

GRUENE'S NOT SO HAPPILY EVER AFTER:
A FAIRYTALE IN GERMAN AND ENGLISH

HONORS THESIS

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by

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Abstract

The purpose of my project is to create an original story that includes fairytale aspects, the German language and sexual violence. I hope that my piece will serve as a unique example of a creative-academic project for those creating a thesis through the Honors College as well as the English and Language departments. When starting my project, I had to brainstorm and research topics that are important to me and that reader could relate and benefit from. I decided to create a story that focuses on sexual violence at the root of the #MeToo movement because it has helped give voice in an amplified and impactful way. Traditional violence from Grimm's fairytales has disappeared from contemporary fairytales, which may have contributed to the silence surrounding sexually violated victims. Integrating German language was important because of the history within my Central Texas home, which was settled part by German immigrants, whose culture contributes to our contemporary food, music, storytelling, and cultures. The challenge I faced while creating this project was finding an appropriate age group. Children have traditionally been the audience for fairytales. However, due to the explicit violence of this story and considering contemporary taboos surrounding the discussion of graphic violence with children, I have ultimately decided to write my story in both traditional and modern fairytale elements for teenagers and young adults in order to bring a narrative of caution back into popular culture.

Author's Artist Statement

Why must we shield young readers from sexual violence? For my undergraduate thesis, I created a short story that is similar to a child's fairytale, but it is aimed towards teenagers and young adult readers. It was important to include sexual violence through elements of both traditional and modern fairytales, because the many boys and girls that experience this, but I had to keep the parents and our era in mind. Not only is the history of Central Texas's development from German culture important, but providing a tool that anyone can use to learn a new language is important. I incorporated an issue that I believe has made a major impact on society, which is the issue of sexual harassment. Together, all of these elements have helped me create a project that will bring a narrative of caution back into stories and make sure teenager and young adult readers are knowledgeable and know how to help those who have been sexually violated.

Incorporating different elements of modern and traditional fairytales allowed me to intertwine sexual violence in a way that teenagers and young readers can be knowledgeable about these issues, but I still had to keep parents in mind. I have always had a fascination with fairytales, especially the Brothers Grimm retellings. I wanted my story to resemble both traditional fairytales in combination with modern stories. The original art and details that go with the traditional fairytales, like "Little Red Riding Hood," "Rumpelstiltskin" and "Hansel and Gretel" are quite gruesome. Although times have significantly changed since the era of the Brothers Grimm, the old stories made a much larger impact on children. For instance, "Little Red Riding Hood" was about not talking to strangers, which is why the wolf is so important. Not only is he a terrifying animal, but the horrific detail about how he eats Little Red's grandmother is quite

chilling. In order to truly capture the young children's attention, these stories had to be terrifying.

By incorporating elements of traditional and modern fairytales, I am able to extend the reader age group and make the situations encountered by the characters more relatable to today. I wanted my story to be modern enough that it would be appropriate for many readers, but traditional enough so that the story can retain some frightening characteristics, similar to "Little Red Riding Hood." I created this story with the intention of having it read by many different age groups, but due to the sexual violence briefly mentioned here, the age groups may be limited. My original age group for this story was elementary aged kids, but the way I wanted to write my story might have been too upsetting for children of that age.

Traditional fairytales have been altered drastically to better suite modern young readers and this is the parents' preference. Times have changed since the era of the Brothers Grimm and we are more careful about what we expose children to. While this has some benefits, I believe this contains pros and cons for both the leisure of reading and the lessons that readers take from stories. For example, instead of fearing our children will talk to strangers on the street, we fear they might communicate with strangers through cellphones or computers. In this case, the way we approach this narrative of caution has changed, but there are still other ways to bring it back. I respect the parents' reasons for shielding children from certain information, but knowledge about sexual violence is important if children were to encounter this or need to help those who have.

Not only in our country, but around the world, boys and girls of all ages have experienced some form of sexual violence. Naturally, all fairytales include a moral or a

lesson for the reader. While many of our modern-day fairytales still do this, they are extremely censored and are limited to the fairly tame circumstances that the characters face. I want my readers to be able to connect with the story and relate it to events that are happening in our own time. If we censor stories, I don't believe readers, specifically younger readers, will benefit much from the lesson.

Ever since I declared German as my minor, I have grown a strong passion for the language and culture of German Texans in Central Texas towns like Gruene, New Braunfels, and Fredericksburg. Since my story takes place near a fantasy version, I thought it would be interesting to incorporate the German language into my story. Unfortunately, the Texas German language is dying. There are very few people alive who still speak this style of German, and no one can learn this style unless taught directly by a native Texas German speaker. I wish I was able to incorporate Texas German language characteristics, but unfortunately, I am not familiar with this style and didn't have access to someone who is knowledgeable about this language. My next best choice was to translate the story to modern German, which would be easier for others to translate and learn.

Because of this, my story could help teenagers and young readers to learn this language. The German language is geographically important because of the many different German cities, such as New Braunfels, Fredericksburg and Boerne, which were settled by German immigrants. When the Germans settled, they brought a piece of home with them to Texas. For example, sauerbraten, polka, architecture, language, and other elements have made a contribution from the German culture in Texas. After all these years, you can still walk through these towns and have a Texas German experience.

Learning a new language can be hard, so I wanted to create a bilingual text that others may use in their own language learning journey. I am hoping to catch the attention of those interested in learning the German language by creating a story in both English and German. Since German is not my first language, I have had my fair share of struggling with the language, but thank goodness for the wonderful German teachers at Texas State University. What many of these professors have done in the past and continue to do is have us sing songs in German that we may be familiar with in English and sing it in German. Not only did this help us with our understanding of the song, but we learned to pronounce the words correctly. However, not everyone has access to German lessons like this. What I have found to be helpful is reading traditional fairytales in German. I know it works for me and I hope it will work for others as well.

I wanted my story to incorporate a lesson, but more specifically, I wanted it to include a relatable situation for today's teenagers and young adults. My inspiration came from people speaking out about their sexual assault or harassment. Some of the characters involved in these stories include Harvey Weinstein, Larry Nassar, and many more monstrous men. Unfortunately, sexual violence happens, which is why I wanted it to be my sole focus of this story.

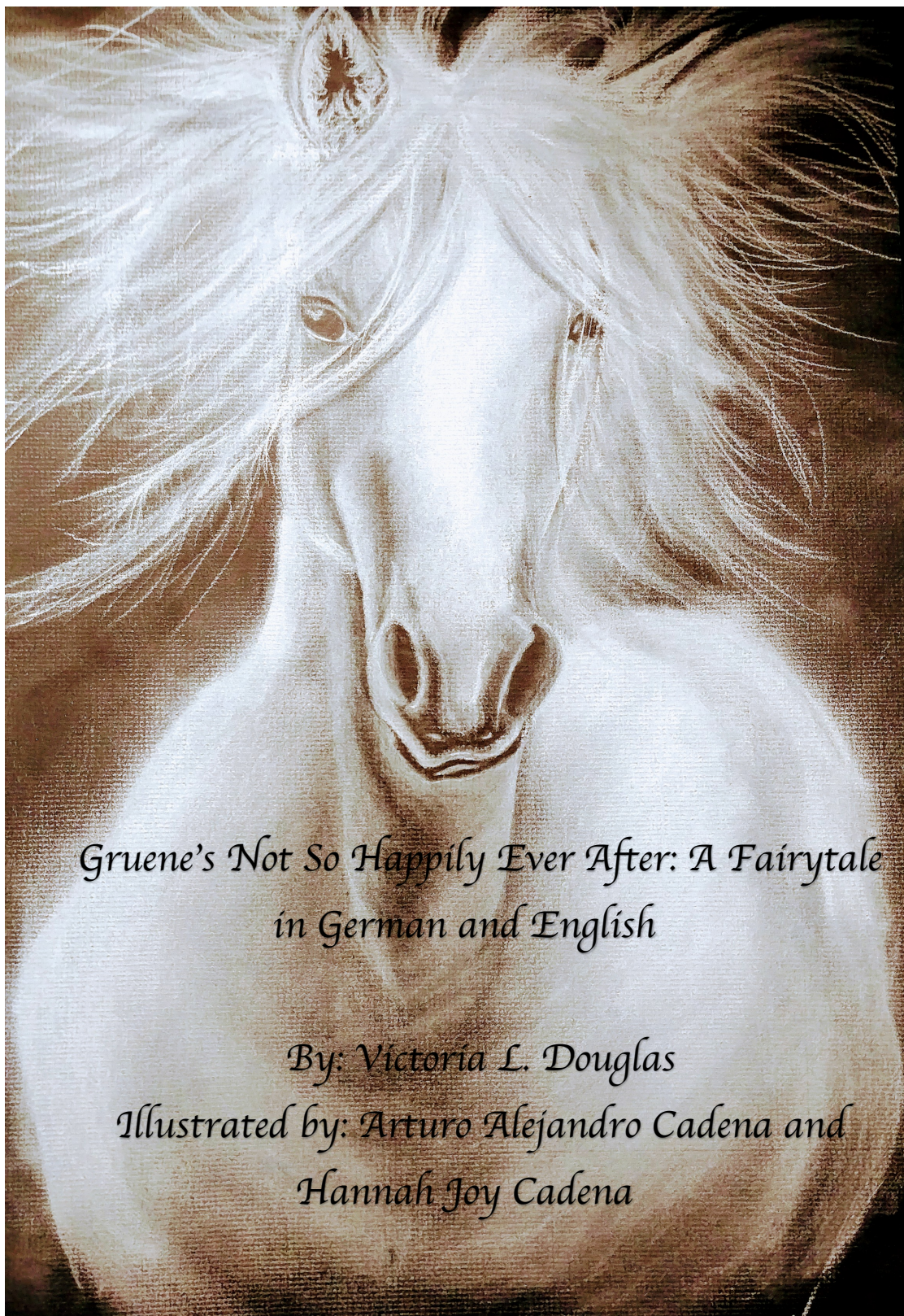
Growing up, I never read books about men or women who have gone through these circumstances until I became an adult. I understand that sexual violence is not an easy topic for young readers, but I feel it is necessary for teenagers and young readers to read it. It is necessary because men and women of all ages have suffered through these unfortunate events. The sad truth of sexual assaults and harassments is that they have been around for ages.

I noticed that the #MeToo movement seems to help survivors to not feel ashamed of what they endured and to find support among other survivors. After suffering through such a traumatic event, many men and women have felt ashamed, lonely, and helpless, because they believed they were alone in these situations. This is why I appreciate the #MeToo movement, which is also an inspiration for my story. I don't expect all readers of my story to have the same connection, due to personal experiences, but I want readers to be aware of sexual violence and take action by encouraging survivors to speak out. After reviewing social media and articles about sexual violence, men and women have been able to confide in each other, as well as gain a form of strength and empowerment. Since this movement has had such an impact in our own society, I felt it was necessary to include it in my story. While my story is fictional, I can only hope that the use of #MeToo will help it catch the attention of readers like it has throughout social media.

Now that I am at end with this project, I have reflected on the ways in which I could have related more German language and Central Texas German culture into my story. If you live in Texas, you probably know that Wurstfest in New Braunfels, Texas is a celebration similar to Oktoberfest in Germany. After completing my story, I realized this could have been a great location where the character Eloise, goes missing. I also noticed that I could have incorporated Texas German food, music, clothing, and even slang to make it more relevant and interesting for local readers. Although I have plenty of modifications to do to my story, I would hope to one day make this part of a larger collection.

In conclusion, I incorporated three things into my project that I believe may help readers. First, combining both modern day and traditional fairy tale themes permits me to

capture the audience's attention. Second, having my story in both English and German may help readers learn another language. Third, incorporating sexual assault and survivorship will help with building awareness of the importance of speaking out and connecting with others in the wake of sexual violence. These three things have helped me craft a unique project that brings a narrative of caution back into fairytales in order to make today's teenage and young adult readers aware of sexual violence and how to help those who may have been violated.



*Gruene's Not So Happily Ever After: A Fairytale
in German and English*

By: Victoria L. Douglas

*Illustrated by: Arturo Alejandro Cadena and
Hannah Joy Cadena*

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I want to thank Dr. Lisa Haegele for taking the time to help me revise the German portion of this project. Working with you has not only improved my German skills, but I have grown more of a respect for the German language during this project. I love that we were able to share our love for the Brother's Grimm's fairytales throughout this project.

I am very appreciative for the beautiful artwork that brother and sister, Arturo and Hannah Cadena have done. Time was our biggest factor, but both of you were capable of working around schedules to present the beautiful works of art. I can't thank you both enough for going above and beyond to bring my project to life.

I want to give a special thanks to Dr. Laura Ellis Lai for being my supervisor throughout this project. This project would have never become what it is, if it wasn't for you. I am very appreciative that you were willing to take the time to work independently with me. There were many obstacles that we endured along the way, but with your patience and expertise, we were able to overcome them. I also want to thank you for being supportive the entire time. Because of you, I have gained more confidence in my writing and will write from the heart, without restricting myself.

Thank you all.

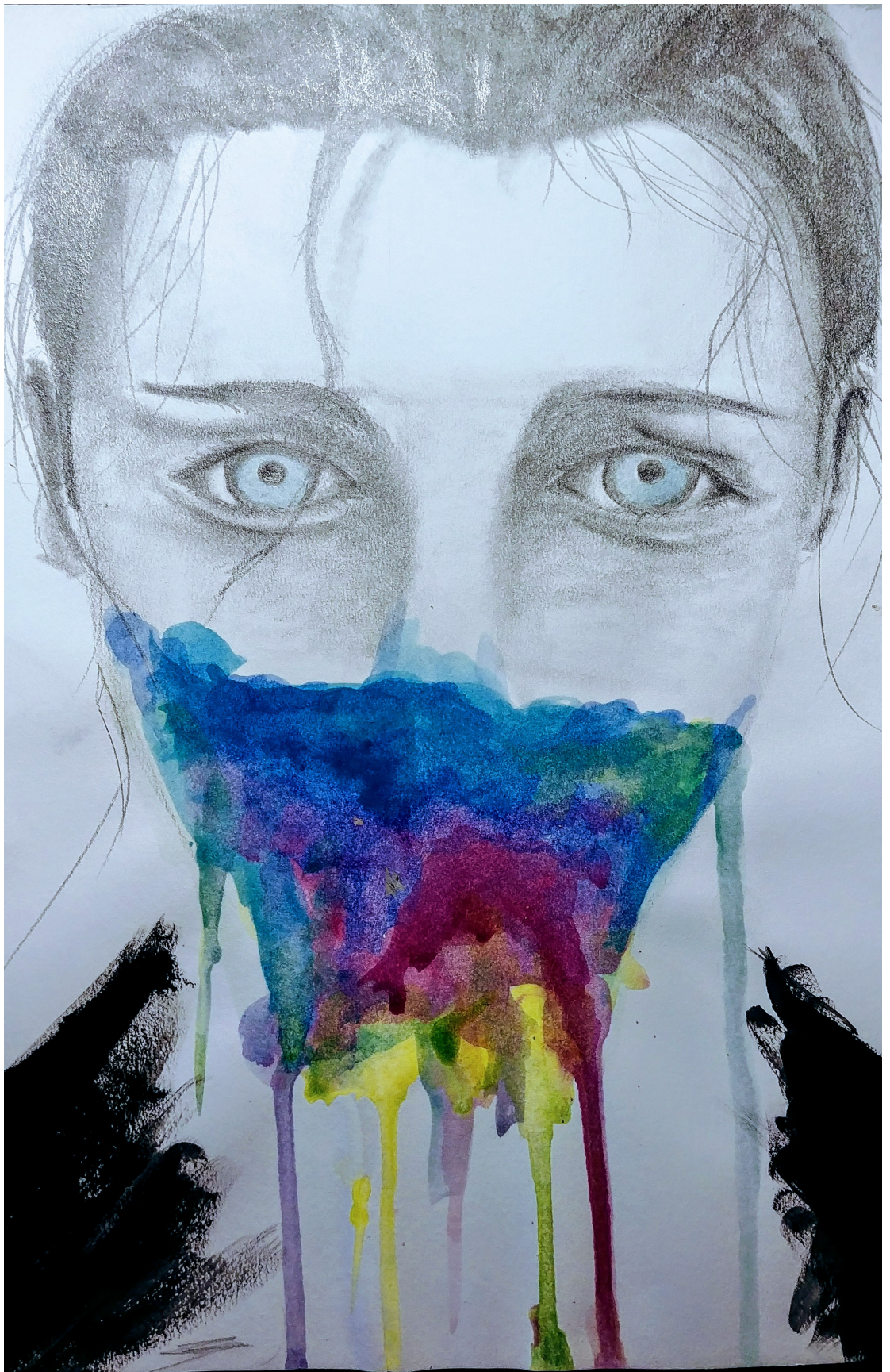
Gruene was a magical land that is one of a kind when it came to beauty and the life that filled it. You could see green for miles with blooming flowers everywhere you turn and the king's castle could be seen from anywhere in the land. The forest and bodies of water should always be respected because they are alive. The water in Gruene was so clear, that mermaids' fins glistened from hundreds of feet below the water.

Gruene ist ein magisches Land, das einzigartig ist, voller Schönheit und Lebendigkeit. Man kann überall kilometerweit grüne wiesen mit blühenden Blumen sehen und von der Burg des Königs kann überall im Land gesehen werden. Der Wald und die Gewässer sollten immer respektiert werden, weil sie leben. Das Wasser in Gruene ist so klar, dass man die glitzernden Flossen der Meerjungfrauen in hundert Kilometer tiefem Wasser sehen kann.



Don't be fooled; much like the world we live in, Gruene has its evil too; while there were many kind creatures in this world, there were also wicked beings. These beings included a prince who would kiss beautiful women without consent, a frog that harassed women until they kissed him, and many others. These foul creatures damaged many lives because they only care about their perverted pleasures. Before I jump into that, let me introduce Johana and her two best fairy friends.

Lass dich nicht täuschen, so wie die Welt, in der wir leben, hat Gruene auch sein Übel. Während es auf dieser Welt viele nette Wesen gibt, gibt es auch böse Wesen. Zu diesen Wesen gehört ein Prinz, der schöne Frauen ohne ihre Einwilligung küssen werden, ein Frosch, der Frauen belästigt, bis sie ihn küssen, und viele andere böse Wesen. Diese abscheulichen Kreaturen beschädigen viele Leben, weil sie sich nur um ihre perversen Vergnügungen kümmern. Bevor ich darauf eingehe, möchte Johana und ihre beiden besten Feenfreunde vorstellen.



Johana was a water fairy, and her two best friends, Eloise and Ute, were both garden fairies. Eloise was very outgoing and would talk to anyone, which was why no one seemed like a stranger to her. Johana wished she was optimistic like her because she always saw the good in every creature. Unlike Eloise, Ute and Johana were more cautious of their surroundings, because they encountered a revolting being. One thing is certain: they all love Gruene and the adventures it brings.

Johana ist eine Wasserfee und ihre beiden besten Freunde, Eloise und Ute, sind beide Gartenfeen. Eloise ist sehr kontaktfreudig und wird mit allen reden, deshalb ist ihr niemand fremd. Johana wünschte, dass Sie optimistisch wäre, wie sie es ist, weil sie immer das Gute in jeder Kreatur sieht. Im Vergleich zu Eloise sind Ute und Johana vorsichtiger in unserer Umgebung, weil wir auf ein ekelhaftes Wesen gestoßen sind. Eines ist sicher, wir alle lieben Gruene und die Abenteuer, die es dort gibt.



One afternoon, the friends flew to Fillory to get some bluebonnets. Fillory had the most beautiful bluebonnets of all the land. The petals have a bluish-purple tint with white accents, which would complement the fairy garden well.

Einen Nachmittag flogen meine Freunde und ich nach Fillory, um Bluebonnets zu holen. Fillory hat die schönsten Bluebonnets des ganzen Landes. Das Blumenblatt haben eine bläulich-violette Tönung mit weißen Akzenten, die den Feengarten gut ergänzen.

Once they arrived, it didn't take long for Eloise to separate herself from Johana and Ute. She was already talking to a gnome while her friends looked for the bluebonnets. They didn't mind, because she did this quite often, but sometimes they worried she would get herself in danger.

Als wir gekommen sind, hat es nicht lange gedauert, bis Eloise sich von uns trennte. Sie sprach schon mit einem Gnom, während Ute und Johana nach den Bluebonnets gesucht haben. Es machte nichts aus, weil sie das oft getan hat, aber manchmal machten wir uns Sorgen, sie würde sich in Gefahr bringen.

After they found the flowers at a local nymph's shop, they looked for Eloise. All that they found was Eloise's favorite rose pin lying on the ground. She does not go anywhere without it. That's when they realized something terrible happened.

Nachdem wir die Blumen in einem heimischen Nymphenladen gefunden hatten, suchten wir nach Eloise. Alles, was wir fanden, war Eloises Rosenbrosche, die auf dem Boden lag hat. Die Rosenbrosche war ihre Lieblingsbrosche, die sie immer dabei hat. Da wurde uns klar, dass etwas Schreckliches passiert war.



They asked if anyone had seen Eloise. That's when a local centaur told them a creature named Heinrich has been disguising himself as friendly beings in order to capture young, pure fairies for his perverted desires. When he takes their purity, he gains extraordinary power, but once it wears off he moves on to new victims. Ute and Johana felt helpless after what they had learned. This was when they realized Gruene was not as peaceful a place as they thought.

Wir fragten, ob irgendjemand Eloise gesehen hat, als ein lokaler Zentaur ihnen erzählte, dass eine Kreatur, die Heinrich heiße, sich als ein freundliches Wesen verkleidete, um junge jungfräuliche Feen zu entführen und somit seine perversen Wünsche zu erfüllen. Sobald er ihre Jungfräulichkeit genommen habe, bekomme er außerordentliche Macht, aber sobald es nach lasse, brauche er neue Opfer. Ute und Johana fühlten sich hilflos, als sie das gelernt hatten. Johana merkte, dass Gruene nicht so freundlich ist, wie sie gedacht hat.

Since Heinrich disguised himself so well, it would be almost impossible to find him. All they knew was when he wasn't in disguise, he had a long torso with rough claws and sharp antlers.

He had large hooves like a bull and his face was
half man, half goat.

Da Heinrich sich so gut tarnen konnte, wäre es fast unmöglich gewesen, ihn zu finden. Alles, was wir wussten, ist, wenn er nicht verkleidet war, hatte er einen langen Torso, rauhe Krallen und ein scharfes Geweih. Er hatte große Hufe, wie ein Stier, und sein Gesicht war halb Mensch, halb Ziege.



Ute and Johana were trying to figure out how to find Eloise when they noticed the creek was oddly quiet and no creatures were near. A beautiful white horse walked towards them. The horse could tell that something was bothering the fairies and wanted to try and cheer them up. He offered to take them to his home, where the most beautiful flowers grew. The horse said they can take as many as they want for the fairy garden if they all go together.

Ute und Johana diskutierten darüber, wie sie Eloise finden konnten, als sie gemerkt haben, dass der Bach seltsam ruhig war und keine Kreaturen in der Nähe waren. Ein kuschelweiches weißes Pferd ist auf uns zugesprungen. Das schöne Pferd konnte sehen, dass uns etwas gestört waren und wollte uns aufmuntern. Er lud uns zu ihm ein, wo die schönsten Blumen wachsen. Das Pferd sagte, sie könnten für den Feengarten so viele nehmen, wie sie wollten, wenn sie alle zusammen gehen.

Ute and Johana thought it was strange that the only animal to be near them was the horse, but Gruene is filled with surprises. They saw the horse's true form in the water's reflection, because he was too busy trying to win our trust to notice. That is why it didn't take them long until we realized that the charming horse was Heinrich himself. They pretended to befriend the horse in hopes that he would lead them to where he keeps his victims.

Sie haben es seltsam gefunden, dass das einzige Tier, das in unserer Nähe war, das Pferd war, aber Gruene ist voller Überraschungen. In dem Spiegelbild im Wasser haben wir die wahre Gestalt des Pferd gesehen, weil er damit zu beschäftigt war, unser Vertrauen zu gewinnen, um es zu bemerken. Deshalb haben wir nicht lange gebraucht, bis wir gemerkt haben, dass Heinrich das entzückende schöne Pferd war. Wir haben vorgegeben, ein Freund zu sein, in der Hoffnung, dass er uns dorthin geführt hat, wo er seine Opfer hielt.

Ute and Johana were shocked because not only was Heinrich's cottage in one of the most beautiful parts of Gruene, but he was not far from Eloise and Ute's fairy garden. While Heinrich was preparing the tea, Ute and Johana quickly searched the cottage for Eloise. At first, the cottage looked normal, but Johana found shredded fairy wings tucked in a corner. The fairies knew Eloise was there and they had to get out before anything else happened.

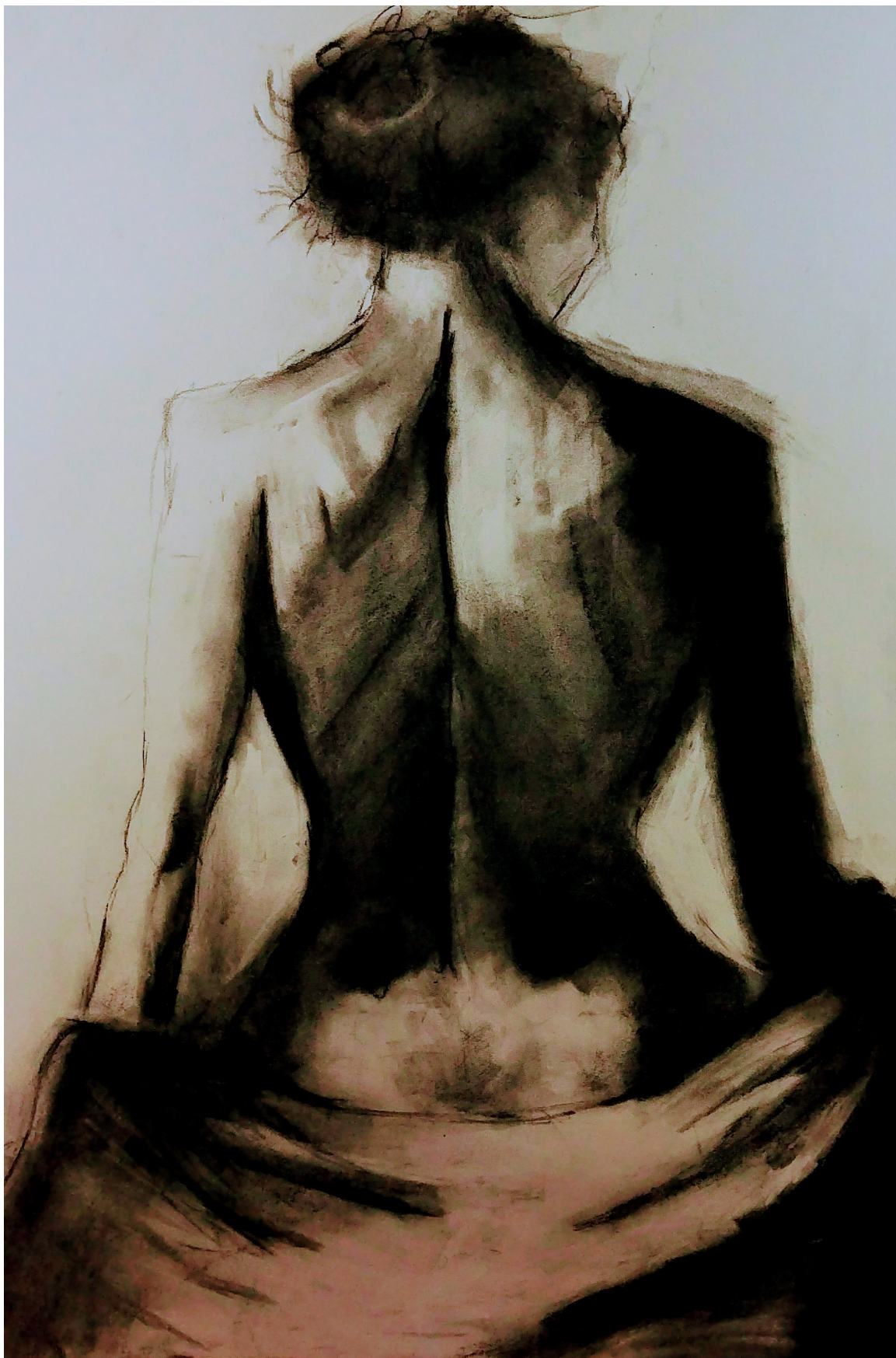
Ute und Johana waren schockiert, weil Heinrichs Haus nicht nur in einem der schönsten Teile von Gruene stand, sondern auch nicht weit von Eloise und Utes Feengarten. Während Heinrich den Tee zubereitete, haben Ute und ich schnell nach Eloise gesucht.

Zuerst hat das Häuschen normal aus gesehen, aber bald fand Johana zerfetzte Feenflügel, die in einer Ecke verstecken wurden.

Ute und Johana haben gewusst, dass Eloise hier war und wir mussten sie rausholen, bevor noch Schlimmeres geschehen wäre.

It didn't take long until they found Eloise and another fairy named Sofie tied up and exposed on a bed. They managed to get them out safely and rushed straight home. Johana tried to inform the royals about what happened, but Eloise and Sofie begged her not to say anything.

Sie habe nicht lange gebraucht, bis wir Eloise und eine andere Fee, die Sofie heißt, auf einem Bett entblößt vorgefunden haben. Sie konnten sie sicher herausholen und wir haben uns beeilt direkt nach Hause. Johana wollte die Königen über das Geschehen informieren, aber Eloise und Sofie haben mich angefleht, nichts zu sagen.



One of the neighbors heard the alarming news and took it straight to the king. The king took this incident very seriously because his wife was once a victim of another monster. He arrived at the fairy garden and had the fairies lead him to Heinrich's cottage so he could suffer the consequences.

Einer der Nachbarn haben die alarmierenden Nachrichten gehört und hat es direkt zum König gebraucht. Der König hat diesen Vorfall sehr ernst genommen, weil seine Frau einst Opfer eines anderen Monsters war. Er ist im Feengarten angekommen und hat uns zu Heinrichs Hütte führen lassen, damit er die Konsequenzen tragen musste.

Heinrich was sentenced to life in Octaveus, which was Gruene's own hell for evil. Although he will no longer harm another fairy, there will always be more cruel monsters waiting to take their next victims.

Heinrich wurde in Octaveus zum Leben verurteilt, was Gruenes eigene Hölle für das Übel war. Obwohl er keiner weiteren Fee schaden werde, gibt es immer grausamere Monster, die darauf warten, ihr nächstes Opfer zu nehmen.

Eloise and Sofie felt like they had no life left and didn't know how to cope with what happened. They trusted Heinrich when he approached them in his most innocent and kind forms, and now they don't think they could ever trust again. Luckily, the queen spoke openly about her violation and soon many other creatures opened up about their experiences too, including Ute and Johana.

Eloise und Sofie hatten das Gefühl, dass sie kein Leben mehr hatten und wussten nicht, wie sie damit umgehen sollten. Sie hatte Heinrich vertraut, als er sich ihnen in seinen unschuldigsten und freundlichsten Formen angenähert hatte, und jetzt haben sie nicht mehr geglaubt, dass sie jemals einem wieder vertrauen könnten. Zum Glück hat die Königin offen über ihre Verletzung gesprochen und bald hat sich auch viele andere Geschöpfe offen über ihre Erfahrungen gesprochen, Ute und Johana auch.



That was why Ute and Johana are more cautious of their surroundings. They should have told Eloise long ago, but they felt like they couldn't talk about it. Time may not heal all wounds, but they have a community of people that they can relate with and confide in. Together, everyone can rid Gruene of the vile beasts and make sure other creatures feel safer.

Deshalb sind sie vorsichtiger in unserer Umgebung. Sie hätten es ihr vor langer Zeit sagen sollen, aber wir hatten das Gefühl, sie könnten nicht darüber reden. Die Zeit kann vielleicht nicht alle Wunden heilen, aber wir haben eine Gemeinschaft von Menschen, der wir uns anvertrauen können. Zusammen können wir die abscheulichen Bestien loswerden und dafür sorgen, dass sich andere Kreaturen in Gruene sicherer fühlen.