

# TROU MAG

Issue #2

Only one thing comes to those who wait

UNLEASH  
WHAT THEY  
FEAR  
THE MOST

It's never too late to embrace your fate





The boy does not expect to live long.

He is a half-feral thing, yes, having spent more time among the trees than in the arms of the one he called *Mother*, but there is only so much one can do to stay alive when their body is rotting from the inside out.

The townspeople knew, of course. Maybe they could smell it on him, sense that he would not fit into their design. Hellspawn, they called him. Child of Lucifer. And so they cast him out, killed his only kin, and left him for dead.

A shiver wracked his frame despite the horrific heat, the weather only sending the sickness in his guts spreading further, digging deeper, his lungs rattling wetly in the cage of his ribs, and he wondered absently how long he would have to wait before the rot found those and his suffering would cease.

The rattling gets louder, and he abruptly realizes it is not his lungs, but the frame of his window, a blackbird blocking out the sun and soothing his burning eyes.

*Have they begun to rot, too? How soon before the tendrils of dying tissue reaches his brain and-*

The glass of the window shatters under the bird's claws, sharp pieces glinting in the light against the floor, and the bird perches atop the boy's chest.

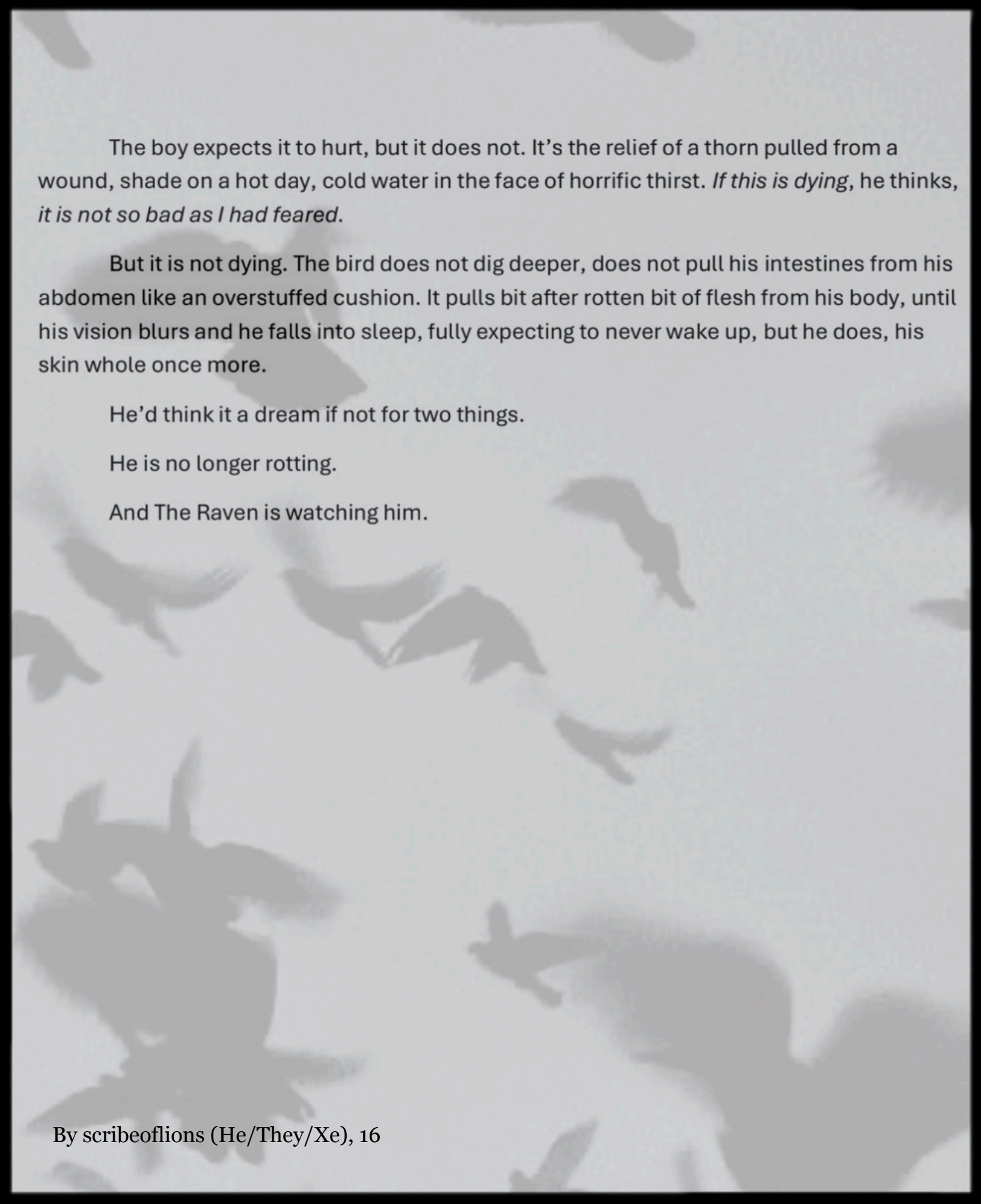
He blinks up at it, and, despite knowing there's little chance of it responding, asks, "Have you come to eat me?"

It cocks its head at him and blinks its solid-jet eyes, then turns, picking its way towards his abdomen and leaning forward.

He holds his breath, the actions answering his question, and he can't help but feel relieved. At least this is over, finally, and at least he's doing something with his life. At least he won't have to live within this misshapen mass of meat any longer.

He doesn't flinch at the slice of its claws along his belly, black-laced blood flowing sluggishly from the split in his skin and the overwhelming stench of rotten flesh filling the air. He shudders, his stomach – or what's left of it, he has no idea how much the rot has taken from him – roiling in protest at the fact that that is *in him*, infecting him.

The bird shifts around to the other side, settling below the cut, revealing the festering mass to the boy's morbidly curious gaze, and begins to eat.



The boy expects it to hurt, but it does not. It's the relief of a thorn pulled from a wound, shade on a hot day, cold water in the face of horrific thirst. *If this is dying*, he thinks, *it is not so bad as I had feared*.

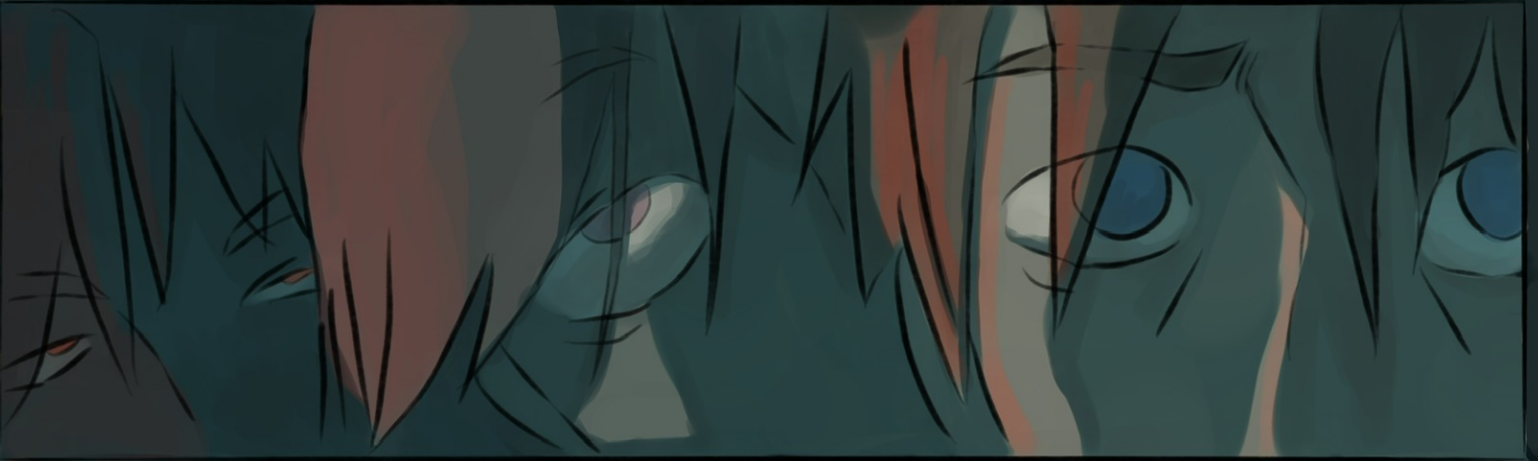
But it is not dying. The bird does not dig deeper, does not pull his intestines from his abdomen like an overstuffed cushion. It pulls bit after rotten bit of flesh from his body, until his vision blurs and he falls into sleep, fully expecting to never wake up, but he does, his skin whole once more.

He'd think it a dream if not for two things.

He is no longer rotting.

And The Raven is watching him.







# The Princess and the Knight

## Part 2

By Forgotten Writer (She/Her)

And so, the princess sat in her room and mused and thought, but no matter who she approached, there were none who would make her a knight. None would train her. They said she was too slow, too small, too weak, too inexperienced. It would be suicide. She had such a good life already. Why would she trade silks for armour?

It made her want to scream and cry and beg, but no matter how desperate she became, no one was willing to make her a knight. Until, at last, as she neared the age of sixteen, and she had all but given up hope, an idea occurred to her. And it was a dangerous idea. It was an idea that filled her with dread and terror, and twice she nearly gave up there and then.

But the dream of being a knight spurred her on, and so, the next day, she ordered her horse prepared and rode off into the kingdom. This was not considered strange; for the kingdom was small and safe, and the people loved their rulers. Often, her family would go on trips to visit each town and village, and though her being alone was not usual, nor did it cause alarm.

This time, however, she did not go to a town or a village or even a city. She rode north, across the plains. Through the great, dark forest which tore at her cloak and clothes. She rode and rode and rode until at last, she came to the border, and there, she found a great swamp. It was a deadly mire; with mud that slipped and gurgled underfoot, and fetid water that would swallow you up.

Here, there was no place for her horse, so she untethered it and sent it off. It was well trained and in a few days, would find its way back to the palace. By that point, she would have succeeded or she would be dead.

Dead.

She didn't want to be dead, but somehow, the thought of staying as she was was even worse. For the hundredth time, she steeled her courage, and forged her way through the swamp.

*Tumblr: @forgottenwriter*



## Orange Blanket

maybe i just hadn't noticed  
but it felt like when i went under  
every leaf on every tree shook itself free  
- i woke up under an orange blanket

bleary eyed  
watching autumn  
through watered lens

it's the prettiest one yet  
there's a metaphor somewhere here,  
about letting things go,  
and it washes over me in anaesthetic haze

windy street  
leaves underfoot new boots, new chest  
clothes that fit

i'm less in my own head  
everything seems a bit sharper  
drying up  
a new prescription  
carving me into the landscape  
new form  
metamorphosis

this year  
i wrote a new body for myself

when i came to  
i finally felt like i deserved it

— Iz Green (He/They), 23



WELL YOU DON'T

KNOW  
ME

BUT I KNOW

YOU

AND I'VE GOT A  
MESSAGE

TO GIVE TO  
YOU





# Beginner's Tomato Pasta

This is the first recipe I learned as a teenager, and the first recipe I'll make when I move into my own place one day.

For those of you who have moved out, left or been cut off from your homes without any decent cooking skills, here's a recipe to start out with, as beginner friendly as possible :]





## Ingredients

- Pasta
- Store bought tomato sauce
- Tinned or fresh tomatoes (optional)
- Half an onion
- 1-2 cloves of garlic (or 1/4 teaspoon of garlic powder)
- Oil
- Mixed herbs (rosemary, thyme, marjoram, parsley, sage and mint)
- Salt

I also recommend adding Worcestershire sauce, Chilli powder and lentils, but all of these are optional, as are the herbs!

Pick and choose whatever you want!

## Utensils

- One medium sized pan
- One frying pan
- One wooden spoon
- One chopping knife



# The Recipe:

Begin by chopping half an onion as finely as you wish. If you're unable to chop an onion (or you don't want to cook an onion), then this ingredient is optional.

If you struggle to chop an onion finely, then chop large, round strips and use scissors to chop the rest.

Pour a few drops of oil into your frying pan. You can preheat it if you want, but it's not a big deal. Add some more oil depending on how brown you want the onions. Then place the onions in the pan and stir every so often to avoid it burning. They do not need a lot of stirring (especially if you've put a lot of oil in), just a few nudges with a wooden spoon will be enough to keep them from sticking. You can sit down for this part if you need to. They should take around 5-7 minutes to cook.

Chop or crush the garlic cloves until fine, or— if you're unable to (or don't want to) chop garlic— then 1/8 teaspoon of garlic powder per clove will work (or just eyeball it). You can add the powder into the sauce at the end.

If you are using cloves, then add them to the onions one minute before the onions have finished cooking. Adding in the garlic too early will make it taste bitter.

When the onions have finished cooking, leave them to one side. You can either begin the next step while they're cooking or afterwards to avoid things getting too overwhelming.

If you want to add vegetables, then wash and chop them up however you wish.

I personally go for broccoli and carrots. If you don't like the texture of vegetables, but want to add them anyway, then I recommend blending up the sauce with the vegetables added if you have access to a blender. If not, then the tomatoes in the sauce are enough, I promise.

Fill the medium sized pan up halfway with water, put it on a high heat and wait for it to boil. This should take around 10 minutes, or you can use water from a kettle if you have one. Don't forget to add a few good pinches of salt!

Add the vegetables into the water, turn down the heat a little, and wait for them to cook. Most vegetables take around 5 minutes, depending on how crunchy or soft you want them. Cook them for less if you want them crunchy, and cook them for more if you want them soft.

When the vegetables have finished, spoon them out and leave aside. Then you can add the pasta!



Add around 1.5–2 cups (1.5 if you want a small serving, 2 if you want a bigger one). The pasta should take around 10-15 minutes to cook, depending on the type of pasta (brown pasta takes longer than white pasta) or how soft you want it. Make sure the heat is on low, and that the lid— if you're using one— is at least halfway off, otherwise the pasta will boil over.

There's a lot of waiting during these three steps, so you can sit down and read or watch something if you'd like. Keeping myself entertained helps with the motivation to actually start cooking, and I personally listen to a favourite album or watch cartoons!

If you want to add fresh tomatoes, or whole tomatoes from a tin, then now's the time to chop them. For one serving, I recommend one tomato or half a tin. If you can't/don't want to chop them, then you can use pre-chopped tinned tomatoes. If you don't like the texture of tomatoes, then you can use tomato purée. This step is technically optional, as we are already using store bought tomato sauce, and is only done if you want a richer tomato flavour.

At this point, you can add all of the sauce ingredients together: the tomatoes, the tomato sauce, the onions and garlic (or garlic powder) and the herbs. You can also add chilli powder if you want an extra kick, or a few drops of Worcestershire sauce for added richness.

You can either add the sauce to a separate bowl, which I find easier for mixing purposes and can be done while sitting down, or you can add all the sauce ingredients directly to the pasta after you have strained out the water. If you use the bowl, then I recommend heating it up for around 20 seconds in the microwave just before you add it to make sure it's nice and warm.

Lastly, spoon out the pasta, the sauce and the vegetables, and you're done!

If you want the sauce to have more of a stew-like consistency, then add a few spoonfuls of the pasta water and mix.



Remember to pick and choose which parts of the recipe you can/want to do! The most important thing is simply to eat, so feel free to peel this back to it's bare bones if you need it. Boil some pasta for ten minutes while you watch TV and then dump half a bottle of sauce over it for a quick meal, or just eat the pasta if you don't like the taste of tomatoes. At the very least, I hope I gave you some decent cooking tips if no one else did.

Happy cooking :]

Knows how to cook two meals :3





THIS IS THE ONLY LIFE  
YOU HAVE

