

The logo consists of the words "HORROR", "POP", and "MAG" stacked vertically. Each letter is rendered in a thick, black, blocky font with a white outline, giving it a three-dimensional, isometric appearance. The letters are slightly slanted and overlap, creating a sense of depth and movement. The overall shape is roughly circular, with the top and bottom edges being slightly curved.

Issue One

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reigning Overlord.

@horrorpopmag on Instagram.
horrorpopmag@gmail.com

Chapter 39: Why Sheryl was Cancelled Midway Through Season 4

Noah Farberman

(Recovered from *My Dad Made Me Act, I Made Me Money* by REDACTED, published August 20, 2019)

Sheryl (the actor) had been unwilling, as far back as pitch meetings, to take on the smaller role.

“The name of the show is SHERYL. Not Sheryl’s friends. Not People Who Know Sheryl.”

Still, the writers began to unravel the effect Sheryl (the character) had on the rest of the characters. Sheryl (the actor), having given up her role as staff writer after season 2, had given up her right to direct the narrative, which had, since season 1, been about Sheryl (the character) acting poorly towards a cast of friends. Season 4, therefore, according to the Sheryl-Writers-Bible, would be about the results of those actions and how they isolate Sheryl (the character).

“It should follow Sheryl being alone. That’s what the show really should do.” Sheryl (the actor), seemingly, could not be persuaded.

Still, she filmed the premiere and the first four episodes.

Narratively, episode four ends with Sheryl’s in-show partner, Shane, leaving her. There is a wide pan out over a

lonely Sheryl (character). Roll Credits.

I have copies of those four episodes. They are really good, probably the best we made for the show.

Episode five was to feature the fallout of episode four, emphasizing Shane trying to find a place to crash, Tudy (Sheryl's former best friend) undoing the damage of Sheryl's last visit to her pastry shop, and Gloss (Sheryl's estranged child) moving back to Florida. Episode 5 would end with Sheryl (character) unsure about which person she should make up to. She eventually decides to reach out to no one and resigns herself to awaiting their return.

Sheryl (actor) (trigger warning), the night before filming episode five, tore off her own face with a broken piece of glass (from her dressing room mirror) and consumed it.



“You can’t have someone eat their face mid show and not keep them prominently featured.”

Well, it turns out that we couldn’t show her unskinned face on television at all. Three PAs complained that cleaning up blood and glass was not part of their job. Two camera operators threw up and then were forced (rightfully) to attend sensitivity training. The head writer quit. And then, after the show imploded, the network reported that because the face destruction was a personal choice, it could not be aired. They reassured us that “had the mirror fallen on its own and cut her face off, it would be a different scenario” (HBO). But, as she made it clear to us at the start of filming, on a speeding camera, Sheryl (actor) made the choice to eat her own face because:

“that’s what SHERYL would have done in this situation.”

Manbaby Father

Nahia Syeda

Mother plucks the grains of rice off my chin
slips them in between her lips
gulps down stale air and says
what a lovely dinner!
she rubs her turmeric yellow fingers
over my eyebrows again and again
overworked with the repetitive motions
until the tips swell, reddened like fat tomatoes

until they burst, blood trickling down her broken mug
deformed by the ceramic hard floor
who threw it? a ghost, she thinks, a monster
a someone who isn't her beloved someone
when he's upset- but not upset, only hungry
eyes swollen with too much rest
veins bulging with the effort it takes



to pry her jaw open until it unhinges
so he can step inside and shatter
each rib to suck the fatty marrow
from each bone *pop*
curling into a ball inside
her womb, thumb in mouth
weight so heavy she becomes paper-light
to stay on her feet, to compensate
even when he claws out of her cervix
born a fully grown manbaby-husband or son?
she accepts him regardless
swaths him in a blanket made out of her flesh
because she is a Mother
and that is what Mothers do

A Recent Nightmare

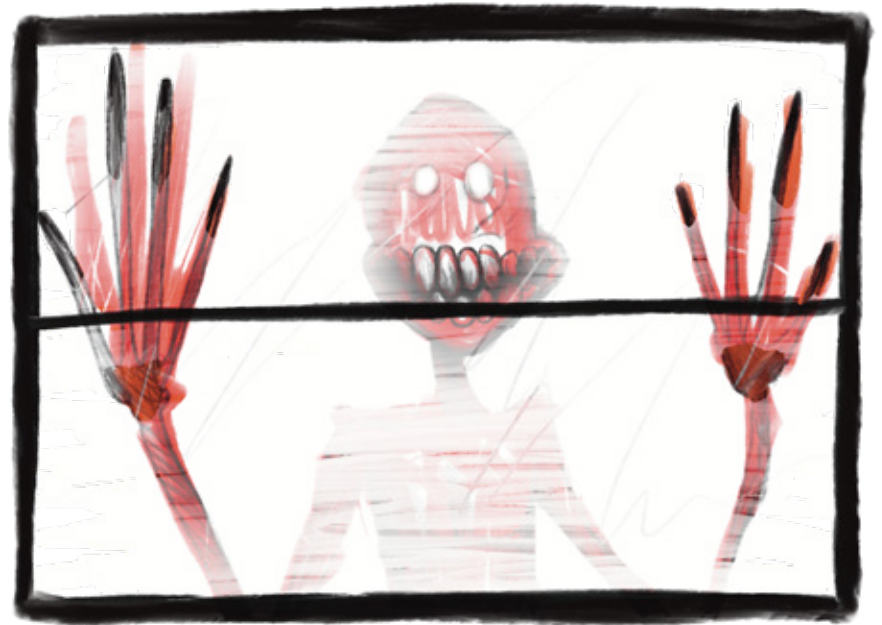
Georgea Jourjouklis

I knew it was there. Like a voice in the wind.

There was no wind, no voice, no breath. Still, I knew it was standing outside my window, watching.

A tall, naked creature peered through the glass. Coconut meat skin, pale and wrinkled, exposed to the sun for far too long. White eyes without eyelids, gaunt cheeks, a shrunken nose, a wide smile with a perfect set of sharp, pearly teeth.

It smiled at me and waved. My stomach twisted.



It did not speak to me, nor had we met before, but I knew its name was The Friend. I *hated* it. I wanted it dead.

It motioned a shriveled hand toward itself, beckoning me closer to the window.

I knew I had to shut the curtains. I had to draw them closed so it couldn't watch me with the eyes of a gutted fish. I took a step closer but its grin widened, beckoning, beckoning. I could trust it. It was a friend, afterall.

It raised its bony hand and rapped against the glass.

The sourness in my stomach climbed my throat and made my eyes water. If I stepped any closer, it would reach right through the glass and drag me out.

So I stared out the window as it knocked, waved, beckoned, then knocked again. I couldn't move, so I began to cry.

I knew it would get in.

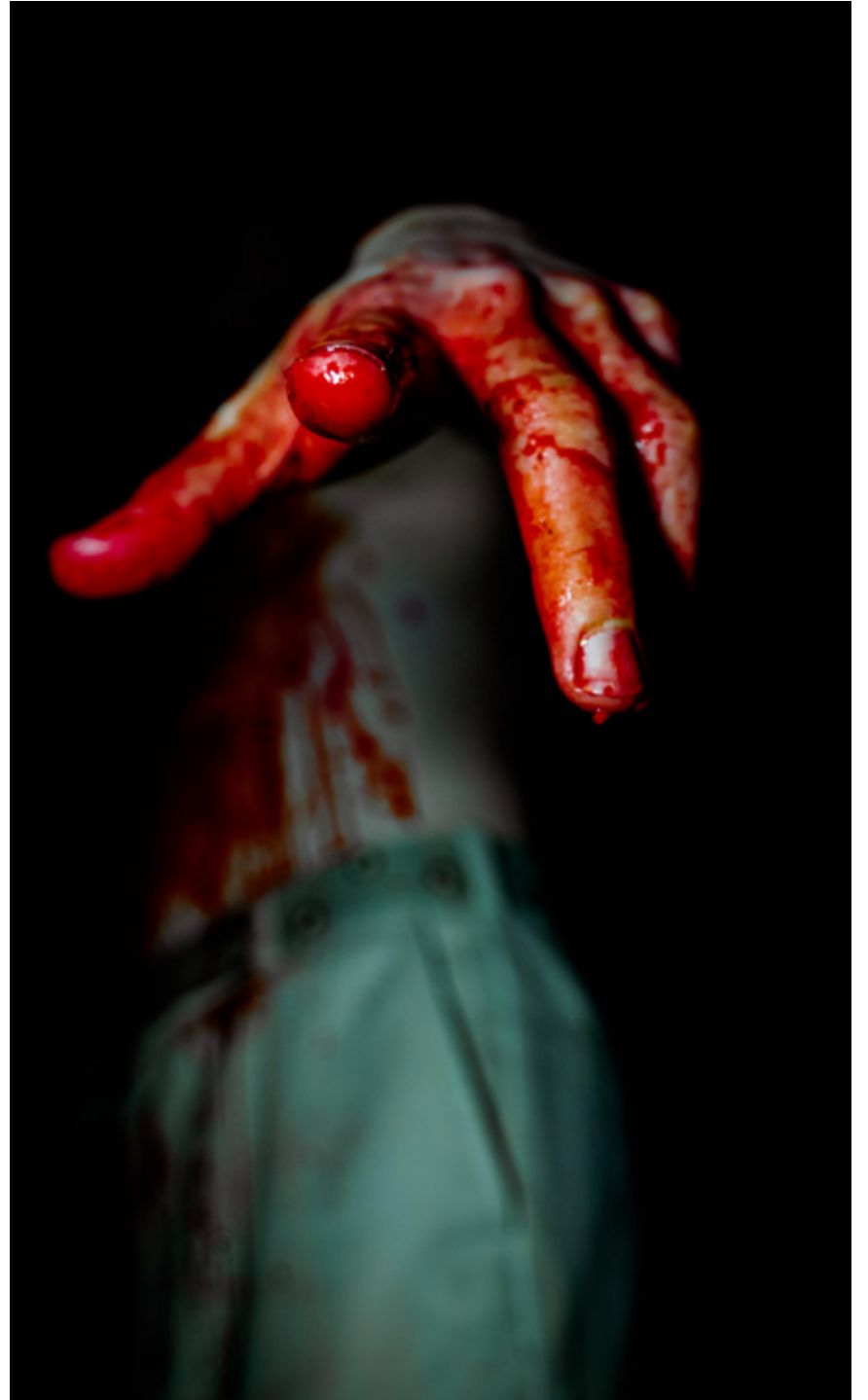
TITLE

Kaitlyn Haddlesey

GORE

Leo Tsisserev





Baystreet Bodies

[Inspired by real life events]

Lucy Ngo



There were stories. Stories with no real source, mostly he-said-she-said bullshit. But she couldn't help but wonder. Beneath the creaking train tracks, tucked away and lonely. Past midnight, the only sounds that spill into the looming spaces that occupy the station are the rumbles of the metal machine. *The next station is Bay. Bay Station.* Why are all automated voices feminine? She wondered. Did a man make up this whimsical, larger-than-life entity whose presence takes over any life it encounters? Or did a woman create this cautionary tale to prevent bad things from happening to other women?

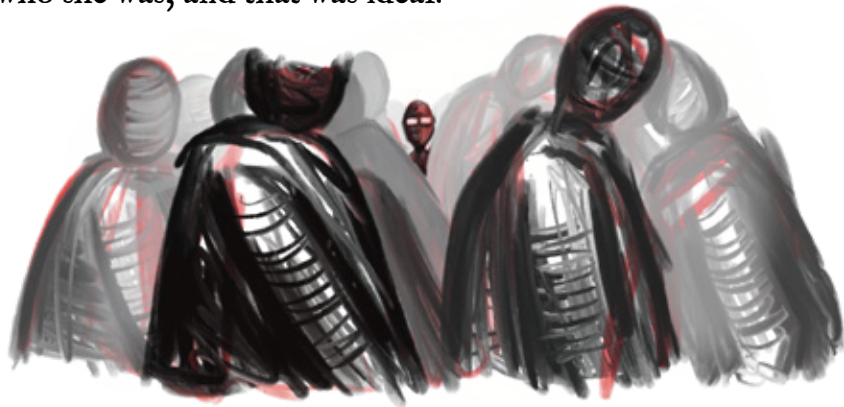
Arriving at Bay. Bay Station.

The station was littered with people that belonged elsewhere, groups of boys in checkered uniforms huddling in a corner, a woman and man who seemed like they just met face-smashing, entranced by their body odours. She couldn't help but feel a tinge of jealousy. They're so immersed in each other that if she came up to them and stared, they wouldn't break their face-merge. She stepped out of the station, took a breath of the clammy spring air, and walked towards her workout studio.

Arriving at Bay. Bay Station.

As she stepped into the station, her senses immediately filled up. The trance-like music sounded both distant and close, like someone tried to conceal it but also hints at a want, some

form of attention from passersby. Turning around on the platform, swarms of bodies line up like cattle, impatiently waiting for their feeding round. They had colour-coded paper wristbands, triumphantly waving them towards a tall man with round glasses, who carelessly waved them towards a downward staircase that led to pitch-black darkness. The station was buzzing with anticipation, a metaphysical energy transfer between bodies eager to release their own tensions from life. She weaved through the crowd and slipped through the cracks of the metal door, avoiding the peripheral of the tall man. Her mediocrity can be an advantage since she can maneuver through spaces with ease. The crowd morphed in waves. She could only make out shadows and strobes of light, and she kind of liked it. The anonymity. Nobody here knew who she was, and that was ideal.



She noticed a stumpy figure separated from the herd of moving bodies in the corner of her peripheral. The figure stood still, barely moving. They were wearing thick, square frames, enlarging the milky bulbs of his cornea. Their presence was stark, like they wanted to be seen in that very moment. The strobes of light orbited around them, tiptoeing carefully to avoid their wrath. The bodies were swaying, but not them. She caught their gaze, and felt a tinge of disgust. Their eyes

were dark orbs, wet and round, tantalizing with curiosity. She quickly looked away, and was drawn towards the energy of the crowd. Soon enough, she eloped into a rhythm, letting the music take over her conscience.

The crowd parted like an ocean wave as she stumbled through them, desperately gasping for air. The drink in her hand sloshed around, spilling droplets across the stairs as she raced to the station's entrance. Something is wrong, she can feel it. What was in that drink? Where did it come from? She had no answers to those questions brimming within her. She found herself on Bay station platform, going Westbound. Westbound means home. In that moment, she was glad she memorized her way home from the workout studio. Thank god for her monthly Barry's subscription, the heroic saviour of her bizarre night. The hissing of the subway doors indicated it slamming shut. As she slumped down on the stained seat, she wondered what drew her to this space on this ordinary Wednesday night.

She turned on the television. It blinked to the news network. A brunette woman was staring gravely at her audience. Over the curve of her exposed neck and shoulder, like an advising devil, there is a square graphic of police vehicles, ambulances, and stretchers with neon yellow details that you just cannot miss. It then pans to a man, with dark, angular glasses. His eyes did not shift from the camera, but his body is twisted away, facing the crowd. In bold text under the footage was 'SUSPECT IN QUESTION'. I unmute the sound.

—*a mass homicide, she is saying. At least 5 bodies, all women, were found at Bay subway station*—

She turned off the TV. She yanked the plug out by the cord.

Goodnight Moon

Scott Laudati

The kids read *Goodnight Moon* to Mom before they went
to sleep
and after the final goodnight Mom realized the children's
book
she'd spent a year writing would never be that good.
Was her ex right? Was she stupid?

The next morning she poured milk into the kids' bowls
of Frosted Flakes and loaded up the minivan.
After the last one was dropped off for homeroom
Mom waved at the crossing guard and parked the car.
Then she walked to the pitcher's mound and lit herself on
fire
(with a whole red box of diesel fuel and a cigarette).
She went up like a wood barn but they dragged her off in
time
and now the other mothers cup their hands together at her
front door
and they share the blue pills prescribed by Dr. Patel.

The kids got taken away and Mom started working on a
novel.
She never wore a bra anymore and she traded
the minivan for a Mini Cooper.
"Do you miss the kids?" her friend asked.
Mom took the orange pill bottle between her index and
thumb
and shook the pills back and forth like a maraca.

“Not if I have enough of these,” she said.

They both laughed and tapped their pills together with a
“Cheers”.

Her ex was wrong. Mom wasn't stupid,
she'd just buried her spark until it became a volcano.



so I swallowed monsters

Nathan Agustin

so I swallowed monsters
When I first entered this world
My farm was full of beasts
that I grew then killed then ate

so I swallowed monsters
Claws gouge my guts out clean
They roar and roll inside of me
and demand I feed them more

so I swallowed monsters,
That wail inside my ears
In my right, they say I'm empty
In my left, they say I'll burst

so I swallowed monsters,
but they themselves need food
Their teeth rake out my flesh
but feast on my soul more

so I swallowed monsters
Until I threw up hell
This hunger screams and now again
I beg to feast anew

someone please swallow me
Or I'll crawl across the world
With sunken eyes and hollow bones
and seek to swallow more



girls night
uhohcowgirl





Resurrect Me

Sarah

*When my time comes around,
Lay me gently in the cold, dark earth.
No grave can hold my body down,
I'll crawl home to her.*

—“Work Song”
by Hozier



Come lay your hands on whatever's left to love.
I have known nothing but dirt and spores until now. Nothing
But the closeness of the earth's body with my own.
Nothing but the land, and the rot—the memory
Of what happened to me. Before your hands, I had lost
All feeling that, at one time, I had a chest that was beating.
I had forgotten the feel of the other side of the earth.
The light. The oxygen. The music. Your touch is an awaken-
ing I had abandoned all hope for. How was I to know
When my time came around

That I would feel the warmth of another woman's lips
Again. When you kissed me, could you taste the mycelium
Lacing my mouth? Did you want to run when you saw
The husk that was left of me? It's hard to say where
The fungi ends and I begin. When they planted my body,
Severed and spoiled by the savage of their hands, how could
they know
The spores would take pity on a dyke like me, the cordyceps

offering

A lifeline in the depths of me. They did not bury me with
the intent to preserve. They did not mean to
Lay me gently in the cold, dark earth.

For a time, I was ready to surrender completely—
Let the earth crack me open at the sternum. I thought,
perhaps I would birth something lovely. Amongst the toad
stools,
I would be a garden of violets. I had seen the end and it was
calamitous.

Let me leave behind something beautiful. I was all but waiting
For the mold to hand me over to the worms. But here,
Your hands felt the rot of my body and you dug deeper.
Here, perhaps I could abandon the rigor mortis to the dirt
At last. The spores are chanting, now:

No grave can hold your body down.

Here is a different kind of loving I never knew
I could be held by. Here is garden. Here is sunlight.
The spores have been holding my limbs together

For your love to mend. When they savaged me, they said
A love like this deserved a poisonous end. You are pulling me
From the earth now, and I laugh at the memory. I said,
you have never known the love passed between two women.
The fungi can consume what's left of my legs. The cordyceps
can
claw for the mind of me. Leave me in pieces in this bed of
decay,

I'll crawl home to her.

Biographies

Noah Farberman writes from Toronto Ontario Canada, where he has lived for 25 years. Joseph Donato is fantastic and makes art a joy to ingest. It's my bio but you are the Overlord so if you don't like what I've submitted then you can delete the second and third sentence.



Nahia Syeda is a writer in Scarborough who likes writing about the patriarchy.

Georgea is a recent graduate of the University of Toronto Scarborough and a future English teacher. As a writer, she is focused on novels, poetry, and normalizing queerness in the fantasy genre.



kaitlyn,

awaiting

bio



Leo Tsisserev is an 18-year-old film student studying at T.M.U. Armed to the teeth with obscure, unique, and absurd creativity. This guy was born on a drum-stool, he's been playing for over a decade, always looking for some abstruse new pattern or technique to show off at his small gigs around town. Despite starting in sketch comedy, he tends to be enthralled by horror aesthetics: the abandoned hospitals, the gruesome gore, and the brain-boiling humanity of it all!!! He finds it quite inspiring, but not in a weird way... probably.



Scott Laudati lives in NY where he runs *Bone Machine* from his apartment. He is the author of *Play The Devil, Baby Bring Back 1997*, and *Camp Winapooka*. Visit him anywhere @ScottLaudati.



Nathan Agustin is a 2nd year English/Creative Writing student at UTSC. When he's not writing he's either reading, playing video games, or cooking. And when he's not doing any, he's contemplating the futility of existence.



Lucy is a gore-infatuated Catwoman. She is an Aubrey Plaza idolizer (who isn't, though). A Goosebumps enthusiast, a lover of *Az4*. Safe to say she indulges in horror to stay sane in this post-apocalyptic capitalist hellhole. Some may describe her as a cold, sarcastic, angry dissertation (the dissertation descriptor is actually true and recent). She currently obsesses over family-backstabbing TV shows like *Succession*, takeout sushi and feminist novels (and no, it does not include *My Body* by Emily Ratajowski). Born in Vietnam and exported to Canada, Lucy is just a girl trying to navigate the mightiest horror of all: life!



When I hear the word horror, womanhood is the first thing I think of. As a person that loves horror films, I am struck with the dilemma of the vile way in which women are treated in horror. To combat the misogynistic ways of horror, yet still encapsulating what I've always loved about it, the uneasiness, the discomfort, the way it makes you reflect on your own reactions to such disturbing things. *girls night* takes the gore and the discomfort of horror, not at the expense of women, rather women are the focal point, their anger, rage, and emotions are presented in a way that women have been taught to hide.





Sarah Hilton (she/they) is a lesbian librarian, or... a lesbrarian! Her work has been featured in several print and online journals including *Minola*, *Untethered*, and *CV2*. She is the author of *Saltwater Lacuna* (Anstruther Press) and the digital chapbook *homecoming* (MODEL Press). They live in Toronto.

OVERLORD'S ADDRESS

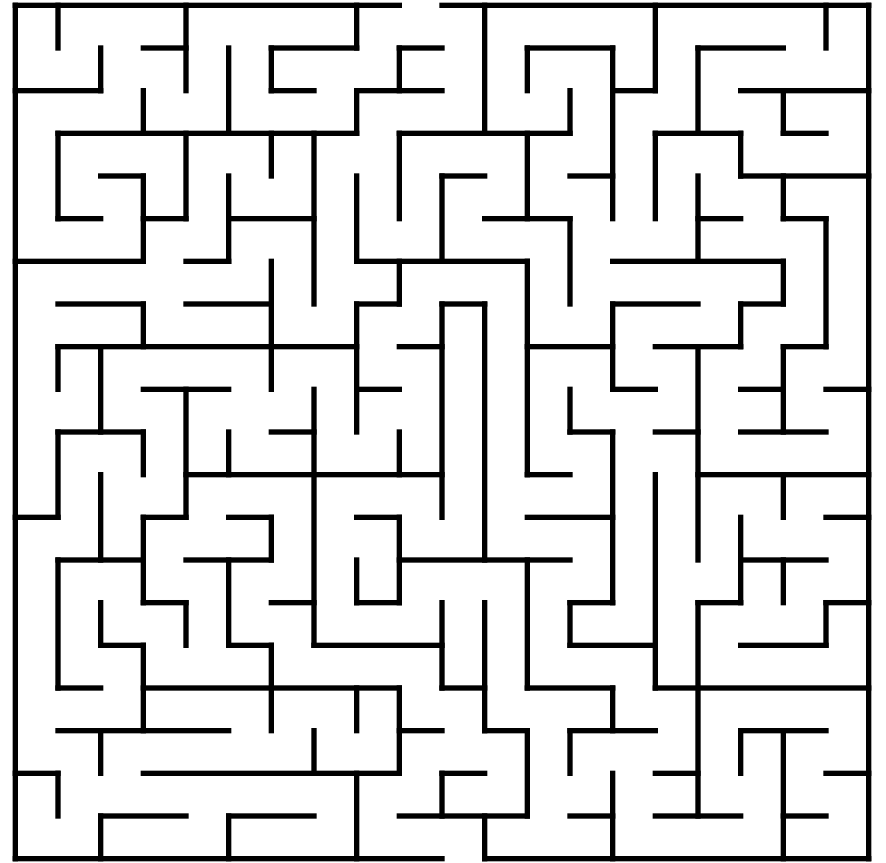
Oh jeez, oh boy, oh wow. I couldn't be prouder of this project, which began as an attempt to have fun with horror and has transformed into a wonderful community of creeps.

Thank you to all ten contributors for loaning their talents to this book and their unwavering patience as I put it together. Thank you to everyone who submitted work, or asked about the issue, or is reading this now. You rock!

Please enjoy these stories, poems, artworks, and activities, even if it's the last thing you do.

Bring back fun and long live horror!

- Joseph Donato
Overlord of Horror Pop Mag



Horror Pop Mag Word Search!



F	O	K	C	G	A	M	Z	N	A	P	G	S
L	P	K	H	O	Z	I	E	R	S	D	C	A
G	O	C	O	R	R	Y	M	E	P	R	O	N
C	P	G	G	E	H	P	A	S	B	O	C	W
O	A	I	L	O	B	A	M	K	E	L	O	F
R	L	R	D	R	V	O	K	M	S	L	N	N
D	B	L	O	O	D	B	O	Y	L	C	U	C
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C	R	N	A	O	Q	A	W	L	P	E	M	W
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Q	S	I	C	D	O	W	B	E	X	R	A	K
B	A	Y	S	T	A	T	I	O	N	P	A	O
M	I	N	I	V	A	N	O	F	G	U	O	P

GIRL'S NIGHT

MOM ON FIRE

SWALLOW

BLOOD BOY

ROLL CREDITS

COCONUT MEAT

HOZIER

- *SECRET SURPRISE WORD* -

OVERLORD

MOTHERS

GORE

BAY STATION

MINIVAN

CORDYCEPS

KAITLYN WORD

Contest!

Design a spooky bookmark
and send a photo or scan to
horrorpopmag@gmail.com.

The winner will have their
bookmark included in
the second issue of
Horror Pop Mag!

EEK!

P.S. Your design BETTER
stay within the confines of
this rectangle. You don't
even want to know what
will happen if not.

Okay, bye guys! See you later!

