mirror with me closely following, the pure red writing that was scrawled on it sent a shiver down my spine. Jeff took out his magnifying glass and scanned

the mirror and wall, hoping to find a clue that would give them a lead.

"The criminal has covered his tracks very well," mumbled Jeff. It had been five minutes and neither me or Jeff with his magnifying glass had found anything. Jeff looked over the other walls trying to find something that would give us an insight on who it was or if it was one of the members from the Black Hearts where they had escaped too. As Jeff's eyes past over the wall to my right he did a double take and strode over to the window on that wall. Next to it was a large basin and as I followed my friend over to it and the window, I saw a glint of red pass through my line of vision. As I looked back on the place, I saw it I saw it again and it was now obvious what it was excited that I had found something certain to be a clue I reached down under the basin and found it. It was a red pen, the one the criminal must of used! But this pen had a mysterious feature on it a heart was printed on the side of it. Once I had showed my discovery to Jeff and received a pat on the back he announced to Ben, "It looks like we revealed some key suspects."

After we had consumed a luxurious lunch of delicacies that only the super-rich could afford, we resumed our searching to find out exactly where they live and when they'll strike again this time to kill. The first thing we did when we entered the room once more was, we went over to the window. The reason being because over lunch we had concluded that the band member responsible must of used the window to get in and out as the only other way in was through the door back into Ben's bedroom and the only way out of there was to

use the door, but the door was locked at night for security. As they examined the window, they found nothing and decided to go and check the window from the outside.

As they walked through the garden flowers sprouted in a flower bed to their right in all different colours and sizes however it wasn't that the we paid attention too. Are gaze was set upon the coarse brick wall of the mansion. This time it was Jeff's turn to find the clue which he found whilst examining the brick work. Small scratches could only be seen by a watchful eye as he beckoned us over, I took a look the weird claw-like scratches on the brickwork none of us could who or what had made this scratch. The next part of the examination of the floor so Jeff and I bent down and examined the turf. It was immediately clear that there were lots of tiny holes all grouped in sixes that led from the wall through the flower bed and then they stopped at the hedge. Although we did not know what had made these holes, we knew that they liked to the scratches and was probably the path of which the criminal took to escape. That said the mystery was who or what was the criminal?

We decided to follow the markings into the bush and then went around the other side to check if they continued. On the other side of the hedge there was a road at which all the markings stopped. However, a new trail had appeared a glistening black liquid trickled in a long line on the road into the distance. Recognising the clue and that the criminal must have taken this route to escape, they started following the trail by walking on the pavement to the side of the road. I hadn't a

clue about what had made this trail, but I had a feeling that Jeff had a vague idea but wasn't 100% sure about it meaning he kept it to himself. Over the years of working by Jeff's side I had come to realise the fact that Jeff's brain worked in a way that no one else did however it always seemed to be right.

After 20 minutes of trudging down the pavement turning corners and changing roads, I was certain that my legs were going to give up on me and I was about to suggest that we took a break when I came accustomed to the fact that the trail had just stopped. As I looked up to scan the area, I gasped a huge house lay in front of us however it looked more like a castle. It had grey bricks and a wall surrounded the perimeter. Realisation flooded my mind. We had found the criminal's hideout.

We all agreed we must get inside and seek out the criminal or preferably collect information from his room and be ready to capture him or her when they come to Ben's mansion to kill him. They sneaked around the back of the metal wall as the front was guarded in the hopes that there would be a weak point in the wall. There wasn't. However, as we got close to the wall, I remembered that I had brought some metal cutters! As I produced them from my deep pockets, I alerted the others and got to business. It was a matter of minutes and we had cut a hole just big enough for me and Jeff to squeeze through. We told Ben he should go back to the mansion as we were the experts and we didn't want him to get hurt in the process.

Once we were through the wall, it became obvious that there was a side door that was a

millimetre open. It looked like luck was on our side. At least, for now. Once we arrived in a kitchen which was luckily empty however as we approached the door voices could be heard in the hallway. As silent and as quietly as we could we snuck from shadow to shadow until we reached the stairway. We crept up the stairs and once we reached the top, we were met by a corridor on which many doors accompanied its sides. As we walked along it was immediately clear that the biggest of the rooms was the bedroom and so we slipped into that room in the hopes to find some clues. Keeping our voices down we carefully examined the room. There was a king-sized bed in the back-left corner, a huge oak wardrobe on the wall to our left however in the right corner of the wall with the door on sat a small chest of draws. In the bottom one lay something that was very out of place. A pair of sharp-studded boots was what I saw, and I knew it was a clue as it was so out of place it must be. I consulted my Friend about the matter, but he too couldn't work out what secret it held. A ping sound made us look up from our observatory and glance at the creator of this sound. It was a huge but slim, black phone. However, as we looked at it more closely and read the alert that had pinged up my heart nearly stopped. It was a reminder for 10 minutes and it read "Execute Ben Thatcher."

Knowing that we had almost certainly sent Ben to his death bed, we rushed out of the house. *No wonder the house was empty* I thought as we raced down the staircase. Using the side door, we used on the way in we made our escape and once far enough away from the house as not to be seen, Jeff got out his mobile

and called his chauffeur Alex. If he had remembered to get Ben's number before they split up then he could just call him and tell him to run away from the mansion however he didn't have his number meaning we had to get there before the killer struck, and they would have to move fast.

Alex pulled up 5 minutes later meaning they we had the little amount of 5 minutes to get there and stop the killer. We jumped in and Alex accelerated quickly away from the ever-growing smaller castle like mansion in the distance. As we pulled up outside the mansion, I checked my clock to minutes to go. My palms were getting sweaty would we make it in time? As we rushed in doors, we sprinted straight to his room, but he wasn't there. Then even in the chaos and stress of the world around me I noticed there was a church on a small hill about 300 meters away with a spire with a window on it that however wasn't what got my attention it was the fact that the window was at a perfect angle to see through the window of this room and that I had just seen some movement behind it.

Alerting my partner to the ever-closer danger looming we raced back out of the mansion and sprinted over the grassy hill I checked my watch 1 minute to go. We moved our legs as fast as they would take us closing the gap between us and the church. 100 metres, 75 metres, 50 metres, I felt my legs tiering and found myself starting to slow. I grimaced and tried to retain my pace. 25 metres, I felt like I was about to give up. 10, 5 my legs were coming to a halt 3,2,1... I had done it made it all the way there. However, the race wasn't over, yet we still had to climb the stairs. I

checked my watch 20 seconds to go! It was now or never. I charged up the stairs feeling like my legs were about to drop off Jeff just behind me. Then we made it to the top. I didn't need to check the clock. My brain had been counting down however the news on the time wasn't good: 4 seconds remained until the criminal pulled the trigger. We burst into the room. My brain took in what was happening in a split second there was a man looking down the scope of the gun a finger clasped around the trigger. Ben must be in his sights. I knew what I had to do. I put all of the rest of my energy into one big jump and leapt off the ground. Whilst I was in the air time felt

like it slowed down I and all I could focus on was the clock in my head. It hit one but at that moment I collided with the man sending his gone skidding out of his hands Jeff grabbed it and knocked him on the head with it knocking him out. He pulled off the man's balaclava and revealed the face of the lead singer of black hearts! It looked like they wouldn't be publishing another song in a while! Then a happy sensation rushed over me. I had just saved the world's most famous pop star. Mission complete.

By Isaac Crow