* THE POOR PRINT \$





Caffeine by Ayomikun Bolaji

UPCOMING ISSUES AND THEMES

Issue 79 – SUMMER Submissions by 22 May (Sunday, 5th week)

Issue 80 – FUTURE

Submissions by 5 June (Sunday, 7th week)

If you need a break from revision, why not exercise your creativity, and get your work published too?

These themes are only intended as a possible source of inspiration – feel free to use or ignore them as you see fit!

We accept submissions for publication in all forms, from any member of the SCR, MCR, and JCR.

Doctor Circuit: Tales of the Great Laundry Supreme

Anonymous

nother day, another sheet, another essay. Not a scoot or whoot in sight – I ponder as I gaze out of my window. A habit I developed since discovering that there is a slight, minute, tiny but VERY CRUCIAL FACT that it is slightly, possibly possible that your atoms can align in such a way that you just, you know ... PLOOP! – faze through the window and fall to your demise. Fashionably ... Anyways, did not mean to go on a tangent there.

My bad.

Oopsie!

Slight fuck up on my part.

As I observed the lack of scoot and whoot. I noticed a scoot!

Back and forth between kitchen and laundry. Yes. You heard that right. Kitchen and laundry.

Lknow

How scandalous.

We are all of the same mind. In unity if you will ;). So, I know that you know that I know that you know that the scoot scooter knows that I know that the only rational, sane, and rational (have I used that word already?) thing to do is to investigate. After all, that essay (or sheet – yes that's right you fuckers will never know if I do STEM or humanities) can definitely write itself. I have alllill the time in the world. Do I even do a degree?

So, I pull away from the window, scoot scoot over to my cellmate and 'BANG BADAWAP BOOM BANG' knock on her door.

'Do you want to uncover the secrets of the kitchen and laundry room conundrum?' I ask her.

She says no (Understandable).

I use my leadership and gaslighting skills that I gained in DofE (I hold her family hostage – Duolingo style) and manage to convince her to join me, willingly of course.

Oh, just marvel at how amazing I am!

We use our mad ninja skills to sneak after him. We watch as his broad shoulders, THICC arms and skinny ass legs scoot scoot to the laundry room. Carrying a bag of what appears to be at least two cutleries (I am British. Take my word for it. This is the correct standard English way of saying it).

Interesting.

We watch as he enters the laundry room, peering through the window into Circuitville – very vile

AND SUDDENLY the room lights up. Whirls of gold dance around inside the washing machines, they make sounds like WHOMP WHOMP WHOOSH, WHOMP WHOMP WOOSHHHHHH. Sparks fly — it's like electricity.

He throws cutlery into the washing machine and a few seconds later, MAAAAASSIVE versions of the cutlery climb out. Rad.

Big fork says, 'All bow down to laundry supreme.'

The others say, 'Cool.'

Cellmate and I say, 'Wut?'

This is all so crazy.

Mad

Insane in the membrane indeed.

AND SUDDENLY (AGAIN WITH THE SUDDENLY, SO MANY JUMPSCARES, OMG) the door swings open. Wash AshFront glares down at us.

'You dare impede on the sacred gathering of fork and man?' He thunders.

'Yah?'

I guess he didn't like that response cos then he turned me and my cellmate into sporks, quite sad actually – we didn't even get a character development or anything. Tragic ...

Oh, right, back to the story.

We UNITE with the cult-leries and embark on a journey to convert the members of the Oxford cult to our supreme, shinier, stainless-steel cult.

A worthy cause indeed.

And so it begins. The Adventures of Doctor Circuit: Tales of the Great Laundry Supreme.

Be sure to scoot scoot to the next issue where we will battle humidity in the laundry room.

Things get rather ... steamy. •

The Universe Awake

Monim Wains

Silence.

No sound, nor light, nor existence at all. The universe idled, in a trance.

It wasn't still, though, not perfectly so, Growing from the tiniest speck to the size of a room, to size of the sky, and space, and time. It was evolving, and changing, and turning, all the while asleep.

Because, for all that was happening, as all came to be, sentience was glaringly empty.

All was dull without eyes, faint without ears, numb without touch.
What could see, or hear, or know, without any

form with which to think?
All was black, and still, and nought.

And thus it stayed, as aeons passed, a comatose womb.

Until one day, something clicked. There was a shift – more a rift – a jolt in the timeline.

With the gasp that escapes when you jump out of a dream, the cosmos was shaken awake.

Out of nothing, there came light. Out of the empty, there was sound. Amidst the vacuum, there was life.

Behold! Adam was awake.

Suddenly, it was dazzling, as the sky burst aflame.

A thousand tiny beacons of raging burning light pierced pinpricks in the fabric of the night. The stars had been lit and were inaugurally seen. The crashing and coursing of the waves was heard, as they whipped and cracked on the shore

The rumble of Jupiter, as its mass rolled by. All was heard, for the first time.

On this little blue dot, which we call home, the universe had awoken to itself.

And with wondrous eyes, it searched, into dark bowels of space,

Into nebulae of chaos and beauty, Into the guts of its orbits and systems.

You, don't you see, are the eyes. You are the ears with which the earth can hear itself.

You are the heart with which the cosmos feels.

From the emptiness of the randomness, you are a pocket where the dice have had a critical roll. Where matter has endowed matter with sense and being.

What else but us is a who?
The accident of nature become aware.

Such a folly, then, to forget –
Such a loss to see anything but a marvel –
Such woe to be disunited.
We are but a moment where the universe has

come alive, the universe ensouled. You are the dust of stars, the heat of fire, the lightning of the clouds, put together so the universe can be.

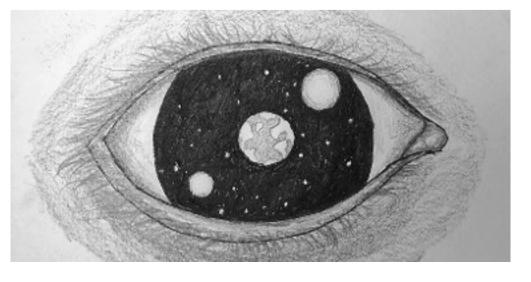
When you look with the universe's eyes into the eyes of another, you see its own soul.

Every moment you look out, into the sea, the sky, the stars, you are nascent creation.

Creation, like a new-born opening its eyes for the first time, seeing that it has fingers, learning how they turn and fold and twist. As we learn the pull and the push and the dancing of the stars.

What more unity could there be than looking into another pair of eyes and realising this? That you are the universe looking out, and it is creation staring back.

That we are the universe awake.



When We're United, We're Unstoppable

Madeline Dougherty

Tenebrum army. Today you have fought hard and we have lost many valuable members. Some of you have sacrificed family members, lovers, friends, children. We appreciate the effort and pain you have endured today and it will be remembered as a day of victory and gratitude for many years to come.' At this, the army erupted into cheers, jumping and whooping with relief and joy. But Eva still had a job to do and a decision to make. She glanced down nervously at Serpentia, who stared back, hard and intently. With a slight nod, her angular face broke into her typical smirk.

'I know many of you are expecting me to make an important decision. To dictate to you all whether the Fica will be given ultimate power or whether it will be restored to the Mages.' This one garnered cheers and boos, which Eva quelled with a placating hand. 'I want to tell you all a story. A story of young love and unity. Some of you knew my parents; all of you have heard of them. What you might not know, though, is that before all this, before me, before we fought today, my father fell for a beautiful and brilliant woman. He met her at a farmer's market, under the balmy summer sun, amidst the joy and vibrancy of the season, and was immediately taken by her intelligence and tenacity. He wrote her poems, brought her flowers; he courted her according to his culture, knowing full well that she was a Fica. She didn't know he was a Mage, only that suddenly there was the perfect life partner presented to her, someone she thought she would never find, who could make her believe in love.

'When she learned his secret, she tried to cut things off, but he had already shown her the power of true love, and she couldn't bear to lose him any more than he could bear to leave her. They entered into a partnership built on their differences, celebrating the things that made them unique, learning how the weaknesses of one were the strengths of the other, ultimately learning that unity provided more opportunities than segregation ever could. Their love allowed for an anomaly to be created – me.

'I am proof that coming together will make us stronger. Today, we fought side by side and the Tenebrum never stood a chance. Today, we showed them that the Fica and the Mages are united as one, and when we're united, we're unstoppable. I propose that we lead together. We take this battle and make it the starting point of a new New World. A world built on equity and understanding, a world built not on dividing, but uniting.

Throughout her speech, her troops were at a hard standstill, faces blank, making Eva's palms sweat. She waited for a moment, about to open her mouth to continue on when slow clapping began from the enemy side of the mountain.

'Very well done, Contrarium; you've certainly shown what you can do. Such a shame it just isn't enough.' The voice was booming and came from a man that was slowly walking up the hill towards Eva. He was toned and clean-cut, wearing a suit that looked like it cost more than Eva's

REX NETTLEFORD LECTURE

This annual event, named in honour of

a past Honorary Fellow and Orielensis

(whose portrait in Hall is behind High Table),

is intended to contribute to the advancement of academic

research into the legacies of colonialism in all its forms.

The inaugural lecture will be delivered by

Professor Nandini Chatterjee

'Coming from, not staying at the roots:

dealing with colonial legacies of language

and law in South Asia and beyond'

on 20 May (Friday, 4th week) at 5:30pm

in the Harris Lecture Theatre.

Attendance is free, but tickets are recommended -

the booking form is available on the College website.

Mages! Fica! We have done it! Only the college education, but he was also easily the size cowardly Elite leaders remain of the of two normal humans, towering at least thirof two normal humans, towering at least thirteen feet tall. His shoes clipped as though he were walking on marble and not bloodied dirt, and his warm brown eyes seemed to twinkle with the promise of a brilliant future. 'Do you really think these heathens will listen to you? Your parents were educated; these swarming masses are not. Join us and we can give you the pathway to ensure their compliance. You may speak of unity, but I saw you fighting. You, Contrarium, crave power. The way you electrocuted enemies on the field? I saw the glint in your eye. You like it. With us, we'll allow you to feel that power all the time, nurse it, strengthen it; we'll make you into the powerful prophecy you're meant to be.'

> The man was in the middle of the field now, his long legs allowing for larger steps. The soldiers moved out of his way like he was parting an ocean, each one seemingly so transfixed that no one dared touch him or say anything. Eva could feel herself starting to float down to the ground unconsciously, the only one on the field who was drawn toward the man, unrepelled. His perfectly manicured warm brown hair barely moved in the slight breeze, his overall pristine appearance clearly contrasting with the ugly chaos around him.

> These creatures could never lead. You said vou had a decision to make, but you're incorrect that it was between the Fica and the Mages. Of course not. The value in your bloodline comes from your father, not your aviary mother. The real decision is between the Mages and the Tenebrum, and we're clearly more your speed. The violence with which you moved through my best beast? That wasn't the passion of a Mage; that was the fiery hatred of the Tenebrum.' He stepped closer and reached up to Eva, even his nails perfectly kempt. 'Come, Eva, join

> 'Never.' She whispered, her voice faint, barely reaching the man, much less the warriors around her. His face twisted into a scowl, his mouth contorting into something inhuman and vicious.

> Come, Contrarium! These weaklings are beneath you!' He roared as his teeth grew sharper and a forked tongue snaked out of his mouth. Eva was frozen in shock and confusion, somehow still wrapped up in the charisma of this stranger. Out of the corner of her eye, she tracked movement, something that started as a slight fidget and then became more purposeful.

> 'Hey!' A foreign high-pitched voice sang out from the crowd. Eva and the man's necks snapped in the direction to find a petite woman walking forward with the confidence of a lion. We aren't weak. We beat you! Eva isn't weak either; she fought with us, she made sure we knew she was willing to put her own life at risk. The Elite are the weak ones -'

> 'Silence!' The man roared, lunging towards the woman. Without any verbal coordination, three hulking Fica men stood in his way and two Mages threw up barriers between him and the woman. The Elite man was frozen in shock, eyebrows twisting and rising into his hairline in outraged disbelief.

'The Elite are the weak ones! Where were you during the battle?' the woman demanded, walking forward under the protection of her comrades. 'You're the ignorant one, sitting in your big house atop the hill, unaware of what the people around you are experiencing. Eva has lived it. That's where her passion comes from.'

Eva stared hard at the woman, trying to determine whether she knew her; why was this apparent stranger willing to risk her life? As she looked, she began to recognise the slope of the nose and sent out feelers she was still learning how to use to confirm her suspicions.

It was Dr Arthi: not Fica, not Mage, but just a short human woman standing up against a force more powerful than she could possibly fathom.

The man was fuming, trying to attack Dr Arthi, but the Mages' barriers were holding strong.

'She's right!' A cry came from within the crowd and soon other voices were joining in. The apparent guile of the man had been broken by the woman's bravery and the warriors slowly began to move and speak out. Before long, the man was surrounded by dozens of angry Fica and

'We've done this much together; why stop now?' someone shouted, and the others yelled in agreement. 'Let's dismantle this Elite piece of

Eva floated above the ground in stunned amazement as the crowd collapsed around the man, weapons once again barred, beating back the increasingly demon-like creature in the suit. They attacked as one, just as they had on the field, until the man was broken and still, the symbol of the rich and powerful torn down by the power of the manv.

Eva landed just outside of the crowd as voices continued to build on one another, calling for equality, proposing new systems, arguing against the opposition, but still working as one unit to find solutions. She wasn't needed there anymore, and, as soon as her feet touched the ground, Eva felt her shoulders slump and the exhaustion of the battle finally caught up to her. As she stumbled to sit, she found Serpentia already happily sitting with crossed legs.

'You did it, Birdie. You did better than any of us could have asked for.' She said, smiling serenely despite sitting on the mangled ribs of some unknown monster.

'So you aren't mad?' Eva slurred, eyes already drooping shut. Serpentia scoffed.

'At what? Oh no, equality? That sounds terrible.' Serpentia rolled her eyes. 'Besides, you did bring me back from the dead, so I don't think I'm allowed to be very upset with you right

Eva smiled loopily back, laying her head in Serpentia's lap. Serpentia bent over and gently kissed Eva's sweat-slicked forehead.

'I love you, Birdie.'



This is an excerpt from the unpublished novel The Prophecy of the Contrarium.

A Word from the Editors

Jerric Chong

Behold, how good and joyful a thing it is: brethren, to dwell together in unity! - Psalm 113:1

the UK our best result in twenty years at Professor of South Asian History, University of Exeter the Eurovision Song Contest: a goodly 466 points to finish in second place. The victorious act (most deservedly, it must be admitted) was Ukraine's Kalush Orchestra, who delivered a captivating folk-rap performance that convinced swathes of the voting populace to unite and back them in vast numbers, and all this while their country valiantly defends its sovereign territory in the face of immense national tribulation

> Unity, therefore, has decisively triumphed at Eurovision, despite the vain efforts of foreign aggression to divide. And unity is now more paramount than ever: in a time of intensifying discord pervading culture, politics and society, only a united, multilateral front can ably respond to the global issues looming large on the horizon.

s I write this, Sam Ryder has just given How, then, could such unity look like? Perhaps some ideas may be found in this issue's contributions. Within you'll find exhortations for allied factions and cutlerian sects to unite, and its importance in the wake of victory on the battlefield and the shenanigans of household utensils, respectively. Unity might also be discovered in the mutual personhood recognised in the eyes of another, here on a solitary planet in a vast cosmos. Or maybe we can find solace in our shared, united experience as Oxford students: perpetually overtaxed and caffeinated, with a plethora of deadlines to catch and expectations to fulfil.

> But as summer beckons and many of us prepare to leave for future things, let us not forget that unity ultimately begins with ourselves - as the psalmist proclaims, what better feeling is there than to live at peace with those around you?

'Dear Beary...'

Beary McBearface

B eary McBearface, treasured Oriel mascot and JCR staple, is here to help you with your troubles. In this column, Beary will attempt to find solutions to your little college worries; trust him, he's seen it all. To contact him, all you have to do is send an email to the poor print@oriel.ox.ac.uk with the subject line 'Dear Beary'.

Of course, if you'd like to remain anonymous - and Beary encourages naming no names; we don't want any beef here - just drop a note with your Beary concern to one of the editors' pidges in the Lodge. And please do: Beary needs a hobby in his twilight years.

[If you're really struggling, or if your problem contains sensitive information, please be aware that Beary has received no formal welfare training. For more information and help, you can reach out to our beloved ICR Welfare Officers (Aidan and Harriet) and MCR Welfare Secretaries (Luke and Ada), or get in touch with the peer supporters, the Welfare Deans (Marta and Dan), the Chaplain (Rob), or the College Nurse.]

1. Dear Beary, how do I get out of a Hamilton listening party? I'm not enjoying this ...

Uh-oh, it sounds like I'm already too late (or you have been stuck there all week)! I recommend a pirouette- into- jumping- forward- roll manoeuvre out of the door. If they ask you where you are going, just politely inform them of your sudden need to get some milk from

2. Dear Beary, I always have so much work to do that I've probably slept a total of ten hours this week. How can I fix this?

Okay, there are lots of factors that play into sleep quality and quantity. Sounds like you are on the dreaded 'Oxford sleep schedule'.

Don't underestimate the importance of sleep. Poor sleep can lead to serious health problems and decrease your life span - not to mention that it just isn't fun!

Look up some sleep-hygiene advice online. The basics include working out what regular pattern works for you and making slow adjustments to stick to that as much as possible. Adjust lighting, temperature, mattress/duvet and noise as much as you can to give you just the right sleeping

I know that some of this is out of your control, and sometimes imminent deadlines are unforgiving, but we could all do our best to correct our sleep schedules. Prioritise your health!

My glass eyes have no eyelids, but that's okay because I'm an eternally un-breathing, unthinking, un-sleeping being with no need for shut-eye.

3. Dear Beary, which is best? Bardcore, skaldcore, or bronzecore?

Skaldcore. People making skaldic music work with texts in their original languages, spend time perfecting the reconstructed pronunciations closer to those of olden times, and will learn an insane number of folk instruments (nyckelharpa, tagelharpa, etc.) just to enhance their music. And they have increased the popularity of these otherwise obscure instruments. Dedication! Need I say more?

4. Dear Beary, a follow up question. Which is best - dieselpunk, cyberpunk, biopunk, or steampunk?

Steampunk is objectively the best. It hearkens back to the times of great Victorian innovation when the Industrial Revolution provided a limitless future of steam-powered utopia. In a way, steampunk represents an exercise in alternate history, a world where coal beat oil, where the worst of 19th-century capitalism became ascendant for generations to come, a dark mirror to our own reality.

THE POOR PRINT TEAM

Executive Editors Monim Wains Siddig Islam

Associate Editors Joe Lever Jerric Chong Ayomikun Bolaji Josh Woodend



EUGENE LEE-HAMILTON POETRY COMPETITION

An annual prize of £60 is available for the best Petrarchan sonnet in English submitted by a current undergraduate of Oxford or Cambridge. The closing date for this year's competition is **27 May** (Friday, 5th week). Further details may be found on the College website.