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Rosemary's Monologue

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I always liked the feeling of ripping off a Band-Aid.

No wound is hidden forever; nor forever forgotten. Scars are a threshold of secrets, memories, and soaked in ounces of brutal honesty. A stitch is intertwined with beauty – reconstruction and restoration. And if you weren't screaming right now, I think I'd have this monologue out loud. Braids symmetrical and clothes ironed. My dainty hands will graze at my collar, and the blasphemous innocence that lurks within my eyes will be stabbing at a true spirit looking back at me. Mother always said to strive for perfection, and I could feel a dark drive pump through my veins. I never rolled my eyes at the phrase; I watched it fall into my subconscious and stared as it manifested and infiltrated my deteriorating mind. "Don't you get it, Rosemary?" Mother would aggressively question, swatting at me for a quick response. I'd just look up and nod. Because I did get it. I get it more than ever now.

The second phrase was about compassion. Though, kindness itself seemed more of a mockery than an enlightenment to the soul. "Sharing is caring," Mother would tell me, brushing my hair and tying in a soft, intricate ribbon. She'd never make eye contact with me as she spoke it, though. Just watched her reflection in the mirror as I always looked up at her. As if I worshipped the air that surrounded her; the essence that oozed off her sentences and structures. "Do you

understand kindness, Rosemary?" And here's the drop of confidence that would enter my realm of obedience: "I always share my toys," I'd softly stutter. "I always do." Mother sharply inhaled through her nose before saying a word. "That's wonderful, Rosemary." A monotone response that was sick with annoyance. That's what Mother was ill with. Sweet aggravation.

Phrase three. "Please sit still, Rosemary." Mother would demand, although she knew I was already complying with our routine. I would feel soft bristles swirling on my cheeks, cold wax smeared on my lips, and a small, wet brush pulling on my eyelashes. I'd flutter my eyes – beholding the sight of myself in the mirror. My body didn't move. I'd lifelessly ponder at the sight of my own being. I was never told as a child I was perfect. I was never told I was pretty. I was always told to listen and to strive. To reach the standard and strangle its meaning; make the word bow down to me. I've memorized practices performed on me by Mother. Counting how many strokes of the brush she'd do while combing through my hair. Engrave the colors and patterns of the ribbons she had chosen into my brain. The clothes picked out, the routine of makeup, all the way down to the motion of how she'd paint my nails a ruby red. And thus, comes along you. And Mother's teachings aren't just lingering in my subconscious anymore; it's shouting within my skull. It's echoing down the hall and luring me to follow the volume. And I take its hand and get dragged to listen to the booming sound of the phrases I was forced to act out all throughout my childhood. I would



share my toys and now I have none. I'm left with nothing but my knowledge and ruthless ambition. I have no toys and I crave having something to play with. I yearn to braid your hair, to swat at your wrists with the pure anger that has been brewing inside of me as I tell you to sit still. I crave you to not strive for perfection – no – I crave you to be perfection.

But good daughters are silent. Good daughters nod their heads and use their manners. You will embody Mother's

fourth phrase. I promise you that.

I always liked the feeling of ripping off a band-aid. And maybe that's why I enjoy the sound of fresh duct tape and the snipping of scissors. I always liked the feeling of ripping off a band-aid. And maybe that's why I enjoy patchwork. Taking your wounds and imperfections and solving them.

To strive means to die for success. And by the time we're done, you'll be my prized possession.

The Issue with 21st Century Horror

Gretchen Hatley
Copy Editor



The horror genre has changed and grown drastically throughout time. From authors such as H.P Lovecraft and Edgar Allan Poe who dominated horror in literature, cult classic cinema characters such as Freddy Krueger, Michael Myers, and Pennywise to our present-day twists on movies that are built on fear and adrenaline. Horror is something that has been shown countless times to allure people to the screen; but how far is the need for thrill to an audience – and the push of boundaries for the artist?

'The Exorcist' is a well-recognized title; for the themes portrayed and ground-breaking horror overall: the 70's was shaken when the film hit theaters. For not just a chill was sent down the audience's spine, as people reported vomiting and passing out in theaters while watching. Though now – this seems more absurd than understandable. The Exorcist was a greenlight and paved the way for more horror films to see how far they could go for a scare, and movies now have run with this freedom. Like the reactions to this now called "tame" movie, 'Terrifier 2' was released October 6th of this year with

people experiencing the same responses. The Executive Producer, Steven Barton, released a statement regarding the low-budget slasher clown film. "This movie contains scenes of graphic violence and brutal depictions of horror. Viewers who are faint of heart, prone to light headedness or have weak stomachs are advised to take extreme caution. There have already been numerous instances of fainting and vomiting in theaters. For those choosing to continue, you have been warned."

The harsh differences between seventies paranormal to a gruesome killer clown brings up the topic of desensitization and the drive for suspense and shock. Desensitization is a theory that presents the idea that with continuous exposure to something, our responses to that are decreased. With the genre of horror and to evoke such a response from an audience, directors and producers have resided to gore and disturbing, unmoral themes for their movies. When the artist sees boredom straining an audience, the motivation to change that is spiked. We've seen countless artwork that deal with

Vampires, Zombies, Ghosts, and more. Due to this, these are now themes that do not evoke much of a reaction from an audience alone. This is notable, and desperate creatives witness this and craft such art that will receive an intense, extreme reaction. They want to be recognized for their unique work and pumping fear into their viewers. But, when upcoming moviemakers are all experiencing the same dilemma: these harsh and disturbing themes are thrown into films and released continuously.

As the need for applause and originality in an artist grows, the more society becomes desensitized to gore and alike. The more we are desensitized to such subjects, the more we are okay with violence. And, the more violence and aggression is normalized, the more violent we become in return. 'Snuff Film' was a term coined in the 70's. It relates to a movie that, in theory, shows a true murder despite saying it's acting. This is important within how horror films have progressed. Snuff films may not have been

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