

The Hooded Lady - Sunah, Year 5, NSW

The thirteenth of February is the date that everyone dreads from the start of the year. It is the Royal Carriage Day.

On this day, the queen, who is known as The Hooded Lady, rides in the carriage pulled by two black, anonymous horses, which takes place on Royal Road. The queen is called this strange name because she was never seen under her hood, but if anyone caught a glimpse of her, what they saw was pale, white skin with two ice-cold eyes.

“Hurry Samara! We’re going to be late!” Mary (Samara’s mum) called up the stairs to her daughter Samara who was brushing her teeth slowly.

”Okay, okay!” Samara spluttered back, bits of toothpaste flying everywhere. She quickly rinsed her mouth and ran down the stairs three at a time, before reaching her bedroom and putting on her most miserable, ebony dress (everyone was permitted to wear black).

“We’re leaving, Adam!” Mary’s expectant voice rang throughout the house. The Orcall family rushed into their small car and drove away to the well known Royal Road.

The Orcall family arrived just as the anonymous horses trotted forwards, a grim carriage following it, but everyone’s eyes were fixed on the slim figure just visible through the black stained glass.

Whispers spread through the crowd like ripples on a pond. They were all about the same three words – The Hooded Lady. From her pale face to her leather, midnight black shoes, with an ominous vibe that was left lingering wherever she went, no one thought their town was safe with her in charge.

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It was the crack of dawn and a hole in Samara’s curtain which was tightly closed, caused a patch of the morning sun to shine on Samara, who was upright in her bed, her face trickling with sweat.

Her little heart thumped loud and clear against her chest. Her breathing was shallow but fast. Her brain was panicked.

Samara stood up and dragged all of her belongings against the door even though it was already locked, but still even through all the furniture that was heaved against the door, she could still hear a rough knock three times on her bedroom door.

Samara was frozen on the spot. Her brain was having a mini war inside her head but at the end she had a decision.

As quiet as a mouse, she tiptoed over to her collection of soft dolls, grabbed a few and stuffed them under her blanket to make it look like someone was there. Then she grabbed the rest of her dolls and chucked them out of her window to the street right below. She climbed on her window frame. She looked down and gulped. She was all the way on level seven and if she jumped now it could be deadly, but before she had time to argue with herself, there was a tremendously loud bang on her door and some of the furniture had fallen over. From the shock of the thunder-loud bang, she lost her grip and fell down, down, down.

She held her eyes closed tight, but the impact never came. Instead, she bounced up from the soft force of the dolls she had thrown out of the window. She looked up and saw a bald man poking his head out of her bedroom window, his face turned red with rage.

With no more words, she ran. Samara did not care where she ran. All she knew was to get as far away from her town as possible. After a full ten minutes of sprinting, she finally settled next to a calm river bank and hid behind a rock not a second too late. She heard distant screams and she guessed they were from her village. As she assumed, a few minutes later, she saw people running and screaming from left to right but her eyes were dragged to one familiar face.

Samara reached out a hand to beckon her to come to her hiding place.

“Lizzy! Hold on, I’ll tell you what happened, so I woke up by this marching noise, so I looked outside of my window and saw at least a thousand men marching in our town and one blasted in my apartment and—” Samara stopped suddenly her eyes wide open in panic for a second before she crumples to the ground, showing a dart shot into her neck.

Lizzy slowly turned around to find a man, his shiny, bald head shining in the sun and his smile wide enough so she could see the many teeth missing.

“Don’t worry laddie, she’s not dead...yet,” the man started speaking so the putrid smell of his breath tickled Lizzy’s nose. “You will come with me and you must answer me with nothing but the truth.”

They approached an old factory and Lizzy followed the man climbing through a secret passageway leading into the factory.

There were men. Sitting on armchairs counting money they found in wallets, a fowl smile creeping on their face through every piece of money that made them closer to being rich. The man made his way to what seemed like his office and threw Samara carelessly to the ground as Lizzy gasped but didn’t dare to object.

“So, little stupid girl,” the man watched Lizzy’s fists clench at those words joyfully. “Everyone’s been telling me I shouldn’t go and try to steal the queen’s precious jewels because she’s meant to be so scary. Is this true you girl?” he spat at her.

”Well y-yes it is,” Lizzy replied - her bottom lip trembling, but even though Lizzy spoke the truth, she let out a high pitched scream as the vile man slashed a nasty scar across Lizzy’s cheek with his dagger-sharp fingernails looking more like claws and held her neck with his hands.

“I am telling the truth...” Lizzy croaked, gasping for air and with that she fainted.

The man dropped her to the ground, clenched his hands and let out a roar of rage.

”You shall hurt no more of my people.”

The man nervously looked over his shoulder to find a woman with a hood covering her face.

“Now I know I owe you, my faithful villagers, an explanation. I am sorry my people for letting you live this horrible lie for so long. I am sorry I have never revealed my identity. You have known for ten miserable years that I am evil. This was all because of my fear. In my childhood, when I won a beauty contest over my fellow colleague, she has held a grudge against me ever since. When she grew up, she became the Head Of The Police Department and convinced the other policemen that I was a criminal, so they chased after me. I went into hiding for two months until I had enough. The only person who would believe me was my parents. They gave me this black hood.”

The Hooded Lady took down her black hood and used it to wipe the thick, pale foundation off her face, showing beautiful, soft blushed cheeks instead.

“Some of you may know this or may not, but it matters not because I am the Pollen Princess,” the Lady who was known to be all black clothed for ten years took off her black coat to let out the most incredible yellow flower dress spreading around her.

”And now none shall hurt my people.”

”CHARGE!” one of the sinful men bellowed from the crowd as The Pollen Princess floated down.

The queen took out ten men at a time and when she took on her thousandth, she still didn’t break a sweat. After a second of jaw dropping and eyes popping out of their sockets, the applause broke out. Unexpectedly, The Princess next threw a thousand beautifully blended yellow flower petals in the air which immediately caused all the hurt to heal and reunite with their families.

All families rejoiced, tears flowing out of mothers' eyes, so happy to be back with their family. The queen, who looked over all of her people who have put up with her for so long even though she was pretending to be cruel, thought they deserved a party. With another swish of her flowers, grand tables and chairs appeared, gold and silver plates filling themselves up with mountains of food.

“HEAVEN!” A tiny five year old boy whooped as he tried to jump onto the huge cake and eat all of it greedily.

Everyone else also rushed to the tables. Everyone ate, thinking about how life would be now that they have a proper queen, but their thought bubbles were popped by the surprisingly loud voice from the same five year old boy whose face was pink with icing.

“SUGAR RUSH!” All eyes turned to a tiny, crazy boy who was running around madly, and from that, the villagers broke up into laughter that made their bellies hurt for the first time in a very, very long time.