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## Introduction

*The compositions included in this inaugural edition of the **Knights of the Green Room Library** were submitted by members of the Young Writers Society and judged by users Hannah, carbonCore, Rosey Unicorn, and Snoink. The top ten pieces were chosen as the first pieces to line the newly-built shelves of the Knights of the Green Room as they move into their new home in the Castle of the Woods.*

*Pieces appear in this collection as they were published on-site at the time of submission to the competition.*

*Authors include six Knights of the Green Room who, in addition to the honor of being published in the inaugural collection, will receive the Scribe Badge from our Third Main Mission.*

*Congratulations to all accepted authors:*

***Knight Rydia, Knight Ariana, Knight Black, Knight Iggy,  
567ajt, Knight Fortis, MooCowPoop, Knight Nite,  
emmylou1995, HighTop***

*May you always write and fight with determination, loyalty,  
and knowledge!*



# 1. *Benjamin Bumblebee*

*Knight Rydia*

Bumpety numpety,  
Benjamin Bumblebee  
always a-fumble, he  
sat on the fence.

When addressed cautiously,  
“What might the matter be?”  
“Incomprehensible -  
doesn’t make sense.”

## 2. *The Story of the Grave*

*Knight Ariana*

The throbbing has stopped;  
Their heart pounds no more.  
As their bodies are moved,  
Through an old wooden door.  
Oh, their memories will last  
And their fame long held tight.  
But they were never asked  
Whether they wanted death or life.  
A single moment, that's all it took  
To take their lives away.  
Just one second, a long, harsh look  
At the reality of today.  
Some of them went to heaven, I know  
But others fell down into fire.  
Some of the mourned by a cawing crow,  
But others mourned by the lyre.  
So, dear friend, don't misjudge life  
And say, "I have time to spare!"  
Though you may be stuck with strife,  
You still will have an heir.  
Do not ruin the life of the child  
That watches you each day.  
Be gentle, loving, meek and mild  
And show that child the way.

### *3. I had warned you*

*Knight Black*

Ice and fire, cold desire  
never before has the time been so dire  
whispering to me in the night,  
wandering away from the light.

Ice cold fire,  
burning hate and endless ire,  
deathly cold and silvered with mold,  
rotting and dying; the victorious bold.

I had warned you,  
I had shown you,  
nothing awaited you out there,  
nothing that I could not bear.

I will offer once again,  
I will plead you not to win,  
I will show you what you'll find,  
if you go and kill so blind.

Whisper whisper in the night,  
you are losing a long lost fight,  
killing burning, destroying and more,  
never again will you find an open door.

I betray you,  
I deny you,  
I will hate you,  
I despise you.

But don't tell that I didn't warn you,  
don't try to make me feel like I was wrong,  
don't, no don't, because you're wrong.  
Whisper whisper, firelight,  
we all know you're long gone now,  
but I refuse to shed a tear,  
I refuse to show my fear . . .  
but soon they will know,  
and soon they'll see,  
all the weakness inside of me.

Weakness, weakness, weakness more,  
hurt me, kill me, but don't hate me,  
show me fear and terror or,  
I'll have to die the slowest death.

And that is something I cannot bear.

## 4. *The Seven Crows*

*Knight Iggy*

Once upon a time, there was a green valley that laid parallel to a wide stream, and on the banks rested a woodsman's cottage. There he lived, with his wife and their seven sons.

Everyday, the woodsman would travel into the nearest town to sell timber, leaving his wife behind to raise the children on her own. The boys were disobedient, lazy, and cruel. They knew how tender hearted and weak their mother was, and they took advantage of her.

For fear of angering her husband, she did not tell him of his sons' vile behavior. Her silence, and her lack of discipline, only caused the boys to grow worse and worse as they aged, until they were the mischievous age of thirteen.

That was when the mother grew pregnant with her eighth child. Terrified of this one turning out like the other seven boys, she went to see an oracle that lived on the other side of the stream. She begged of a way to make her children become obedient and good.

The oracle handed her a tarnished silver ring, which the mother slid on. "Give them three chances, and three chances only. If they disobey you after the thrice, hold out your hand and sing to them a lullaby, and they will turn into the sons you desire. Beware, for if you sing to them before the third warning is given, then something terrible will happen."

The mother returned home to see muddy footprints all over her clean kitchen floor and dishes piled up. Angered, she marched up to their shared room and demanded they clean it up, or else. The seven boys merely looked at each other and laughed, shaking her off with a rude wave of the hand. And so the first warning was given.

The next day, she went down to the well to fetch a pail of water, only to see that it was filled with dung and dirt. The boys had been tossing it in carelessly the day before. She stormed out to the backyard and ordered them to empty the well out, then fill it up with fresh water. They refused, and so her second warning fell on deaf ears.

That next morning, as their father was getting ready to leave for work, he commanded them to feed the goats and the cow, with grass that grew on the other side of the stream. Afraid of disobeying their father, but simply too lazy to row across the water, the boys ventured into the woods and filled three bags with the grass that grew there. This was dangerous to give to animals, as it caused their stomachs to swell. They had been taught this, but in their ignorance, they chose to disregard the consequences and mixed the grass with the remaining food in the stables.

When the mother discovered the sick and bloated animals the next morning, she snapped. Slamming open the door to her cottage, she found them in the kitchen, eating their breakfast.

"Now we will not have any milk or goat cheese for weeks! I told you boys a million times not to feed them grass from the woods!" She yelled, pointing out to the stables, where one could see the goat lying on its back, stomach round and protruding grotesquely.

When the sons saw this, they all burst into cruel howls of laughter, despite her angered yells. The mother finally had had enough. She held out her right hand, the oracle's ominous warning forgotten, and started to sing, a lullaby her mother sung to her as a child, the song of the magpies.

"One for sorrow,  
Two for joy.  
Three for a girl,  
Four for a boy.  
Five for silver,  
Six for gold.  
Seven for a secret,  
Never to be told!"

The boys' laughter came to an abrupt halt, a collective gasp uttered from each of them. As a whole, they all sank to their knees, their bodies convulsing and twitching, their skin crawling as if snakes were slithering beneath the surface.

As the mother watched in horror, they seemed to transform before her eyes. They shrank, their skin bursting open and black feathers spilled forth, their bones twisting and reshaping. And then her sons were no more; in their place sat seven abnormally large crows.

She screamed. The birds let out caws of their own, and the one in the front, formally the eldest son, jumped into the air and spread his wings, shooting past the mother and into the sky. The others followed, and the woman stumbled back, away from the door, for fear of them coming back to peck her eyes out.

When the father came home that night, he found an empty house, save for the terrified woman hiding in their bedroom. He held her close in his arms as she explained all that they had done, their disobedience, her trip to see the oracle, the forgotten warning. When she was done, he was saddened, but gently stroked her hair and told her not to worry, that their sons had been punished for their sins.

Months passed, and soon came the arrival of a beautiful little girl. To her parents joy, she grew to be kind, helpful, and obedient. She did all that was asked of her around the house and in the stables, cleaning and feeding, grooming and tidying.

Despite her mother's company, she was lonely, wishing for a sibling to play with. For fear of frightening her daughter, the mother erased all evidence that the seven sons had ever lived in that house, that they had ever even existed.

But, of course, she could not erase everything. One day, when the girl was thirteen, same age as her brothers were when they were cursed, she went up to the

attic and started to explore. She searched through boxes and boxes until she came across an old photo album, black and white and coated in an ancient layer of dust.

She looked inside it, finding photos of seven different babies, all labeled with different names and dates of birth. She saw her parents with every one of them, holding them, kissing them, raising them. The details of the photos, although worn with age, were evident, the way those boys took after her parents.

She took the album and ran down the stairs, to fling into her mother's arms and sob, demanding to know where her brothers were and why she never knew them. The mother burst into tears, for she missed and loved her sons, however troublesome as they were. But she could not bring herself to tell her child the truth, so she lied, saying they were playing in the woods, one gloomy day years ago, and were lost, never to be seen again.

"I must find them. They must still be in there, lost and scared. They need me." The daughter said, hugging the photo album close to her chest and gazing out the window, to the woods that rested thirty feet away.

"No! You will never go anywhere near those woods, do you hear me, child?" The mother commanded, taking the album away from her and placing it on the bookshelf, once more hiding the boys' existence from the world.

The daughter had to at least try and find them, but she knew better than to argue, so she promised she wouldn't, loosely crossing her finger behind her back.

That midnight, she quietly waited until her parents retired to bed, then slid out from underneath the covers and slid on a dress, stockings, and a wooly sweater. She grabbed up a lantern filled with oil and quietly snuck out of the house.

Inside the woods, she got a flame going inside the lantern and started to walk, her eyes wide and bright, searching the darkness for something, anything.

The deeper she went, the colder she got. The shivers had long racked her body of warmth, her teeth chattering, yet she pushed on. Her imagination started to run wild, things that go bump in the night, terrible beasts with sharp fangs that dripped with the blood of its prey, salivating for a taste of her sweet, soft skin..

Crack.

What was that? She whirled around, waving the lantern madly, trying to see in the dark shadows that surrounded the tree she was near. A dim glow caught her gaze, a pair of beady black eyes. A crow.

She laughed, a small smile forming on her lips as she moved closer to inspect it. "Just a crow." She mused to herself, trying to still her heartbeat. "Mr. Crow, have you seen my seven brothers?"

The crow simply clawed again, and the air around her was distorted as another crow flew out of the sky and landed beside the first one.

Suddenly, an old nursery rhyme popped into her head, and she felt compelled to sing it. "One for joy, two for sorrow." She chuckled softly.

They seemed to stare at her intently. She felt their gazes burning into her as two more seemed to melt out of the shadows.

"Three for a girl, four for a boy." She whispered, taking a small step back as two more came forward. "Five for silver, six for gold.."

"Seven for a secret never to be told." The croaked and cruel voice echoed in her brain as she felt a claw land on her shoulder, a beak brushing her ear. She screamed and dropped the lantern, extinguishing the flame.

It was found the next morning by her grieving father, who had a group of friends searching the woods for his missing child. Just that broken object, and a single black feather that crumpled away when he picked it up, the remaining sliding through his fingers like ashes.

## 5. *Flares*

567ajt

RAWR!

Lice!

Lice!

Lice!

And flares go off!

And flares go off!

And flares go off!

And off go flares!

I tiptoed to the water's edge

Without hesitation, I jumped in!

Cleansed myself of a stickman's gift

The tectonics then started to shift!

All good in theory but one fatal mistake:

My skin itched, ears started to ache!

I killed myself again and again

Rolling in my own shit like a pig's pen!

And flares go off!

And flares go off!

And flares go off!

And off go flares!

The fire from the flares woke me up  
The water drained, at the bottom of a cup!  
Cried myself to sleep when the film reel ceased  
I meant nothing for I was deceased!  
Prayers of resurrection and forgiveness  
Echoed the backdrop of unfinished business!  
I couldn't comprehend the repetitive strain  
Existence traded me for another stain!

And flares go off!  
And flares go off!  
And flares go off!  
And off go flares!

RAWR!

Lice!  
Lice!  
Lice!

Lice were eating my hair alive  
Maggots orchestrated meals on my thighs  
I was the buffet, the scarecrow's meal  
The light from the flares seemed all too real  
I quickly stabbed myself in the face  
To find myself in a familiar place  
Gripped on the bedsheets, papa close by  
"JUST A NIGHTMARE" he said, "NO NEED TO CRY!"

Or wasn't it a nightmare.....?

Or was there a need to cry.....?

Papa's face dropped when he saw I was ok  
He snatched my pillow, pressed it up to my face!  
He whipped something strange out of his pockets  
And suddenly his eyes popped out of his sockets!  
What I thought was a knife was my teddy bear  
Muffled screams but my papa still didn't care!  
Mommy died last night and the proxy fulfilled  
I guess I'll join her inside a flaming pit in Hell!  
Hell!  
Hell!  
Hell!

And flares go off!  
And flares go off!  
And flares go off!  
And off go flares!

RAWR!

Lice!

Lice!

Lice!

RAWR!

## 6. *Wanderlust*

*Knight Fortis*

We were all placed on a barren world.  
There's no magic, no adventure.  
We could walk for miles  
staring at the paved roads  
and never run into a single elf, orc, or fairy.

Maybe we'd have a little excitement:  
Perhaps we'd find an old coin,  
bent and rusty,  
a treasure from the past.

We would discover  
the secret past of the coin.  
The names of all who held it,  
all who rubbed it for good luck.  
And be enchanted by the splendor  
that a story can bring us.

But we wouldn't be looking down.

We would be driven  
by a wanderlust so strong  
that we would be staring up.  
Gazing at the clouds,  
guessing at the infinite number of times  
that they had circled the globe.  
Imagining their crevasses and rills  
as a mirror image of this terrestrial world.

It'll be a gateway to adventure  
and all we need is the key.  
Native wanderers to an ever-changing island,  
full of new mysteries to explore.  
Searching for ancient treasure,  
much more precious than the old coin  
which would pass unnoticed beneath our feet.  
As the mightiest of pirates,  
We'd circumnavigate the firmament,  
And be captains of our own vessel,  
whether it be the moon  
or merely a lost balloon floating aimlessly.

Perhaps we would be farmers,  
ameliorating the fertile sky,  
plowing the clouds into straight rows  
and seeding them with dreams  
that would blossom into memories.

When it becomes sunset,  
We would swim in crimson pools of fire  
and liquid gold  
and violet velvet.  
It would be a kaleidoscope  
of raw emotions and thoughts  
lighter than air  
Greater than even we could imagine.

We'd discover new planets that never existed  
with strange inhabitants:  
Spiders with pink cotton candy webs  
weaving across the vast, eternal sphere.  
Trekking across these dreamscapes,  
we would fill our thirst for adventure.

But we wouldn't be finished yet.

Inch by inch, night would fall,  
dragging the moon out of hiding  
and signaling the stars to appear.  
With only candles and fireflies  
to light our way,  
we'd plunge into the shadows of our hearts  
and uproot any sorrows.  
We'd be left torn and broken,  
yet healed beyond measure.

The clouds would have been blown  
by the strengthening winds of faith,  
and we would marvel at the heavens,  
bespeckled with pinholes of light.  
We'd twirl and dance  
and holler in the joy of it all.  
Then we'd settle down and dream.

Dream of a glass world  
made of sunlight and shadow.  
Grayscale rainbows arching above us.  
We would mummer in the halo of moonlight  
and startle at our demon-like faces  
cast by the light of our candles.  
Then sleep would come  
and we'd sleep the warm, peaceful sleep  
of a time-worn traveler  
of the mind.

## *7. 10 Extremely Helpful Tips to Surviving (Most of) High School*

*MooCowPoop*

### 1.) Prioritize

I'm not sure if you're an unorganized person or not, but this step really helps. What you need to do is find out which things are a priority and which things are not quite as important. What's due tomorrow? What's due the rest of the week? What's due in the upcoming weeks? You want to start with the thing that has the most immediacy, meaning the thing that's due tomorrow, and is worth a whole bunch of points. Start out with that, then work your way down to what's not as important. By doing this, you save yourself a whole lot of stress than by trying to start everything all at once.

### 2.) Set Yourself Up For Success.

Sitting around may feel great at the moment, but what about that awful feeling of embarrassment and shame you're in school and realize that you've missed a whole bunch of assignments while everyone else is turning in their work? It does not feel good to be left out like that. Don't lie to yourself, you will NOT be able to finish it later because something really important might come up or something else easily interrupting-- either way, you really wouldn't be able to finish your work, if something happens because you let it go for so long. Don't let it get to that point; do the work the instant you get home, or even do it at lunch if you can (this is my new tactic and it's been working well so far). Do this so that you won't have to worry about it when you get home. It feels better when you know that you've completed your work than knowing that you've got tons of work left.

### 3.) Get a Good Work Space.

This is vital if you want to be successful. If you're in an environment where you know you can't work well, don't shrug it off and blame the environment for your problems-- MOVE! Go somewhere that you know you'll be able to work without any distractions, like the library. When my doctor-friend suggested that I go to the library to do my work, I cringed. Not because I don't like going to the library, but because I felt like it was just a terrible idea. I didn't even consider it until I actually tried it, and guess what? It worked. I was able to focus on my homework and not the internet or the television and I actually felt good about getting my homework done with no unnecessary breaks in between. Studying between commercial breaks is not an option, nor is it effective. I got into a place that would make it hard for me to procrastinate, and I suggest that you do the same.

#### 4.) Don't freak out.

This was a big one for me. I always got anxious about not completing my work and worried about my future and how I wouldn't accomplish my goals, and yada yada. Realize that it's going to be okay, and it isn't the end of the world -- or rather your world-- if you don't complete one homework assignment. If you're worrying all the time, you won't have any time to get your homework done and if you're pushing it off to the side all the time (which can be another form of anxiety), you still won't have the time to do what you're supposed to be doing. Find the right level of motivation, and stick with that.

#### 5.) Be realistic and/or strategic.

This step ties in with Step 2. You need to realize that not everyone is perfect; not everyone makes straight As or makes it to valedictorian of their class. This is perfectly fine. You, however, need to do what's best for you. If you know you aren't going to finish editing that entire essay by midnight, then don't push yourself and see if you can go beyond your limit. You have to set up a common goal, and not try to be perfect all the time.

#### 6.) Don't Beat Yourself Up.

Again, nobody is perfect. If you didn't get the score you wanted to get or you worked really hard to get a perfect grade on the test but you missed a few questions, it's perfectly fine (in this case, you can be perfect). There's always going to be another day to work on a new assignment. My teacher says that he doesn't do "right now's" but he does "next times". This means that you're always going to have another chance. One measly essay or test does not determine your fate. Just learn from your mistakes and move on. Do not let the feeling of ----- upset you. But also remember that just because you get another chance, it does not mean that you should take advantage of it. Don't let your procrastination tie into what you're trying to accomplish, and don't turn it into an excuse. You've still got deadlines to follow.

#### 7.) Reach Out.

You didn't think you could do all of this by yourself, did you? It's important to ask for help, no matter how much of the information you think is tedious and dull. If you're not understanding the content, why let yourself suffer? Use your worrying time to ask the teacher questions. Invest in a tutor, grab a study buddy-- do anything that will help you to not go through this stuff alone. Most importantly, get someone who can hold you accountable for your work. For instance, if you were to get a study buddy, that buddy could call you up and make sure that you're doing your assignments because you will both be responsible for making sure that the other person is doing their work. By doing it this way, neither of you will be able to give up as easily or procrastinate as easily because you will have each other's backs. If this is your year of high school, you will especially need to make sure that you're getting help from someone else, not just because of the work, but

to make sure you are doing what you're supposed to be doing (parents are not very helpful with this step. It'll just feel like they're nagging you).

#### 8.) KNOW AND HONOR YOUR LIMITS!

I love this one. This is my favorite step of them all because it relates so well to me and it ties in with step 4. Sometimes a person can get so caught up with trying to make something perfect that they forget they have an actual life besides school. If you cannot stay up any longer or if the clock's saying it's almost three am, you know there's a problem. Sometimes you just have to let things be. If they don't work out, of course you'll feel bad, but sometimes that's just the way things work. Sometimes you have to throw in the towel. This is cliché, but, life really isn't a race. If it was, who would you be racing against and what for? There's no point in trying to beat someone at your own game, is there? If you need to stop, then stop. Don't keep going if you know you'll collapse at the finish line. How can life be good for you if you're too tired or stressed out to enjoy it? Be happy with what you have, and recognize that you are trying your best, and that will always be enough.

#### 9.) Always Try Your BEST. Period.

This one kind of explains itself, but I will elaborate on it. It's not the kid who gets straight As and answers all the questions correctly that gets noticed... Really, I'm serious. It's actually the person who tries their hardest and keeps pushing but recognizes where they need to stop is the person who's more praised. When a person recognizes their own limits and shows immense dedication to something, that is so much more meaningful than being the one who's always right. It's the person who knows that they have faults and tries to fix them that's good. It makes that person so much more real than the guy who just gets everything right. And frick the people who think they're better than everyone else because they get the best grades. Newsflash: college is almost nothing like high school! In fact, it's ten times harder, so just because everything is working for them now doesn't mean it'll be like that after high school. You do a lot more learning and knowing yourself when you find a fault and you fix it, than staying the same all the time.. It makes you much more real of a person, and people will admire that.

#### 10.) GET YOUR BUTT IN THE CHAIR!

This should have been listed as number one because it's really the most important one of them all. How are you going to follow any of these steps or get what you want in life if you don't put in the work for it? Get yourself in the CHAIR! Not the computer chair, the restaurant chair, the roller coaster chair--- THE STUDY CHAIR. Yeah, it sounds so dull and mundane, but if you're expecting the car to work, you need to put in the keys, you know? Sit down and don't wait until the last minute to get things done.

## 8. *Ferrozine Woman*

*Knight Nite*

The ferrozine woman  
eschews red clothing--  
so oxidized, so typical.

Instead she lures  
with sunbeam hues  
and acetate perfume.

Once naked, now  
complexed to her,  
you are clothed  
in violet that screams  
quantify me, if you dare.

## 9. *Foxtrot*

*emmylou1995*

I.

Your chap stick has melted  
from its plastic cradle  
left in the back of the car  
in the sun since Monday  
it's Thursday  
and the weekend inches closer  
one more day to ride and slip and slide  
through school

It's time to break your fast  
and the honey drips  
one dot two dots three  
onto your pumpernickel toast  
watch for the yellow bus  
you are running out of time  
your hairspray has caramelized  
over your bangs

You are young  
you do not understand the significance  
of the morning dew and the rain  
but you dance in it  
you made me teach you the foxtrot  
as the bus pulled up  
and then I waved goodbye

II.

You are shackled to a world of grandeur  
the ballroom whirls around you  
and you keep stomping on feet  
you never learned  
the foxtrot

It is orchestra loud  
ringing overwhelms you  
and your diamonds make it hard  
for you to breath they are heavy  
you are sweating  
under your clothes  
But don't let them notice

A chandelier hangs over you  
its size makes you shutter  
it feels like you are trapped  
under its metal under their gazes  
but it is a masquerade  
you cannot see them but they can see you  
and you are self-conscious  
out—out—out  
you cannot breath and the cast-iron shackles  
are itching at your ankles

## 10. *The Biting Game: Alice's Story*

*HighTop*

Alice giggled as she slid into the back of abandoned car. "They'll never find me here." she whispered as she looked out the back window. All the windows were blacked out. There was a certain joy Alice felt in being able to see someone who wasn't able to see her, and it made her giggle again, but in a hushed voice. She didn't want to attract the Biters.

Alice gazed out the window as the Biters moved past. Shuffling along in a group of forty, Alice estimated. They would bump into each other often, almost knocking each other over. Alice giggled again, the way they walked and the silly red stains on their faces was enough to set her off in hysterics. They reminded her of clowns, in the before days Alice loved clowns.

She watched them walk past some more. They always moved slow. A pack of forty could take at least an hour to move completely out of sight. She started looking at them, really looking at them. One of them she noticed, seemed out of place. Among the group was a little girl. She was about a year younger than Alice, she looked eight years old. Her long, red-stained hair flowed like a black river, stained with blood, but still beautiful. Alice looked at her own frazzled hair tied in lazy pigtails, making her dirty blond hair look like straw. "I hope mommy can make my hair pretty when I find her." she said. Alice wanted to feel like a princess again.

She froze, as an exasperated sigh came from the front seat of the car. There was a long pause, she was holding her breath, but was made easy by the stiff fear that caught in her throat. She heard a noise, a cough. Biters didn't cough, they didn't breath. "He..hello?" She inquired of the person in the front seat.

"Bet" he said, followed by a loud, hacking noise. "Beth." he was alarmed now. "Beth, I'm sorry, but you.....you were bitten, I had no choice but to leave you." he was saying through fits of sobs and coughs. "I didn't want to die." he said looking back to meet her little, confused eyes. The smell of alcohol was strong on his breath, and it made Alice gag. " Beth, your hair is different." he sounded genuinely surprised.

"I'm not Beth." Alice said.

"Yes you are!" he shouted, grabbing her by the neck, and forcing her head into the leather seat. "You are my Beth, you came back," he laughed as tears rolled down his cheeks. His grip on her neck loosened, but he didn't release her. "you're not infected anymore and we" he stuttered "we will go back to our lives." infected? Alice thought, but this was all just a big game, that's what Mommy had said. Just a big game.

"I'M NOT BETH!" Alice screamed, the man covered her mouth with his hand. She bit him. He immediately recoiled back to the front seat, his eyes wide with surprise and fear. A bite was a powerful thing these days. She seized her opportunity, and leaped out the door. The Biters had just passed the back of the car. Alice sprinted as far as her legs would carry her. Some of the Biters began to follow her, but stopped when the man opened the car door and shouted in a fit of tears.

"Beth!" he screamed, grabbing all the Biter's attention. "please don't leave me again." and then the Biters were on him. Sinking their teeth into him. The bigger ones were the only ones to get a bite, the rest licked blood off the pavement. In pure delight, they screeched with pleasure. Alice couldn't watch after they tore open his chest.

Alice walked home uninterrupted. All the Biters were probably drawn to the fresh kill. When she reached the front door of her house, she did the secret knock. BANG-BANGBANG-BANG. She noticed the door was unlocked, and slightly ajar. She walked inside.

She searched the house for her mother, getting more and more panicked with each room she found empty. Eventually Alice reached the small kitchenette at the back of the house, messy from the breakfast they had four hours ago. Her gaze fell to a moving figure. She could see it. Through the back window she could almost make it out. "Mommy." she screamed.

Alice ran to the window, to make sure it was her mommy. It was, but she was a Biter. Alice screamed as her mommy lunged at the window connecting the kitchen and laundry room. Alice went to open the door, but it was locked from the inside. She sat there, in front of the window, thinking. She wondered what would have happened if she stayed with the strange man, but she pushed the thought away, as she rose to find the spare key to the laundry room.

"I'd rather be a Biter with my mommy, than a player with a stranger." she said to herself.

She had found the key. Standing in front of the door she began to think again. It's only a game she thought as she put the key in the hole. It's like mommy always said, we can't win the game, we'll have to play someday.

The door opened with a defining click.