

/lit/ winners club
December 2025



4chan

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/lit/ Writing Competition

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Entrants to this contest were required to incorporate theme and character elements. Entries were selected by popular vote, with each voter being asked to select a rank of three entries. The winners are published here in ranked order from last to first.

The theme requirement:

Must explore ancient traditions in the modern day

The character requirement:

A character must be convinced someone is breaking into their house and not stealing, but leaving items

Great Caesar

Production Blues

He will bring back the Age of Gold to the Latian fields where Saturn once held sway!

The words rang through his head during the meeting, drowning out the senator's meandering speech. When would *he* bring back the Age of Gold?

Expand his empire past Garamants and the Indians to a land beyond the stars!

He made the mistake of briefly returning his focus to the senator, who was in the middle of listing the many facilities and amenities unavailable at the empire's present seat of power, far from Rome. No power grid. Little running water. A dearth of heavy-duty farming equipment meant the "laborers"—a politically correct term which disgusted him because his birthright was to freely own slaves—had to work the land with either primitive tools or not more than their bare hands.

Beyond the wheel of the year, the course of the sun itself, where Atlas bears the skies and turns on his shoulder the heavens studded with flaming stars!

The emperor held up a hand. "We've heard enough," he said.

"Great Caesar," the senator said, bowing. "You still haven't heard the effects of limited water on growing crops. Or the number of laborers who have collapsed due to heatstroke. In *December*!"

"I need not know. Your time is finished."

"You may ignore these problems, great Caesar, but that won't make them go away. My scouts have found another island in the Americas that would be much more suitable for our purposes."

"Silence."

"Great Caesar, you must see reason."

The senator's groveling insistence on calling him "great" set his teeth on edge. He wished he could have the man executed, maybe tortured first, but he'd already done so to a previous senator for a more flagrant insult and risked waking up with twenty-three stab wounds should he have

cracked down harder. Before he could give a scathing reply, the emperor's phone chirped, notifying a message from his wife.

—Is this yours?

Attached to the text was a picture of a small gift box wrapped in royal purple and tied with a black bow.

“This meeting is adjourned,” he said, gathered his flowing robes, stood up out of his curule chair, and paced out of the curia. Ignoring the audible chagrin of the senate, turning a corner—out of view—he quickened his step. His villa connected with the curia via tunnel, making it easy to arrive without getting slowed by his adoring—or not-so-adoring—citizenry. “Where is it?” he asked his wife.

She pointed it out, sitting on a chair in the atrium. “It’s addressed to you. Who is it from? It only says ‘Santa Claus.’”

The emperor stood frozen for a moment. Then, he pointed to one of his servants.

“You!”

“Yes, Caesar?” the woman asked.

“Take that box outside and open it.”

“Yes, Caesar,” she said. The other servants gave her sorrowful looks while she delicately lifted the box and lugged the small but heavy thing a fair distance from the villa. Everyone, including the emperor, watched through windows, crouched and bracing as if the package might contain a bomb. The servant called out after opening the box.

“It’s *what*?” the emperor called back, straining to hear.

“It’s just coal!”

The package, on top of the dusty black chunks, also contained a letter handwritten in cursive. It read simply, *You’ve been very naughty!* Ever the stoic, the emperor calmly berated his servants instead of absolutely losing his senses to paranoia. But his actions were no less useless. It remained a mystery who had left his present for him on that otherwise unobserved Christmas Eve. Around Easter-time, he did end up finding and destroying a handful of the

hidden recording devices the mysterious individual or group had also left for him, but not all, and not enough to stop the mounting collection of legitimate evidence against him.

No Good Deed

Bartlebooth

Yes, the tap dancing of little mice keeps me awake long after the sun sets. They frolic together in the space between my roof and the floor of the neighbour above. Sometimes I hear them fall behind my walls. It is the chaotic sound of panic and scrambling; what you get for dancing too close to the edge.

On certain summer nights, when the wind is dry and hot, I sleep under my blankets anyway. Even if it is a hundred degrees. On these nights I am sweating all over and above me I can hear the little mice fucking. I wonder what little male mice have that makes them able to find females that I lack. I wonder if the mice that live in my walls envy the mice that live in my roof, for being above them. I do not feel this way about my upward neighbour, but I am also twenty-nine, beyond the age a mouse could live to.

Daniel. I have written my own name in every calligraphic on the internet, my own name and nothing else. I don't trust anyone else and I don't need anything else. All that's needed can be found in my apartment.

Of course my shower started running again. This is one of the longest standing faults with the place, my shower just starts running sometimes. When I am not home it likely runs for hours. I once complained to my landlord but after he wanted to send someone around to inspect it I told him the problem had resolved itself. I think back to this sometimes as I'm reaching in and get myself wet to turn it off, but I have enough towels. The water bill does not bother me because I have few uses for money anyway.

I found an unusual black smear on my door this morning. No matter how dirty my apartment gets I keep my door clean, because it represents me while facing the outside world. So for there to be a black mark there was immediately suspicious. My existing rags proved too dirty to clean it off so I had to go and buy a sponge.

Soon after I was listening to the scuttling of the mice when I heard footsteps and obscure action outside my door. I lunged about and swung my door open, looking to

find the culprit smearing my door. It was only my neighbour, Ashley, who was standing in the hallway with half a couch in her hands, trying to fit it in her doorway. This was at almost 1am. Even though I wasn't trying to sleep the amount of noise they were making suggested they didn't seem to care if I was. I assumed the person carrying the other end of the couch was Ashley's girlfriend, so as they wiggled it through the frame I shouted out that they were a pair of gawking faggots. I stared at her until they were able to get the couch in and went back to my space, where I imagined what it would be like if Ashley sat on my face. This vision was interrupted by the sound of mice fucking in the wall, so I bashed the end of a broom handle into it until they stopped.

A paper clip, a button, a pen lid not belonging to anything in my collection. I became convinced Ashley had smeared my door and now she was leaving these things too, which did not belong here. Obviously she had to be breaking in when I was away, because I found these items on my table and outside my bedroom door. These were obviously conduits of curses being laid at my feet, Ashley's little gifts.

Frank, my landlord, talked to me about my concerns. He is a reasonable man but overly gullible. I laid out to him my argument in simple terms: Ashley and her girlfriend belonged to a coven of witches, and they didn't like me because Ashley could look inside me and tell that I sometimes imagined her naked. Landlord Frank did not know what to make of my statements and told me he would get back to me.

A long day of scrounging in the tip. When I got back I heard my shower running and furiously turned it off. On my couch I saw a little picture, like an icon in a Greek church, which I ripped up and binned. Then I deeply regretted not taking a picture of it for Frank, or even bringing it to someone nefarious to test for magical properties.

Going back to ancient times the Evil Eye has been put

up in people's homes to ward off evil spirits. The Greeks love it, the tricolour pattern with a light, light blue. Although I am not Greek Orthodox I plastered these things all over my apartment, and put one on the outside of my front door for Ashley to see when she walks past. That night I dreamt of the mosteyed creature, spiders, and the next time I left I saw the external eye had been taken down. I put it back up, but got a call from Landlord Frank saying no religious symbols were to be put up in public.

Grunting and groaning into my hand and imagining unspeakable things to an audience of mice all paused from their usual activity to observe this supernova of sexual energy. I knew that if I fucked Ashley hard enough in the mind she'd feel it in the flesh, and my squeaking bouncing bed, the silence of my mouse pests, the free-flowing stream of consciousness evolution of sexual depravity in my brain encouraged me to keep going. I stared into one of the evil eyes I had pinned up on my wall and let myself be relieved as thousands of years of tradition watched over me, and I knew if Greece had produced such great men as Alexander and Aristotle Onassis then this symbol would not fail me. At the point of climax my shower flicked on and water rushed out, suddenly matched by a flurry of noise from the cities of mice settled in my roof and walls.

Of course, Ashley got her hooks into Landlord Frank and probably placed a spell on him. He confronted me with people's complaints about the sounds and smells coming from my place, and said calling my neighbour a faggot was entirely unacceptable. He said my lease would not be renewed at the end of the year, even though Ashley was obviously being a faggot. When this was over I found my final gift from my neighbours, a little pile of ashy dust on the corner of my table top. I blew it into the air and laughed watching it fall.

The Evil Eyes across my apartment came down after that. I was angry at myself for believing in it just because it had history, and as the year winds down I've got a new

resolution against all traditions except the ones I've created myself. I won't be participating in Christmas this year, and I've got to find a new place by Jan 1, but if I could get Ashley to fuck me by then it would be worth it. The only tradition I believe in now are the codes I write into my work, my gifts to readers and to myself, once I forget what they are. They are easy to find—treat me like an acrostic poem.

Sir Burton

Duck

It had been roughly two months since Sir Burton's "reconnaissance in a rather novel direction" as he called it. The many men that would visit the house usually on business would first believe this direction was Sir Burton's foray into, what was then, the new science of airplanes. Instead his new ventures ran super-scientific.

It began when Sir Burton had woken up in a frenzy rushing towards a desk drawer and rummaging through it till he found paper and began drawing his watch face, which in the night (precisely 5:18) had cracked and stopped. He claimed to me to have seen a clock strike 5:18 and suddenly stop. This disturbed him enough in his slumber to wake him and upon finding his wrist watch broken at the same time needed to document it. This premonition began the series of experiments he found to be his true calling.

"John wake up," said Sir Burton. "I saw smoke. I was on the ground crawling watching these women choke and gasp. Coughing black sluggish ejaculations. The smoke rolled over the air until it sank down, taking my breath. I crawled and just made it to what seemed to be a balcony and before my lungs gave, there were these beautiful columns, something out of Greece or Rome." He began drawing what he'd later identify as a temple to Mnemosyne.

He began to insist we try to recreate this dream somehow or another. We removed the modern decorum of the guest bedroom, smoked plenty of cigars and Sir Burton began to crawl on the floor. He made me spit up this black liquid which was comprised of burnt chalk, water, and "enough milk to give the impression of phlegm." He crawled around with a very serious face. He mustered his strength and opened the balcony doors, but there was no temple, just the airstrip that surrounded the estate, but nothing new came to him.

Mnemosyne was the goddess of memory, Sir Burton, explained to me. She, with the muses, could plant ideas and visions of the past, or in his case with the watch he

believed visions of the future, or maybe present. Like that of aircraft taking us on a new axis of science, a world of dreamscape memories from different souls and your future self we were to embark on a new frontier, yet unexplainable.

A package came addressed to the master of the house featuring a toga and a copy of Pliny the Younger and Pliny the Elder. There were notes on the margins surrounding the chapter labeled “The Eruption of Pompeii.” With this Sir Burton was to be known as “Pliny the Elder” and me “Pliny the Young” and to his former aircraft friends “Pliny full of it.”

The next great dream he still found himself surrounded by ash. “40,000 dead” rang through his ears. The early morning light dimmed further and tremors shook around him. The dream shifted and he was a thousand feet in the air. The smoke looked like rockslide falling into the town. Sir Burton then knew what Mnemosyne wanted from him, he began shouting to flee and run, but the damage was done. In the fading moments of the dream he attempted to find where the village could be. There were no columns like Pompeii, it was remote. Certainly poor. He could spot some french on signs, but not enough to find its location.

We began pouring over french maps and list of its colony’s geographic features. Eventually coming across Mt Teahiti’ a. Sir Burton and I took a long range expedition craft, one of the first of its kind (I redesigned the landing mechanisms.) After a weeks worth of travel arriving at the island we found the reports vastly overestimated the size of the village and coming in from the air Sir Burton was certain it was not the right place. After disembarking we found a local news stand’s headline “MOUNTAIN EXPLODES 40,000 DEAD. MONT PELEE GONE IN AVALANCHE OF FLAME”

“Well, can’t win them all,” said Sir Burton.

the end

