

Alternate reality stories: mapping a new genre of digital fiction

RUTTER, Kirstie Elizabeth

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**Alternate Reality Stories:
Mapping a New Genre of Digital Fiction**

Kirstie Elizabeth Rutter

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of
Sheffield Hallam University for the degree of Masters of English by Research

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Abstract

The Aim of this thesis is to chart and develop a methodology for the emerging Digital Literature genre, Alternate Reality Stories, to enable future scholars to analyse social media based interactive narratives. This new genre combines the tropes of existing field to produce a wholly unique narrative experience, that can only be experienced within the moment it is created. I argue that, whilst similar forms do exist, the examples included within this thesis offer a unique storytelling experience that mobilises agency and reality to immerse readers in a new way. I state that this research is positioned within narratology, digital literature, and game studies, providing an interdisciplinary methodology that can replicated across fields of research to understand what it means to experience an ARS.

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Candidate Declaration

I hereby declare that:

1. I have not been enrolled for another award of the University, or other academic or professional organisation, whilst undertaking my research degree.
2. None of the material contained in the thesis has been used in any other submission for an academic award.
3. I am aware of and understand the University's policy on plagiarism and certify that this thesis is my own work. The use of all published or other sources of material consulted have been properly and fully acknowledged.
4. The work undertaken towards the thesis has been conducted in accordance with the SHU Principles of Integrity in Research and the SHU Research Ethics Policy.
5. The word count of the thesis is 30,000.

K.Rutter

Name	Kirstie Elizabeth Rutter
Date	December 2020
Award	Masters in English by Research
Faculty	Social Sciences and Humanities
Director(s) of Studies	Alison Gibbons

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Vmwd w Lendtp

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Rational, Aim and Scope of study

Digital Literature is an ever-evolving genre. The starting point for this thesis came during my own observations that an emerging form of interactive digital literature, which I call Alternate Reality Stories (ARSs). This new genre appears unique in way it presents itself and how it incorporates interactivity, agency, transmediality and real-time story telling (see chapter 7, page 74).

In chapter 2 I review existing genres, scholarships, and categorizations to build a foundation for where ARSs fall between the gaps of existing definitions. Whilst I primarily use narratological thinking, the rule-based definitions provided during ludology debates provide useful insight, not only into how game and literature can evolve beyond imposed guidelines, but also as evidence that ARSs cannot be prescribed to any existing genre due to the fluidity of their form.

The thesis is composed of three subject-based analyses of examples of the emergent narratives, *Dear David* (2017), *The Greg Story* (2018) and *The Sun Vanished* (2018). These analyses offer evidence for the existence of the genre. It uses narratological thinking and possible worlds methodologies to propose a framework for analysing the features of ARSs. The chronological content analysis of these narratives is further detailed in chapter 3 and is implemented through chapters 4 to 6.

The rationale for this study arose from the current gap in research into the specific form of interactive, alternate reality narrative that are represented by ARSs. At present, much of the research exploring new digital genres is focused in Ludological or Narratological debates on surrounding classification, or explores the implementation of Alternate Reality Games (ARGs) for promotional or scientific purposes. My research combines said fields and forms to explore how the combination of DL/IF features emerging on social media has resulted in a new form of fiction. Thus, this study aims to answer to the following research aims:

- (1) To comparatively map the defining features of Alternate Reality Games (ARG) and hypertext fiction relative to emerging forms of interactive online fiction which I describe as Alternate Reality Stories (ARSs)
- (2) To establish the unique features of ARSs as independent from those of other genres
- (3) To apply a methodology for analysing ARSs

This study finds that whilst rooted in existing Digital Literature and ARG forms, ARSs are a new genre that push interactivity and agency in new directions. In addition to the above chapter 2 also outlines the areas that cast the most influence onto ARS, and map where they lay in reference to these fields. In chapters 3, I outline my methodological approach for analysing the content and characteristics of ARSs and in chapters 4, 5, and 6, I implement it in the analysis of *Dear David* (2017), *The Greg Story* (2018) and *The Sun Vanished*,

respectively. The final chapter is dedicated to the conclusion of this study and the classification and ARSs

1.2 Why is This research Important and Where is it Going?

Exploring emerging forms is vital for understanding how literary fields are developing, and where they may go in the future. It is therefore essential that new forms are documented and analysed as they arise. With social media sites continuing to increase in popularity, and with ARSs taking place on them, analysing ARSs sheds light on an untapped potential for immersive storytelling.

Understanding them opens doors few new literary developments and the progression of our understanding of the digital form.

The key texts in this study took place on the social media platform twitter, between 2017 and 2020. *Dear David*, *The Greg Story* and *The Sun Vanished* each display the unique features of ARSs applied in different ways. Analysing these three texts therefore demonstrates that ARS are a diverse form of media.

It should be noted however that whilst my study focuses on twitter as a platform, ARSs are by no mean limited to this site. ARSs can be adapted to and staged on any platform, provided the followers are there to interact with the narrative. Future studies may wish to explore the video-sharing social networking apps TikTok and YouTube for potential ARSs that value video over text.

1.3 Thesis Roadmap

My thesis is divided into seven chapters. This opening chapter has outlined the world in which ARSs exist academically, and the aims of my study. Chapter 2 goes on to detail the prior, relevant research and how their impact will shape the conclusions I make, in a comprehensive literature review. Chapter 3 outlines my methodology, which introduces an adapted version of Bell's Possible Worlds Theory approach (Bell, 2010), and details the history and variations of the precise approaches I have employed. Chapters 4 to 6 go on to apply the methodology to the chosen texts in the subsequent order: *Dear David*, *The Greg Story* and *The Sun Vanished*. Finally, Chapter 7 summarises my findings and defines what I believe are the fundamental characteristics of an ARS. In particular their similarities to existing 3rd and 4th generation digital fictions, real-time reality bending mechanics and agency manipulation.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

In this chapter, I will deconstruct the areas of research relevant to Alternate Reality Stories (ARSs). Whilst many of the following fields broadly overlap, there are minor distinctions that are critical for understanding new interactive narratives. With ARSs existing in predominantly online spaces, Electronic Literature will be essential for understanding how existing genres have adapted to electronic spaces. Section 2.2 will thus focus on Electronic Literature and its related scholarship by exploring Interactive Fiction in section 2.2.1 and Digital Fiction in section 2.2.2. Section 2.3 will focus on prior research on Alternate Reality Games (ARGs) as well as research in video game studies. Finally, section 2.4 will combine the scholarships of Alternate Reality Games and Electronic Literature to discuss how or if ARSs conform in reference to these genres. Throughout this chapter, my account ARSs features is based on my critical observations as a user of ARSs. These potential features will be examined and evidenced in my subsequent analyses in chapters 4 through 6. In the field of interactive literature, various sub genres and concepts have developed. However, as the field, technology and methodologies have evolved, these terms have begun to overlap in definition. For clarity, this thesis will be using the terms as defined in the glossary found on page 274.

2.2 Electronic Literature

Defined by Katherine Hayles as “digital born” works designed to be read on a computer (Hayles 2008, p.3), Electronic Literature encompasses the online literary field in which ARSs reside. Contrary to ARGs, the field of Electronic Literature (E-Lit) has received considerable critical attention. Although they are often categorised separately, E-Lit has a large crossover with early text-based games like *Zork* (Infocom, 1977) and *Colossal Cave Adventure* (Crowther & Woods, 1977). The distinction between these genres is based on the user input and configuration relationship (Eskelinen, 2004). The scholarship from video game studies and Electronic Literature already have a documented history of crossover, with many academics referring to some video games as examples of Interactive Fiction and vice versa (Hayles 2008).

When looking at E-Lit in reference to ARSs, it becomes clear that the central elements are user interaction to guide the narrative and build immersion (discussed in section 2.1) as well as the use of social media (discussed in section 2.2.2). The former will be discussed below in relation to interactive fiction and hypertext whilst the latter will be considered in relation to digital fiction.

It is important to note that Interactive Fiction and Digital Fiction are deeply intertwined. Both fields evolve with one another and incorporate the technological and literary innovations made by the other. It is for this reason that much scholarship considers the two fields in tandem. Section 2.2.2 will build upon the notions of interactivity in literature and apply them to the digital age.

2.2.1 Interactivity: Interactive Fiction and Hypertexts

Observing ARSs, interaction appears to be a key factor, not only in how the narrative is formed, but also in how immersion is created. Interactive Fiction as a genre relies closely on how a user's decision-making can alter the course of a narrative, and therefore is essential for understanding ARSs. This section will introduce the Interactive Fiction genre, key academic interests and the forms interactive fiction takes.

Interactive Fictions (IF) are literary works in which the user determines the narrative by working with the text. The genre is intertwined with Aarseth's notion of ergodic literature: works that require nontrivial actions in order to be read (Aarseth, 1997). Whilst IFs are subsets of video games, Monfort notes that they are not inherently based in puzzles or gameplay but are rooted in riddles and software development (Monfort, 2005 p.14-15). Such texts can require actions such as entering commands, providing inputs through the controls, or the reader making choices or decisions that ultimately influence the narrative. Whilst not strictly digital, IF has been catalysed by computing, allowing for the development of IF genres like hypertext and Cybertext. The element of interactivity enabled by electronic literature allows for immersive storytelling and multilinear narratives, capable of changing with each reader. IF sees the most direct crossover with the video game genre, with many text-based adventure games being described as examples of IF.

This interactivity is key to how ARSs are formed: they require the reader to take additional steps to further the narrative and build an immersive experience. Thus, Aarseth's Ergodic Literature is essential for understanding how reader agency can affect a narrative. As discussed in section 2.3.2, ARS agency appears to differ from what we expect of choice-driven mechanics in video games and literature. Unlike choose-your-own adventure literature, ARS users are not presented with a clear set of options, rather an open-ended request is presented. Hypertext Fiction, novels and short stories written in non-sequential lexia or artefacts, connected via hyperlinks (Bell, 2010 p.1; Nelson, 1974), offers a similar branching choice mechanic and a non-linear narrative path. However, the narrative in question is predetermined, and those artefacts are written before publishing (Bell, 2010 p.2), whereas with ARSs the user input comes as the narrative is being developed. Additionally, Interactive Fiction has in the past required the use of specific software (i.e. Twine, Storyspace, Adventure Game Toolkit) or has taken place on their own dedicated websites. With ARSs existing on social media platforms, where 2.4 billion people are registered (Clement, 2019), ARSs are significantly more accessible. These stories are no longer passed around on discs or linked on forums by the IF community; instead, they are immediately accessible to millions of people, with no prior knowledge or experience of the genre.

Whilst IF does have playable elements and cannot proceed without 'user input' (Aarseth, 1997), the existing IFs offer clear choices, artefacts or commands for the user to interact with. Seeing these objects as elements to be interacted with leads to a break in the level of immersion between reader and narrative. We play IF intentionally; the reader enters knowing they will be presented with a piece of fiction they can interact with, and makes conscious decisions within it. Alternatively, ARSs appear to deliberately obscure reality. It could be suggested

that ARSs are simply genre non-conforming IFs (or an expansion of the fourth Digital Literature Age (See 2.2.2 below)). Yet at the time of writing there has not been an IF that simultaneously takes place outside of IF communities, obscures a player's agency, and distorts the barriers between fiction and reality.

2.2.2 Digital Fiction and Social Media

Digital Fiction (sometimes called Digital literature) typically requires the reader to navigate the text or narrative whilst making use of the digital medium. It is written on a computer, to be read on a computer and would lose something if translated into print (Bell A. , et al., 2010). As ARSs take place on social media and exist predominantly within online realms, they are a particular form of digital fiction and crossover with DF subgenres.

In the introductory chapter of *Analysing Digital Fiction* (Bell, Ensslin, & Rustad, 2014), the authors acknowledge that digital fiction scholarship is somewhat behind the practice: "While authors have been experimenting with different genres and styles, the scholarship surrounding digital fiction hasn't yet caught up" (Bell, Ensslin, & Rustad, 2014, p. 3). DF has its roots in 1980s IFs like *Zork*, but the genre has progressed from pre-web software like HyperCard and StorySpace, to HTML and Flash based products, to some video games, and finally to social media literature. The field has evolved dramatically and like ARGs, each subcategory differs. However, various academics have classified DF into four distinct generations (Bell, Ensslin, & Rustad, 2014; Ensslin, 2010; Landow, 1997; Rustard, 2012). The first generation of DF was generally reliant on linking lexia, and the StorySpace program (Landow, 1997). Second generations were able to expand to software outside of this and began including semiotically diverse interfaces (Bell, Ensslin, & Rustad, 2014). These are known as hypermedia texts and often incorporate film, images and drag-and-drop mechanics (Ensslin, 2010 p.9). Ensslin argues that the third generation should be known as the Cybertext Generation (Ensslin, 2010). In this generation, the agency of readers is dramatically reduced, giving the program more control, whilst simultaneously tricking the reader into believing they are in control. The adoption of cybertexts in turn allows for the inclusion of art and narrative based games, like those mentioned in section 2.3 below. The fourth generation is widely accepted to be the social media generation, where Twitterfictions and Facebook Fictions began to utilise the aesthetics of their platforms to further a narrative (Rustard, 2012). It is the latter two generations that are most applicable to ARSs with social media being the most directly related. Additionally, the cybertext generation introduces hypermedia and pictorial elements into practice, which ARSs appear to regularly utilise.

Ensslin's cybertext generation is a condensed version of Aarseth's original notion of ergodic texts (Aarseth, 1997). The generation builds upon hypermedia technology by using plug-ins to further the playable elements, combined with the creative use of hyperlinks (Ensslin, 2010 p.11-12). Additionally, Ensslin's cybertexts are designed in a way to trick the reader into believing they have agency over the machine, when in fact the opposite is true. This genre also pulls from MMORPGs (Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Games), art based and narrative centric video games. One example of cybertext that shows

diminished agency, video game influence and non-linear storytelling is *The Stanley Parable* (Wreden & Pugh, 2011). At one point in the game, you are presented with two doors and are told by the narrator to go through the door on the left. If the player chooses instead to go through the door on the right, the narrator will claim they planned for you to do this all along and will place an employee lounge in the player's path to justify the divergence from the story. This demonstrates that while the player has the ability to disobey the game, the game remains in control. ARSs establish a similar method of disguising the player's agency. However, where cybertexts lure the reader into believing they are in control, ARSs appear to suggest that the reader is a witness, and the protagonist is the one making decisions. This is done through the inclusion of protagonists presented as existing in (or interacting with) our world: they seem to act upon their own agency, though in reality they are often taking suggestions from unknowing readers. For example, in *Dear David* the protagonist begins burning sage in his apartment, but this only happened after multiple twitter users replied with the advice (This is expanded upon in the Chapter 4 analysis).

Ensslin concludes her argument for this new cybertext generation with the acknowledgment that the field will continue to grow: "The ever-increasing possibilities of literary, artistic and ludic expression will, in the near and distant future, give rise to a widening range of new genres, which will increasingly cross boundaries between textual, ludic and visual phenomena" (Ensslin, 2010 p.12). This is what I propose ARSs are doing; they often take place with limited text, incorporating film and images to further the narrative, they swap out point-and-click interaction in favour of puzzle solving ludic features. These texts build upon previous concepts such as interaction and hypermedia but push them in entirely new directions. For example, ARSs incorporate large player scales like MMORPGs (Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Games). Many IF and DF texts are single player, experienced by one individual at a time. ARSs, however, are interacted with by hundreds of people at once, throughout the narrative. They also cannot be replayed: once the story has concluded, that is the end. They can be reread but at that point they become static versions of themselves; interactions and engagements no longer affect the narrative, and the building of suspense is lost.

Like much of the literature discussed in section 2.2, Ensslin's work is now somewhat outdated. She discusses how newer hypertexts (at the time of original publication) were employing web-based publishing, and developing non-softwarebased works, yet this distribution method is now commonplace. In fact, it is now rare for modern devices (i.e. smartphones and tablets) to be compatible with the HyperCards or CD-ROMs that hypertexts were originally circulated on. Whilst PCs may still be compatible, many of these systems are now redundant, often replaced by cloud-sharing services. In the introductory chapter of *Canonizing Hypertext*, Ensslin notes that British people spent around seven minutes per day on the internet (Ensslin, 2007 p.1). In 2019, these numbers have dramatically increased, with 99% of 16 to 44-year-olds being active internet users (Prescott, 2019), and the average daily internet usage reaching over three hours per day (OFCOM, 2019). It is fair to say that we now live in a more digitised society and whilst Ensslin's work is essential for understanding previous generations of DF, society and our relationship to the online space has changed.

The fourth generation of DF focuses on social-media-based literature. As ARSs are almost exclusively rooted in social media, the forms and structures seen in this generation will be directly comparable. As the texts analysed in this dissertation are primarily based on Twitter, this section will place emphasis on Twitterfictions. In “140 Characters in Search of a Story: Twitterfiction as an Emerging Narrative Form” (Thomas, 2014), Bronwen Thomas describes Twitterfiction as when “an authorial figure of some kind create stories specifically tailored to the format for his or her followers” (p. 95). She goes on to establish two distinct Twitterfiction forms: “Shorty” or, singular tweets with self-contained narratives; and twitter threads that follow one serialised narrative and require ‘skills and activities from its users’ (Thomas, 2014, p. 95). She describes these skills as memory, emotional attachment, and commitment to text. However, it could be suggested that these skills more closely resemble facets of the human mind than they do substantial efforts expended to obtain the narrative. Understanding that Twitterfictions interaction resembles the aforementioned skills, and not game mechanics or the inputting of commands, demonstrates the distinct difference between this genre and ARSs. Nevertheless, ARSs do take place on twitter and both genres incorporate engagement in some way. In another example of the platform’s uniqueness, Twitterfictions are capable of taking place in real-time.

Whilst the texts analysed by Thomas – Basu’s *Twister* series (Basu, 2020) and *Epicrotold* (Sreedharan, 2014) – attract engagement from users and tell stories that are distinctive in form, these texts are also clearly displayed as fiction. The use of third person in Basu’s “Twisters” adds a layer of separation between the reader and author, and the characters. ARSs however manipulate fiction-reality distinction, by using the first person. By presenting the twitter account holder as the protagonist of the narrative, removing any visible extra-textual author, and using a first-person narrative, the boundaries between fiction and reality become less clear. This makes the experience feel more directly personal, in the same way oral traditions, like campfire horror stories, build upon immersion by presenting them as historical accounts.

Building upon this notion of suspense, tweets can be released over weeks or months, with large gaps in between updates. This, Thomas notes, allows for the reader to feel like a participant in the narrative: “it is not so much the quality or even the quantity of output that matters most, so much as the reassurance that there will be constant updates, and that followers will be kept “in the loop” about any new developments” (Thomas, 2014, p. 105). Keeping readers without updates can create a level of suspense, especially if the account in question has no updates at all for a prolonged period of time. In *The Sun Vanished*, the author would seemingly disappear for long periods of time, leading to speculation from readers that the protagonist had died or been captured by unknown entities. This action of being “out of the loop” only catalysed the desire for more updates.

However again it is important to note that Thomas’s text was written in 2014, and whilst her textual analysis is still relevant, Twitter as a platform and the literature upon it has evolved. For example, she describes the platform as a microblogging site with a positive global impact. Whilst twitter may have set out to make a positive platform, a 2018 study shows that teenagers in the US have mixed feelings regarding the impact social media has on their generation (ANDERSON & JIANG, 2018). In terms of the microblogging label, this is something Twitter

CEO Jack Dorsey has pivoted the company away from (Kafka, 2018a) (Kafka, 2018b). Whilst this has little direct impact on Thomas's analysis, it again shows how quickly internet culture can change.

Ensslin's Cybertexts and Thomas's Twitterfiction show the field of Digital Fiction is constantly evolving. The texts I see as ARSs do not currently fit cleanly into either of these DF genres, so I suggest they are another stage in the development of Digital Fiction. In particular, and as the fifth generation of DF, ARSs combine the agency manipulation and hypermedia artefacts of cybertexts with the mediums and real-time elements of social media literature. The key features for ARSs repeatedly emerging from the Electronic Literature scholarship discussed in this section are: non-trivial interactivity, tailoring to (and specificity of) the text's medium, and the incorporation of evolving technologies.

2.3 Alternate Reality Games

Many Alternate Reality Stories are formally similar to ARGs or are formed within that subculture. It is therefore essential to introduce and discuss the concept of Alternate Reality Games. I will firstly outline the history and diversification of ARGs.

2.3.1 History of ARGs

Alternate reality games (ARGs) are complex narrative driven transmedia games that require deep player engagement. The games rely heavily on player participation and thus produce player-created content. The game content (created by the game creators) and player-created content (created while the game is played) form the digital information sources for the play of the game). (Beer & Bothma, 2016 p.433)

Alternate Reality Games or ARGs are immersive internet-based games that blur the lines of fiction and reality. In most cases, ARG authors, often called 'Puppet Masters', will not disclose that the event is a game in order to create and protect the immersion of users (Szulborski, 2005). This lack of disclosure can make determining what is or is not an ARG difficult; in some cases, a piece may be considered an ARG regardless of the author's original intent.

Joseph Matheny's collaborative transmedia story *Ong's Hat* (Matheny & Moon 2002) is generally considered to be the first ARG (Szulborski, 2005 p.79; Śliwińska & Kozurno, 2015, p. 146), as it employed many of the now key characteristics of ARGs: a combination of Interactive Fiction (discussed in section 2.3), cryptography, multi-media and videogame mechanics (Beer & Bothma, 2016). *Ong's Hat* featured an established ghost town and urban legend of the same name (Beck, 1983, pp. 18-23), in conjunction with electronic and printed materials that developed the background story. The producers then made use of online discussion boards, where the story was told, picked apart, and pieced together again. The story followed a conspiracy theory regarding the fictional group, the Moorish Science Ashram, working in Chaos Studies and metaphysical disciplines, to develop a craft capable of interdimensional travel called THE EGG (Matheny, 1993). However, the project was eventually cancelled after some players became convinced the story was real, and began harassing Matheny, going

as far as to camp out on his property demanding answers (Oelbaum, 2019). The project demonstrated that the lines between fiction and reality could not only be blurred but be indistinguishable enough to truly suspend one's disbelief. This fiction-reality blurring is a key feature of ARGs and ARSs, and I will refer to this act as the breaking of the reality/fiction paradigm.

It was commonplace for early ARGs to be used as marketing tools for upcoming films or games. For example, *The Beast* (Microsoft, 2001) acted as a tie-in and expansion upon *A.I. Artificial Intelligence* (Spielberg, 2001), and *I Love Bees* (42 Entertainment, Bungie, Microsoft, 2004) was created by Ubisoft to increase interest in *Halo 2* (Bungie, 2004). Due to the increased accessibility of computers though, many ARGs are produced by independent creators or for purely entertainment purposes. The games have evolved with society and technology and are adapting into more elaborate and complex narratives. A recent example is *Elsewhere*, which began with physical printed flyers (u/pinkangel_rs, 2019), but progressed onto a range of platforms, utilising a dedicated website, YouTube, Twitch, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and the webchat service, Discord (Forster, 2019a). It is believed that *Elsewhere* is viral marketing for the 2020 series *Dispatchers from Elsewhere* (Forster, 2019b), which itself is based on the ARG *The Jejune Institute* (McCall, 2012). This promotional usage has often been a purpose of ARGs, particularly before the social media boom (Abbas & Singh, 2014) which truly changed how ARGs were developed and spread. Whilst there are differences in the motives and scale of promotional ARGs when compared to those of grassroots origins, the narrative experience and characteristics remain largely the same.

As the use of online spaces evolves, so do ARGs, resulting in an ever-expanding range of texts. Some ARGs are based solely on one site like *lonelygirl15* and *YouTube* (Beckett, Flinders, Goodfried, & Goodfried, 2006); others like *Elsewhere* use a variety of platforms. Some are heavily puzzle-based and require direct input like *Cicada 3301* (Unknown, 2012); others are tailored more towards an interactive viewing experience i.e. *Petscop* (Petscop, 2017). In 2018, *The Sun Vanished* (TSV) (TheSunVanished, 2018) became a crucial intertext of *Fantastic Daily*, demonstrating that ARGs (and ARSs) can change in relation to new content and that the textual boundaries of an ARG can be expanded and therefore difficult to define. Subsequently in 2019, the *Fantastic Daily* channel began 'unlisting' videos and changed their social media settings to private, before ultimately removing all content. The channel briefly reappeared under the name *Red Hot Punch*, though as of January 2020 the channel is once again unavailable.

When a genre becomes as diverse as ARGs, it can be difficult to identify the genre similarities between different examples in the same classification. *I love Bees*, for example, is different in purpose, method, audience, and even mechanics to the likes of *Fantastic Daily*. *Fantastic Daily* originally began as a person

documenting black-eyed children supposedly stalking him. After gathering a following of both ARG fans and cryptid-enthusiasts (a group of people who believe in, or follow supposed encounters of creatures like Bigfoot, Mothman, Chupacabra ect. (See Strawn & Terry, 2019)), the channel developed a talk-show format, discussing odd occurrences in the news. *I love Bees*, however, began within the trailer of *Halo 2*, via a hidden message, which took players to a

puzzlefilled website. As users solved puzzles, more and more backstory was revealed; once completed, players were invited to play *Halo 2*'s multiplayer mode before it was announced. In this example, we see *I love Bees* using puzzles and coding to market a game, and further an existing canon. *Fantastic Daily*, alternatively, uses vlogs and social media posts to discuss a variety of topics with no product to market or tie into. Both ARGs use a range of creative and multimedia storytelling technics to drive their narratives and ultimately entertain, yet they employ it for entirely different purposes. This demonstrates that ARGs do need further classification or subgenres, like those proposed by The Independent Game Developers Association, which is discussed section 2.3.2.

2.3.2 Scholarship on ARGs

Alternate Reality Games are still critically under researched from an academic perspective. Most focus on the relation of ARGs to video games. The ongoing debates between Ludologists and Narratologists will therefore be the focus of this section. In discussing such studies, I am able to highlight the similarities between academic critiques of ARGs and VGs, whilst exploring the gaps in the scholarship that this thesis aims to fill. Additionally, many of the available texts for academic discussion of this genre are outdated, often written in the earlier years of ARGs. It is also due to this large social media presence and a lack of academic papers, that many sources relating to ARGs are social media posts within the ARG community. Whilst this does pose a difficulty in beginning the research, by collecting established research, I will be able to construct the scholarship that can be used in further studies.

Most research on ARGs has focused on the application of ARG-inspired resources (i.e. teaching materials) within larger fields or on the participation and teamwork cultures surrounding ARGs. Researchers from The University of the West of Scotland found that the implementation of ARGs in an educational environment could “considerably help in motivating and engaging students in learning a second language” (Connolly, Stansfield, Hainey, 2011). An experimental study from Indiana University found that ARGs could be utilised in tackling obesity rates among university students (Johnston, Massey, & Marker-Hoffman, 2012). Whilst these studies are not directly linked to the narrative of ARGs, the outcomes nevertheless point to the fact that ARGs engage audiences in ways that prototypical prose literature does not.

There has been some debate over the emerging subgenres within the ARG classification. The Independent Game Developers Association (IGDA) ARG Special Interest Group (SIG) proposed the following classification system for ARG genres (Barlow, et al., 2006):

- Promotional: Large scale ARGs with complex interactive elements and a high budget, which tie into a product.
- Grassroots: ARGs made by individuals (or small teams), with a limited budget, and for entertainment purposes.
- Commercial: ARGs where a product is an essential part of the experience or is required to solve the puzzle.

- Single Player: ARGs that do not benefit from collaborative community interaction and can be played start-to-finish by an individual.
- Educational / Teaching: ARGs designed to teach players a new skill, act as a team-building exercise, or promote knowledge instead of a product.

Whilst this system is useful for the categorisation of ARGs based on purpose, it is unfortunately inappropriate for analysing ARGs based on narrative mechanics. For example, ARGs like *Ong's Hat* and *Elsewhere* are remarkably similar in how they develop narratives yet, using the above model, they would be categorised into different classes (Grassroot and Promotional respectively). As stated in 2.3.1., ARGs have evolved and diversified to the extent, I argue, that the genre now warrants additional methods of classification.

There are also debates between Ludologists (e.g. Eskelinen 2001: Frasca, 2013: Moulthorp, 1991) and Narratologists (e.g. Murray 2004: Manovich, 2010: Grusin, 2006) concerning the literary analysis of ARGs and whether they themselves could be classified as forms of Transmedia Storytelling (Szulborski, 2005). Transmedia Storytelling encompasses literature that delivers its narrative over a range of mediums or continues the narrative in a new way (Jenkins, 2010). In Markku Eskelinen's article, 'Towards computer game studies' (Eskelinen 2001), he states that games and literature cannot be compared, due to the boundaries of literature. These debates are nothing new (Ensslin 2014, Flores, 2019) and have since been deemed an issue of early justifications for an emerging game studies scholarship (Clement, 2017 p.2). However, as ARSs are themselves an emerging field, I believe it is imperative that scholarship on both narratological meaning and ludological mechanics be assessed, as they are likely to relate to the core principles and influences of ARG/Ss.

Whilst I agree that game narratives and prototypical literature have different affordances, the parameters of the form are of course always being pushed and tested, but the overarching thing in common is narrative. Since the publication of Eskelinen's article, the literary world has seen storytelling boundaries manipulated with experimental works that push narrative experience norms. One key example is *Invisible Monsters Remix* (Palahniuk, 2012), a novel written with a non-linear plot, where the reader is given instructions on when, and how, they get to view the story. For example, the reader may be asked to turn to a seemingly random page number, rather than progress naturally to the next page. Even if all the rules are followed some parts of the text will still never be read. This is a similar mechanic to video game narratives, where the story is told in fragmented cut scenes. In the case of open-world games like *The Legend of Zelda: Breath of the Wild* (Nintendo, 2017) *Fallout 4* (Bethesda Game Studios, 2015), and *Grand Theft Auto 5* (Rockstar Games, 2013), these cut scenes are also often told out of order. If we were to look at *Invisible Monsters Remix* in the same way Eskelinen views game narratives, it would fail to meet almost all expectations and literary conventions, yet that does not mean it lacks narrative. If we expect that experimental texts are capable of containing complex narratives, told to us in unconventional, fragmented, and interactive mediums, then we are able to apply the same narrative analysis to ARGs.

It is also important to note that Eskelinen's work was written at a time when story-based video games were limited by and to their consoles (Zarzycki, 2015). Eskelinen suggests that narratives with games are a secondary feature (Eskelinen, 2012 p.236). Yet, as Zarzycki states, the narratives of *Assassin's Creed* (Ubisoft, 2007) and *The Name of the Rose* (Eco, 1980) are remarkably similar in content (Zarzycki, 2015 p.787). Moreover, we now have games that are primarily narrative based, with a few interactive elements that could be described as secondary features, such as *Firewatch* (Moss & Vanaman, 2016)), *The Stanley Parable* (Wreden & Pugh, 2011), and *What Remains of Edith Finch* (Dallas, 2017). These games are often described as walking simulators (Carbo-Mascarell, 2016) and in terms of mechanics and narratives are most akin to ARGs. Eskelinen fails to account for the wider gaming appeal of walking simulators, 'let's plays' and livestreams, all of which are now core parts of the gaming industry (Johnson & Woodcock, 2018). If we are to truly evaluate and study ARS, we must understand that video games have far surpassed the criticisms within foundational arguments. Looking at these fields in a modern context, it is clear that prototypical fiction and video games do crossover in terms of their narrative elements. Whilst I agree with the Ludologist notion that something is lost when analysing only the literary elements within a game, I would also argue that watching *Macbeth* (Shakespeare & Muir, 2005) performed as a play is different to solely reading its scripts. Following from this, I assert that narratives can be consumed in a variety of methods, and do not necessarily retain a singular form or follow literary conventions.

In addition to media being consumed in a variety of methods, the ways in which we can interact with them can also be challenged by literature. Narratologist Janet Murray makes the assertion: 'Agency requires that we script the interactor as well as the world, so that we know how to engage the world, and so that we build up the appropriate expectations' (Murray 2004, p.6). Although her piece is focused on the 2000 EA game *The Sims* (Wright, 2000), this statement is still relevant to games today and can be applied to ARGs and ARSs. Multi-linear and open-world games do not, however, have unlimited agency. The games must be programmed with the potential choices having been considered from the early stages of development. For many games, this can mean giving players multiple narrative paths to follow, which offer players a clear choice (i.e. go left or go right, press A or B etc) and allows for the player to make narrative decisions. This is not a limitation of the narratives within video games, or the games themselves, but rather an example of media-specificity (Hayles, 2001; Hayles, 2014; Greenberg, 1982) and the unique ways in which these narratives require manipulation. Alternatively, in ARGs the players are participating in real-time, giving Puppet Masters the ability to moderate and control which narrative 'beats' (that is, events or developments that advance the plot) players can see. This often results in the characteristic of fragmented narrative, although if players do not solve a certain puzzle, or a seed goes unnoticed, it could bring the entire narrative to a halt.

Ken Perlin puts forward the notion of intermittent agency, a game-story in which the game character is separate (yet influenced) by the player: "In other words, can we create a form in which the wall between 'my agency' and 'the agency of an entity that seems psychologically present and real to me' can be removed or blurred?" (Perlin, 2004 p.15-16). I would argue that not only is this feature

present in ARSs but can be seen in games like *Until Dawn* (Supermassive Games, 2015). In the game, the player is asked by Dr. Hill to choose from a selection of images, which they are more afraid of. In the early game, these scenes appear completely separate from the main narrative. However, if the player says they are afraid of needles, a different character (Josh) will attack the player with a needle. One issue with this is the notion of a “psychologically present and real” character. How do we really make these in-game characters feel ‘real’, or more than just pixels on a screen? I would suggest that whilst this ‘realism’ may never be truly possible, games can be immersive enough to create an experience that triggers an emotional and psychological connection. Perlin continues, suggesting that (in 2004) video games had not yet achieved this, and that the genre was, at the time underdeveloped: “In order to create a psychological suspension of disbelief, a visual narrative medium requires all three of the following elements: writing, directing, and acting” (Perlin, 2004 p.17).

Perlin’s claims can be strongly contested in recent years by the development of advanced non-linear writing software like Twine (Klimas, 2009), and professional script doctoring being added to the development process (Despain, 2008). Game developer roles have now expanded to include creative and art directors, who coordinate the artistic and narrative components within video games (Ferguson Publishing, 2009 p.17-25). Whilst voice acting may have been limited in 2004, motion capture technologies have now been applied to allow a wider range of physical acting (Patoli, Gkion, Newbury, & White, 2010). With the meticulously detailed environments now implemented within video games it becomes easier to immerse oneself within these worlds. For example, during the Covid-19 quarantine, urban photographers were able to continue their work by using ingame environments. One photographer in particular, Craig Whitehead (Whitehead, 2020) created high quality images by using the in-game camera engine and screenshots of *Red Dead Redemption 2* (Rockstar Games, 2018). Many Sci-Fi and fantasy games now have in depth fictional histories often with canonical histories spanning hundreds of years. Within the *Elder Scrolls* Series, there are more than 800 in-game books that players can interact with (Bethesda Soft Works, 1994). Over 300 of these are dedicated to fictional lore detailing the history of the universe. This vast world-building feature demonstrates that writing within in games can be substantial, and thus builds a more realistic universe. Having games with such immersive environments and histories and realistic acting can allow for an increased suspension of disbelief. Additionally, all three of Perlin’s requirements – writing, directing, acting – are now categories within the annual Game Awards (The Game Awards, 2019), indicating that not only has the industry has continued to incorporate them, but that the fields are established enough to warrant prestigious awards.

Previous studies have not often accounted for transmediality; the possibility of games leaving the designated space and continuing in other mediums. A prime example of this is the franchise *Five Nights at Freddie’s* (Cawthon, 2014), which appears to be an arcade style PC game with no story. However, the creator hid narrative elements within hidden or secret levels, often in the game’s code, in the website’s HTML files, and within promotional images. This allowed the game to continue outside of the game. In these cases, the player was not the protagonist or the god of a virtual world. They instead become one part of a larger community working to piece together a puzzle, so they can progress the narrative from outside

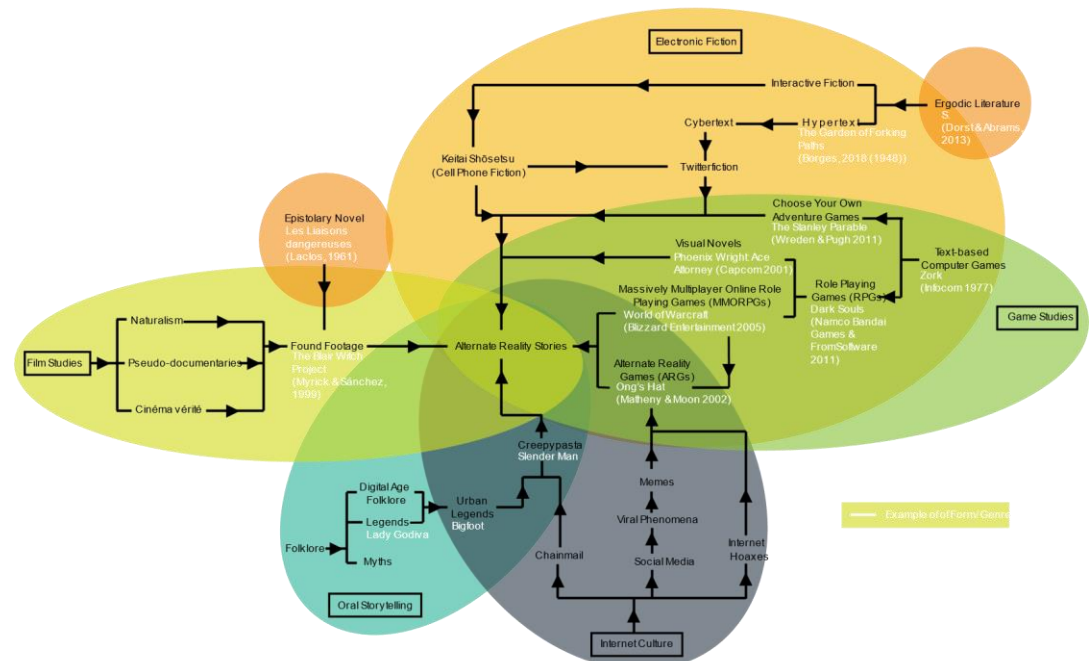
the game. ARGs follow similar transmedia storytelling techniques by moving the game across multiple websites, incorporating social media, and in some cases taking the game offline and into the physical world.

To conclude this section, the literature review identifies that defining features of the ARG genre are: immersive interactivity, elements of transmediality, the obscuring of the reality/fiction paradigm and fragmented non-linear narratives.

2.4 Towards a Definition of Alternate Reality Stories (ARSs)

I propose that Alternate Reality Stories are a form of Electronic Literature digital fiction which might be seen as a new fifth generation form of Digital Fiction. ARSs have developed from the various forms that have preceded it, such as

Twitterfiction, Cybertext, ARGs and Video games. I define Alternate Reality Stories as narrative-based ARGs that continue to blur the line between fiction and reality, with the aim of telling a story. Whilst this chapter has reviewed the most significant precursors and influences on the development of ARS, it is unfortunately not possible to outline all potential significant generic relationships to ARSs. The chart below illustrates the concepts that feed into ARSs, demonstrating just how broad the inspirations for ARS are. For example, the Japanese genre of Keitai Shousetsu (Cell phone Fiction), follows a similar medium of short fragmented digital storytelling, but where ARSs employ sparsely updated social media posts, Keitai Shousetsu often take place in shorter forms, aiming to mimic text communications. Urban legends and Creepypastas share with ARSs their distribution throughout online spaces, and have their roots in oral storytelling, of which ARSs resemble a digital version. A larger version of the ARS map is available in the appendix on page 271.



[Figure 2.1]

In the next chapter, I justify my ARS data selection and introduce my methodology for analysing my chosen texts.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

For this study, I conducted three close readings of Alternate Reality Stories, comparing them to the features of existing genres, namely Alternate Reality Games and Interactive Digital Fiction. After ethical approval was granted by my institution, data collection took place between 20th July 2020 and 12th November 2020. The goal was to determine how closely the texts in question – Dear David, The Sun Vanished and The Greg Story – resemble existing literary genres. Additionally, publicly available responses from Twitter users, interacting with the texts, were also studied to determine if they have any discernible effect upon the narrative. Relevant tweets were saved via screenshots and as text-only artifacts, after which they were then stored in an encrypted folder to protect user's data. All identifying information was anonymised appropriately in accordance with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) guidelines.

3.2. Justification of Data Selection of ARSs for Analysis in this Thesis

In this dissertation, I use three ARSs as my case studies: The Sun Vanished, Dear David, and The Greg Story. In the subsections that follow, I introduce and provide a brief summary of these texts and their central features. In relation to the selection of video games, Aarseth suggests “we must be careful to choose games that not only will confirm our hypotheses, but also potentially refute them” (Aarseth, 2003 p.6). To ensure this, the three texts that I have selected contain both similarities and differences. ARS are incredibly diverse and for this reason, I have had to eliminate many potential ARSs as they are too dissimilar for an early exploration of this text-type. All three texts chosen and discussed above are predominantly text-based (though contained some multimedia elements), took place on Twitter, began within the last five years, and displayed clear example of interaction used to guide the narrative. Analysing Dear David, TGS and TSV will enable this dissertation to demonstrate the variety of twitter-based ARSs, consider textual similarities between ARSs, digital fictions and ARGs.

3.3 Study Background and Methods

As the field of Digital Fiction has continued to evolve, a distinct gap has formed in the scholarship, as shown in chapter 2: namely between video games, alternate reality games and electronic literature. This chapter provides an overview of the methodological decisions, procedures, method of analysis, ethical concerns, and limitations of this study. As ARSs are an emerging form, there is not yet an existing methodology or established practice for their analysis. For this reason, this thesis draws on existing methodologies in the most directly related fields, video game studies and electronic literature studies. The following section will directly address this challenge and outline my method for analysing Alternate Reality Stories.

3.3.1 Methodological Approaches

In order to properly develop a methodology for appropriately studying Alternate Reality Stories, scholars must explore and apply the research of related fields in new ways. As discussed in chapter 2, the most directly related fields with substantial scholarship are video game studies, electronic literature, and interactive fiction. When examining the existing scholarship on video game narratives, methodological approaches have tended to fall into two categories, those pioneered by ludologists or those pioneered by narratologists. As discussed in Chapter 2, narratological perspectives allow for the proper analysis of a narrative even when it is communicated in a non-typical medium. Below are assessments of the three most relevant forms of analysis for ARS: Qualitative Content Analysis, Game Studies and Possible Worlds Theory.

3.3.1.1 Qualitative Approaches

Observational qualitative methods allow for the close analysis of a text's characteristics, whilst being adaptable to the individual researcher's needs. Allen defines qualitative analysis as "driven by broad questions with the goal of gaining an understanding of how problems affect the reality of participants" (Allen 2017, p.1378). This section focuses on two methods of qualitative analysis: close reading and content analysis. There is also discussion of medium specific and ethnographic methods.

Close reading is an established method in the humanities (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Kim J., 2015) and the approach most often taken in the analysis of literary texts. Close readings for twitter-based literature is well established (Marwick & Boyd, 2011; Marwick, 2014). Marwick recommends collecting a small number of related tweets and applying close reading and critical discourse strategies in order to properly analyse tweets for deeper meanings or content. However, these methods are somewhat limited. They offer only a small sample of twitter methodologies, and are aimed at projects linked by hashtags or topic, rather than narrative pieces. Although Marwick and Boyd offer a useful framework for qualitative research on Twitter, their approach was not designed for ARS research. In order to fully investigate ARSs, supplementary methodologies were adapted into the study.

A related form of qualitative analysis is content analysis. Hsieh and Shannon described qualitative content analysis as "a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns" (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1278). As the aim of this thesis is to study ARS features and organise a proper classification for the genre, implementing a methodology with this focus was ideal.

Content analysis has a varied history and a range of applications. Hermeneutic scholarship has, for example, applied this to interpret historically significant texts (Krippendorff, 2004). In more recent digital contexts, however, content analysis has been adapted to analyse electronic literature (Hayles, 2008; Kontopoulou, Predari, & Gallopoulos, 2013; Looy & Baetens, 2003). Hsieh and Shannon outline three forms of qualitative content analysis: conventional - studies designed for

establishing a phenomenon; directed - studies aiming to validate existing theory; and summative - analyses with the purpose of understanding the usage of the content. The conventional approach allows for the formation of new theory and classifications, based on the data retrieved, rather than preconceived ideals (Kondracki, Wellman, & Amundson, 2002). Hsieh and Shannon explain that the conventional content analysis approach “is generally used with a study design whose aim is to describe a phenomenon”: this means that this “type of design is usually appropriate when existing theory or research literature on a phenomenon is limited” (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1279).

Using this approach allowed for the examination of research goals 1 and 2. Additionally, it also permitted for inductive reasoning that aided the process of data driven conclusions. A level of summative analysis was also implemented to allow for the interpretation of meanings within texts, in particular how responses from players offered a wider understanding into how audiences were reacting at the time of publication.

Digital ethnography is the observation or participation of an online community (Hine, 2000). Marwick’s (2014) article presents a framework for using twitter as space for ethnographic research. This can take two forms: through the following of identified subjects and the tracking of their interactions, or through the study of large discussions orbiting specified hashtags (Marwick, 2014). In consideration of the importance of interaction within ARSs, the former approach was adapted into this methodology. As this paper was a retrospective discussion of ARSs rather than a live participation, the direct act of following the subject for updates was not necessary. Instead, a thorough examination of the account’s relevant replies and “quote tweets” was undertaken.

3.3.1.2 Video Game Methodologies

As ARSs are related to video games, game studies provided a useful insight into how to properly form a framework for analysing ARSs. Research into video games studies tend to follow two separate approaches, audience centric or game critiques (Consalvo & Dutton, 2006). Studies featuring the game text as the subject have, according to some game scholars, has been limited in their qualitative methods (Aarseth, 2003; Consalvo & Dutton, 2006; Konzack, 2002).

In response to this gap there have been a growing number of studies into qualitative game narrative methodologies. Lars Konzack, for example, separated games into typology layers (hardware, program code, functionality, gameplay, meaning, referentiality and socio-culture) (Konzack, 2002). However, these strict classifications severely limit what discussions can take place and have become outdated with advancements in technology. For example, with the hardware layer, Konzack makes a distinction between using computers and home consoles for gaming, and asserts that these experiences will be entirely different based on the device at hand. However, the ability and accessibility of games is no longer limited by hardware but rather by developer choices. Recent games are more likely to be cross-platform, meaning they are capable of being played (at the same graphical level) on many devices. Due to similarities in hardware capabilities, games code (layer two) and functionality (layer 3) are rendered near obsolete.

Many functional and technical differences in consoles and PCs are cosmetic or are linked to the controller. These differences should not be entirely dismissed, and it should be acknowledged that mobile games currently have limited graphic and gameplay elements. Whilst there is still a distinction to be made between console, PC and mobile games it is now much narrower than in 2002 and much of

Konzack's method would need adapting in order to make it capable of analysing modern games. Whilst stripping a game to its key layers could be applied to ARSs this method would require significant adaptations.

Espen Aarseth outlines the importance of immersing oneself within the world being researched, and playing games for reasons beyond an analytical purpose (Aarseth, 2003 p.7). As this paper aims to establish a new scholarship for ARSs, I assert that that it is important for future researchers to immerse themselves in potential ARSs and to experience them first-hand before analysing them. These texts are new and consistently evolving, so it is integral that any frameworks or methodologies developed are done so with experience of live ARSs. With this in mind, the methodology put forward in this paper was based upon those that recognise the importance of playing what you research.

For any kind of game, there are three main ways of acquiring knowledge about it. Firstly, we can study the design, rules and mechanics of the game, insofar as these are available to us, e.g. by talking to the developers of the game. Secondly, we can observe others play, or read their reports and reviews, and hope that their knowledge is representative and their play competent. Thirdly, we can play the game ourselves. While all methods are valid, the third way is clearly the best, especially if combined or reinforced by the other two. (Aarseth, 2003 p.3)

For ARSs, I am only able to study the mechanics, design and rules. Although Aarseth suggests talking to developers, the 'behind the curtain' characteristic of ARGs/ARSs prevents this.

Observing others play, or rather interact with, the ARS allows for an analysis not only of how interaction affects the narrative, but also allows insight into the mindset of users at the time of each tweet's publication. Interviews of previous participants could be conducted, though these would need to be retrospective in nature. Doing this would not provide a true insight into what the user was experiencing at the time but could rather be influenced by the ARSs conclusion or narrative revelations. For example, someone playing Elsewhere may have different attitudes towards their experience, before and after the association was made with the TV show Dispatchers from Elsewhere. For this reason, I will only be including tweets which demonstrate an influence on the narrative (i.e. were responded to by the protagonist's account, or suggested ideas that later appeared in the narrative), or act as reflective artifacts to gauge the audience's mindset.

As Aarseth indicates, playing a game is the most effective way of understanding it. He raises another important notion that as researchers we are removed from the experience unless we fully immerse ourselves: "unlike studies of films and literature, merely observing the action will not put us in the role of the audience.

When others play, what takes place on the screen is only partly representative of what the player experiences" (Aarseth, 2003 p.3). Unfortunately, due to the nature of ARSs being a one-time experience, and this paper being a retrospective

analysis of ARSs, playing the narrative and getting the full experience is not entirely possible. However, in order to replicate a diluted version of the experience, I will be looking at all the tweets in chronological order. Whilst this will not imitate accurate pacing or the building of suspense over time, it will ensure that the narrative is experienced in its entirety and as originally presented. Additionally, looking at second-hand accounts, as previously mentioned, will help to piece together how the audience was reacting in that given moment.

In developing a methodology, Aarseth suggests “we must be careful to choose games that not only will confirm our hypotheses, but also potentially refute them” (Aarseth, 2003 p.6). I have selected texts that I believe have potential to demonstrate a need for an established ARSs scholarship and that are markedly different. For example, in *Dear David* the agency of players is unclear. Whilst the protagonist does ask for advice from users the implementation of this is less apparent than that of the others. A lack of unambiguous influence and agency would refute my assertions about ARSs. I go into further detail on this selection process in section 3.2.4.

Many video game methodologies take ethnographic approaches that allow for these observations and immersion in the world being studied. Combining Aarseth’s notions with the close reading and ethnographic content analyses outlined in the previous section permitted an in-depth immersive study into the environments ARSs create.

3.3.1.3 The Possible Worlds Theory

Possible World’s Theory (PWT) began as a practice to examine possibility, validity and contingency of worlds that differ from the one in which we exist (Menzel, 2017). PWT approaches propose that reality is composed of these distinct worlds and pose questions or concepts that link our world (also known as the Actual World or AW), with an alternate world (Ryan, 2013). One of the key features of ARSs, identified in chapter 2, is the blurring of fiction and reality, thus a theoretical framework that allows for the analysis of distinct worlds will be beneficial to alternate reality studies.

Possible worlds theory can be dated as far back as the first century (Lucretius, 1916), and has been applied to fields from inception in quantum mechanics (Everett 1957) to literary studies (Bell 2010; Eco 1984; Lewis 1986; Pavel 1975; Ryan 1991). Ryan suggests that PWT studies tend to fall into two main categories, “the theory of fiction, and the semantic description of storyworlds (or rather, narrative universes), whether fictional or not” (Ryan, 2013). It is the latter notion that I find most appealing in relation to forming an ARS methodology, whilst the concepts developed by PWT scholars in different fields add validity to narrative methodologies, this thesis will pay particular focus to those already established in narratology scholarship. In 1975, Thomas Pavel introduced PWT for narrative studies, suggesting that literary texts are themselves alternate worlds (Pavel, 1975). This concept is critical for understanding ARSs: these texts exist in a world that whilst separate to our own, mimics and often interacts with us. I propose that the reader’s world is the AW and that the protagonist(s) of an ARS exist in an alternate world(s), and that twitter acts as bridge between these worlds.

Alice Bell (Bell, 2010 p.10-27) put forward an adapted version of Marie-Laure Ryan's Possible Worlds Theory (Ryan, 1991), which presents a modal framework for analysing fictional texts that have the capacity for alternate systems of reality. Bell's account features the following categories (Bell, 2010 p.25):

The **Actual World** is the ontological domain that forms the centre of our system of reality. In the context of a literary analysis, it is the domain to which the reader belongs.

Possible worlds are ontological domains that represent alternatives to the Actual World. These are created by imaginings, wishes, fears and dreams of inhabitants of the Actual World.

A **Textual Actual World** is a particular type of possible world which is described and thereby created by an individual fictional text. It is the domain to which the characters of that text belong. It forms the centre of a Textual Universe to which respective alternative Textual Possible Worlds are affiliated.

Textual Possible Worlds belong to the same Textual Universe as the respective Textual Actual World and represent alternatives to what is given as fact in the narrative. Textual Possible Worlds are generated by characters' mental processes such as wishes, dreams or imaginings and therefore constitute possible alternatives to the actual course of events.

A **Textual Universe** is a modal system comprised of a Textual Actual World and associated Textual Possible Worlds. A Textual Universe is described and thereby constructed by a text.

Whilst Bell's version of Possible Worlds Theory was created to help analyse hypertexts that can be experienced in different narrative orders, by different readers, an adapted version was implemented into the study (discussed below in section 2.4.1) to help create clarity when referring to worlds within ARSs.

3.4 Methodology Summary

As the previous sections of this chapter have shown, ARS research requires a new approach to content analysis and game methodologies. As my literature review in chapter 2 showed, ARSs pull inspiration from a variety of domains. Thus, any methodology hoping to analyse them must do the same. This section will outline the methods implemented into this study and introduce a framework for analysing ARSs. In doing so, this framework represents my third research aim: to construct a methodology for analysing ARSs. My methodological framework for analysing ARSs synthesises qualitative analysis, video games analysis and possible worlds theory terminology, each of which has been explained in the preceding sections. Each text was examined oneby-one via a close reading to identify and catalogue the features of each ARS. Texts were read in chronological order alongside the corresponding replies in order to simulate a level of play.

Features present in each text were compared to the features of ARGs and Electronic Interactive Fiction as listed below:

ARG features

- Transmedia Narratives
- Puzzle or Gameplay Elements
- Fiction/Reality Immersion
- Fragmented or non-linear Narratives

Interactive Fiction

- Non-trivial interactivity or Interaction via commands
- Interlinking non-linear narratives
- Presented as fictional
- Tailored to an online medium/ Incorporation of

In observational studies, there is a potential for bias from the researcher. To combat this, ARSs will not be classified as having any distinct features, unless they are clearly demonstrated multiple times. More ambiguous findings will be discussed in the relevant sections.

Reading these texts requires a process of participation in wider social and cultural contexts. From a user's perspective, examples include engaging in activities such as advising the protagonist, influencing the author, connecting with other users via social media, or the formation of sub-groups. As discussed in 3.3.1.2, this study is retrospective, and whilst the narratives could be read as just the tweets produced by the author, it is clear that this participation influences the experience of the narratives and therefore a level of Digital ethnography was required, in this case it was the consideration of relevant replies and "quote tweets".

In order to examine the different worlds in existence within an ARS, an adapted form of Possible Worlds Theory (Bell, 2010; Ryan, 1991) was constructed.

The Actual World (AW): the world in which the reader exists.

The Textual Actual World (TAW): the world in which the main protagonist exists or is documenting.

The Textual Possible World (TPW): a world within the TAW which is developed by the characters' mental processes that depict alternate events to those in the TAW, i.e. dreams.

The Extended Textual World (ETW): the world in which any additional entities outside of the main protagonist communicate from. This world is separated from The Textual Actual World in order to make the main account distinct from potentially non-canon or secondary plots.

The Textual Universe (TU): the space in which the entire narrative and all above worlds exist in. This universe endures across the Fiction/Reality Paradigm.

Adopting this framework allowed for discussions of the Fiction/Reality Paradigm, and how crossing it can create an immersive environment.

3.5. Data Protection

All data was anonymised, with names and tweets containing identifying information discounted from the study. The names of all users were replaced by a pseudonym based upon which story they interacted with, for example a respondent engaging with The Sun Vanished would be referred to as 'TSV-R001' and so on. In the case of Dear David, the author, whose personal and business account was used to tell the Dear David story, will be referred to as 'Ben'. Where necessary, dates and times will be provided to establish a timeline of events, and all time are recorded as Greenwich Mean Time (GMT). These compensations have been made in alignment with American Psychological Association's (APA) Privacy and Confidentiality guidelines (American Psychological Association, 2017; Lee & Hume-Pratuch, 2013).

Data was gathered from multiple sources including the main Twitter account of the ARS, associated accounts, responses from users, and related social media accounts. All artefacts were taken from publicly available accounts, which are accessible to all online users and exist within the public space, and are typed as originally shown. Collection took place over six months and all data was stored within Sheffield Hallam University's research store, as is the institution's policy. Whist live, all data is encrypted and can only be accessed with a username and password and is backed up on additional protected servers in the event of data loss (Sheffield Hallam University, 2019).

3.6 ARS Selection

A small sample was chosen because of the expected difficulty in obtaining functionally similar ARSs. As discussed in Section 2.4, ARS are diverse and for this reason, I have had to eliminate many potential ARS examples as they are too dissimilar for an early exploration of this type. Publications were only included in the analysis if: they were predominantly text-based (Although contained some multimedia elements), took place on Twitter, began within the last five years, and displayed clear example of interaction used to guide the narrative.

Tweets from the ARSs studied were primarily collected after the narratives had concluded. However, in the case of TSV collection was taken during a dormant period of the narrative. As TSV appears to be continuing and the narrative will continue to evolve post-publication, this will limit some of the assertions regarding the narrative.

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter has outlined how the research was conducted in order to answer the research questions, including data selection and collection. A close reading content analysis with inductive ethnographical reasoning was used to develop a theory for the analysis of ARSs, and a framework for their identification. Chapters 4-6 demonstrate the implementation of this methodology and detail the findings for each text.

Chapter 4: Dear David

4.1 Introduction

This chapter analyses *Dear David*. The narrative took place between 2017 and 2018 on the personal account of a popular artist, known to exist in the Actual World (AW). After the narrative concluded, the rights to *Dear David* were purchased by New Line films (BBC 2018). The chapter begins with a chronological analysis of the features and techniques employed by the author and respondents (section 4.2). This is followed by comprehensive summary of the emergent characteristics compared to those of the existing genres (sections 4.3 & 4.4). The conclusion considers what *Dear David* demonstrates in terms of its status as an ARS (section 4.5).

4.2 Chronological Content Analysis

What follows is an account of the *Dear David* story. Appropriate Tweets forming the narrative and the relevant responses are catalogued in Table 1 [PAGE NO.]. Each tweet has been numbered for anonymity and, in this thesis, tweets pertaining to *Dear David* begin with DD followed by the accession number, i.e. DD-001.

The *Dear David* saga is predominantly split into sporadic threads of varying lengths with occasional smaller single tweet updates. The narrative originally took place from August 2017 to February 2018, with the aforementioned threads occurring at least once per month. This structure of distribution follows a similar form to the fragmented narratives of ARGs and IF. As discussed in previous chapters, ARG and IF narratives are often released in small segments, and often across a larger timeline. For example, in video games the player may be given a small amount of information at the beginning of the game, but will only gain more story beats by defeating bosses, completing tasks, or exploring the world. In the case of *Dear David*, information is only released when the author decides, and thus whilst the fragmented narratives are similar in form, the way in which the narratives are delivered is not.

The first month in which *Dear David* ran, August, was the most densely populated in terms of tweets with ten threads, potentially as a deliberate choice to gain an audience. There were three separate threads in September, an additional three in October, four in November, two in December, a final two threads in January. Subsequently, three individual tweets were released in February and a final two in March. The following sections will divide *Dear David* into two-month periods, with the exception of August, which due to the length and the introduction of key features, requires a more thorough analysis. Each period develops its own themes and plot points, causing what could be interpreted more traditionally as chapters.

4.2.1 August

“So, my apartment is currently being haunted by the ghost of a dead child and he's trying to kill me. (thread)”

(DD-001)

The story initially began with the above message from protagonist ‘Ben’. This tweet is what ARG enthusiasts refer to as a Trailhead or Rabbit Hole, or first marker of the game (Szulborski 2005). These trailheads are used to draw in an audience in preparation for or as the start of the game. Ben’s tweet acts as an intriguing hook that lures twitter users into the story. I therefore argue that this tweet demonstrates the implementation of an ARG characteristic. This first tweet also develops the Textual World. The use of the conjunction ‘so’ implies this is a continuation of a trend, despite this being the first tweet and the introduction of a reality different to our own.

There are approximately nineteen tweets in this thread. Twitter threads are a medium-specific form of organising individually linked tweets from one person or from a conversation between users. These connected textual fragments could mirror the interlinking lexia of IF, and show that the story has been tailored to Twitter’s medium, which would be indicative of DL.

In this first thread, we are introduced to the antagonist David and are given our first depiction of him in the form of an illustration (DD-004). The inclusion of an image establishes the narrative as multimedia. This again suggests that *Dear David* has ARG features, additionally the use of digital illustration demonstrates the incorporation of technologies outside of what Twitter can provide. Interestingly after the first tweet (DD-001), the follow up tweets are split into two threads, with tweets DD-002 – DD-005 in a separate chain to DD-006 – DD-022. Whilst this could be a technical or human error, it nevertheless makes the text more difficult to traverse. The text therefore requires non-trivial interaction on the part of the reader. This form of interactivity exemplifies DL features and again shows that the text does resemble DL form.

This initial thread introduces us to main settings of the story, Ben’s real-world apartment in the textual world and the world existing in his dreams (or the Possible Textual World). Much of the information pertaining to David is released during Ben’s recounting of nightmares: Ben introduces us to a girl in a library who is the first to give a name to David and outlines ‘rules’ for Ben to follow (DD-007 – DD-010). In the next dream, however, Ben breaks these rules and odd occurrences begin to happen in ‘real life’ (DD-019 – DD-021). This separation of Ben’s dream world and the world he normally exists in, develops a Possible Textual World (PTW) alongside the Textual World (TW), and thus creates another layer of reality immersion.

In these early tweets, the more subjective elements of the story are kept in the dream world (PTW), whereas video and photographic ‘evidence’ is presented as existing in the actual world, despite existing in the TAW. This merging and

obscuring of world boundaries is an ARG technique used to make games more challenging. When employed into an ARS it gives the illusion that the narrative at least partially exists in the same world we do. The notion that the barrier between these worlds can be crossed or have entities coexisting in multiple worlds echoes McHale's suggestion of a semipermeable membrane the real world and works of fiction (McHale, 1987 p.36).

Ben posted his first updates on August 9th (DD-023) followed by an image of his cat meowing at midnight (DD-026), but it is in this thread that Ben first introduces video to the narrative. The continued use of multimedia elements again suggests that *Dear David* does conform to ARG and DL characteristics. The next day, Ben informs the audience that he intends to record himself sleeping to see if he can pick up any unusual activity (DD-033). On the 11th August, Ben posted these audio recordings (DD-037 – DD-041), which revealed footsteps, static, and groaning. As discussed in reference to the images and video, the inclusion of audio adds more multimedia layers to the narrative.

In the days prior to this, one user suggested the sleep app to Ben (DD-R066), so it appears that the narrative is responding to reader suggestions. This strategy of incorporating and acting on responses continues. After the first thread, some of the more sceptical users enquired if the building could be experiencing a carbon monoxide leak (DD-R067 – DD-R069). In the first update, Ben then opened with confirmation that his monoxide alarm was working (DD-024). Users subsequently tried to assist Ben by offering spiritual remedies to get rid of David. In particular, many users recommended pouring a circle of salt around his door (DD-R013; DD-R014), which Ben did, though continued haunting would suggest it did not work. In a similar vein, Ben was also advised by users to burn sage (DD-R003; DD-R063; DD-R064; DD-R065). Again, Ben would follow this advice, and this time actively acknowledged the audience's suggestion (DD-057).

Without conformation from the author, it is impossible to say if salt and sage had always been a planned plot point. However, the users responded with these suggestions and in the case of the sage Ben did acknowledge the user tweets. This could be interpreted as fulfilling a similar function to entering commands into a text-based IF (e.g., if a user enters the command 'go forward', the game character moves forwards). In replying to the *Dear David* tweets, however, users may give advice, but the protagonist may or may not respond to or act on this advice. The outcome of user interaction is therefore less clear. It could also be argued that with games or EL you are aware that what you are interacting with is entirely fictional and has no real-world consequences, but *David* takes place on a platform – Twitter – in which real users interact. As such, when viewing the account of a person we know to be real; it is easier to assume this could be a person in our world experiencing a real problem.

From the 14th of August, potential image manipulation and an increasingly inquisitive audience become evident. Tweets DD-043-DD-056 document how Ben's haunting affects a polaroid camera. The first few images appear normal, but the photo of the hallway develops completely black.



[Figure 4.1: DD-047]



[Figure 4.2: DD-056]



[Figure 4.3: DD-056]

Some sceptical users noted that black PVC tape was visible in the background of Ben's video and on the lens of the camera (DD-R016 & DD-R017). Others, however, commented that in the same video they could see the outline of a face before the film developed black (DD-R018). This demonstrates not only do users respond in differing and unexpected ways but also employ investigations and critical thinking of their own. *Dear David* does not demand or necessitate these responses from users and, therefore, this is an example of non-trivial interaction, which in turn forms how other readers experience the narrative. This is reminiscent of Jenkins' observation of how transmedia readers can act like "hunter gathers", taking "pleasure in tracking down character backgrounds and plot points and making connections between different texts within the same franchise" (Jenkins, 2003). What is also interesting is that this update incorporates both a polaroid and an iPhone cameras (DD-056), two different technologies producing two different image mediums (analogue and digital respectively). This indicates that *Dear David* continues to support more complex uses of technology.

Ben's experiences eventually worsen to the point where he is physically harmed: Ben has a dream in which David drags him by the arm into an abandoned warehouse (DD-075). The dream is fairly routine until Ben wakes up and notices a bruise in the same place David grabbed him (DD-076) and spots an abandoned warehouse (DD-080 - DD-082). Again, this experience shows Ben's dreams (in the TPW) crossing into his reality (TAW), making those distinctions between worlds more malleable. In turn, the use of the Twitter platform and responding to readers' suggestions makes the barrier between the AW and the TAW less clear.

In the last August updates (DD-083 – DD-115), Ben notes that his cats are now meowing at 10pm, his phone is receiving mysterious calls, and that he has invested in a pet monitoring camera. Said camera picks up Ben's cats acting strangely during the night the green rocking chair David was first seen in (DD-003) rocking back and forth, a turtle shell falls from the wall, and a blue chair disappearing. Users again responded: some joked that rocking chair should be burned (DD-R021 & DD-R022) but others offered more sceptical solutions like an air conditioning unit being left on (DD-R023). Ben was quick to dismiss the idea of a breeze but noted that he did have the AC on (DD-111). Some replies suggested that users saw shadows in the videos (DD-R024). Whilst Ben did not acknowledge these theories, he did note the more mundane observation that a blue chair disappeared then reappeared between videos (DD-114 & DD-115).

This first month of Twitter activity from the *Dear David* account provides evidence of multimedia/transmedia narrative composition, audience interaction, fragmented storytelling, interlinking lexia, the use of multiple technologies, tailoring to twitter's medium, fiction/reality distortion, and interlinking lexia, all whilst existing in the digital space. The August data therefore shows that *Dear David* conforms to many of the established features of IF and ARGs. The only outliers of this were concrete examples of gameplay and the use of commands. The following sections will focus on supporting the examples found so far, detailing their progression, and searching for clearer examples of gameplay and commands.

4.2.2 September

On the 6th of September, Ben returned with another thread. On this occasion the narrative focused on Ben's two cats rather than Ben's own experiences. The pet monitoring camera mentioned the previous month (DD-100) captures the cats acting strangely, in particular the black and white cat appears to be looking at something and standing on its hind legs (DD-120 – DD-124). In the video posted in Tweet DD-120, a green jar moves across the table without anything appearing to touch it. Ben does not initially comment on the jar moving; instead, he focuses on the odd behaviour of his cat. However, users were quick to pick up on the movement (DD-R027). Much like the previous polaroid camera Tweet, users were split with different opinions: some believed the jar was on a string and being pulled from off screen (DD-R028); other users focused on the cats, suggested they may be attacking something the camera did not pick up (DD-R026); others dismissed the cats' behaviour as caused by having fleas (DD-R029). Another group of users concentrated on the colour of the effected objects: the rocking chair, the chair in the warehouse, the jar and the shell were all green. This led some users to believe David was drawn to this colour (DD-R030).

The last updates before Ben leaves follow the same trend as previous threads. Ben continues to have nightmares, and as a result leaves his apartment, once again passing the warehouse (DD-127 - DD-137) This time the door is closed but he hears a sound from inside (DD-139), Ben puts his camera up to a window in order to investigate (DD-144 – DD-147). The image is blurred and difficult to make out but once zoomed in, a small translucent mass can be seen near the door. Users were also quick to notice this (DD-R70 – DD-R72), and reinforced Ben's suggestion that a face was present. Ben however does not acknowledge any of these replies. The last update for September is Ben thanking users for the support before leaving for Japan (DD-152 – DD-155).

"Whatever happens, I want to thank everyone for their kind thoughts and concerns. This whole ordeal has been stressful and it means a lot."
(DD-154)

"It makes me feel like I'm not going through this alone. See you in a couple weeks. ♡." (DD-155)

4.2.3 October and November

Ben next tweets on the 3rd of October, purportedly the last day of his trip in Japan (DD-156). He informs readers that things have been quiet and uneventful, until the last day. Whilst walking through Sapporo Ben encounters a statue that bear a striking resemblance to David (DD-159). Whilst Ben was not aware of or neglected to mention the statue's name, one user was able to identify it as Takeo Yamauchi's *Mori-no-uta (Song of the Forest)* (DD-R033). Located in Nakajima Park the statue depicts a group of figures playing instruments, whilst I was unable to find an official date for the statue's construction, a Trip Advisor review from 2016 (Willow888, 2016) shows that *Mori-no-uta* predates the *Dear David* narrative. It is therefore unclear if this statue was already known to Ben and was intended to be used all along, or if it was a coincidence.

After Ben returns home, the electricity in his apartment develops abnormal behaviours (DD-165 – DD-172). Whilst this plot progression only has minimal impact on the narrative, it does show that the narrative is continuing to incorporate technology in unique ways. Ben's light bulbs bursting, and TV backlights flickering are the first technologies outside of the cameras that document the haunting.

Ben continues his routine of leaving the apartment to escape the strange incidents. This time though, he hears something from behind his door (DD-175) and, fearing what is on the other side, Ben takes a photo through the peephole (DD-180). Whilst the image appears to show smudges on the glass, Ben confesses that the longer he looked at it, the more a face began to take form. Some users agreed and began to reply with outlines of faces drawn over the image to illustrate what they were seeing to others (DD-R036 & DD-R037). Some users were sceptical, and tried to assure Ben that he was seeing what he wanted to see, rather than what was actually there (DD-R035). Despite this Ben was clearly shaken by the events, his next tweet suggested he was taking new steps to stop the supposed haunting.

Almost two weeks later Ben returns, apologising for the lack of updates and informing us a friend came over to cleanse the apartment (DD-183 & DD-184). Whilst Ben did not actively acknowledge the suggestions, many users had previously recommended cleansing the apartment or speaking to a spiritual advisor (DD-R013; DD-R073 – DD-R76). Much like previous advice, this worked for a short period of time but was ultimately proved futile. As in previous updates, Ben walked past the warehouse, and spots something unusual; this time, a black hearse (DD-192). As DD was not associated with a production company until after the conclusion (BBC, 2018), it is likely than Ben was funding the story himself at this point. Hiring a hearse for one picture would be costly so it seems both possible and likely that parts of *Dear David*'s narrative could be opportunistic in their creation. This suggests something about the nature of ARSs that I had not previously considered: that narrative suggestions may come to the author not just through replies but also from the world around them. This puts the notion of replies acting as commands into question: if an idea from a user carries less or more weight than competing inspiration, the degree to which users can alter the narrative would become more fluid.

In the same update, Ben recounts an incident where he spots someone standing outside his window staring at him (DD-201). He takes photos (DD-203 & DD-

204), which again users edited to point out the figure they saw (DD-R77 – DD-R79). Based on the small size and bald head that reader identified, many assume this is a manifestation of David. Interestingly this is the first time a non-translucent figure is seen in the TAW. This indicates the inclusion of props, and with a physical form diverts some of the scepticism that suggests Ben was seeing things that were not there.

Ben ends the month feeling deflated, afraid, and resorting to alcohol to calm his nerves (DD-205 & DD-206). He makes a reference to how anxious he felt when the activity first started and how, with the most recent event, he feels the same. At the end of August, Ben made a similar allusion to needing substances in compose himself, in particular Xanax (DD-115).

4.2.4 November and December

November starts with Ben recounting another nightmare, this time David in the bedroom moving towards Ben as he tries to take photos as evidence (DD-207 – DD-219). He wakes up and tries to carry on with his day but later notices a series of photos on his phone that he has no memory of taking (DD-222 – DD-226). Three of the photos show the small figure from DD-203, getting closer and closer to the camera. This use of images continues the ARG and DL trend of incorporating media and technology to progress the narrative.

The next updates explain that Ben has recently discovered a loft space above his apartment (DD-230 – DD-243). Over several days, he photographs (DD-236) and videos (DD-237) the hatch to this space, and draws an illustrative diagram (DD-240). As the hatch is above a steep flight of stairs, Ben orders a telescoping pole in order to open it (DD-245) and, when he does so, a small, deteriorated shoe falls from the hatch (DD-255). Sometime later, Ben's landlord ventures into the space and discovers a small green marble (DD-263). In response to the pictures of the marble, users began doing their own research and found that the marble was a handmade German piece from 1860-1910 (DD-R080 – DD-R082). As this is not a mass-produced modern item, it would be more difficult to source, though I was able to find similar marbles on the consumer-to-consumer e-commerce site eBay (gerbear0814 2020). Whilst users suggested that concealing a shoe was a technique used to ward off spirits (DD-R039), no users were able to date or identify the shoe. Due to the level of deterioration the shoe would be a difficult item to purchase or replicate. Coupled with Amazon.com existing in the AW, this aids in the suspension of disbelief that Ben could exist in the Actual World.

Ben returns in December. After having problems sleeping, he moves the pet camera into his bedroom to try to capture what is waking him up (DD-267 - DD-278). The first image shows Ben sleeping in his bed, the second shows David



[Figure 4.4: DD-278]



[Figure 4.5: DD-286]



[Figure 4.6: DD-289]

sitting in an armchair, the next shows him crawling from the chair, then standing next to the bed, then on top of the bed, and finally directly in front of the camera (DD-278 – DD-289).

Whilst the use of images is nothing new, using these images in succession to build anticipation is novel. An image series again shows that transmedia technology has been incorporated and posting each image in a separate tweet demonstrates tailoring to the medium. However, these images seemed to be a turning point for many users: some who had previously believed the story to be real, at this point believe the most recent images show a doll being moved between pictures (DD-R83 – DD-R85). This breakdown validates how fragile the boundaries between Textual and Actual worlds are and substantiates the idea of a semipermeable membrane.

4.2.5 January to March

A few days into 2018, Ben informs readers he has been with family in Montana and, after having some time away from his apartment, is considering moving



[Figure 4.7: DD-313]

(DD-294 – DD-296). However, during his stay, odd incidents began happening. Small footprints appear in the snow outside of the house and lead out to a field before suddenly stopping (DD-297 - DD-304). As the state of Montana and the Christmas Holiday exist in the AW, including these in the narrative cements the notion that Ben lives in a world nearly identical to our own and helps to blur the lines of fictional worlds and reality. Ben eventually returns to his apartment but can still feel David's presence at night. He has a nightmare where David hovers above him whilst he sleeps (DD-310). Similar to the previous month, this dream appears to come true when images show David apparently falling from the ceiling (See figure 4.7) (DD-313).

There were two distinct responses to this image: one group of users noticed that in brightened versions of the image, a string can be seen attaching David to the ceiling (DD-R045; DD-R048; DD-R049); less sceptical users suggested that David is falling into Ben's body and suggest that this is an attempt at possession (DD-R047; DD-R042; DD-R086). Despite being five months into the story, spiritual, sceptical and users who are 'playing along' all still actively engage with the text. This demonstrates that users of different backgrounds are capable of being captivated by these narratives for different reasons.

“So, I don’t know if this legit or if it’s very well edited fiction. Either way this story has me hooked! I find myself constantly checking your Twitter for updates. If it is real, I apologize for what you’re going through. If it’s a fictional story then keep up the good work.” (DD-R043)

In the final thread, Ben informs us that his technical problems have progressed (DD-321 – DD-325). He posts screenshots of Instagram posts that he remembers posting and compares these with distorted versions showing what other users apparently saw. Image manipulation has already allegedly occurred in the text but not to this degree. Interestingly, these posts existing outside of Twitter show the incorporation of new technologies and the transferring of the medium to a different site.

The next update provides a video taken from an odd angle, showing a cat meowing at a door before turning to face the camera, with no caption or follow up. Six days later the message “everything is fine” (DD-328) is posted. A further eleven days pass before Ben writes “please dont worry about me. I’m okay and everything will be like it was before 😊” (DD-329). This is followed by a second video of a cat meowing. There is never any elaboration on these posts. However, in March, Ben posts two tweets saying he would update if anything else happened (DD-331 & DD-332). Ben never officially concluded the narrative, but his posts returned to normal after this time and he began focusing more on his artwork. This open-ended conclusion allowed for one final opportunity for users to interpret the narrative, with their tweets arguing that David had taken control of Ben’s body (DD-R055 – DD-R057).

4.3 Does Dear David Conform to ARG and IF Features?

The narrative of *Dear David* unfolds over text, image, audio and video as well as including references to other social media platforms. *Dear David* can therefore be seen as a transmedia narrative. This combined with the fragmented narrative segments and the inclusion of immersive tactics could lead to speculation that *Dear David* conforms with ARG features. However, something not featured in *Dear David* is an element of gameplay or puzzle solving. Typically, in ARGs, gameplay comes in the form of brainteasers, memorising or identifying patterns, solving anagrams or word-based logic puzzles like riddles. ARGs may also include hidden clues or instructions within a program’s code. Nothing resembling this appears within *Dear David*. It could be argued that a level of deductive reasoning and interpretive puzzle-solving is demonstrated in the reader-replies: Advising the protagonist to take photos using different devices and from varying distances could be seen as implementing trial and error techniques, or the application of environment-based knowledge. However, this is not equivalent, and I therefore do not believe that *Dear David* wholly conforms to ARG characteristics.

The implementation of commands or controls are central to interactive fiction. As suggested, it is possible that the action of replying to tweets could act as the entering of commands. However, there are three issues. Firstly, the agency in

Dear David is obscured to a certain degree: whilst users can comment and give advice, their comments do not necessarily change the course of the narrative. The author does not have to implement every suggestion, but can choose to implement any or none of the suggestions at any time. Thirdly, it is possible that some readers will not be aware that this narrative is fictional.

Twitter threads could be seen as interlinking lexia because they connect together through linked tweets that can be viewed as a chain, or if clicked can be viewed individually alongside replies. Follow-up tweets outside of the thread or tweets that at first do not appear to be part of the narrative can also be accessed by following the link to Ben's profile then scrolling down the feed. These threads additionally create the appearance of a fragmented narrative. Whilst large sections can be read in their entirety, many sections of the narrative are split into separate threads, replies or singular tweets. Fragmented narratives are characteristic of many IFs. *Dear David* does possess features of IF, but due to the limited adherence to commands and clear fiction labels, it does not entirely conform.

By virtue of existing online and tailoring to that medium, *Dear David* is Digital Literature, and through the incorporation of changing mediums is also a form of transmedia storytelling. However, as a user's suggestion can alter the narrative, the breakdown of AW/TW barriers and the attempts to blur this distinction, leads me to believe that *DD* has features unlike those in existing subgenres.

4.4 Does Dear David Display any Unique Features?

Dear David not only demonstrates features of the above fields, but also incorporates some unique elements. Tailoring to the medium is common for DL but this narrative integrates multiple social media channels connected via screenshots and hyperlinks, developing an even more fragmented story that crosses the boundaries and limitations of one site. Whilst this situates *DD* under the transmedia narrative umbrella, I would suggest that the following features set it apart from other ergodic texts.

Something unique to social media centric narratives is the ability to leave long gaps of time between updates. A similar feature can be seen in diary or record keeping forms. However, utilising social media also allows for users to experience gaps in real time, aiding in the building of suspense. Without updates, users are left with only their imagination to decide what has happened to the protagonist.

In section 2.2, I suggested that at times a user may be unaware of the impact they have on the narrative, and if a user were to believe they have agency, their suggestions could be outweighed by another user or something outside of the narrative found by the author. If elements of *Dear David* were incorporated without prior planning from both the responding users and due to spontaneous real-world events (in this case an open warehouse, a hearse or discarded shoe), then that would imply advice made by users could be chosen over something appearing in the writer's world and vice versa. Ultimately narrative decisions are at the discretion of the writer, but their influence may be swayed by the independent choices (i.e. advice, research, debunking) of the users, thus both parties have some agency over the narrative's progression, resulting in this fluid pattern.

4.5 Conclusion

Dear David has displayed core elements of all ARGs and IFs, yet at each stage there has been some level of ambiguity or contrasting features that has stopped this. I therefore conclude that whilst the narrative does contain features of ARGs, IF and DL, it also possesses such unique elements that it must be distinguished from them in some way. Chapter Five will go on to apply this analysis to *The Greg Story*.

Chapter 5: The Greg Story

5.1 Introduction

Having examined the features displayed in *Dear David*, I investigate *The Greg Story*. The account was activated in July 2018 and began publishing non-narrative tweets, the main storyline took place from October 2018 to January 2019. Like the previous examination, this chapter begins with a chronological analysis (Section 5.2) accompanied by a summation of features found, and closes with a conclusion concerning how well *TGS* conforms to expectations of existing genres.

5.2 Chronological Content Analysis

TGS also known as *The Greg Thread* or, after the Twitter username, @gr3gory88, follows a postgraduate student's attempt to sell his deceased grandfather's home in a remote town. The full collection of tweets from the @gr3gory88 account and selected user responses can found in Table 2 [PAGE], labelled in the same fashion as previously, with the moniker G-000 or G-R00.

Unlike *DD*, *TGS*'s threads are not interspersed with the author's personal updates, but they do take the form of intermittent threads. The account was created in July 2018 and began with comparatively innocuous tweets of the kind one would expect from non-narrative social media usage (G-001). In autumn of that year, though, the account would transition into a dedicated narrative experience. Much like *DD*, these threads form distinct chapters and thus my analysis will divide the investigation to focus on these sections. The first sections will focus on the pre-narrative tweets from the 22nd of July to the 29th of October, followed by coverage of the Halloween period, and finally a section covering December and January.

5.2.1 Pre-Narrative Tweets: July – October

Unlike *Dear David*, Greg was not a person known to exist in the AW, instead the narrative takes place on an account used only for the narrative, thus additional effort was expended to build a protagonist that could exist in the AW. The first tweet on Greg's account is seemingly simple "Guess I'm gonna try Twitter again 🐼" (G-001). The use of "again" tells us that this is not Greg's first time using the platform, and that he is aware of the mode of communication he is using. Much like use of "So" in *DD* this suggests the existence of a life before this tweet. Additionally, the use of "gonna" and emojis demonstrates a familiarity with English internet slang. Deliberate respellings are often used to represent the natural phonetic processes in informal speech, and are known as allegro speech respellings (Gibbons & Whiteley, 2018 p.137-138). These elements used in conjunction aid in the development of a character who could exist in the AW. This process evidently had the desired effect as one reader would later reply to this tweet asking, "Is this a real story?" (G-R001). This demonstrates that some readers were unable to identify whether this series on tweets are part of AW communication or develop a TAW narrative. Another user replied "Does it truly

matter? Either way, just enjoy it” (G-R003). This exchange demonstrates that ARS may not necessarily need to maintain the illusion of existing alongside the AW, but rather be capable of generating moments of belief.

During this initial period, we learn Greg enjoys watching TV and movies (G-002, G-003, G-005), goes to bars (G-003 & G-006) and enjoys breakfast food (G-004 & G-007), and in particular eggs. Later in the narrative, eggs become an integral plot point; foreshadowing this could be a deliberate nod to readers going back through the tweets. One of these readers retrospectively replied with “Chekhov’s egg” (G-R004) comparing the tweet to ‘Chekhov’s Gun’, a “dramatic principle that requires every element introduced in a narrative to serve some role in the story” (Robertson & Young, 2014, p.155). Interestingly Greg mentions the TV show *LOST* (Lieber, Abrams & Lindelof 2004), a program associated with multiple promotional and extended narrative ARGs (see *The Lost Experience* (Rosenberg, 2006) & *Find 815* (American Broadcast Company & Hoodlum, 2007)). It is possible that this was a nod to the ARG stylisation of TGS.

Many video games contain ‘Easter eggs’, hidden segments of a game implemented by the author that are meant to be found but are often hidden or require additional investigation to find (Bailey, 2008), and which have the capacity to enhance gameplay but not alter it. These are often notes left by developers, cameos from other games, or secret levels. To find these tweets, users would need to scroll backwards through the text until they reached them. This shows that readers of ARS can expend additional effort to receive what is comparable to a pre-programmed reward. There are no instructions in the text telling readers to scroll back or search for further tweets, yet many nevertheless employ investigative skills and some users found the tweets regardless. This action, when observed alongside comments that liken TGS to an ARG (G-R005), suggests that some readers may have a background in gaming. Alternatively, this could indicate that the use of a social media platform makes users more likely to investigate an individual’s profile.

These tweets come to a halt, however, when Greg announces the passing of his grandfather.

“Just found out my grandpa died. Never really knew him but still [Confused face].” (G-008)

This shift in tone is brief but sets up an integral plot point for later in the narrative: Greg’s grandfather has died, and Greg and his mother’s relationship with him was strained (G-009). The next tweet, returned to the previous tone, with Greg posting a picture of a slug with the caption “Made a new friend!” (G-010). Things did not immediately change after his grandfather’s death instead things ‘went back to normal’ making Greg more relatable and the distinction between fictional and real events blurred. As these tweets existed prior to the trailhead (see section 4.2.1), they could be considered a prologue to what follows.

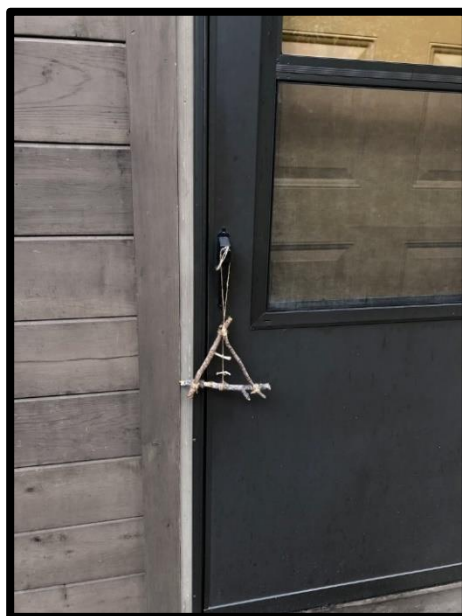
5.2.2 Halloween

“Something weird is happening in the woods outside my house and I don't know what to do.” (G-011)

On the 30th of October, Greg posted the above tweet, followed by an increasingly unsettling thread (G-011 – G-052). In this thread, there are a total of fifty-one tweets, the majority were posted in quick succession, linked to a prior and follow-up tweet. However, some posts were published out of order (G-033). While this was most likely a technical issue or human error, it makes the text more difficult to traverse, requiring more effort to be expended by readers. This locks sections of the text away from those users who were reading only one thread. This echoes the fragmented or often interlinking lexia of Interactive Fiction.

In this first thread, Greg introduces us to the major settings of the story: the house, the lake, the town, and the woods (G-012 & G-013). The notion of an abandoned house in the middle of woods removed from civilisation is a common trope in horror movies (for instance, see: *Friday the 13th* (Cunningham, 1980), *The Blair Witch Project* (Myrick & Sánchez, 1999) and *The Cabin in the Woods* (Whedon & Goddard, 2011)), and in folklore. The idea preys on our fear of isolation, darkness, and things we do not understand; in folklore, the enchanted forest trope also offers a space for transformation and learning (Zipes, 2002; see also: Łaskiewicz, 2017; Maritz, 2007; Tatar, 2003). What this demonstrates is that, whilst ARS are recent phenomenon, *TGS* and *DD* pull inspiration from existing literary tropes, in this case horror.

Greg explains that, despite not being close with his grandfather, the man's house now belongs to him. He planned to sell the house and leave as soon as possible but finds a small triangle made of twigs and bones, attached to the door (G-017).



[Figure 5.1: G-018]



[Figure 5.2: G-018]

He informs his readers that the next day he spotted more of the artifacts around the property, all slightly different but consisting of three sticks tied with string and an item attached (G-021 – G-024). What is interesting about these artifacts is that, unless they were spontaneously found by the author, they were most likely made intentionally as props for the story. Many users joked that the artifact took a similar appearance to the ones seen in *The Blair Witch Project*, whilst others began researching the symbolism or the bones themselves (G-R011 – G-R015). However, none of this advice was ever adopted into *TGS* or referenced by Greg; much like the use of premade props, this suggests the author had a planned narrative. Greg finds discarded clothing and a torn notepad, with marks from where someone had written on the previous page (G-028 & G-029). Users were again quick to offer advice, suggesting rubbing a pencil across the page to reveal the text (G-R017 & G-R018).

The narrative takes a sinister turn when Greg returns home to find a cloaked figure standing in his garden. He manages to record a video and we are presented with our second character, an unnamed eyeless woman.



[Figure 5.3: G-049]



[Figure 5.4: G-049]

The introduction of video reinforces the found-footage style horror story that this narrative takes. The utilisation of video to develop the narrative demonstrates multimedia use, a trait seen in IF, DL and ARGs. Found-footage films have a history of blurring fiction and reality (Heller-Nicholas, 2014; Ognjanovic, 2015; Sayad, 2016). The cinematic genre blends the use of documentary and horror cinema, two genres which themselves have demonstrated the ability to create immersive environments that can distort reality (Black, 2002; Rhodes, 2002; Williams, 1980).

The inclusion of a person in special effects makeup shows preplanning, and a budget large enough to accommodate this. ARGs with large financial backing are relatively common but, as discussed in Chapter 2, these are normally promotional or extended experiences of an existing property. As Greg would never endorse a project, a promotional budget seems unlikely. Any funding or SFX use would therefore have to be supplied by the creator(s). Unlike in *DD*, this antagonist exists in the TAW immediately, there is no dream state in which she crosses over from, Greg witnesses her and presents his evidence to us as exactly that. It is then up to the readers to decide if she exists in the AW, TAW or both. Greg runs back inside calling the police (G-0051), ending the thread with the following:

“I know I won't be able to sleep tonight. I feel light headed and nauseous. I don't know what's going to happen. I'm scared shitless.” (G-052)

The expletive language conveys a sense of relatability and authenticity from Greg, helping to make the protagonist more believable, by responding in the way someone in the AW would. The next morning the police arrive and confirmed Greg’s concerns of them not taking the account seriously (G-053 – G-057). This inability to rely on law enforcement combined with the realisation that nearby houses are empty adds to this isolation.

Still feeling observed, Greg spots two people on distant fishing boat in the lake (G-061). Much like the hearse in *DD*, this was likely a coincidence or spontaneous event which was added to and incorporated into the narrative. This suggests that inspiration can occur at any time, changing the course of the narrative. Unlike in works that go through a lengthy process before being published, ARSs are written and published live; inspiration can be implemented as it occurs. Suggesting that ARS could be both pre-planned, and susceptible to interference from users and the world surrounding the author. Although it is possible that the author plans the tweets in advance, editing a rewriting them before pressing send, *DD*’s incorporation of suggestions indicates that at these drafts can be changed or re contextualised for immersion.

The use of SFX is again applied in the next few tweets when Greg finds a discarded eyeball on the shore of the lake (G-068). Greg starts to panic, asking twitter if this is from an animal of some kind (G-069).



[Figure 5.5: G-068]

Some users pointed out that the eye looked fake; “If that was a Real eye itd have much more tissue and not look like it was a ping pong ball lol” (G-R022). Others agreed but were still interested in the narrative: “Loving this thread but this is the fakest eyeball I’ve ever seen [Face with tears of joy]” (G-R024). Other users continued to believe or acted as though they believed Greg was facing a real problem, suggesting that the eye belonged to the cloaked woman and he should add more security to the house (G-019 – G-021). This again shows that consistently maintaining the levels of belief are not necessary to keep users engaged.

Two users began a back-and-forth discussion about what the motives of the people on the boat could be, and a third reader later entered the discussion, proposing that an organised sect could be involved.

User A: I don’t see why they’d need a boat when that chick was literally 10 feet away from you. Has to be some explanation as to why they’re out there and not in the yard anymore (G-R028)

User B: Maybe it’s different people? Meaning the boat people might not be connected to the girl from the yard? Idk, but you’re right, it would seem weird if they were part of the same group and doing that. (G-R029)

User A: Right? The girl also has no eyes. Maybe they’re the one taking the eyes? He did find an eye in the water. (G-R030)

User B: Ooh, that’s a good theory. I hadn’t even considered that... I wonder why he feels safer closer to the water, too, especially since they’re out there (possibly collecting eyes). What if they’re waiting for him to wade out far enough so they can take his? (G-R031)

User A: Like some creepy sirens? (G-R032)

User C: Possibly it is some kind of sect or cult or maybe something much darker that may be happening to @ gr3gory88 since since his grandfather passed away, that house was empty, but possibly they were inhabiting it for those dark acts they carry out !!! (G-R033)
[Translated]

By participating in online community discussions, users can form parasocial relationships with fictional characters and each other. In reference to parasocial relationships forming in community discussions Chappuis writes:

In these discussions, members are able to relate and commiserate with one another as they share their ideas and beliefs with the community. As a result, members get to know one another on a deeper level, which may lead to the formation of a parasocial relationship (Chappuis, 2014 p.39-40).

In reference to television, these parasocial relationships would form between episodes, on fansites or within a community on social media platforms, separated from the show; *TGS* discussions took place in direct response to the author and to other users. As Greg would later retweet these replies (G-161 & G-202), we know the protagonist (and by extension the author) can see the fan theories developing.

This breaks down the barriers between AW and TAW and extends the conversations between readers into the narrative. Building a parasocial relationship with the author goes against the expectations of an ARG wherein the readers are expected to be removed from anything existing behind the curtain.

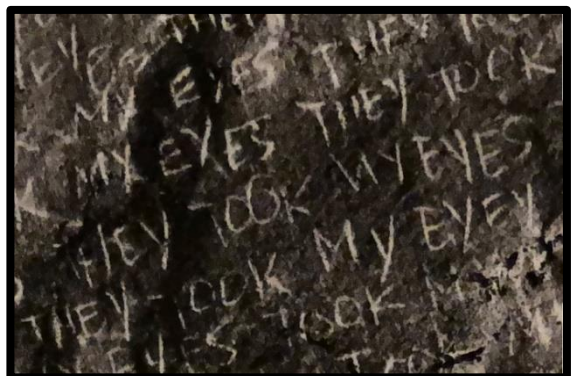
5.2.3 November

Greg returns on 7th November, shaken after hearing a loud noise coming from the woods, and discovering the remains of an unidentifiable animal (G-072 – G-078). Much like after finding the eye, he asks what sort of animal could cause the disturbance (G-073). Users were quick to offer suggestions of foxes or coyotes (G-R034 & G-R035), and although Greg did not reference these suggestions, he did bring back the notebook (see 5.2.2).

“I’ve been trying to figure out what’s written in this notebook from the woods. I’ve had it for a couple days and I can see faint letters but I can’t make them out. A bunch of people replied and told me to do a pencil or charcoal rubbing, but I didn’t have anything like that.” (G-079)



[Figure 5.6: G-086]



[Figure 5.7: G-086]

Attempting to apply the recommendation to use a pencil rubbing to expose writing, Greg goes into town, whilst there he encounters a pair of twins making fun of him (G-082), causing him once again feel observed (G-081). Greg also makes a reference to eggs, noting that the grocery store has been out of them for several days (G-083).

Greg manages to uncover the last thing written before the page was torn out. This again references eyes but by adding ‘they’ it becomes clear that perhaps the eyeless woman was a victim. If these suggestions or the use of charcoal was not previously planned, then the ARS equivalent of entering commands was used and accepted as a choice to guide the narrative. However, other suggestions go ignored. This reinforces my discussion in Chapter 4 that a user’s advice can go unanswered and therefore does not act like a traditional command and response relationship.

After taking a break, Greg returns on the 10th, mentioning that his mother is still apprehensive to talk about his grandfather (G-088 – G-094). He goes outside to clear some debris and find a collection of metal letters and asks the users if they can find a solution (G-095 – G-099). This problem takes the form of an anagram, a puzzle that has been adapted into both board and video games (see: *Scrabble* (Mattel, 1938) and *Bookworm* (PopCap Games, 2003)).



[Figure 5.8: G-099]

Users were quick to suggest solutions, but how they found these solutions that is interesting: G-R044 screenshotted the image, crossing letters out one at a time as they formed the word; DD-R045 entered the letters into the website (anagram-solver.com). Curiously, DD-R046 suggested a solution that did not involve solving the anagram directly but rather proposed attempting to “find the shape of the letters, or the order of them with the nail holes on the house”. These suggestions show creative problem-solving skills, demonstrating that user interactions are unpredictable, thus hypothetically the narrative could become unrecognisable to the author if unforeseen responses are implemented. Users correctly solved the anagram for “Deepwater Chapel” (G-047 & G-048), although the narrative significance would not actually be revealed until December. The use of puzzle mechanics is symbolic of the codebreaking seen in many ARGs and point-and-click puzzles in IFs, showing again that *TGS* draws clear inspiration from ARGs. Unlike in video games where a user is aware they are playing a game and where a correct solution is immediately rewarded, *TGS* presents the game as someone genuinely asking for help and offers no reward or recognition.

Whilst visiting a local restaurant Greg orders eggs Benedict only for it to arrive with no eggs. He then tweets a photo of his food and the menu showing several traditionally egg-based meals have the ingredient missing (G-100 - G-109).



[Figure 5.9: G-105]



[Figure 5.10: G-107]

Whilst this post was not an invitation for advice from users, many nevertheless started investigations in the replies, noting that the grocery store has also been out of eggs: “Hasn’t the store been out of eggs to?” (G-R058). One reader made the connection to eggs looking similar to eyes (G-R059), and others researched if it was possible to make vegan hollandaise sauce (G-R056 & G-R057). What was surprising was one user making a twitter account masking as the diner, then tweeting at Greg (G-R060) (Homestead Diner 2020). This act produced and extended textual world (ETW), existing outside of the main narrative but still contributing to it. Due to the ‘no peeking behind the curtain’ rule of ARGs, it is possible that this was the same author as *TGS*. However, as Greg would never reply to or retweet the message from this account it seems unlikely, he would create this and not utilise it. If this was a fan account, this would demonstrate that users are so engaged in the narrative that they attempt to deliberately insert themselves into it, creating an extended experience.

Greg returned home to find a note stuck to his door reading “leave” (G-111 – G-113), and a few days later encounters a skull (G-122). Users were again quick to investigate, finding that the note was written on a specific puncture repair kit (G-R067). Many speculated that this could be unrelated or a warning from the eyeless woman regarding the people on the boat (G-R063 – GR066). With the skull, however, the discussions were less rooted in researching materials of the AW, focusing more on potential supernatural aspects of the TAW. Some made jokes (G-R073), one user noticed that the triangle pattern was similar to that of the artifacts (G-R069). Several became quite concerned (G-R70 & G-R072), indicating that a parasocial relationship has formed or that the level of belief is high enough for users to be alarmed, or potentially a combination of the two. It could be that by forming a bond with Greg, users are able to suspend disbelief further. Several readers introduced themselves as witches, two of whom made very interesting comments. The first suggested that, due to the specific kind of witchcraft being used, Greg could be “caught” in a parallel dimension (G-R074), the specific use of “caught” implies that the user believes Greg trapped in another universe, suggesting that, in this reader’s mind, the barrier between actual and textual worlds are malleable. A second witch’s comment reads

“So, I don't know if this is a true feed or a fictional story, but I am a witch. A white witch. I would love to offer you some tips for protection against this dark magick- because that is definitely an evil witch you are dealing with- so please feel free to msg me directly” (G-R077).

This suggests that some users are unsure of the degree to which they believe, but are still concerned enough to offer support. The differing discussions in the replies show that an individual’s life experiences help form independent and unexpected responses to the narrative.

5.2.4 December and January

December begins with Greg informing us he has discovered what the metal letters spell (G-131): a polaroid stored in an old book reveals that the house was called “Deepwater Chapel”. Perhaps in response to not receiving validation for solving the puzzle, users replied with variations of “I told you so” (G-R082 – G-R084). Other users commented on how the polaroids and book do not look appropriately aged (G-R078 & G-R079). A further group of readers spotted ghostly figures within the polaroid of the woods (G-R080 & G-R081).

Days later, Greg has a nightmare involving his friend Eric (G-144 – G-150), who asks “Is there somebody watching you sleep right now, Greg?” (G-150). Greg wakes up shaken finding the door flung open and some clothes missing (G-152 – G-160). Unlike in *DD* we do not see Eric cross over from the TPW to the TAW, although from Greg’s tweets we can assume a version of him exists in the TAW. Some users were compassionate, urging Greg to take his time conveying what had happened (G-R091). Other users commented on the time, stating that seeing the tweet at 1AM made them more afraid than during the daytime (G-R087 – GR088). This live publishing feature is uniquely employed on social media, where the text is published directly to the reader at the most effective time, allowing for long pauses between updates in a natural setting. One group of users formed an unofficial group called the “Notification squad” in reference to those who receive notifications for @gr3gory88’s tweets (G-R089). Some users also began making *TGS* themed jokes, using existing meme formats and creating a comedic name for the Eyeless Woman, which became an in-joke for the community, (G-R096; G-R113; G-R114; G-R122).

Erick: “I bet I can scare you”

Greg: “Alright, very funny. You can stop now”

Erick: “There's not a single egg in this town”

Greg:



[Figure 5.11: G-R097]

(G-R097)

*“It’s I am good Sir I don’t know if I’m prepared for Eyeless
Becky right now” (G-R085)*

Aarseth has referred to rebellious forms of interaction as transgressive play, an action in which players are able to use their power to forge their own identities (Aarseth 2007). Many of the interactions seen in response to *TGS* are simultaneously unique and communal. In-jokes and *TGS* based memes developed within the replies (G-R135 & G-R136), building a sense of community among readers. The naming of Becky and its continued usage demonstrates this. Simultaneously readers continued to give advice, develop frustrations over Greg not leaving sooner and create said memes upon their own agency. However, once users press send, their expressions are integrated into the narrative and are open to exploitation by the author and other readers. This in itself is a form of transgressive play from the author: they are reacting to user’s reactions by employing advice or deliberately going against them, and thus regaining the power of those decisions. In *DD*, this is more clearly seen as a collaboration (for instance, taking up users’ suggestions such as the use of sage and salt); in *TGS*, it can be seen in the use of charcoal to reveal the writing in a notebook (G-080). What this suggests is that not only is agency fluid in ARSs but both readers and authors have an element of play when developing the narrative.

Greg returns on Christmas Eve, informing us that he has been staying at a motel outside of town, and has called a locksmith to update the security (G-162 – G-164). On the way back to the house, a bloody creature runs into the road causing Greg to crash and hike back through the woods (G-167 - G-172). Whilst walking he finds another artifact, this time with his glove in the centre. The deeper into the woods he gets the more stolen clothing he finds (G-175 – G-177). Now lost, Greg tries to check his GPS but his phone is unable to locate him (G-179). Interestingly several users suggested that this loss of signal could signify Greg was pulled into another dimension (G-R102 & G-R103) (or rather an additional PWT), suggesting that much like the witch in 5.2.3 (G-R074) some users already believe in a semi permeable membrane between the worlds within a textual universe (TU).

Greg stumbles upon a cluster of giant eggs (G-182 – G-185). Some users pointed out that the eggs looked like balloons (G-R104 & G-R105). For a moment Greg considers smashing the eggs but quickly decides against it (G-186). Users repeatedly commented telling him to smash or eat the eggs (G-R110 - G-R112). Another group of users made the connection between these eggs and the lack of eggs in town (G-R106 – G108). One user focused less on the eggs



[Figure 5.12: G-184]

themselves but the placement instead, noting that in nature, nests have more structure (G-R109). This again supports the notion that users can continue interacting with the narrative despite differing levels of belief. Much like in IFs that are distinctly fictional, and ARGs where users interact via play, users can ‘play along’ and act as if it were real circumstances.

Greg makes it back to the house, installs new locks and begins to feel safe (G-189 – G-91). However, this feeling does not last (G-192). He finds a much larger triangle on his porch with “Fear the New Moon” written on the wall (G-197). One user did some research finding that the next full moon was due on 5th January (G-R113), which Greg then retweeted (G-202). The decision to retweet a user instead of tweeting the information as Greg shows further usage of Twitter’s options and the insertion of users into the narrative in order to tell a story. This is a unique feature not seen in ARGs or IFs: when we play a video game, we generally play as a character existing in the game world. In ARSs, however, we play as ourselves (or whoever we choose to be) and exist in the AW, but are capable of interacting with at least one person in the TAW. This again creates a semi permeable membrane between TU worlds and aids in building a more immersive experience.

The night of the 5th arrives alongside a storm (G-205), at around 9:00pm local time the Eyeless Woman appears in the cellar (G-210). Greg photographs her facing away from him (G-212), again incorporating technology and transmediality. The woman tells Greg she has no ill intent but wishes to warn him about a ceremony currently taking place in the woods (G-214 – G-239). The Eyeless Woman tells Greg that the artifacts were to protect him against a creature living in the lake. Each year, this creature come to shore and grants longevity and fertility to those who sacrifice their young to feed the new-born creatures. She reveals that she was once offered as sacrifice, the creature took her eyes, but she was able to escape.

This section is significantly longer than what users have come to expect and is written less like a person updating social media and more like a typical story. Users quickly became aware of this and it began to cause a breakdown in believability (G-R132 & G-R134), though many users continued to interact with the text.

“okay it's obviously fake now but like damn sis.. u a good writer” (G-R132)

Realising he is too late to stop the sacrifice, Greg returns to the house feeling deflated (G-250 – G-257), and eventually leaves the town, suggesting that maybe he will return next year (G-258 - G-266). Users were left excited, anticipating a return (G-149 – G-153), but as of June 2021 there have not been any updates.

“I'm not sure when I'll tweet again. I need to take a break and get my head together. But I'll be back. I have to go back. I won't let it happen again.” (G-266)

5.3 Does The Greg Story Conform to ARG and IF Features?

TGS unfolds through text, image, video, and gameplay. In some cases where gaps in the narrative have not yet been filled, users developed fan theories as an extension of the narrative, thus *TGS* displays features of transmedia storytelling. *TGS*'s immersion exists to such an extent that many users questioned if it were real (G-R001; G-R077). Whilst others expressed an understanding that it was "fake", they still gained satisfaction from interacting as if it were real (G-R075). This however makes analysing the effectiveness of fiction/reality blurring difficult. I would argue that if some users are able to immerse themselves for part of the story then distortion has been achieved. Used in conjunction with the fragmented narratives and anagrams these features demonstrate clear ARG inspiration. Some users even identified *TGS* as an ARG in the replies (G-R005), whilst some users likened it more to a twitter-based horror story (G-R002). Contrary to ARGs like *The Beast* or *I Love Bees*, the puzzle solving is limited and does not come with immediate evidence of being correct and the narrative is less obscured by the need to unlock segments. Rather, anyone is able to read the narrative in its entirety, by scrolling through Greg's feed. *TGS* is potentially a genre nonconforming ARG or one that values narrative over gameplay.

As previously discussed, the act of replying to tweets with advice could be akin to IF commands, but like in *DD* the issues of agency, authorial decision-making and the bending of fiction and reality, persist. The interlinked threads and quote tweets demonstrate the tailoring to the medium and interlinking lexia components of IF. However, we again have the issue of IF existing in a specialist space that separates the narrative reality (i.e. a game distribution service or dedicated website). With *TGS*, the 3rd and 4th generations of digital fiction have been combined, to produce an interactive ergodic text that takes place on social media. Nevertheless, there are still no clear markers to say this is fictional from the outset.

5.4 Does The Greg Story Display any Unique Features?

As examined above, the features of *TGS* that stand out are the deliberate use of real time social media posts that allow for the building of suspense and immersive storytelling. Whilst this has been seen in Twitterfiction, it has not been discussed in scholarship in reference to a narrative which deliberately blurs the lines between fiction and reality. When combined with social media, and gameplay elements, this latter motive is proving unique to ARSs. Where a reader may pick up a book that blurs these lines (see Cathi Unsworth's *That Old Black Magic* (Unsworth, 2018)), they are still actively pursuing this book, ARSs however can appear unprompted in a reader's life.

Where ARGs can take place digitally and physically, using real world clues in conjunction with digital puzzle solving, ARSs attempt to infiltrate a user's daily lives through social media and market themselves as a person in need. It is possible that ARSs are a combination of 3rd and 4th gen DL, presented in a narrative centric ARG format, with the intent to provide immersive entertainment through reality distortion.

5.5 Conclusion

The Greg Story displays the features expected of ARGs and IFs, and whilst there is no one feature that sets ARSs apart from these forms, the specific way in which features, playability and stylisation are fused, is unique. I suggest that *TGS* applies the form of ARGs and IFs but in conjunction with tropes from further afield (see Figure 1). Chapter 6 concludes the analysis segment with *The Sun Vanished*.

Chapter 6: The Sun Vanished

6.1 Introduction

My final case study is *The Sun Vanished* (TSV). The main account (@TheSunVansihed) began tweeting on the 30th of April 2018, and was last updated in October 2020. As with the two preceding chapters, Chapter 6 begins with a chronological analysis (Section 6.2) followed by a review of TSV's features comparing these to those of existing digital genres.

6.2 Chronological Content Analysis

The Sun Vanished takes place in an alternate universe wherein the Earth has been plunged into darkness, told to us by the survivors. Unlike *TGS* and *DD*, TSV takes place over three twitter accounts: @TheSunVanished, @thmadjoy (aka Tucker) and @LostSunNews (aka Nat). Additionally, in a series of now deleted tweets the author was revealed to be Aidan Elliott. I was unable to retrieve these tweets, but his personal account (Elliott, 2020a) and website (Elliott, 2020b) also claim authorship. The protagonist's name has never been revealed. Although fans of the narrative refer to him only as TSV, to avoid confusion in my analysis I refer to him as 'Sunny'.

Due to the length of TSV and the limitations posed by this thesis, it was not possible to analyse the narrative in its entirety. As many of the features emerge within the first four months of TSV and on the @TheSunVansihed, I will focus on this time period and account. The selected tweets and user responses can be found in Table 3, labelled with the monikers SV-000 or SV-R00. Unlike *DD* or *TGS*, TSV rarely uses the thread feature but instead posts sporadically. The pseudo-chapters seen in previous analyses are much less defined in TSV and greatly vary not only in length, but also in terms of the time between them. The following sections will document the narrative in subsequent order: April, May, June, then July.

6.2.1 April

Unlike *DD* and *TGS*, there were no tweets before the narrative began. At 14:24 on the 30th of April 2018, *The Sun Vanished* began simply with "Help" (SV-001). In the next few tweets, our protagonist reveals that, despite being daytime, the Sun is absent from the sky (SV-002 – SV005). These early tweets give enough information to attract user's attention, but raise enough questions to simultaneously make them intrigued enough to keep reading. The use of "Help" also acts as a clear request for assistance, engaging interaction from users. I would therefore argue that SV-001 through SV-005 act as TSV's trailhead.

"Where is the sun." (SV-004)

The range of TSV is significantly larger than the previous ARSs. Whilst this helps to generate a more complex narrative, with multiple characters and storylines, it also reduces believability. Many users were quick to recognise the narrative as an ARG or work of fiction (SV-R005 & SV-R006); others however disagreed, suggesting that TSV couldn't be an ARG due to the lack of interaction (SV-R003). Some speculated that the narrative could be marketing for a new *Cloverfield* movie (Reeves, 2008) (SV-R004 & SV-R005), whilst others either believed Sunny, or chose to 'play along' (SV-R001 & SV-R007).

It is also within these trailhead tweets that users are presented with the first video in the narrative (SV-005). This text clearly incorporates other technology and mediums from the outset. Moreover, the use of a television within this video (and the video editing skill required to falsify a news broadcast) further demonstrates the level of technological integration.



[Figure 6.1: SV-005]

The video shows that the Cable News Network (CNN) exists in both the AW and TAW, helping to make the TAW more akin to the AW. Users promptly focused on this clip: some sought to find related articles in the AW (SV-R001 & SV-R008); others tried to get more information from Sunny (SV-R007); and some focused on the mention of New England's Darkest Day (SV-R009), an historical AW event that occurred in May of 1780 (Williams, 1783). Much like the inclusion of CNN, this implies that Sunny lived in the AW at some point prior to April 30th 2018 but that the TAW splintered away from the AW.

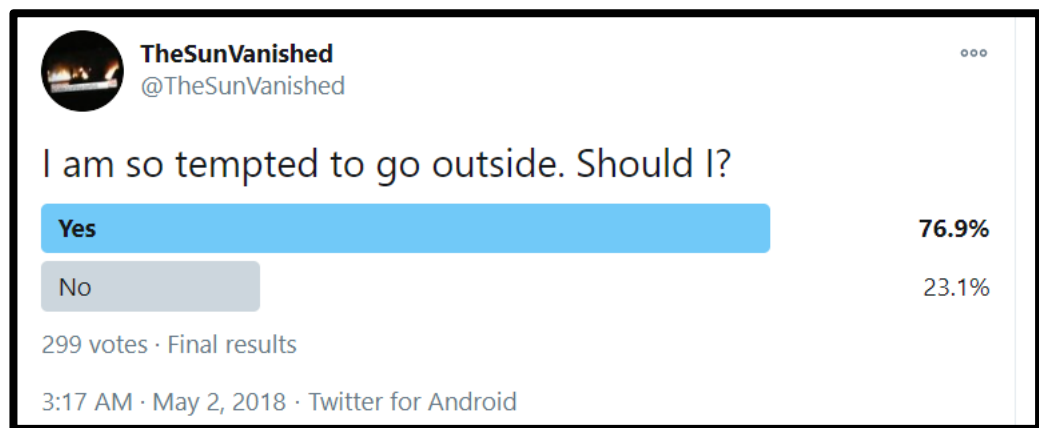
Several hours into the document apocalypse, the tweets move from contextualising the TAW, to the conflict Sunny is facing (SV-006). He explains that he can hear loud noises outside, and this is followed by a low visibility video featuring a series of flashing lights in the sky accompanied by a sound similar to an aeroplane (SV-007). This video introduces us to two of the major themes of TSV, intangible lights and sounds. The unknown origin, and potentially sinister motives, of who, or whatever, is causing the various spectres becomes one of the major sources for intrigue and tension in TSV. Keeping the full extent of the horror out of sight of readers (or viewers) has long been used in fiction (for instance, in *The Blair Witch Project*), and shows again the roots from which ARSs emerge. This could also be a technique used to limit the production costs of the narrative, as mentioned in the previous chapter: SFX can be costly and require significant preplanning, but utilising a passing plane is free. This again implies that spontaneous events occurring in the author's presence can be incorporated into the narrative.

6.2.2 May

The sound trend continues when Sunny updates us the next day, claiming that he can hear gunshots and has lost connection to the news broadcast (SV-008 - SV-013). Some users suggested that this could be the National Guard (SV-R014). Curiously, however, one user asked several questions that would be quickly implemented (SV-019).

“Are the sounds getting closer? Is it safe to go outside to see if you can see the stars?” (SV-R019)

Only 30 minutes after this reply Sunny would post the poll shown in Figure 6.2. As Sunny would later acknowledge the user’s mention of the stars (SV-R019), it is therefore possible that the poll was created in response to the other user’s suggestion to go outside.



[Figure 6.2: SV-014]

This poll gives users a clear choice about what Sunny does (though of course, he would not have to act on it). The poll can therefore be seen as similar to the choice mechanic of choose your own adventure games, or multi-linear IF narratives. What is different, however, is that the choice is not made by one user, but rather many (here the 299 people who voted). This can also be compared to the Twitch Plays Pokemon (TPP) social experiment wherein 60,000 people shared control of a single-player game (Ramirez, Saucerman, & Dietmeier, 2014). However, I would argue that despite the decision being shared, the final decision is still a command. This would confirm that, *TSV* does adhere to the Non-trivial interactivity and Interaction via commands feature of IFs. Additionally, the implementation of a poll via Twitter, shows parts of the narrative were tailored to what Twitter can provide.

With the winning vote being “Yes”, Sunny did exit his home, and quickly encountered a disembodied clicking sound accompanied by a red flashing light whilst amongst some trees (SV-016). In subsequent tweets, he states that he believes the light may have in fact been following him (SV-019). In SV-018, he also acknowledges the aforementioned user’s question regarding the stars, stating “I looked for stars or planets as you all suggested, the sky was absolutely pitch black. Could be because of clouds, or something else.”. This shows that Sunny

can not only see reader's advice via polls, but can in fact reads and responds to unsolicited advice. Further, this implies that suggestions do not need to take a command format like the above poll. In regard to the red light, many users began their own discussions, some noting that the pattern made by the light resembled a skull (SV-R020 & SV-R021), while other users dismissed this as a shadow or reflection from nearby trees (SV-R022). These discussions show that each individual is capable of making wildly different conclusions from the same source material. If every user with a differing opinion were to offer advice, there would be at least some unexpected responses. It is therefore reasonable to conclude that, if user suggestions are a part of the narrative, an ARS can never be fully pre-planned.

"Day 3. Still no sign of daylight."

"It is getting colder." (SV-020)

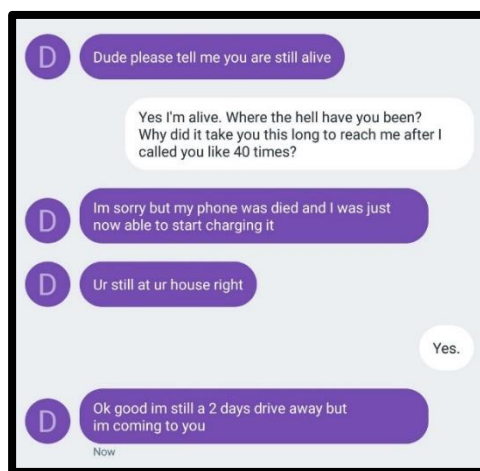
On the 3rd day without the Sun, Sunny posted the above tweet. This acted as a quick response to those users wondering if the Earth was beginning to be affected by the lack of heat from the Sun (SV-R13). A response to this tweet is more intriguing, however: a user replied, "Stay safe my brother. Does calling 911 or the National Guard help? Are you able to contact anyone else besides us on twitter? (sic)" (SV-R027). Sunny then replied: "I've tried, all I get is a busy tone. This twitter is the only way I know how to contact the outside world" (SV-021). This reply-thread not only signifies the importance of Twitter's platform within the TAW, but also demonstrated a form of interaction with the followers. Additionally, it indicates that Sunny knows his audience exists and what they are saying, even when not in the form of a poll.

Sunny returns the next day apologising for being away and stating that his reception had "gone out" (SV-023). He also notes that the whilst power in his home is working, he has chosen to keep the lights off for safety concerns (SV-025 & SV-026). This cleverly allows for the author to explain absences without arousing suspicion, but also (as seen in *TGS*) aids in building suspense. The narrative takes a turn, however, when Sunny informs users that something has just flown past his house (SV-027). He posts a video of a nearly entirely black screen, accompanied by rustling noises then a deep humming sound. He also notes that whatever flew past warmed the temperature by "10 or 15 degrees" (SV-028). This temperature increase implicitly answers reader's questions on how the Earth has not frozen since the Sun's disappearance (SV-R013). Although never confirmed by Sunny, over the course of the narrative, users come to accept that the ships were deliberately heating the Earth at a temperature capable of sustaining life (SV-R032 – SV-R034). As this information has been accepted but never confirmed, it could be seen as an example of fanon, "the process whereby material that is created as an addition or supplement to the canon becomes accepted and used by other fanfiction writers" (Thomas, 2007). These fan discussions form an integral part of fandom communication. Fanfiction scholars have stated that narrative theory often looks at readers and the texts they consume as separate

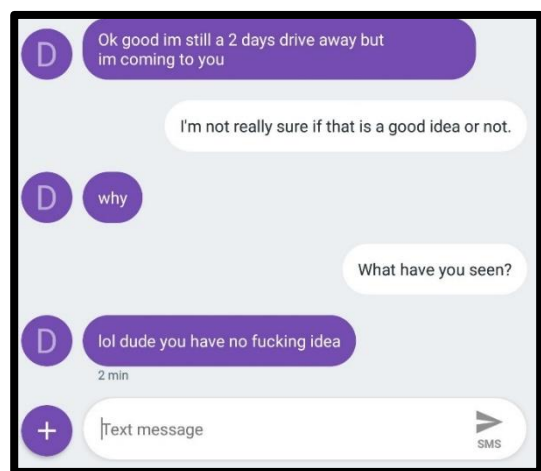
entities (Thomas, 2011 p.6-7). In the study of ARSs, however, this cannot be ignored as reader response become an integral part of the story.

Whilst readers could not see the source of the heat or sound, they were quick to speculate, ask questions and offer advice. One group of users focused on the sound featured in the video, some with humour joked that it was not a standard aircraft (SV-R029). One user, either through research or prior knowledge of aircraft, suggested it sounded similar to the Avro Vulcan used by the RAF (SV-R030). Amongst other responses was the suggestion of an alien spaceship (SV-R031), which would later be proven correct (in the TAW).

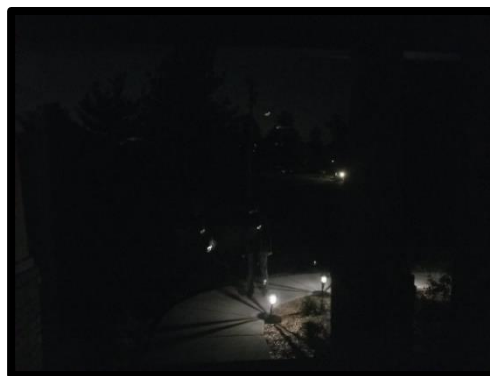
In SV-030 – SV-032, we are introduced to our second character, Danyon. His introduction via screenshots of a text conversation again shows an incorporation of different technology and multimediality.



[Figure 6.3: SV-031]



[Figure 6.4: SV-032]



[Figure 6.5: SV-034]



[Figure 6.6: SV-037]

Danyon's introduction is cut short however, when Sunny encounters one of the narrative's antagonists. He posts a dark image of an obscured figure walking up a dimly lit path (SV-034), followed by a tweet saying the figure is standing there, even after an hour passes (SV-035 & SV-036). During this time Sunny has sent the same image to Danyon who informs him to stay away from it, and avoid flashing lights.

Sunny hides out in his room and arms himself with a baseball bat, after the figure tries to get through the door (SV-041 – SV-044). Whilst there, he addresses his followers.

“If anyone knows ANYTHING about what is going on, please message me. 911 and other emergency lines are not responding and the only radio I have is out in the car, so I’m trying to gather as much information online as I can.” (SV-045)

Sunny then shares a screenshot of a Twitter Direct Message (also called a DM) from an unknown user in British Colombia, who informs Sunny that looking into the red light causes a form of brainwashing resulting in the figure seen outside (SV-046). The use of DMs again shows an incorporation of Twitter technology, but if this was a reader messaging Sunny then the incorporation of a fan’s theory into the canon can be clearly seen in this one tweet. It is possible (much like the diner in *TGS*, discussed in section 5.2.3), that this was sent from a second account made by TSV’s author. However, as the following tweet was someone from the AW claiming they could still see the Sun (SV-047), it seems equally plausible that the user could have been a real person distinct from the author. User role-playing as characters with the TAW first occurred several days earlier, with one follower claiming their local news station was reporting NASA had lost contact with the International Space Station (SV-R016). Another account began role-playing in 2019, claiming they had been in hiding but was happy to find other survivors (SV-R0170). Whilst I have introduced the idea of users ‘playing along’ with an ARS, the act of assuming an entirely fictional role, in which they claim exist in the same TAW creates an extended experience not available to users who stay within the AW. This in effect creates an Extended Textual World, realms wherein non-canonical TAW characters (or AW users masquerading as such) communicate from.

After Danyon’s car breaks down (SV-048) Sunny posts his second poll.



[Figure 6.7: SV-050]

Before deciding what to do, Sunny is interrupted by someone screaming outside (SV-051). This prompted a series replies warning him not to leave the house, which Sunny would screenshot and post without comment, seemingly confirming that he would stay home (SV-054). Sunny sees a flashing white light outside and attempts to record it, but as he gets closer to the window it stops, then starts flashing red (SV-062). Concerned Sunny had looked into the light Danyon asks “what street did we both live on when we were kids” suggesting that memory loss may be amongst the mind-altering effects of the light. Whilst ARGs can be solved by large player bases working together to crack code, it is rare for players to be given a choice, as there is “correct” answer that would allow them to progress.

Soon after we are introduced to Tucker, a survivor from Virginia, whose friend Flynn became paranoid and attacked him (SV-068). Interestingly, Tucker not only has his own twitter account, that is dedicated to the *TSV* narrative, but the Tucker account was featured on Aidan Elliott's website as an official part of the *TSV* narrative (Elliott, 2020). This rare peek behind the curtain, allows us to confirm that there are canon and non-canon survivors, i.e accounts run by Elliot (or affiliates) and accounts run by fans of the narrative. Populating the world with more characters and modes of interaction builds a network of interactivity, requiring users to navigate multiple accounts in order to obtain the full narrative. I would argue that this additional effort indicates nontrivial interactivity.

At this time, a pattern emerged of followers becoming suspicious of Danyon (SV-R037 & SV-R049). On the 15th May 2018 Sunny tweeted that he has become aware of the suspicion, and alludes to having his own concerns after Danyon refuses to answer a question only he would know (SV-096 & SV-097). However, he dismisses his suspicion stating he does not have anyone else to trust. Intriguingly the idea to test Danyon with a personal question was proposed days earlier by a user "Prob best to ask a question only they would know and make sure it's actually your friend ..." (SV-R037), again suggesting that the author follows these prompts. However, when Danyon gets closer (SV-099), Sunny posts the following poll.



[Figure 6.8: SV-100]

This third poll has considerably more votes than previous polls (13,044 compared to 299 in poll one), showing that the audience has grown alongside the narrative. This also implies that as the group expands and more opinions are given, the narrative course could be altered. Whilst this choice is similar to the command entering mechanic of video games, the voting system is quite unique. In the following tweets, however, something peculiar occurs: Sunny disagrees with the group's decision. Whilst he still follows it, he immediately regrets this and blames the audience.

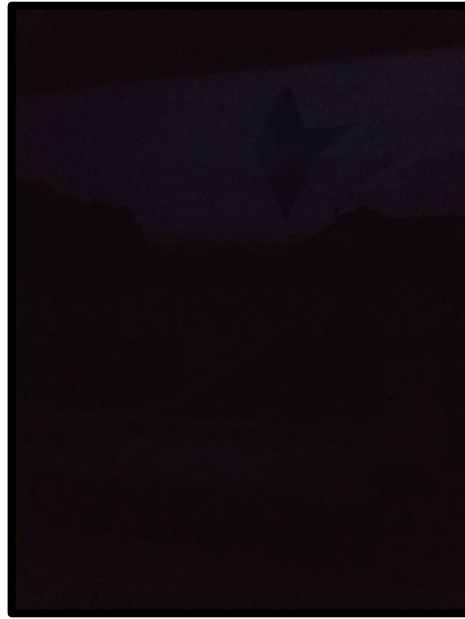
Since you all won't stop DMing me about updates, here's updates for you:

I haven't slept since the screaming, ran out of bottled water days ago, been drinking from the faucet, very close to running out of food too, and I hope losing my only close friend will be worth it.

Happy? (SV-103)

SV-103 shows that whilst users were able to make a decision the game character is not happy about it, following along begrudgingly. This relationship could be likened to Bulkhead Interactive's *The Turing Test* (2016) wherein the protagonist is taken control of by the player, against the protagonist's will. However, as we will see later in section 6.2.2, Sunny's agency is not always dictated by the users.

After a break-in leaves Sunny feeling unsafe, he retreats to a neighbour's now abandoned house (SV-107). On 29th May, Sunny informs us that the aircraft mentioned in previous tweets has returned and this time he was able to take a picture (Figure 6.9).



[Figure 6.9: SV-130]

I couldn't see anything out the window, but I quickly snapped a few pictures just in case before taking cover.

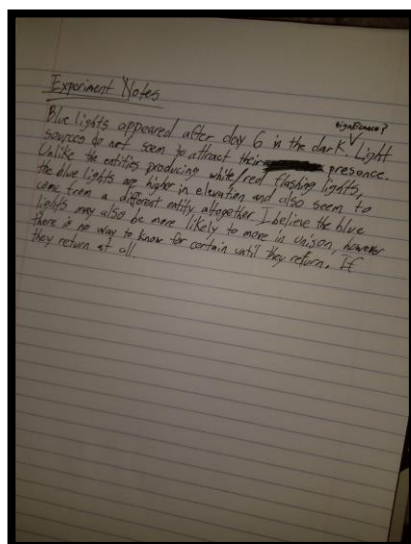
I can't believe what I'm looking at. (SV-130)

Followers were quick to respond; some asked for the image to be brightened (SV-R059), to which many others complied (SV-R060 - SV-R062). What was interesting is that users "Enhanced" SV-130 in different ways; some converted the image to black and white, others adjusted the brightness or contrast, whilst others zoomed or adjusted the hue. This again shows that ARSs are capable of prompting a wide variety of answers to a single question. This trend continued with the text-based replies, some users joked that the diamond shaped craft was similar to that of *The Sims* (Wright, 2000) logo (SV-R068 - SV-R070). The main consensus amongst followers however was that the object was most likely of alien origin (SV-R062 – SV-067), although there were further discussions about what kind of alien craft it was. One group began a discussion on "Atlas-like entities" (SV-R063; SV-R066; SV-R067), a reference to the god-like artificial intelligence in the *No Man's Sky* video game (Hello Games, 2016). The Atlas coincidentally also takes the form of a large floating black diamond and is capable of simulating and altering realities.

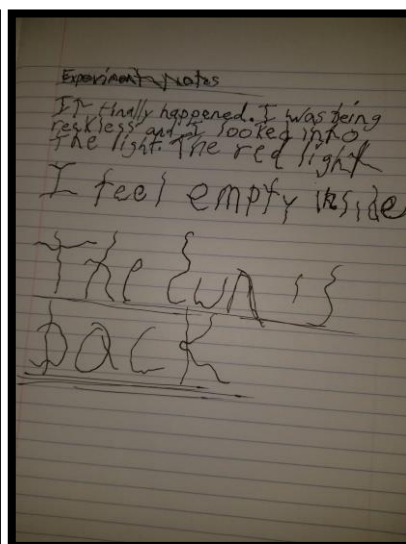
On 30th May, Sunny informs us that the spacecraft has disappeared, and later posts a poll asking users if he should leave the security of his bathroom (SV-134 & SV-135). The poll (now receiving 31,560 votes) narrowly urges him to leave. Emerging from the house to investigate, Sunny encounters the remains of another person (SV-136). Many users were in a state of shock or disbelief in response to this development, with some even demanding pictures as proof (SV-R072). Sunny however refused this request: “There's no way I'm taking a picture of a dead body. This is too gruesome” (SV-137). This again shows that the protagonist can refuse to comply to commands.

6.2.3 June

On the 2nd June tweet, Sunny finds notes in his neighbour’s home (SV-138 – SV-142), shown in Figures 6:10 and 6:11. The letters reveal that, after surviving the initial riots, Sunny’s neighbour began documenting the “flashlights”. However, they would eventually look into the red light, leading to the eerie final message “The Sun is Back” (SV-141).



[Figure 6.10: SV-140]



[Figure 6.11: SV-141]

Replies from followers theorised that the red light may cause hallucinations, leading to the brainwashed people Sunny encountered or may act as a bridge between universes (SV-R073 – SV-R075).

Sunny briefly mentions Danyon on June 10th when he shares a screenshot of an unanswered apology (SV-147). This tweet started a “shipping” trend, wherein users wish for a romantic relationship between two characters to prevail (O’Donovan, 2016 p.45), in the replies (SV-R076 & SV-R077). This again demonstrates the formation of parasocial relationships between users and TAW characters.

On the 15th June something starts knocking on Sunny’s window (SV-140), whilst he cannot make out who is causing the sound he wonders if it could be Danyon before attempting to film the encounter (SV-151 – SV 153). After a while, Sunny attempts a second video; this time, the footage ends with the sound of glass shattering (SV-157). Sunny says the person is now inside the house and looking for him (SV-158). The next image is from a point of view from under a bed,

someone is stood bare foot next to the bed (SV-159). After hiding for 20 hours Sunny tells followers that he needs to check if the house is clear, then posts a poll asking where to check first (SV-160 – SV-161). Whilst “upstairs” won the vote, users suggested other options in the replies, some comical and some detailed.

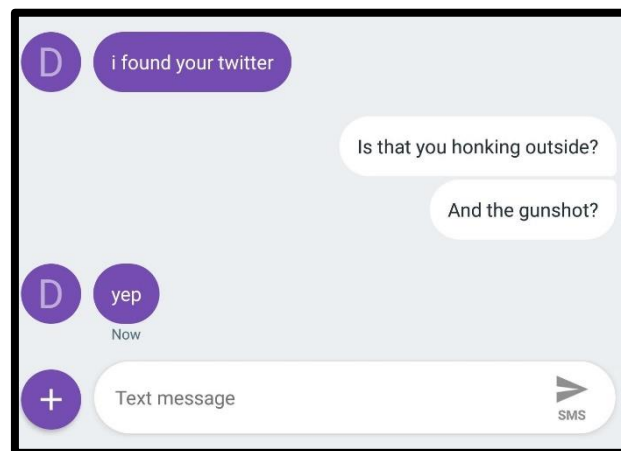
SV-R078: The fridge

SV-R079: I would go somewhere there’s a weapon at

SV-R080: Check whatever floor you are on first

SV-R081: Closets, beds, bathroom(s) be systematic close each cleared room.

Sunny checks upstairs and finds a bloody handprint next to a tall figure standing aimlessly in the dark (SV-162 – SV-165). Sunny notes that the woman appears to be in a trance and cannot see him, as a safety measure he locks her in the room (SV-166 & SV-167). The next morning however the door is open, and the woman is gone (SV-168 – SV-169). Hiding under the bed the woman once again approaches Sunny, she stops next to him and slowly reaches her hand towards him (SV-170). Just before she reaches him, a car horn is heard outside, distracting the woman and luring her away (SV-170). Users were quick to assume the distraction was caused by Danyon and despite voting for him to leave, were excited by his return (SV-R084 – SV-R087). Within minutes Sunny confirmed users’ assumptions by posting the image shown in figure 6.13.



[Figure 6.12: SV-172]

What is interesting here is that Danyon confirms he can see Sunny’s tweets (and possibly the responses), implying that characters within the TAW can see the tweets without themselves having an account or interacting with the AW. Still apprehensive about their previous argument, Sunny reiterates the relationship suffers from a lack of trust, Danyon however responds with “at your 11th birthday party I gave you a batman lego set is that good enough? Grab your stuff. Let's go” (SV-173). The next tweet featured a video of Sunny sprinting towards a car and getting in. Danyon waits inside with gun on his lap (SV-174). Danyon takes control of the situation here, the use of “Let's go” acts as an order, overriding the previous poll and thus players’ “command”. This shows that the agency of *TSV* is fluid, much like what was displayed in *DD* and *TGS*, and the choices made by users can be ignored. Users again had mixed response: some saying that Danyon could now be trusted (SV-R092), others were still sceptical (SV-R090), some fell

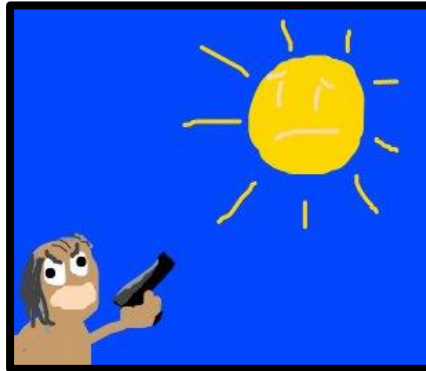
somewhere in between (SV-R093), whilst several also picked up on the fact that Danyon had a gun (SV-R094 & SV-R095). Curiously, there were also numerous responses that assumed this was the end of the narrative, but again each person formed different opinions.

SV-R097: Oh really!! So here the story ends

SV-R098: I lowkey dont want the story to end oof

SV-R099: What if it ended right there, and it's up to the reader to decide if he got shot by his friend

SV-R100 What really happened



[Figure 6.13: SV-R100]

After four days with no updates from Sunny some users became concerned for him, noting he rarely leaves for more than a couple of days (SV-R096). This again demonstrates the importance of time in ARSs, and how, when utilised, live publication can create a more immersive experience. The differing opinions, level of research and type of response also show the unpredictable nature of ARS responses.

6.2.4 July

Sunny returned on 8th July, tweeting that he was “finally” back with new information to share with followers (SV-175). He and Danyon had driven away from the city and into the “boonies” (SV-176), an American slang term for swampy, inhospitable rural area. Much like the use of allegro speech respellings in *TGS* (see section 5.2.1), this could be used to make Sunny more relatable. It is during this period we also see an in-joke form within the replies. Many users began responding to the updates with the word “tea” (SV-R101 – SV-R106), in this context being a reference to the idiom “spill the tea”, meaning to share gossip (BBC, 2020), and the creation of *TSV* focused memes (SV-R107 & SV-R108). This again shows the formation of parasocial relationships, and the ability to form a community around the player experience.

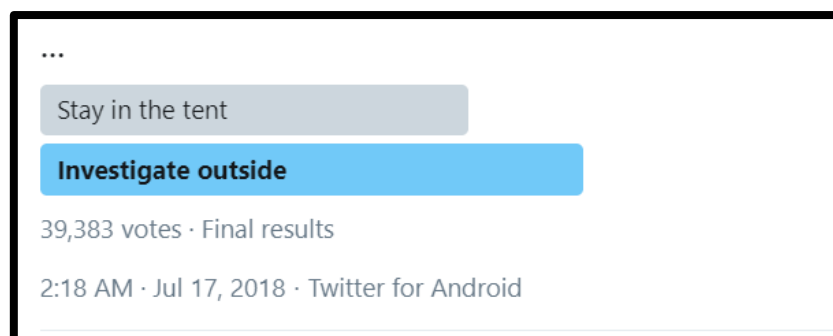
Danyon becomes frustrated at Sunny's desire to communicate the AW, but before they can continue their argument a storm reveals another craft in the sky, which they were able to catch on video, as can be seen in figure 6.15 (SV-179 – SV-181).



[Figure 6.14: SV-181]

The use of video and the editing skill required to produce it, demonstrate a repeated incorporation of technology and multimedia for narrative production. Whilst driving away from the craft Sunny spots a cell tower and stops so he can tweet whilst Danyon leaves to refuel the car (SV-184). Sunny actively requests that users submit questions to him (SV-185). During this question-and-answer session, Sunny posts screenshots of responses and messages posed to him, three of which appear to be from existing users (SV-186; SV-188; SV-189). SV-188 in particular shows a reply that is still publicly available (SV-R114). This interaction shows that not all collaboration in *TSV* needs to drive change. User-interaction can also be a channel for conversation, something not seen in prototypical literature, or IFs. An argument could be made for this feature being reminiscent of NPC dialogue prompted by a player-character. However, in these situations the player is limited to set of preprogramed options, which elicit a preprogramed response. In ARSs, both sides of the conversation are improvised. This section also introduces a third TAW character, Nat, who communicates via her own account (@LostSunNews) (SV-187).

Almost sixteen hours after answering the last question, Sunny wakes up to find Danyon has still not returned (SV-190). On 15th July, Sunny informs us that he only has thirty-eight hours of battery left on his phone, and a few essential supplies (SV-192 & SV-193). On 17th June, one of the light creatures approaches Sunny's tent (SV-197). At this point, Sunny posts the final poll in this segment (SV-200).



[Figure 6.15: SV-200]

Leaving the tent as instructed, Sunny is able to get away safely, but with his phone almost out of battery, he again goes quiet. Sunny returns and disappears several times over the next two years, introducing new characters and more complex situations for followers to participate in. As of November 2020, Sunny and co are still trapped in the TAW, but each character has continued to evolve and interact with a still active player base. In 2020 Sunny marked the 2nd anniversary with the tweet below, before again vanishing.

Two years. It's been exactly two years since the day all this started. (SV-205)

6.3 Does The Sun Vanished Conform to ARG and IF Features?

TSV evolves over text, image, video, gameplay, and twitter polls. This is similar to the way in which followers of *TGS* created fan theories to expand upon the narrative and took discussion onto other platforms (SV-R010: SV-R011: SV-R051). I therefore argue that *TSV* is a multimedia narrative and incorporates technology in such a way that it is tailored to the twitter medium. Like *DD*, we again saw some users initially believing the narrative, some announcing that they knew it was an ARG, some played along, and others inserted themselves into the narrative by inventing TAW identities. In an ARG or IF, users/players may assume the role of a TW protagonist or our AW-selves, but rarely can many players assume fluid roles within the same Textual Universe (TU) Whilst many of the users presumed the narrative was fiction, there were again moments of doubt for some users, suggesting that the levels of immersion seen in ARGs was present. Unlike ARGs however there are no puzzle elements, the gameplay is again more focused on the survival of Sunny via polls and advice, or rather the story.

The interaction in *TSV* is somewhat different to that in *DD* and *TGS*. Much of the user-driven decisions are produced via twitter's poll feature, allowing users to choose between two options, the winning vote to which can be seen as acting as a command feature. However, as seen in Danyon's story arc, poll decisions do not have to be actioned, and, unlike multi-linear IFs like *Until Dawn* (2015), are not a single-person's decision and cannot be replayed to make a different choice in an attempt to experience different pre-programmed endings. The interlinked fragmented narrative, typical of IFs and ARGs, is present, but *TSV* is not a contained narrative that stops once the player quits.

6.4 Does The Sun Vanished Display any Unique Features?

Whilst interlinking lexia and expanded narratives are common for IFs, *TSV*'s plot exists across multiple accounts, each detailing a different character's story. Whilst it could be suggested that this occurs in books or games with sequels, these follow ups are sequential (or precursors in the case of prequels), i.e. published after the release of the first story. To mirror *TSV*, a publisher would need to release multiple narratives at once, with interlinking chapters (or levels) that complete (or compliment) one another.

What I also found interesting in *TSV* was the different levels of role-playing assumed by different people. Much like a fantasy RPGs (such as *Dungeons and Dragons* (Arneson & Gygax, 1974)), where players can create their own character and backstory, some users inserted themselves into the TAW and assumed survivalist roles similar to Sunny. Other users “played-along” as themselves (or versions of themselves) in the AW offering advice and support. Again, like the previous chapters *The Sun Vanished* appears to be a narrative focused ARG with elements of 3rd and 4th generation DL.

6.5 Conclusion

The Sun Vanished displays many of the features of both ARGs and IFs, yet again there are these small distinctions that set it apart from the forms. I propose that *DD*, *TGS* and *TSV* have their roots in interactive fiction and alternate reality games, but have evolved into something new. Chapter 7 will move on to discuss this suggestion in more detail.

Chapter 7: So, What Exactly Are ARSs?

7.1 Summary

Throughout this thesis I have argued that the specific ways in which ARSs manipulate agency and utilise interaction to further a narrative are unique to DL and IF. I have shown that despite clear influences of existing forms, there are small but noticeable features that set ARSs aside from predecessors in IFs and ARGs. This chapter will expand upon and summarise my findings, beginning with, what I believe are the foundational distinctions of an ARS, in section 7.2. This is followed by a discussion of limitations imposed by the thesis (Section 7.3) and finally a proposal of how future studies could explore the field (Section 7.4).

7.2 The Features of an ARS

The goal of this thesis was not to argue if ARSs are DL or ARGs but rather to see how similar to existing forms they are. The previous chapters have shown that the ARSs in question have been tailored to their medium, and that they incorporate the thread and reply functions in a unique way that could not be entirely replicated in other forms. These threads also act as a form of interlinking (and due to the passage of time between them) fragmented lexia. Additionally, the platform allows for the inclusion of image, video and audio alongside the text, a feature not offered in proto-typical literature unless accompanied by media device (i.e. CD-ROM), or linked to by a third-party platform. Whilst some narratives (See *DD*) can be transmedial or cross-platform, this is not a requirement, an engaging narrative can take place on site.

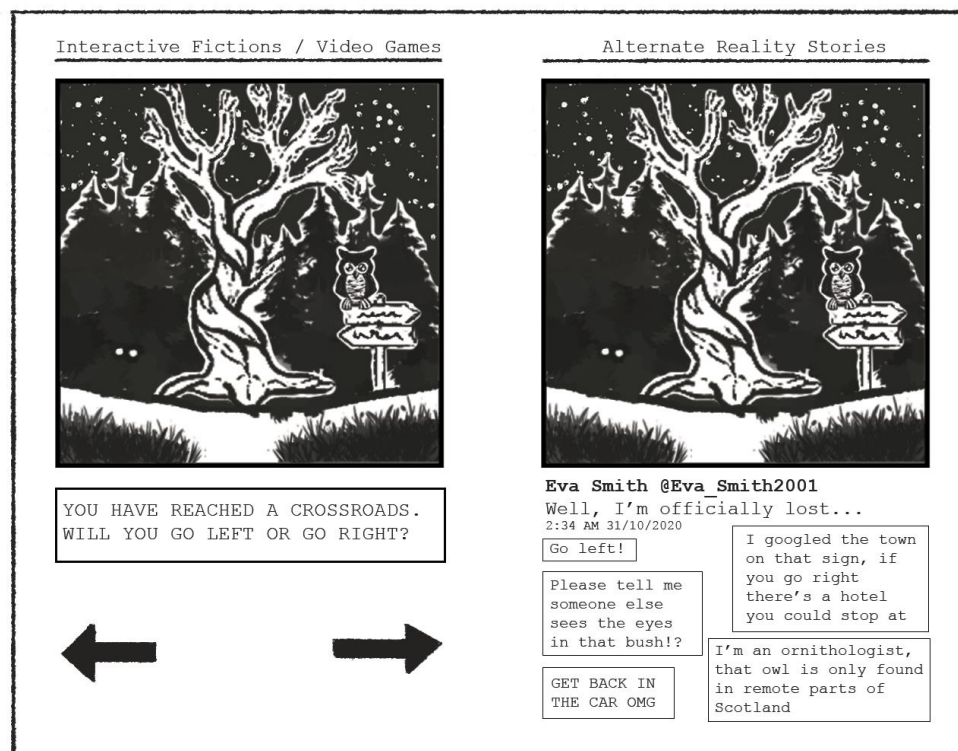
Where these texts have continued to diverge from their roots however, they have consistently fallen into two categories; Interaction and Immersion, sections 7.2.1 and 7.2.2 will discuss these differences respectively, followed by a summary of my findings.

7.2.1 Interaction

The interactivity in ARSs does not follow the puzzle or action-based play seen in video games, instead it functions more like a murder mystery novel, where readers piece together bits of information to form a conclusion. Whilst this has been seen many times in hypertexts, those texts are often; single-player experiences, can be replayed, and have predetermined conclusions. ARSs however have the opposite structure. The multiplayer aspect of ARSs could be likened to a narrative centric, massively-multiplayer-online role-playing-game (MMORPG), where-in followers “play” by offering advice rather than pushing buttons or entering direct commands. In MMO games player often also assume fantasy roles or avatars, these characters however are limited to what the gamestory and programming can provide. In ARSs however we see followers craft roles many forms, some assume no role, playing as themselves offering genuine support, other interact as a version

of themselves that is “playing-along”, and other assume the role of an entirely fictional character within the TAW or ETW. Again, in contrast with many games, these narratives cannot be replayed, the tweets can be re-read or replied to in post, but they will not be incorporated into the narrative and are not experienced in real time, causing a level of interactivity (and thus immersion) to be lost.

The strongest argument for ARSs employing a command feature are the polls in *TSV*, where users could vote on what choice to make. Whilst this could be likened to branching narrative (or butterfly effect) game commands, the narrative has already been pre-programmed by the game’s code. What we see in ARSs more closely resembles what Marie-Laure Ryan describes as “Real-time story generation” (Ryan, 2005), in that the ending is not predetermined, and is in part authored by the reader. However, examples of this have often resulted in real time authors finding themselves caught between satisfying narrative and a user’s a desire to act without constraint, this is known as Aylett and Louchart’s narrative paradox (Louchart & Aylett, 2003a; Louchart & Aylett, 2003b). The bottom-up method of programming, that begins with a storyworld populated with temporal experiences, then offering users a chance to make decisions. Ryan suggested that *The Sims*, is an example of Real-time story generation, and whilst this is true it does not fully encapsulate the structure of an ARS. In *The Sims* the player acts a god-entity, and controls the player by clicking on items and selecting actions. Whilst there is no predetermined narrative there is still that element of command and response, and again said commands are limited to pre-programmed options. Figure 7.1 illustrates how these relationships differ.



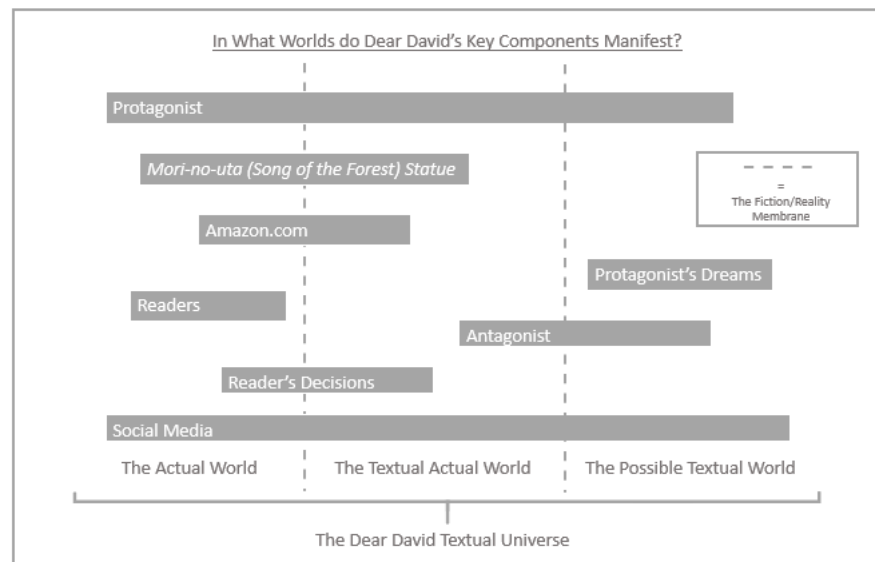
[Figure 7.1]

Although the options in IFs may not literally be limited to “Go Left” “Go Right” they will nonetheless be limited to a selection of options chosen by the developers/ writers. In ARSs however these suggestions come from the followers, it is then the decision of the author which advice to take. There is also the option to combine advice (see the sage and salt in *DD*), take no advice at all (See the repeated suggestions to leave in *TGS*), or to take a suggestion and then reverse it (see Danyon and Sunny’s relationship in *TSV*). This ability to tweak audience responses plays into the narrative paradox. Whilst ARSs have by no means solved this paradox, they have provided a useful aide for encouraging users into feeling less restrained. To do this they rarely present followers with strict decisions, and allow for the free expression of ideas in an advice like setting.

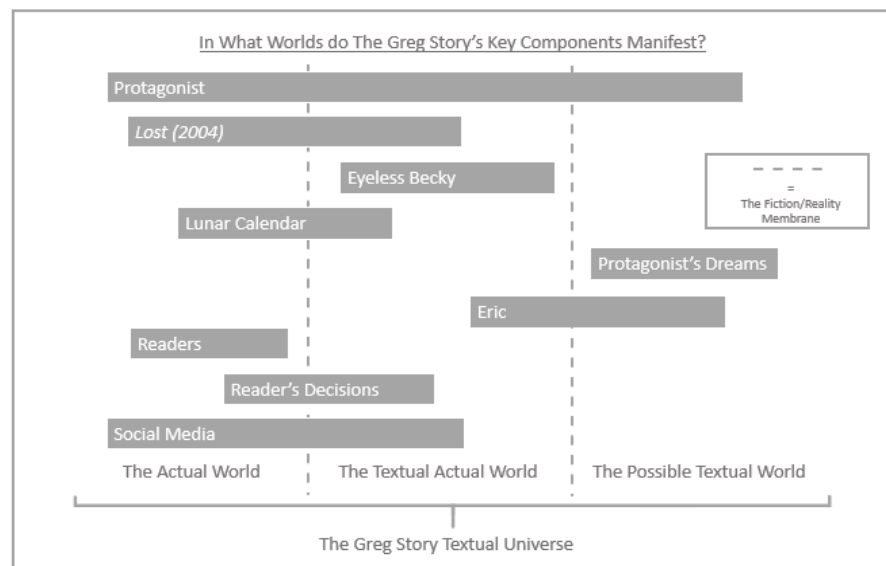
Reading these texts requires a process of participation from the researcher, as well as users. To truly engage and understand interactive narratives like ARSs, even retrospectively, readers must explore comment sections, sub-groups, and occasionally additionally social media accounts to consume all elements of the narrative. Whilst it is possible to read the narrative as just the tweets made by the author account, not only would the “hidden” story beats be lost but the fluidity of agency is also rendered mute. There is something essential to AR studies that can only be documented by ethnographic explorations.

7.2.2 Immersion

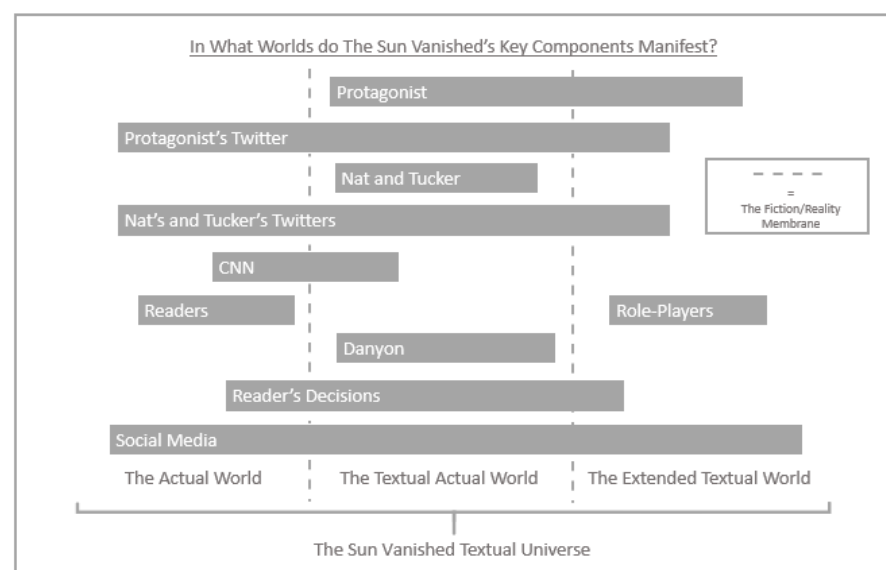
Participation’s importance as core component of an ARS cannot be understated: whilst the same narrative could be conveyed without user interaction, they would lose the element of narrative fluidity, and engagement in the overall experience for users. As mentioned, responses from followers often take the form of advice rather than commands. This stems from the relationship cultivated by the author, wherein they produce a protagonist relatable to AW followers who is capable of generating an empathic response. In the ARSs studied, authors mimicked informal speech and regional dialects, making a character appear as though they could exist in the AW. There is also an important distinction to be made in how followers encounter the narrative. By publishing the narratives on a social media platform such as twitter, it is possible that followers could stumble upon an ARS with no knowledge of the narrative or its authenticity, or of similar text-types such as ARGs,. This can aid in the immersion of readers by catching them “off-guard” and presenting themselves as factual accounts from a person in (or originally from) the AW. This reality bending feature is used many times within each of the TUs for various effects. In some instances, AW items were added into the TAW, i.e. *TSV*’s CNN report, *DD*’s use of Amazon.com or *TGS*’s mention of *LOST*. These additions blur the lines between fiction and reality, resulting in an immersive experience that feels as though it could be factual. Figures 7.2 – 7.4 on the next page show how frequently this world jumping feature occurs.



[Figure 7.2]



[Figure 7.3]



[Figure 7.4]

In figures 7.2 – 7.4 we can see the repeated crossing of boundaries. It is fair to see when how an antagonist that can move between a PTW and a TAW, followers may be more apprehensive of it moving into the AW, especially when the TAW and AW are nearly indistinguishable. It should also be noted that whilst followers exist in the AW their actions can affect the TAW, and when using role-playing they create an ETW, both of which contribute to the TU, despite the author's intentions or decisions behind the curtain.

It is in this relationship that we also see a difference in agency mechanics, in video games, a user controls a protagonist character and the actions they inflict on their environment. In ARSs we see that followers sometimes have an effect, but so can the author's AW world and their own ideals. Whilst the author always makes the final decision for the protagonist the sphere of influence is fluid. Followers are not always aware of the effect they have on the narrative, and can never know for certain which of their actions would have an effect, thus the command/ response relationship does not occur in the same sense seen in IFs. To illustrate: an IF player may not know what pressing "X" does, but they can assume that it will have some or no immediate effect. In an ARS follower may recommend burning sage, they have no way of knowing if the protagonist will do this, when the response will come, or how it will occur, or if the author will reverse the action. Thus, the agency in ARS is at least partially obscured from followers. However, given the unpredictable nature of responses demonstrated in figure 7.1, preplanning cannot fully occur, authors too cannot predict what response followers will have to each update. Because of this the author too loses a portion of the control compared to that of pre-programmed narratives.

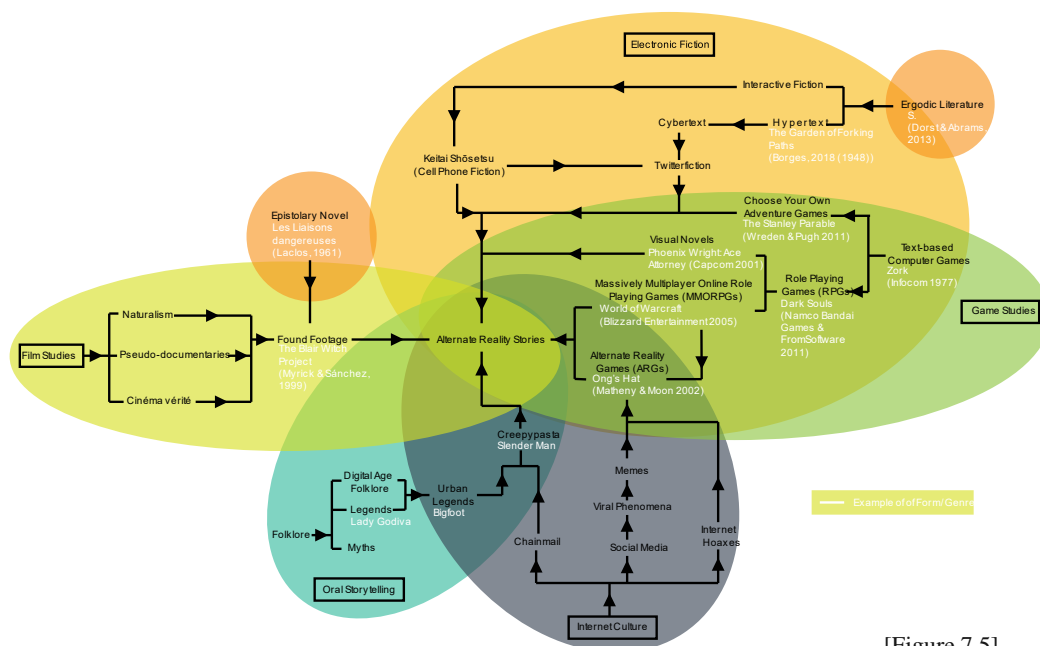
7.2.3 Summary

ARSs are, by nature, digital literature, rooted in 3rd and 4th generational aesthetics; they have a high degree (albeit obscured) of interactivity. They could also be seen as a social media version of Cell-Phone fiction, found-footage cinema, or visual novels. Followers have additionally consistently noted similarities to Alternate Reality Games, just with a lower degree of gameplay, or higher narrative focus. It is not that ARS are not DLs or ARGs nor are they 'advanced' versions of such, it is instead that ARSs are simultaneously many things. They are reality bending, agency manipulating, real-time, video game-inspired, interactive narratives.

They can be accurately identified however by the following characteristics.

1. Interactive and fragmented social media-based multimedia narratives.
2. They make at least some attempt to portray themselves as real
3. They take place in real-time and are played by many people at once
4. Allow for the player-base to interact via indirect commands (i.e. votes, advice or research)

With the above in mind, I again refer back to the map first featured in chapter 2 (figure 7.5). It is clear that ARS are shaped by many things and perhaps have not yet been fully explored, but the influences and history that has led to them is vast and should not be forgotten in future discussions.



[Figure 7.5]

7.3 Limitations

Whilst this study has successfully documented and outlined the phenomenon of ARSs, there have been some limitations. Due to the length of this thesis it was only possible to analyse similarly structured ARSs based on twitter. There are many more potential narratives based on other social media sites (namely YouTube, Reddit and TikTok), that could benefit from more dedicated studies. There is also the problem of ARG mechanics and authorship being concealed by anonymity, many of the conclusions made in this study are based on observations from only one side of the metaphorical curtain. In order to truly understand ARSs, the authors perspective must be considered, something this thesis was not able to discuss.

7.4 Moving forward

In order to fully understand ARSs, we as academics must engage with them. Future studies would benefit greatly from digital ethnographic observations into how the author/follower relationship develops in real time. However, what would be most advantageous is a metaphorical “peek behind the curtain”, or rather having an academic see the process from an authorial standpoint. Doing so, would not only allow for a greater understanding of the technical limitations and mechanics of running an ARS, but would provide insight into how the narrative paradox can be examined.

In the time I have been studying for this thesis, many more Alternate Reality Stories have appeared across the internet, each deserving academic attention. It is my hope that future academics are able to delve further into the worlds of Alternate Reality Stories.

Appendix

Appx 1 Twitter Logs

This section contains the complete collection of each Alternate Reality Story's relevant tweets, and selected responses.

Appx 1.1 Dear David

Tweet ID	Tweet Text	Attachment Description	Date	Time
DD-001	So, my apartment is currently being haunted by the ghost of a dead child and he's trying to kill me. (thread)		7.8.2017	16:35
DD-002	He started appearing in dreams, but I think he's crossed over into the real world now.		7.8.2017	16:35
DD-003	The first time I saw him, I was experiencing sleep paralysis and saw a child sitting in the green rocking chair at the foot of my bed.		7.8.2017	16:35
DD-004	He had a huge misshapen head that was dented on one side. I did my best to draw it:	[Image] Sketch of small child with loose balding hair, sunken eyes and a large head with deep impression on the left side	7.8.2017	16:36
DD-005	For a while he just stared at me, but then he got out of the chair and started shambling toward the bed.		7.8.2017	16:37
DD-006	Right before he reached my bed, I woke up screaming.		7.8.2017	16:37

DD-007	I had another dream a few nights later, where I was in a library and a girl came up to me and said, "You've seen Dear David, haven't you?"		7.8.2017	16:37
DD-008	I was like, "Who?" And she said, "Dear David. You saw him."		7.8.2017	16:38
DD-009	She continued, "He's dead. He only appears at midnight, and you can ask him two questions if you said 'Dear David' first."		7.8.2017	16:38
DD-010	Then she added, "But never try to ask him a third question, or he'll kill you."		7.8.2017	16:38
DD-011	Then, David came back in another dream. Same situation—I was in bed, and he was sitting in the rocking chair near the window, staring at me.		7.8.2017	16:39
DD-012	In the dream, I say, "Dear David, how did you die?" He mumbles, "An accident in a store."		7.8.2017	16:39
DD-013	I say, "Dear David, what happened in the store?" He groans, "A shelf was pushed on my head."		7.8.2017	16:39
DD-014	I'm frozen with fear. I ask, "Who pushed the shelf?"		7.8.2017	16:39

	David doesn't answer.			
DD-015	I realize that I've asked a third question, which I'm not supposed to do. At that point, I wake up, absolutely terrified.		7.8.2017	16:40
DD-016	Sort of randomly, the apartment above mine is vacated, and I have the opportunity to move into it. It's a larger apartment, so I'm thrilled.		7.8.2017	16:41
DD-017	Another month or two goes by, and I sort of forget about Dear David. I think he lost track of me because I moved upstairs.		7.8.2017	16:41
DD-018	But lately, something strange is happening.		7.8.2017	16:41
DD-019	For the past 4 nights, my cats gather at the front door at exactly midnight & just stare at it, almost like something is on the other side.	[Image] Two cats sniffing at the base of a door	7.8.2017	16:42
DD-020	Last night I got a weird feeling and looked out the peephole, and I'm dead certain I saw movement on the other side.		7.8.2017	16:42
DD-021	When I opened the door and turned on the hall light, nothing was there, but my cats seemed unnerved. Bushy tails, etc.		7.8.2017	16:43

DD-022	And that's where I am right now. Dear David found me, I think. I don't know what to do. I'll keep you updated.		7.8.2017	16:44
DD-023	Good morning. I thought I'd clarify a couple things for new followers. First of all, I am alive.		9.8.2017	03:44
DD-024	Secondly, I've tested the apartment for carbon monoxide, so I know I'm not slowly being poisoned.		9.8.2017	03:44
DD-025	Last, I have a book coming out next year, but it has nothing to do with David. This isn't viral marketing! It's just a book of funny comics!		9.8.2017	03:45
DD-026	Update: for the sixth night in a row, my cat has walked over to the door promptly at midnight and stared at it.	[Image] A black and white cat sitting on the floor staring up at a door. In the foreground the photographer holds a green analogue clock with the time 12:03	9.8.2017	05:09
DD-027	What is going on?	[Video] A black and white cat meows at a door before moving closer and sniffing at the gaps below and to the side of the door	9.8.2017	05:11
DD-028	Ok, so I took a photo through the peephole cuz I'm too scared to open		9.8.2017	05:24

	the door. I feel like I saw something.			
DD-029	I couldn't tell so I mustered the courage to open the door. Nothing was out there but I took another photo. Look at this		9.8.2017	05:25
DD-030	Is it just me or is there something in the first photo, right where the bannister meets the shelves? Hiding on the stairs.	[Image] Image 1: blurred photo of a landing taken through a peephole. There is a small black mass above the stairs Image 2: a photo of the same landing taken with the door open	9.8.2017	05:26
DD-031	I wasn't sure if it was a smudge or something so I took a second photo from inside. There was something out there.	[Image] Image 1 and 2: recreations of DD-030 Image 1, the previously seen mass is now gone	9.8.2017	05:29
DD-032	I deadbolted the lock and got in bed because I don't know what else to do. I can still hear my cat meowing at the door.		9.8.2017	05:37
DD-033	It's been pretty quiet tonight. I'm gonna try out a sleep talk app to see if anything happens during the night.		10.8.2017	05:13
DD-034	The app picked up way too much noise last night—cars on the street, subways, etc. I'm gonna alter the settings and try again tonight!		10.8.2017	15:29

DD-035	I don't even know if this is the right kind of salt.	[Image] A door surrounded by a ring of salt	11.8.2017	05:08
DD-036	I used a sound app to record my apartment last night. It makes individual recordings each time it hears something. There were 33 recordings.		11.8.2017	17:47
DD-037	Most of them are pretty vague A couple them are passing cars and the like, but there are three that I'm interested in.		11.8.2017	17:48
DD-038	The first is a snapping sound & what seems like a single step. It's odd because I didn't get out of bed all night.	[Audio] See Tweet Text	11.8.2017	17:49
DD-039	This one is weird because out of 33 recordings, this is the ONLY one that has that strange electric sound throughout	[Audio] See Tweet Text	11.8.2017	17:50
DD-040	This directly follows the electric static. Another snap, then I groan in my sleep.	[Audio] See Tweet Text	11.8.2017	17:51
DD-041	These happened between 2-3 AM. I have no explanation for them. I'll keep recording and share if I find anything curious.		11.8.2017	17:52
DD-042	Getting the eff outta my haunted apartment for the	[Image] 'Selfie' of 'Ben' doing the peace finger sign.	12.8.2017	11:48

	weekend 🎃 [Ghost Emoji]	In the background is a glass door		
DD-043	So, a weird thing just happened. Take it with a grain of salt.		14.8.2017	05:25
DD-044	I bought a Polaroid camera this weekend, because they're fun and dorky. I decided to take a few photos around my apartment.	[Image] Photo of an Instax Mini 9 camera	14.8.2017	05:26
DD-045	I took a couple of my living room and bedroom (that's the rocking chair I first saw David in). They're pretty unremarkable.	[Image] 2 photos of polaroid pictures showing the bedroom and living room of 'Ben's' apartment	14.8.2017	05:29
DD-046	Then I went into the hallway and snapped a photo.		14.8.2017	05:30
DD-047	The Polaroid developed completely black.	[Image] A black square on a polaroid film	14.8.2017	05:30
DD-048	I even ripped open and destroyed a fresh pack so see if it was just an undeveloped Polaroid, but they start out white.	[Image] 8 undeveloped polaroid films	14.8.2017	05:32
DD-049	I also thought maybe I accidentally covered the lens with my finger so I took a photo while intentionally covering it.		14.8.2017	05:37
DD-050	The photo on the left is me covering the lens with my finger. The one on the right is my fully	[Image] Two polaroid films, a lighter grey one (left) and DD-047 (Right)	14.8.2017	05:38

	lit hallway taken just after midnight.			
DD-051	I'll record myself sleeping again tonight, and I have sage being delivered tomorrow. As always, I'll keep you in the loop.		14.8.2017	05:40
DD-052	Ok, one last thing cause I wanted to double check. Here's a couple video of me taking photos:	[Video] 'Ben' walking around his apartment holding the polaroid camera and taking photos	14.8.2017	06:21
DD-053	And then the hallway:	[Video] 'Ben' holding the polaroid camera taking a photo of his hallway from the door. The photo develops completely black	14.8.2017	06:25
DD-054	It came out totally black again, for a second time.	[Image] A black square on a polaroid film	14.8.2017	06:27
DD-055	Someone told me to take photos from farther away so I tried that. Once with my iPhone and once with the Polaroid.		14.8.2017	06:44
DD-056	Left is with my phone. Right is with with Polaroid. The hall light was on both times. Why is it pitch black each time with the Polaroid?	[Image] image 1 shows a clearer photo of the doorway leading to the landing, which is visable and well lit. Image 2 is a photo of a polaroid taken from roughly the same angle however the doorway is completely black	14.8.2017	06:46

DD-057	Folks have been urging me to get some sage, so did.	[Image] Ben burning sage near the door	15.8.2017	01:33
DD-058	Saging the hall, and definitely saging the hell out of this rocking chair.	[Image] Image 1: Ben burning sage in the hall/landing Image 2: Ben burning sage near the green rocking chair	15.8.2017	01:34
DD-059	Honesty, sage doesn't seem like it'll help much, but I'm open to anything. I barely slept last night.		15.8.2017	01:35
DD-060	But who knows, maybe this will do something.		15.8.2017	01:36
DD-061	Sage did not work.		15.8.2017	19:25
DD-062	I haven't dreamed about David in a few months, but he appeared again last night.		15.8.2017	19:25
DD-063	In the dream, my bedroom was filled with hazy smoke, but I could see David sitting in the chair across the room.		15.8.2017	19:26
DD-064	He was smaller this time. Almost shrunken. He didn't do or say anything except look at me.		15.8.2017	19:26
DD-065	I've been recording myself sleeping, and it picks up this weird static electricity sound every night at 3 am. It lasts about 5 minutes.		18.8.2017	05:18
DD-066	This morning I woke up to the whole house		18.8.2017	05:19

	shaking. It felt like a small earthquake.			
DD-067	I debated even mentioning that on Twitter, because it sounds made up. But I distinctly felt the house swaying.		18.8.2017	05:20
DD-068	It's just a whole bunch of small things happening at once. I feel so uneasy, like right before a thunderstorm comes.		18.8.2017	05:21
DD-069	Everyone is telling me to move, but I don't have any guarantee that this won't follow me.		18.8.2017	05:22
DD-070	They just issued a thunderstorm warning for tonight...	[Image] a red alert symbol over a lightning cloud background. Text reads: Severe Thunderstorm Warning	19.8.2017	00:34
DD-071	Everyone in the city is talking about how weird the sky looks. I can hear rolling thunder in the distance.	Image of a sunset over a city	19.8.2017	00:58
DD-072	All this ghost stuff has been spooky, but this past weekend was the first time I actually felt unsafe in my home. (thread)		21.8.2017	23:35
DD-073	On Friday night, there was supposed to be a huge storm. In the end it passed, but that night was bizarre anyway.		21.8.2017	23:35

DD-074	I fell asleep pretty early. I was incredibly tired for some reason.		21.8.2017	23:36
DD-075	I had a dream that night where David was dragging me by the arm through an old abandoned warehouse.		21.8.2017	23:36
DD-076	It was a creepy dream, but I didn't think much of it when I woke up. I took a shower, and then I noticed something.		21.8.2017	23:37
DD-077	I'd woken up with a huge bruise on my arm.	[Image] Ben's arm with bruise near the wrist	21.8.2017	23:38
DD-078	Now look, maybe I injured myself the day before, and my arm was hurting during the night, which manifested as a dream.		21.8.2017	23:38
DD-079	There could be a totally logical explanation for it, so I brushed it off. I went to get coffee, which I do every weekend.		21.8.2017	23:39
DD-080	When I walk to the coffee place, I always pass a food cart repair depot. It's always INCREDIBLY busy, especially on weekends.		21.8.2017	23:39
DD-081	But today, it was completely abandoned. The whole warehouse was totally gutted and empty	[Image] an abandoned warehouse	21.8.2017	23:41

DD-082	Basically the only thing in the entire warehouse was a single green chair.	[image] a green dining chair in the centre of an empty warehouse	21.8.2017	23:42
DD-083	There have been a few small developments in my apartment, but I'm not really sure what to make of them. I just know I'm scared. (thread)		26.8.2017	04:20
DD-084	If you recall, my cats usually gather at the door at midnight, but lately it's been getting earlier and earlier every night.		26.8.2017	04:21
DD-085	I was almost used to routine, so when they started to cry at the door closer to 10 pm, I was confused.		26.8.2017	04:21
DD-086	They began a new routine: hover around the door at 10 pm, cry for about 15 minutes, then wander off as if nothing's wrong.		26.8.2017	04:22
DD-087	Shortly after the usual cat stuff, around 10:30 or so, I start getting phone calls from an unmarked number.		26.8.2017	04:24
DD-088	My entire call history for the past week looks like this. You'll notice that I answered once, yesterday.	[Image] Screenshot of call log, showing 7 unanswered calls from an unknown number and one answered called call	26.8.2017	04:24
DD-089	I didn't say anything. I just listened, waiting		26.8.2017	04:25

	for some automated message to chime in.			
DD-090	Instead, what I heard on the other end was a peculiar electrical static sound, very similar the the static my sleep app picks up at night.		26.8.2017	04:26
DD-091	I kept listening. I heard what I thought was breathing, but it was so faint I can't be sure. My heart was racing, so it was hard to hear.		26.8.2017	04:27
DD-092	Then, just as I was about to hang up, I heard a very small voice whisper, "hello."		26.8.2017	04:28
DD-093	Something about the way they said hello freaked me out. It wasn't a question, or a greeting.		26.8.2017	04:28
DD-094	Just, "hello." A flat statement. So quiet I could barely hear it.		26.8.2017	04:28
DD-095	I panicked and hung up. I didn't know what else to do. I closed all the curtains in my apartment and turned on every single light.		26.8.2017	04:29
DD-096	If I look at each individual incident on its own, there are perfectly logical explanations for everything.		26.8.2017	04:29

DD-097	But after three weeks of weird shit happening, I don't know how to make sense of it all.		26.8.2017	04:29
DD-098	The only thing I feel like I can do right now is write everything down. So that's what I'm doing. And that's what I'll keep doing		26.8.2017	04:30
DD-099	So, I moved the green chair out of the bedroom weeks ago. It's been in various parts of the living room ever since. (thread)	[Image] Green rocking chair	29.8.2017	02:22
DD-100	I should probably get rid of it, but I'm not sure that would have any effect.		29.8.2017	02:22
DD-101	Also, I'm going on vacation to Japan in 3 weeks, & I keep thinking if I can make it to my trip, this will all end, as dumb as that sounds.		29.8.2017	02:23
DD-102	David lost track of me once when I moved, so maybe if he believes I've left the apartment again, he'll leave me alone.		29.8.2017	02:23
DD-103	Anyway, last week I bough a pet monitoring camera so I can keep an eye on the cats while I'm overseas.		29.8.2017	02:24
DD-104	It's basically a nanny cam that connects to the wifi, so you can check in whenever		29.8.2017	02:24

	you want. It runs 24/7.			
DD-105	It also alerts you to sound and movement via an app. (I blacked out the company, since I doubt they want to be associated with ghosts)	[Image] notifications from an unknown app reads: Motion detection from [redacted] Sound detection from [redacted]	29.8.2017	02:24
DD-106	In any event, I decided to test it out this weekend. I was away from home one night, so I set up the camera before I left.		29.8.2017	02:25
DD-107	My phone pinged periodically through the evening, alerting me to the cats running around and playing. Normal stuff.		29.8.2017	02:25
DD-108	Then, around 11, it alerted me again that it detected motion, but when I checked the feed of my apartment, I didn't see anything.		29.8.2017	02:26
DD-109	So I watched the feed again. Still nothing. I watched it a third time, and finally noticed something.		29.8.2017	02:26
DD-110	Watch the chair.	[Video] Security camera footage of Ben's living room, on the left is the green rocking chair. At 0:05 it begins rocking	29.8.2017	02:27

DD-111	I knew it couldn't be the wind, because I haven't had the windows open at all this summer (I have AC and like to keep it chilly).		29.8.2017	02:27
DD-112	About half an hour later, I got another motion alert.		29.8.2017	02:28
DD-113	Here's the feed of that alert.	[Video] Security camera footage of Ben's living room, at 0:10 a turtle shell falls off the wall	29.8.2017	02:29
DD-114	Wait, wtf. Someone just pointed out that one of the blue chair in the background disappears in the second video	[image] two screenshots from DD-110 and DD-110. in the first image 2 blue chairs can be seen on the right, in the second only one is visible	29.8.2017	02:45
DD-115	Wait, now people are pointing out the chair is still there, it's just the lighting. This is too much. I'm taking a xanax and going to bed.		29.8.2017	02:59
DD-116	It's happening again. (thread)		6.9.2017	01:20
DD-117	I've been leaving the nanny cam on 24/7. It records every time there's movement or sound, as you know.		6.9.2017	01:20
DD-118	I was going over the feed from this weekend, and noticed some weird stuff.		6.9.2017	01:21
DD-119	During the night on Saturday, while I slept, it recorded the cats in the		6.9.2017	01:21

	living room. It seemed pretty unremarkable at first.			
DD-120	But then, after a few moments, Maxwell freaks out and jumps over something invisible.	[Video] Two cats sitting on a rug in Ben's living room, one of the cats suddenly jumps backwards and looks back to where it originally was. A green jar moves across the table	6.9.2017	01:22
DD-121	I don't think it was a bug or anything. Maxwell doesn't react like that with bugs. He just eats them. Something spooked him.		6.9.2017	01:23
DD-122	Specifically, it recorded Maxwell doing this on and off for hours.	[Image] a black a white cat sits up on its hind legs looking up	6.9.2017	01:25
DD-123	He'd sit up on his hind legs and peer around the room, as if looking for something (or looking at something?)		6.9.2017	01:26
DD-124	Here's the final video the camera recorded that night.	[Video] a black and white cat sits upright on its hind legs and paws at the air	6.9.2017	01:28
DD-125	I suppose there's a chance it was a fly, but I honestly never get flies. So that seems unlikely.		6.9.2017	01:28
DD-126	I just can't shake the feeling that something has made its way into the apartment.		6.9.2017	01:28

DD-127	I've been having so many nightmares lately. (thread)		17.9.2017	03:02
DD-128	They're way more intense than my usual dreams, too. I don't know if it's because I'm stressed, or if it's something else.		17.9.2017	03:02
DD-129	In the dream, I was laying in bed, and rolled over to face the other direction.		17.9.2017	03:02
DD-130	On the pillow next to me was a severed head with a bloody spine attached, snaking down the bed.		17.9.2017	03:03
DD-131	The head was staring right at me, somehow still alive. It had this huge smile plastered on its face.		17.9.2017	03:03
DD-132	Horried, I screamed, "What happened to you?!" The head smiled even bigger.		17.9.2017	03:03
DD-133	"It feels great," the heads groaned.		17.9.2017	03:03
DD-134	After that, I woke up. It was dark outside by then. Everything was quiet.		17.9.2017	03:03
DD-135	Other dreams have been just as strange. Things like dark figures staring in my windows, even though I live on the second floor.		17.9.2017	03:04

DD-136	I decided to go for a walk, if for no other reason then to get out of my apartment. I went to a bodega a few blocks away to get a snack.		17.9.2017	03:05
DD-137	On the way, I had to pass the warehouse that was boarded up a few weeks ago.		17.9.2017	03:06
DD-138	I hurried past it, since it freaks me out now. At the bodega I got some Doritos and a seltzer, then made my way back home.		17.9.2017	03:06
DD-139	When I passed the warehouse a second time, I heard a dull *thunk* from the other side of the shutters.		17.9.2017	03:07
DD-140	I froze in place, but there was no other sound after that. I probably should've just continued on, but curiosity got the better of me.		17.9.2017	03:08
DD-141	There was a grated window next to the doors, about a foot above my head. Too high to see into.		17.9.2017	03:08
DD-142	So I thought to myself, "OK, I'm gonna hold my phone up to the window, take ONE photo, and then run for my life."		17.9.2017	03:08

DD-143	I made sure my flash was on, positioned my camera lens through one of the grates, and snapped a photo.		17.9.2017	03:08
DD-144	I almost thought I saw movement when the flash went off but I couldn't be certain. The light bounced off the grates and was pretty blinding.		17.9.2017	03:09
DD-145	I couldn't even look at the photo. I just ran all the way home. I was too jumpy to look at it for a while. I just ate my Doritos nervously.		17.9.2017	03:10
DD-146	When I finally did look at the photo, here's what I saw		17.9.2017	03:10
DD-147	There was a bunch of old insulation and what looked like a filing cabinet and a ripped up leather desk chair.	[Image] dark and blurred image, it is unclear what is in the room	17.9.2017	03:11
DD-148	Then I noticed something else, in the upper right corner. Something that looked like a face.		17.9.2017	03:12
DD-149	The more I stared at it, the more it started to look like a nondescript blur. Now I can't even be sure what I'm seeing.		17.9.2017	03:12
DD-150	Maybe I'm too deep into this and my brain wants to		17.9.2017	03:12

	see David when he's not there.			
DD-151	But here, I messed with the filters on my phone a bit. Tell me this doesn't look like him.	[Image] a zoomed in version of DD-147, there is a translucent mass next to what appears to be a door	17.9.2017	03:13
DD-152	The past few days have been fairly quiet. I haven't been spending much time at home. I leave for Japan in a couple hours.		22.9.2017	18:58
DD-153	I've been trying to avoid anything weird before my trip. I still feel like this all might stop if I just leave for a couple weeks.		22.9.2017	18:59
DD-154	Whatever happens, I want to thank everyone for their kind thoughts and concerns. This whole ordeal has been stressful and it means a lot.		22.9.2017	18:59
DD-155	It makes me feel like I'm not going through this alone. See you in a couple weeks. ❤️		22.9.2017	19:00
DD-156	It's my last full day in Japan. (thread)		3.10.2017	05:42
DD-157	The past couple weeks have been pretty peaceful. I have people taking care of the cats and they say they've been doing fine.		3.10.2017	05:43

DD-158	This morning I went for a long walk around Sapporo. I never really plan my vacations. I like to wander a lot and see what I find.		3.10.2017	05:43
DD-159	I came across this statue in a park. I couldn't find out any real information about it online, but it was weird and pretty.	[Image] photo of statue in a Sapporo park, it is metallic statue with many female and child like figures surrounding a central column	3.10.2017	05:44
DD-160	I was taking pictures of it from different angles since its cylindrical. I moved around to one side & almost dropped my phone at what I saw.		3.10.2017	05:46
DD-161	It felt too similar to be a coincidence. I felt dizzy staring up at it, this kid with a dented head.	[Image] a section of the statue in DD-159, showing a child figure with a misshapen head, in the arms of a woman	3.10.2017	05:46
DD-162	I don't know. Maybe I'm overreacting? Maybe this is nothing? It doesn't feel like nothing.	[image] cropped version of DD-161	3.10.2017	05:47
DD-163	Anyway, I have to pack for my flight home in the morning. It'll be good to see the cats again, at least.		3.10.2017	05:48
DD-164	I made it home safely! The cats are fine, if a little more talkative than usual.	[Image] Ben holding a cat	6.10.2017	01:51

DD-165	Weird things have been happening with the electricity in my apartment this week. (thread)		14.10.2017	06:14
DD-166	First, 2 bulbs have burned out in the hallway in less than a week. At this point I've just left it alone, rather than get a ladder again.		14.10.2017	06:15
DD-167	But the strangest thing has to do with the backlight on my TV. It's an LED strip that plugs into the TV itself via USB.		14.10.2017	06:15
DD-168	The TV has to be on in order for the backlight to be on. But last night the backlight was flickering on and off by itself.		14.10.2017	06:15
DD-169	I noticed it just sometime before dawn, when I woke up and went into the kitchen to get some water		14.10.2017	06:16
DD-170	I'd barely gotten back into bed again when I saw a faint light come on in the living room. After a few seconds, it went dark again.		14.10.2017	06:16
DD-171	I went back into the living room and stood there watching the backlight go on & off, on & off, for at least a few minutes. It was bizarre.		14.10.2017	06:17

DD-172	Eventually it stopped, and now the backlight doesn't work at all. It's only a couple months old, so it shouldn't be dead already.		14.10.2017	06:17
DD-173	Anyway, I couldn't get back to sleep, so I went to the diner near my apartment. It was the only thing open at 4 AM.		14.10.2017	06:18
DD-174	When I got back home, the sun was starting to come up so I figured I might as well shower and go into work early.		14.10.2017	06:18
DD-175	As I passed the front door, I thought I heard a faint scratching sound from the other side.		14.10.2017	06:19
DD-176	It was so soft I wasn't sure it had really happened. I went over the the door but I was too scared to look through the peephole.		14.10.2017	06:19
DD-177	I couldn't bring myself to actually put my face that close to the sound, so I opted to take a photo through the peephole instead.		14.10.2017	06:20
DD-178	Since there's a skylight just outside my door, the hall was awash in faint yellow-green light. I		14.10.2017	06:20

	snapped a couple photos.			
DD-179	At first the pictures didn't seem like anything. Just blurry nothingness.		14.10.2017	06:20
DD-180	But as I analyzed it, and started noticing things. Part of a face. An ear, and an eye staring right back at me.	[image] photo taken through a peephole, translucent white masses are visible across the image	14.10.2017	06:21
DD-181	I think maybe it's time to get someone else involved. It's obvious this isn't going to stop until I do something.		14.10.2017	06:21
DD-182	I'm just not sure what that is yet. I'll let you all know when I figure it out.		14.10.2017	06:22
DD-183	Sorry for the radio silence the past couple weeks. (thread)		27.10.2017	04:45
DD-184	First, I had a friend come over to do some cleansing stuff. She did the whole apartment and the hallway.		27.10.2017	04:46
DD-185	A lot of self-proclaimed professional mediums have reached out, plus about a dozen "ghost hunter" TV shows.		27.10.2017	04:46
DD-186	I've declined them all because I don't really want strangers in my house		27.10.2017	04:46

	sensationalizing what's going on.			
DD-187	So instead I had a friend come over and cleanse the place. And for about a week or so, it seemed like it worked.		27.10.2017	04:47
DD-188	Things appeared to go back to normal. The cats weren't gathering at the door anymore. I stopped having dreams.		27.10.2017	04:47
DD-189	It was starting to seem like like it was over.		27.10.2017	04:48
DD-190	Then, one morning last week, I was walking to work and passed the shuttered warehouse as usual.		27.10.2017	04:48
DD-191	This time, all the metal door were wide open, sunlight pouring in. The warehouse was still mostly empty. Except for one thing.		27.10.2017	04:48
DD-192	There was a hearse parked near the back wall.	[image] a black hearse with red partially drawn curtains parked in a warehouse	27.10.2017	04:48
DD-193	The warehouse has been closed for over two months. I have no idea why it was open that day. Nobody was around.		27.10.2017	04:49

DD-194	It was weird, but I tried not to think about it. It's not all that strange to see a hearse, I guess? Like they have to park somewhere?		27.10.2017	04:50
DD-195	I tried to put it out of my mind, and the the next several days were uneventful.		27.10.2017	04:50
DD-196	But something else happened last night. It was around 11 or so, and I was watching TV on the couch.		27.10.2017	04:51
DD-197	I went into the dining room to get a drink from the fridge, and noticed both the cats sitting by the far window, staring up at it.		27.10.2017	04:52
DD-198	The window looks out onto the roof of the business next door. I glanced out the window but didn't see anything.		27.10.2017	04:52
DD-199	I figured that maybe there was a mouse in the wall or something. I shrugged and grabbed a beer from the fridge.		27.10.2017	04:52
DD-200	As I went into the kitchen to get the bottle opener, I noticed something.		27.10.2017	04:53
DD-201	There's a window in the kitchen, which looks out onto the same roof. And someone was standing on the roof, staring at me.		27.10.2017	04:53

DD-202	I immediately ducked down. I reached up and flicked off the light switch. I peered over the window sill but couldn't see much.		27.10.2017	04:54
DD-203	My phone was in my pocket so I grabbed it and took a photo. It was blurry and dark but I swear someone was out there.	[Image] picture of a roof or balcony space taken through a window at night	27.10.2017	04:54
DD-204	I tried to take a better photo, but the figure had disappeared.	[image] clearer image of the roof/ balcony space	27.10.2017	04:56
DD-205	I closed all the blinds and made sure the door was locked and then drank like 5 more beers until I was too drunk to be scared.		27.10.2017	04:56
DD-206	But now I feel like I'm back at square one. I'm sure it was him. He's not going away. I don't know what to do.		27.10.2017	04:57
DD-207	It's been about four months since the first time I dreamed of David. (thread)		7.11.2017	02:37
DD-208	This might be long, but stick with me. Last night I dreamed about him again. It was almost exactly the same as the first time I saw him.		7.11.2017	02:38
DD-209	In the dream, I saw him in a chair again. I don't have the green chair in		7.11.2017	02:38

	my room anymore—this time it was a recliner I've had for years.			
DD-210	He was staring right at me, just like the first time. Again, I felt paralyzed & could barely move. But this time, something was different.		7.11.2017	02:38
DD-211	I still felt mostly immobile, but I could squirm a just little bit. I felt more alert. I could move my hands somewhat.		7.11.2017	02:39
DD-212	David glared at me, and I dreaded what I knew was coming. He was going to get out of the chair and come toward me, like before.		7.11.2017	02:39
DD-213	I had to do something. I keep my phone next to me on the bed, and I somehow managed to get ahold of it.		7.11.2017	02:40
DD-214	I thought, "If David is going to kill me, maybe I can at least get evidence on my phone." I started snapping pictures in the dark.		7.11.2017	02:40
DD-215	Sure enough, he crawled down off the chair and began shuffling toward me. He moved		7.11.2017	02:41

	slowly, like it was a struggle for him.			
DD-216	I felt terrified, but I kept taking photos. David limped closer toward me, never taking his eyes off me. Soon I was face to face with him.		7.11.2017	02:41
DD-217	He started muttering something, too quiet for me to understand. I watched as his eyes rolled back in his head, until they were all white.		7.11.2017	02:41
DD-218	I tried to writhe away from him, but I could barely move. I stared in horror as he began crawling up onto my bed, still murmuring something.		7.11.2017	02:42
DD-219	And that's when I woke up. Same as before. Broad daylight. No trace of David anywhere.		7.11.2017	02:42
DD-220	It's almost routine now. But it was a dream after all, so I got up and went to work, and after a while the stress of the dream melted away.		7.11.2017	02:42
DD-221	I wasn't even going to write about this, since it wouldn't really be new information. But tonight I noticed		7.11.2017	02:42

	something that petrified me.			
DD-222	I went into my phone to find a picture from a couple days ago, & saw dozens of pitch black photos in my camera roll. All from last night.		7.11.2017	02:43
DD-223	It's better to just show you. Turn up your brightness, because they're pretty dark.		7.11.2017	02:43
DD-224	N/A	[Image] A dark room with a small figure sitting in a chair	7.11.2017	02:44
DD-225	N/A	[Image] The same dark room this time the small figure is standing	7.11.2017	02:44
DD-226	This is the one that made my heart drop.	[Image] a blurred image of the previous figure now closer to the bed	7.11.2017	02:45
DD-227	Usually I can come up with some excuse for what's happening, but I have no logical explanation for this.		7.11.2017	02:45
DD-228	So now I'm sitting here on my couch, freaking out. I certainly won't be able to sleep. I just felt like I needed to get this out.		7.11.2017	02:46

DD-229	For everyone asking—yes, I'm alive. I've been on the quiet side because there's something I'm trying to investigate and I'm not sure how to yet. I'd rather not tweet unless I have something substantial to share. (thread)		18.11.2017	03:27
DD-230	It's also sort of hard to explain the logistics of what I'm trying to find out, but I'll do my best. Basically, there's a part of my apartment I'm just now learning about. At least that's what I think.		18.11.2017	03:27
DD-231	To refresh your memory, I live in a duplex. I used to live on the first floor, and now I live on the second floor. It's a long boxy building that looks like this:	[Image] Diagram of Ben's building	18.11.2017	03:28
DD-232	The other week, I was tweeting the most recent update from the living room couch. About 30 seconds after I'd sent the last tweet, I heard a thump directly above my head, as if someone above me had dropped something on the floor—which is impossible, since		18.11.2017	03:29

	I'm in the top apartment.			
DD-233	There's also no way to access the roof. There aren't any ladders on the outside of the building. The only way you'd get on the roof is through a skylight in the hallway. There are no trees in the immediate vicinity, either.		18.11.2017	03:29
DD-234	It definitely wasn't pipes, either. It was distinctly the sound of something falling to the floor. My building is old and makes lots of noises, but this was a new sound and it startled me.		18.11.2017	03:30
DD-235	So I'm thinking, "Is there some secret crawl space in my home?" I look all over my apartment but I can't figure it out, so I go into the hallway, and that's when something dawns on me.		18.11.2017	03:30
DD-236	There's no real way to ease into this so I'll just say it: there's a mysterious hatch in my hallway. I've always known about it, but I just	[Image] A water damaged hatch in a ceiling	18.11.2017	03:31

	assumed it opened directly to the roof.			
DD-237	It's REALLY high above the stairs, so I always figured it was impossible to access without some sort of fancy professional ladder. I took this video so you can see how high it is.	[Video] pan up and down showing the distance between the stairs and hatch	18.11.2017	03:34
DD-238	I see that hatch every morning when I leave for work and think nothing of it, but this time something dawned on me. It can't lead to the roof, because it's actually below the roof. I'm about to spring some simple math on you, so I apologize in advance.		18.11.2017	03:35
DD-239	First, the skylight is flat with the roof (I checked Google Earth to make sure). The hatch is about 3 feet below the skylight, meaning there's about 3 feet of empty space between the two openings.	[Image] Different angle of the ceiling showing a 3 foot wall between the hatch and a higher ceiling with a skylight. There's a white arrow marking this space and text reading: 3 feet of empty space I can't account for	18.11.2017	03:36
DD-240	I think, "Maybe the hatch leads to a short ladder going to the roof?" But even if that's the case, the hatch is level with all the	[Image] A revised version of the DD-231 diagram, now showing the empty space	18.11.2017	03:37

	ceilings in my apartment. That means there's three feet of empty space all over my apartment.			
DD-241	I was ready to explain this away for a few reasons. One, it might just be some sort of insulated space that all residential buildings have. I'm not an architect, so what do I know? It didn't seem relevant enough at the time, so I decided I wasn't going to mention it here.		18.11.2017	03:37
DD-242	But over the past week and a half, I've been hearing more things above me. A few days after the first sound, I heard a similar thump while I was in the kitchen. Then last night, I heard something small clink to the floor and roll about 6 feet before stopping.		18.11.2017	03:38
DD-243	Something is going on up there. Maybe it's a raccoon? But maybe it's not. I also can't get over the fact that the hatch is in such a weird, inaccessible place over the stairs. I need to investigate, I'm just		18.11.2017	03:38

	not sure how right now.			
DD-244	I guess I'll try to buy a long pole off Amazon to see if the hatch even moves? I might have to buy a construction ladder. At any rate, that's why I've been MIA for a minute. I'll keep you posted when I figure out how to get up there.		18.11.2017	03:38
DD-245	OK, I bought a pole. If the hatch is moveable, I'll either shell out for a ladder or call my landlord to investigate.	[Image] screenshot of an amazon order reading: Arriving nov 18 - Nov 20 On the Way: In the Breeze Heavy Duty Telescoping Pole, 16-Foot Sold by: Amazon.com LLC \$38.99 condition: New	18.11.2017	03:49
DD-246	A lot has happened in the last week, but I was away for Thanksgiving so I'm just now able to write it all down. (thread)		29.11.2017	03:18
DD-247	The noises from the ceiling haven't let up, but the pole I ordered didn't arrive before I had to leave for the holiday, so I didn't actually get it until late Friday night. I planned to investigate the next		29.11.2017	03:19

	morning and went to bed.			
DD-248	I'd barely fallen asleep when I woke up to an INCREDIBLY loud crash above me. It sounded like someone had dropped a bowling ball. I bolted upright in bed and immediately felt strange. There was a weird energy all around me. I can't explain it.		29.11.2017	03:20
DD-249	After about a minute I heard another crash. I briefly thought about grabbing my shoes and booking it, but that would mean passing under the hatch, and that seemed like a bad idea. So instead I just listened and waited, though I'm not sure for what.		29.11.2017	03:21
DD-250	The crash happened again, and then again—probably 15 times in a row, followed by a long silence. Then I heard a smaller, creaky sound from the hallway. In my mind I registered it as a footstep, but it really could've been anything.		29.11.2017	03:21

DD-251	I stayed still, but there were no more sounds after that. I lay back down, still tense and nervous, but I must've fallen asleep at some point because I woke up the next morning and everything seemed normal again. I got dressed and left to go get a bagel, same as every Saturday.		29.11.2017	03:21
DD-252	As I made my way down the stairs, something crunched under my feet. I looked down and noticed a pile of debris on the stairs, directly under the hatch.	[Image] photo of red stairs with a black powder covering them	29.11.2017	03:22
DD-253	It looked like dirt but I couldn't tell for certain. It could've been old plaster or something? I glanced up at the hatch and noticed something else peculiar. The edge of something was caught in it, barely poking out. It's hard to see because it's so far up, but I took a photo:	[Image] Photo of the hatch	29.11.2017	03:24
DD-254	At that point bagels were the last thing on my mind. I went back upstairs and grabbed the pole. I set my camera on the coat wardrobe at the top of the		29.11.2017	03:24

	stairs and hit record, just to make sure it would be caught on video if a demon burst out of the hatch.			
DD-255	Here's the video:	[Video] Ben standing on the stairs using a pole to open the hatch. At 0:25 something falls from the gap	29.11.2017	03:27
DD-256	I jumped out of the way and practically fell down the stairs trying to dodge whatever it was that fell. At first I thought it was a dead squirrel, which would honestly explain a lot. It hit the steps and bounced down to the first floor.		29.11.2017	03:27
DD-257	I went upstairs to get my phone and collapse the pole, since it's so long and unwieldy, then went back downstairs to investigate the object that fell. At first I wasn't even sure what it was. It was a dingy, faded black.		29.11.2017	03:28
DD-258	I picked it up and realized what it was. It was a small leather shoe.	[Image] Small very worn black leather shoe approximately the same size as Ben's hand.	29.11.2017	03:29
DD-259	I hustled back upstairs and texted my landlord. I told him I thought there was something in		29.11.2017	03:30

	the crawlspace and asked if he could investigate. He said he'd come by later with a ladder and check it out.			
DD-260	A few hours later my landlord was on a ladder, shining a flashlight into the crawlspace, I stared up at him, half expecting something to grab him and yank him into the darkness. He angled his flashlight all around and finally saying, "There's nothing up here."		29.11.2017	03:30
DD-261	But then he was like, "Oh, wait." I watched as he reached up into the emptiness with his free arm, and when he pulled it back he had something small and round in his hand. He climbed down the ladder and handed it to me.		29.11.2017	03:31
DD-262	Again, I wasn't quite sure what I was looking at. It was smooth and shiny and at first I thought it was an old piece of candy, but it was cold and too heavy to be candy. After a second I realized it was a marble.		29.11.2017	03:33

DD-263	It was so worn that it hadn't registered as a marble at first. Its shape was also sort of weird, with a little bump on one end.	[Image] 2 photos of Ben holding a pale green striped marble	29.11.2017	03:34
DD-264	My landlord seemed unbothered for the most part (uhhh ok dude) and he told me to call him if I heard anything else. I went inside and headed to my office to see if I could figure anything out about this marble that somehow made its way into my ceiling.		29.11.2017	03:35
DD-265	I had nothing to go on, and In short I didn't really learn much. But I did figure out the bump on the marble, I think. Apparently in the early 1900s they made marbles by hand and cut them with big metal scissors, which would mean the marble is probably really old?		29.11.2017	03:36
DD-266	Anyway, now I have a decrepit old shoe and a marble sitting on my dresser. I guess this is the new normal.		29.11.2017	03:36
DD-267	Sorry for the long break—I haven't been feeling great the past couple		13.12.2017	03:07

	weeks and haven't had time to update. (thread)			
DD-268	There also wasn't much to say for the most part. I wasn't sleeping well, and I was having weird dreams, but they were vague and hard to describe. I'm sleepy all day long, and I've been getting sudden bouts of dizziness.		13.12.2017	03:08
DD-269	I chocked it up to always having earbuds crammed in, and made a mental note to get my ears checked. Other than that, things were pretty quiet. I sort of fooled myself into thinking that finding those items in the attic somehow ended all this. Not that that would make much sense.		13.12.2017	03:08
DD-270	But last week something started to happen. Late on Wednesday, I woke up with a start and felt something strange, like something had just been watching me. I turned on the light but I was alone.		13.12.2017	03:09
DD-271	Still, there was this a tangible feeling of... badness? Everything felt wrong, sort of like when you have the		13.12.2017	03:09

	flu and you wake up at night and can't really tell where you are for a minute.			
DD-272	It was a feeling I'm used to—it always accompanies David. People tweet at me a lot saying he might just need help, but I'm certain that's not the case. Every time he shows up, I feel a palpable sense of malice.		13.12.2017	03:10
DD-273	There's what I felt that night. Malice. Dread. But still, I was alone. And I was so tired, I wound up just going back to sleep. I've been so exhausted recently I can barely function.		13.12.2017	03:11
DD-274	The next night, the same thing happened. I woke up suddenly, feeling like I had just missed seeing something. Like a candle had just gone out and I could still smell it.		13.12.2017	03:11
DD-275	I thought about using the pet cam from the living room to monitor my bedroom while I slept, but the cord was too short to get the camera high enough to see the entire room. So I improvised.		13.12.2017	03:12

DD-276	I downloaded an app that takes a photo every 60 seconds and set my phone on top of a bookcase (it's almost 7 feet tall, so it had a pretty good view of my bed and the surrounding room). Then I went to sleep.		13.12.2017	03:12
DD-277	Just like before, I jolted awake hours later, feeling the same unease. I turned on the light and hurried out of bed to get my phone from the bookcase. There were probably 350 photos to scroll through.		13.12.2017	03:13
DD-278	The vast majority of them were me sleeping in an empty room. It's sort of dark but you can see me sleeping. I'd left a couple night lights on just in case anything showed up, but for the first hundred or so photos it was just me in an empty room.	[Image] Ben's bedroom, ben is asleep in the bed	13.12.2017	03:13
DD-279	N/A	[Image] Ben's bedroom as before, a small child now sits in the armchair	13.12.2017	03:16
DD-280	Then, suddenly, he was there. Standing on the chair at the foot of the bed staring at me.		13.12.2017	03:18

DD-281	In the next photo, from a minute later, he seems to be staring straight up at the ceiling? Just staring.	[Image] A similar image to DD-279 but the figure is now looking away	13.12.2017	03:18
DD-282	Then he appears to collapse on the chair. The next dozen photos are all the same. He's completely lifeless. At first I'd thought he was dead, which obviously doesn't make any sense. I looked over at the chair half expecting him to still be there but it was empty.	[Image] A similar image to the previous pictures, however the figure is slumped forwards hanging off the seat	13.12.2017	03:19
DD-283	But then, in the next photo, he's gone. The room is totally empty again. He's gone in the next several photos, too. I figured maybe that was it, but I kept swiping through the photos.		13.12.2017	03:20
DD-284	About 15 photos later, he was back, standing next to the bed. It was just like the last time I saw him.	[Image] the figure seen in previous images is now standing next to the bed	13.12.2017	03:21
DD-285	That's when my heart started to race. I didn't want to look at the rest of the photos, but I knew I had to. I swiped to the next photo and my heart sank into my stomach.		13.12.2017	03:21

DD-286	He was on the bed. Inches from me, staring down at me sleeping.	[Image] the figure seen in previous images is now standing on the bed above Ben	13.12.2017	03:22
DD-287	The next one was worse. In the next photo, he's staring right at the camera.	[Image] the figure is standing in the same position but now looks in the direction of the camera	13.12.2017	03:22
DD-288	After that, there's seemingly nothing. He disappears again and the rest of the scroll is just me alone in my room again. That is, until the last photo.		13.12.2017	03:23
DD-289	Here's the final photo on the scroll.	[Image] the camera's view of Ben's bedroom is obscured in the lower left corner by a child's head	13.12.2017	03:24
DD-290	I'm at a loss for words. That malformed ear, that stringy hair. I didn't even know what to think. I looked all over my room but couldn't find anything. And honestly I've been so exhausted I didn't know how to process it.		13.12.2017	03:25
DD-291	Even now, all I wanna do is just go to sleep.		13.12.2017	03:25
DD-292	Hey everyone—I'll be gone for the next week, visiting family back home in Montana for the holidays. It'll be nice to get away		20.12.2017	20:13

	from all this for a bit. Thanks for everyone's kind words lately. I'll see you when I get back.			
DD-293	So I've been away from the city for a couple weeks. (thread)		3.1.2018	03:18
DD-294	I went home to Montana for the holidays, and almost immediately I started to feel better. Less tired, less foggy. Up until now, I haven't really entertained the thought of moving, thinking that David would probably just follow me wherever I go.		3.1.2018	03:19
DD-295	But when I left for Montana, everything seemed to improve. Like maybe David wouldn't follow me after all. Maybe he was tied to the house, not me. Being home felt safer, and I managed to relax a little bit		3.1.2018	03:19
DD-296	I even started browsing listings for new apartments back in New York. The last thing I want to do is move in the middle of winter, but after the past few months it seemed like it might be worth it.		3.1.2018	03:20

	It felt like there might be a way out.			
DD-297	But after a few days, I started to feel strange again. One night I got up to go to the bathroom, and as I stood there in the dark, I couldn't help feeling like there was something moving outside the bathroom window.		3.1.2018	03:21
DD-298	The bathroom looks out into the back yard and it was pitch black. I could barely see anything but it's Montana and there are animals passing through all the time. Sure enough, in the morning I found animals tracks through the snow. (I don't know the specific animal—deer? elk?)	[Image] A blanket of snow with two small tracks can be seen in the snow	3.1.2018	03:22
DD-299	The next night, the same thing happened. I got up in the middle of the night and thought I saw movement in the blackness outside. This time I stood at the window and gazed out, straining my eyes to see, waiting		3.1.2018	03:22

	for them to adjust to the night.			
DD-300	For a long time I stared out into the snowy darkness, but couldn't see any movement. Then, just as I was about to turn away, I saw something lurch off to the right and disappear from view.		3.1.2018	03:23
DD-301	Again, it was too dark to make out the animal, but it could've been anything. Maybe a coyote or something?		3.1.2018	03:24
DD-302	In the morning, as I was getting out of the shower, I glanced out the window and noticed tracks behind the garage.	[image] a snow covered garden with tracks leading behind a building	3.1.2018	03:24
DD-303	I couldn't tell what they were from the bathroom, so I got dressed, put on my coat and went outside. When I got up close, my heart practically stopped. They weren't tracks, they were footprints. Really small footprints.	[Image] tracks in the snow leading to the edge of a shallow ridge	3.1.2018	03:25
DD-304	I followed them across the backyard but they disappeared into the ditch out back. I stood there in the		3.1.2018	03:26

	snow, not knowing what to do. What could I do? Call the cops and tell them I found footprints in the snow?			
DD-305	The last couple nights I was too scared to leave my room. If it had been David out there in the snow, it meant that he could follow me anywhere. No matter where I moved, he could find me. I felt helpless.		3.1.2018	03:27
DD-306	I flew back to New York the day after Christmas. Back in my apartment, it seemed like I was at square one yet again. I've tried everything I can think of. I've saged my apartment, I've hired a medium, nothing has worked.		3.1.2018	03:27
DD-307	And worse, I still feel him at night. Watching me from different corners of my room. Always getting closer, and waking up right before something happens.		3.1.2018	03:28
DD-308	For the past few nights, I've been using that app that takes photos every couple minutes, but nothing has shown up. For whatever reason it doesn't		3.1.2018	03:28

	seem to work anymore, but I've left it running just in case. It's picked up absolutely nothing, save for one thing, from last night.			
DD-309	Last night was particularly bad. I felt sick and had nightmares all night. I dreamed that David was hovering in the corner by the ceiling, far off the ground. He was mouthing something, but I couldn't hear any words.		3.1.2018	03:29
DD-310	Then he was hovering above my bed, staring down out me, his mouth moving faster than it should be. I couldn't move—I could only look up at him.		3.1.2018	03:29
DD-311	Suddenly he plummeted downward and I felt this huge pressure crash into my chest. I woke up gasping, the wind completely knocked out of me. I sat up and looked around frantically, heaving for air, but there was nothing.		3.1.2018	03:30
DD-312	When I caught my breath I retrieved my phone from the dresser. The photo roll showed		3.1.2018	03:30

	nothing of note, save for the last photo, taken just a moment before.			
DD-313	N/A	[Image] Dark image of Ben sleeping as a small figure appears to be falling from above him	3.1.2018	03:31
DD-314	I don't know what to do. I'm at a loss here. I just don't know.		3.1.2018	03:32
DD-315	Sorry for the long delay. Honestly, I wasn't sure I was going to tweet again. (thread)		17.1.2018	03:24
DD-316	After what happened a couple weeks ago, everything stopped. Well, sort of. I wasn't having dreams anymore and I was feeling better. I was sleeping through the night again.		17.1.2018	03:25
DD-317	Actually, I was feeling great. I still do. But things have been sort of weird, too. It's hard to explain. I'll try, but I don't know if any of it makes sense. Basically, as good as things have been for the past couple weeks, I can't shake the feeling that something is off.		17.1.2018	03:26


DD-318	Like I've been sleeping fine and I have lots of energy during the day, but sometimes I seem to sort of... lose time, I guess? Like I'll look up at the clock and realize a whole hour has gone by and I don't remember any of it.		17.1.2018	03:26
DD-319	Or I'll mishear someone and ask them to repeat what they said, but they'll say they didn't say anything. Little stuff like that. But after what I've been through, that's not a big deal. Despite all that, I felt ready to put it all behind me.		17.1.2018	03:27
DD-320	So on Sunday I opened Twitter intending to update you all that it was over, or at least I thought so. I just want things to go back to the way they were, and it seemed like they had. I was writing something to that effect when I noticed I had way more notifications than usual.		17.1.2018	03:28
DD-321	I swiped to my mentions and saw that everyone was tweeting to me about something I'd posted to my Instagram Story the		17.1.2018	03:29

	day before, saying they saw something weird. The stories are expired now but I have screenshots, and I don't know how to explain it.			
DD-322	Long story short, I went to brunch on Saturday with a friend. I posted a few photos to my story, and they were fairly unremarkable. Here's the first two I posted. Totally dumb and normal.	[Image] 2 screenshots of Ben's Instagram stories the first shows poached eggs on toast and the second shows Ben smiling with an unknown woman under text reading: Bottomless mimosas	17.1.2018	03:30
DD-323	They're totally boring brunch photos. I posted one more photo of me and my friend before leaving, and that was that. But the next day I had a zillion messages about the third photo I posted. People had taken screenshots and sent them to me.		17.1.2018	03:31
DD-324	This is what somehow got uploaded to my Instagram story:	[Image] A distorted version of the second DD-19 screenshot, under the distortion Ben's face appears to be disfigured	17.1.2018	03:31
DD-325	I have no clue what happened. It looked perfectly fine on my phone when I uploaded it. I'd say it was just a glitch but I can't make		17.1.2018	03:33

	sense of what's happening with my face.			
DD-326	Maybe I can. I know what it looks like. What it probably is. But I don't know if I care anymore. I really just want things to be normal again and things feel normal enough right now. I don't know. I guess I'll keep you updated if something else happens.		17.1.2018	03:33
DD-327	N/A	[Video] A video taken from floor level, a black and white cat is meowing at something off screen and away from the camera, before turning to face the camera and meowing again.	28.1.2018	08:17
DD-328	everything is fine		3.2.2018	07:07
DD-329	please dont worry about me. I'm ok and everything will be like it was before :)		14.2.2018	07:05
DD-330	N/A	[video] A partially obscured video of a black and white cat meowing at a door	14.2.2018	08:00
DD-331	For everyone asking if I'm alive: I'm doing OK! It's been pretty quiet around here lately and I've been trying to focus on work.		12.3.2018	22:12

	Of course I'll keep you updated if anything strange happens, but for now I'm staying busy with drawing and other projects. 👉			
DD-332	[In reply to DD-R062] I've said a few times that I'd update if anything happened. I'm not going to start inventing stuff just to keep a steady flow of updates. I promise I'll keep you informed, but if you're only here for David tweets, I don't know what to tell you! I've had this account for 8 years.		19.3.2018	01:55
Tweet ID	Tweet Text	Attachment Description	Date	Time
DD-R001	'Store' mite not mean a shop, may have older meaning like a coal store/coal storage facility	[Image] Screenshot Google Image Search: Vintage Coal Store. Black and white image of the U.S. Coal & Coke Company. Www.alamy.com DHC1Ck	10.9.2017	11:16
DD-R002	Try to check out, that place that you live has always been house? go back do reasearch of the place check out the past.		3.9.2017	20:15
DD-R003	BURN SOME SAGE IMMEDIATELY, obvi.		7.8.2017	04:45
DD-R004	A bit of a stretch since you're in NY	[Image] Information appeal	27.10.2017	16:04

	& this unsolved murder case was in philly but looks like him ! The case is called 'the boy in the box'	poster reading: POLICE DEPARTMENT, PHILADELPHIA, PA. INFORMATION WANTED. Balck and White Image of an injured young child [This is the same image as DD- R005]		
DD- R005	Have you heard the Boy in the Box case? he was missing part of his skull. https://www.historymysteries.com/the-boy-in-the-box/amp/	[Image] Information appeal poster reading: POLICE DEPARTMENT, PHILADELPHIA, PA. INFORMATION WANTED. Balck and White Image of an injured young child [This is the same image as DD- R004]	11.8.2017	08:29
DD- R006	My bf also just suggested that it might be a rat on a route outside your door. Could explain the cats		7.8.2017	17:02
DD- R007	N/A	[Image] Screenshot of notes app reading: 0:09 - Door (?) click sound 0:14-0:15 - "can you hear me?" 0:19-0:22 Angry/ Swearing voice 0:25 - 0:26 - Man Talking 0:33 - 0:34 - "she loves the dark" 0:40 - 0:41 Man Talking	5.9.2017	05:57

DD-R008	I think your kitty wants to go downstairs where you used to live.		1.9.2017	23:42
DD-R009	Set up a camera outside so it will already be recording when your cat goes to the door. Then you'll be able to see remotely what it is.		2.9.2017	04:45
DD-R010	Am I the only one seeing this?? He looks like he's reaching forward towards the door. Could be a smudge, could be your impending doom 	[Image] An outline of a figure drawn over DD-030 image 1	31.8.2017	00:07
DD-R011	i would suggest you buy some white sage and burn it while walking thru every room ordering david and his friends out that includes the hall		7.9.2017	21:26
DD-R012	Some scary sh*t!	[Image] An outline of a face drawn over DD-031 Image 2	2.9.2017	13:14
DD-R013	This is when you put salt around your door, burn some sage, call a priest, and pray.	[GIF] Gif of a woman yelling, subtitles read: I rebuke it in the name of the lord!	9.8.2017	06:43
DD-R014	SPREAD A SALT CIRCLE TOMORROW IF YOU SURVIVE. also sage. Order him to leave say he has no power here.	[GIF] Gif from the show Supernatural (2005) showing one of the charaters pouring salt on a window frame	9.8.2017	05:49

DD-R015	N/A	[GIF] A zoomed in copy of DD-042, with the outline of a face.	30.8.2017	11:39
DD-R016	I think there is something covering the camera lens when you took the picture	[Image] A screen shot of DD-053, paused at 0:30 with a red circle around a black object on the camera lense	14.8.2017	12:11
DD-R017	have you tried to photograph without a pvc tape covering your instax's len?	[Image] A screen shot of DD-053, paused at 0:49 with a red square around a roll of plack electrical tape in the background	29.8.2017	15:00
DD-R018	Guys that honestly looks like a face to me.	[Image] a screenshot of the developing polaroid from DD-053	14.8.2017	06:34
DD-R019	I think you should invest in this ouija board...	[Image] black and white image of a ouija board	15.8.2017	19:27
DD-R020	Maybe the warehouse is where he was murdered. What was it before? Like years ago?		21.8.2017	23:46
DD-R021	BURN THE GREEN ROCKING CHAIR		26.8..17	04:31
DD-R022	Salt AND THEN burn the green rocking chair		26.8..17	04:32
DD-R023	When the chair is moving it appears as tho plant to left of turtle shell may be as well. Was AC or fan turning on?		31.8.2017	08:27
DD-R024	Scroll slowly and look at the bottom wall next to your bookcase, a shadow crosses as the shell falls.		1.9.2017	18:48

DD-R025	[Follow up from DD-R025]	[Image] 3 screenshots of DD-113 taken at 0:18 0:19 and 0:24, with a red arrow drawn onto pointing towards a shadow	1.9.2017	18:52
DD-R026	Cats stand on hind legs when they feel threatened by a predator. They do this as a survival tactic to appear larger.		10.9.2017	06:28
DD-R027	You're freaked out about the cat but there's just a jar taking a road trip on your coffee table.		14.9.2017	01:03
DD-R028	The jar doesn't just move, it *twists*. Like if someone was pulling a thin string from behind the sofa.		6.9.2017	01:34
DD-R029	This is just how cats act when they have itchy fleas, including the staring at 'nothing'. This would also explain the moving glass.		12.9.2017	12:54
DD-R030	Things David has moved: Green Rocking Chair, Green Turtle Shell, Green Jar. GET RID OF GREEN!		6.9.2017	01:37
DD-R031	While this story seems fake to me, the storytelling part is pretty good stuff. I'll read either way.		7.9.2017	20:34
DD-R032	Ouija board in the warehouse???		17.9.2017	03:37

DD-R033	Found it.	[Image] Screenshot of sapporo.travel page containing a photo of the statue in DD-159, the captions read: Sculpture Mori-no-uta (Song of the Forest) This is one of Takeo Yamauchi's best known outdoor sculptures from among the many on display all across Japan. Yhis group of scultures was created based on the Hymn of life, and depicts children playing on instruments while frolicking with different animals.	3.10.2017	06:28
DD-R034	I think at this point you're just putting things in your head because you want something to be there when there isn't anything there at all.		14.10.2017	18:31
DD-R035	i see it like this	[image] a screenshot of DD-180 with the outline of a face drawn over it	14.10.2017	18:23
DD-R036	I see it, but the features don't quite seem human. To me, it looks a lot like the kid in that statue you saw, from a higher angle...	[GIF] gif featuring a white outline of a face and a photo of the DD-159 statue over a screenshot of DD-180	14.10.2017	20:15

DD-R037	Either ghosts are real or you've put a good amount of effort into faking your pics. Either way, I just had a heart attack.	[Image] Comaplation of DD-224, 225 and 226, alongside brightened versions of the images	7.11.2017	03:50
DD-R038	It's a manhole bro, it gives people access to the roof cavity. Most buildings (if not all) have them. It's for maintenance, access for builders/construction/electricians/insulation professionals etc. People who would have proper ladders/scaffolding to get up there.	[Image] picture showing a ceiling hatch above a tiled space	18.11.2017	03:55
DD-R039	Look up "concealed shoe" it's an old theory they were used to ward off evil spirits. That shoe looks EXACTLY like the shoes that have been found before. Bro better put it back. (I watch too many paranormal shows)		29.11.2017	04:51
DD-R040	So the rocking chair was green. So was the turtle shell that fell. The glass that moved. Wasn't there something else green too? And now the marble, also green.		29.11.2017	03:58
DD-R041	Has anyone noticed how this is the last tweet of his that's on the Dear David Storyify thing?		19.2.2018	07:40

	Maybe Adam just forgot to add the newer ones, or maybe it hasn't been Adam telling these past few updates this whole time and we never even knew it.			
DD-R042	[Follow up to DD-R041] Oh my gosh it makes so much sense now that I think about it. These are the first pictures of David on top of Adam. What if this is when Adam got possessed. What if David has been in him all this time and now has finally broken him?		19.2.2018	07:43
DD-R043	So, I don't know if this legit or if it's very well edited fiction. Either way this story has me hooked! I find myself constantly checking your Twitter for updates. If it is real, I apologize for what you're going through. If it's a fictional story then keep up the good work.		7.1.2018	22:22
DD-R044	Aren't you afraid of releasing too much of your book before it's published? I guess you will or are just adding more to the actual printed story. So far it's not		6.1.2018	14:28

	all that good though, not enough backstory or character development but I guess that's what's in the book?			
DD-R045	Check your channels in Photoshop, and retouch out the string. Happy to help. Hourly rate.		12.1.2018	11:26
DD-R046	You said that, in your dream, a girl in a library told you about David, what you can, and must not do. So, why don't you try to find a library similar of that you were in and search for that girl, or information about David?		10.1.2018	05:16
DD-R047	Brah he's trying to possess you. You need to be bathing in holy water, wearing rosaries like Mardi Gras beads, and sleeping in an iron tub filled with salt.	[GIF] A man making the sign of the cross over himself	3.1.2018	03:35
DD-R048	The same picture other angle and filter)) You think about this....))	[Image] Brightened and filtered versions of DD-313 with two pointed finger emojis aimed at what appears to be a string attached to the figure	6.1.2018	08:59
DD-R049	Don't get me wrong, I believe in spirits/ghosts, but is this maybe a string holding	[Image] Brightened and filtered versions of DD-313 with a ref circle drawn around what	3.1.2018	03:58

	David up? [Thinking Face Emoji]	appears to be a string attached to the figure		
DD- R050	Ok I haven't believed this since you posted the pictures of "David" lol. If it were real I'm pretty sure you would actually try and get some real ass help. But you're a good story teller so I'll keep reading [Shush emoji]		9.1.2018	17:24
DD- R051	But how was it expired if you screenshotted it yourself??? It clearly says "Your Story" and has your pic next to it lmao Dear David debunked		17.1.2018	03:33
DD- R052	This has happened to me. One of the filters glitches so when I swipe to put a filter on it looks like this. No conspiracy people.		9.4.2018	10:16
DD- R053	now i'm starting to feel like this is just a way to use his spooky ghost story to get more instagram followers, lol		17.1.2018	04:04
DD- R054	There's no jumpscare but in the last few seconds if you look at the floor you'll see a shadow go across the rug, right when the cat sits up, like whatever it		28.1.2018	08:58

	was looking at moved across the room [Sacred emoji]			
DD- R055	The fact that there's no caption is very concerning and the fact that this isn't part of a thread worries me deeply oh no		28.1.2018	08:24
DD- R056	Theory: Adam's dead and this was the last thing he was able to video before David got him. #RIP #DearDavid #fucksleep		28.1.2018	08:32
DD- R057	ok David		3.2.2018	07:14
DD- R058	GUYS HE POSTED A COMIC TO INSTAGRAM 3 HOURS AGO HE'S FINE!	[Image] A screenshot of an instagram post from an account linked to Ben. It shows a comic of love heart sweets with quotes from the TV show RuPaul's Drag Race (2009). The caption reads: I made some Drag Race valentines and you can get individual valentines to send people on my Patreon! Just check the saved story in my profile or head to patreon.com/adamtots!!	14.2.2018	08:02

DD-R059	This is fake and that cat is a paid actor		14.2.2018	11:57
DD-R060	I was just wondering what was going on in the #DearDavid writers room. #dankmemes #please		16.2.2018	05:07
DD-R061	He said it's been "pretty quiet" "Quiet" has 5 letters. "David" also has 5 letters. This is David.	[Gif] From the show It's always sunny in Philadelphia (2005) showing a distressed man in front of a wall of papers connected by red string	12.3.2018	22:15
DD-R062	Hey, it's cool if you're done with the whole 'David' saga, but if so could you maybe make a statement to wrap it up? I loved it when the notifications popped up, but if it's in the past I'd like to turn off my notification when you tweet!		19.3.2018	01:52
DD-R063	Have you tried doing a sage smudging? I'd suggest one in your home, and in the hallway if your neighbors agree.		10.8.2017	06:23
DD-R064	Sage so hard. Sage harder than sage could ever sage and then sage past that		7.8.2017	23:59









	stage of saging. If that doesn't make it stop... Move. Serious			
DD-R065	Why don't you try to clear the bad energies of your house? Try burning sage Maybe that help		10.8.2017	22:55
DD-R066	Time to record audio/video. Time to see if anything occurs while asleep. Courage buddy.		9.8.2017	21:06
DD-R067	bruh you might have a carbon monoxide leak! https://ted.com/talks/carrie_poppy_a_scientific_approach_to_the_paranormal		7.8.2017	23:18
DD-R068	Check your apartment for carbon monoxide leaks. CM poisoning is why so many people experience "ghost" visits while sleeping. #ghostbuster		8.8.2017	05:06
DD-R069	Just to rule it out... can you get your apartment building check for a carbon monoxide leak? It's known to affect people's mental state.		8.8.2017	13:44
DD-R070	1.head and spine. 2.David in the cut. 3. Someone staring at him...all three things he has mentioned previously....	[GIF] A woman shaking her hands defensively and walking away	17.9.2017	09:11

DD-R071	There's a lot going on in this picture	[Image] image of DD-147 with a face and spice, two eyes, and David draw over it	17.9.2017	03:50
DD-R072	In the red circle, it looks like a skeleton face in the pic, but it could just be matrixing.	[Image] image DD-147 with a red ring draw around a faint translucent mass	17.9.2017	03:14
DD-R073	You should do a cleanse in your home of all evil spirits, either through a medium or a priest. Whether you believe or not, you never know		7.9.2017	05:48
DD-R074	I'm nervous for you. Ask a religious figure to come over and cleanse your home. I'd be freaked out.		6.9.2017	01:48
DD-R075	You should contact a local demonologist or occult specialist. They will suggest a psychic medium come to your home to determine a presence.		6.9.2017	01:30
DD-R076	START A GO FUND ME AND GET A PRIEST OR A MONK OR ANYTHING FOR THIS FUCKING APARTMENT		6.9.2017	07:34
DD-R077	I enhanced it.	[Image] A brightened version of DD-203, showing a clear child height figure standing on the roof.	27.10.2017	04:59

DD-R078	It almost looks like a tiny doll. And thay shadow on the right is beyond creepy		27.10.2017	05:09
DD-R079	This your guy? The little alien fella dressed as a vicar?	[Image] A brightened, black and white version of DD-203, with a zoomed in section showing a clear child height figure standing on the roof.	27.10.2017	13:44
DD-R080	It is German, pre-1970	[Image] a red marble of a similar style to the one Ben found	29.11.2017	01:53
DD-R081	If it was cut with a marble cutting scissor (invented 1846 Germany), I would imagine it's from 1860-1900 when it was more popular in other countries. But its probably not valued very higher because its styled with banded swirls which is generally of low value.		29.11.2017	16:03
DD-R082	Okay, color me impressed. Fully expected to dig in and find this is a common modern mass produced-in-china marble but::	[Image] Screenshot of www.joemarbles.com showing an image of an identical marble to the one found by Ben. Text reads: Green Based Transparent Banded Lutz Hand Made 1870-1910	29.11.2017	05:38

DD-R083	One question if this is a ghost why dose it cast a shadow? ghost don't cast shadows only solid objects do,that's why it just looks like a doll being positioned around & having pics taken of it, so sorry it just don't look real to me, it just looks like a no face doll to me		24.12.2017	05:38
DD-R084	It does look like a doll but I like to believe		25.12.2017	01:06
DD-R085	Dude you totally had me fooled until I noticed the previous pics had shadows where "David's" head is... then when he's laying down the shadow is gone! Nice work though! [Face with tears of joy]		27.12.2017	10:38
DD-R086	Aaaannnnnd now your possessed		4.1.2018	03:35

Appx 1.2 The Greg Story

Tweet ID	Tweet Text	Attachment Description	Date	Time
G-001	Guess I'm gonna try Twitter again 		22/07/2018	22:07
G-002	Why does watching a movie at home feel like a huge commitment, but I can easily watch 17 episodes of Extreme Child Baker Showdown without batting an eye?		22/07/2018	22:22
G-003	Tonight I tried to pay my bar tab with my Moviepass card, in case you're wondering how my night it going!		23/07/2018	06:42
G-004	the worst part about smelling eggs on the morning train is that you don't know if someone is eating a breakfast sandwich, or someone ate a breakfast sandwich an hour ago		30/07/2018	06:39
G-005	maybe this is the year I finally watch Lost		06/08/2018	02:54
G-006	This cocktail came in two separate glasses and I'm very confused, but it tastes good so I'm not complaining!	[Image] A wine glass filled with a green liquid next to a smaller glass filled with a similar liquid and a small white plant	06/08/2018	05:37
G-007	      	[Image] Eggs Benedict	16/08/2018	12:59
G-008	Just found out my grandpa died. Never really knew		27/08/2018	21:39

	him but still [Confused face]			
G-009	My mom never wanted to talk about him and I never really asked. [Disappointed face]		27/08/2018	21:40
G-010	Made a new friend!	[Image] a slug	29/10/2018	20:21
G-011	Something weird is happening in the woods outside my house and I don't know what to do.		30/10/2018	02:53
G-012	I guess I should start at the beginning. This isn't really my house, it was my grandpa's, but I guess it's mine now. He died a couple months ago and because of some tricky paperwork I'm apparently responsible for it now.		30/10/2018	02:53
G-013	He lived pretty far away, up in the mountains by the lake. There are a couple other houses down the road but they seem like they're empty for the season. I assume they're summer houses. I've been here for a few days and it's really pretty, but it's super quiet and chilly.	[Image 1] A lake with mountains in the background [Image 2] Rough woodland terrain with black trees [Image 3] sunny image of tall trees on flatter terrain	30/10/2018	02:53

G-014	My mom never talked about my grandpa and I only met him once, when I was really young. I think they had a bad relationship but the few times I asked about it she got annoyed and changed the subject.		30/10/2018	02:53
G-015	So basically I don't really know what I'm doing here. This guy from my grandpa's estate basically told me the house is mine now, so I came up here to sell it as fast as I can and go home. I guess it's not that easy to just sell a house, especially one in the middle of nowhere.		30/10/2018	02:53
G-016	At any rate, I think I'm alone up here. Or at least I was. I figured I'd be up here for a couple weeks to get this all handled and then I'd go home and be done with it. I'm on a break from grad school so I don't have any other responsibilities at the moment.		30/10/2018	02:53
G-017	But now weird things are starting to happen. It started on my third day here. There's a little town about 25		30/10/2018	02:53

	minutes away and I'd gone to get some food and supplies since I don't know how long I'm staying. When I got back that evening there was something strange on my door.			
G-018	It was this....artifact? I don't know what to call it. It was obviously handmade. It was made of sticks and twine and had some small bones tied into the middle of it.	[Image] two images showing a small triangle made of sticks, with two bones in the centre, tied together with string.	30/10/2018	02:53
G-019	I didn't think too much of it at the time. I figured it was probably a kid from one of the other houses trying to mess with me, so I took it off the door and tossed it in the fireplace.	[Image] the triangle from G-018 burning in a small woodfire.	30/10/2018	02:53
G-020	By the next morning I'd pretty much forgotten about it. And honestly I had too much on my plate at the moment to worry about some kid's prank. So I got up that morning, made some breakfast, and went out on the deck with some coffee.		30/10/2018	02:53

G-021	I was sitting there drinking my coffee when I noticed something hanging in a tree just over the railing. It was another one of those artifacts.		30/10/2018	02:53
G-022	It was just like the last one, but it had a rock tied to it instead of a bone.	[Image] a triangle again made of sticks and twine with a small stone tied to the bottom stick	30/10/2018	02:53
G-023	And then almost immediately I saw ANOTHER one, in a tree farther down by the ground. I went down the deck steps to retrieve it, and then I started seeing even more of them. I found about 8 in total, hanging in trees all around the house.	[Image 1] triangle of sticks with a stone tied to it. [Image 2] a larger triangle with a small feather on the bottom stick. [Image 3] a smaller triangle with a larger tattered feather on the right stick. [Image 4] Close up of a stick with an unknown husk like object tied on with twine.	30/10/2018	02:53
G-024	They all had different objects tied to them. Bones, feathers, that sort of thing. It was definitely weird but I was more annoyed than anything, thinking that someone was in my yard decorating the trees with these ugly goth Christmas ornaments.		30/10/2018	02:53

G-025	Also, if someone was trying to scare me, it was gonna take more than some bullshit arts and crafts project to do the trick. I gathered all the artifacts together and burned them like the first one.		30/10/2018	02:53
G-026	After I disposed of all the stick things, I took a shower, got dressed, and went back outside to do some basic tidying and whatnot. The deck and the yard are sort of overgrown and leaves are starting to fall and cover everything. Being a new homeowner is a lot of work, turns out.		30/10/2018	02:53
G-027	That was when I found something that actually DID make me nervous. I was raking a corner of the yard when I saw something dark on the ground, off in the trees. I couldn't tell what it was from afar so I went to investigate.		30/10/2018	02:53
G-028	At first I thought it was a blanket but when I got closer it looked like a big sweatshirt or a hoodie or something. I didn't want to touch it but it was obviously	[Image] a dark blue hoodie amongst overgrown dried grass	30/10/2018	02:53

	clothing of some kind.			
G-029	I looked around and realized it was a whole encampment. There were a couple old socks, a pair of what I think was underwear (gross), a few old napkins scattered around, a plastic spoon, and creepiest of all, a beat up notebook.	[Image 1] a white dirty sock amounts some grass [Image 2] a blue item of clothing on the ground [Image 3] a black college ruled notebook under overgrown grass	30/10/2018	02:53
G-030	I flipped open the notebook, but nothing was written inside. A whole bunch of pages had been ripped out of it, so I know someone had been using it. Plus you could sort of see the shadow of pen marks on the most recent page. I couldn't make out what had been written though.	[Image] a blank open notebook with several pages torn out	30/10/2018	02:53
G-031	Anyway, that definitely freaked me out. It was clear someone was camping out on my property and possibly trying to scare me out of the house. I wasn't really sure what to do about it though. What could I do? I definitely didn't sleep well that night.		30/10/2018	02:53

G-032	That was the day before yesterday. The next morning I sort of expected more weird artifacts to be outside, but I didn't see anything. And the encampment was gone, so I figured it was probably a homeless person passing through or something.		30/10/2018	02:53
G-033	The driveway ends a ways up from the house, and then you have to trek down a path which bends around around the side of the house to get in. I was walking around the house when I saw some movement across the yard, near a tree. I froze dead in my tracks.		30/10/2018	02:53
G-034	I thought that was the end if it and turned my attention back to the house. I realized the house had almost no cleaning products and I needed to pick up supplies again. I drove into town and picked up some Windex, some spare light bulbs, and some other stuff, then came home.		30/10/2018	03:00

G-035	The driveway ends a ways up from the house, and then you have to trek down a path which bends around the side of the house to get in. I was walking around the house when I saw some movement across the yard, near a tree. I froze dead in my tracks.		30/10/2018	03:00
G-036	Someone was standing under a tree staring at my house. They didn't see me though, since I was also partly behind some trees and a good distance away. Whoever it was, they were wearing the same dark hoodie I'd seen in the grass the day before.		30/10/2018	03:00
G-037	As quietly as I could I set down my shopping bags next to me and slipped my phone out of my pocket. I managed to take a couple photos, but the person turned and disappeared into the woods.	[Image] A figure in a black robe standing amongst trees	30/10/2018	03:00
G-038	I stood there for a couple minutes too nervous to move, in case the person came back. But they didn't, so I picked up my bags and hurried inside. I picked up the		30/10/2018	03:00

	phone to call the cops, but put it back down because I didn't even know what I'd tell them.			
G-039	"Someone was looking at my house?" Like any police offer would take me seriously. And like an idiot, I'd destroyed all the weird artifacts from before, so there wouldn't even be any evidence. I felt like there was nothing I could do right then.		30/10/2018	03:00
G-040	I was mad at myself and feeling scared all alone in the house, so I locked all the doors and left out the back. I went down to the lake because I didn't know where else to go. I just knew I didn't want to be in the house at that moment.		30/10/2018	03:00
G-041	I walked a ways down the lakeshore, then sat for a while looking out at the water. I thought about getting in my car and just going home, but I felt like that would get me in trouble. There's all sorts of property tax stuff I don't understand. I felt trapped.		30/10/2018	03:00

G-042	Also, I couldn't decide if I was actually in any danger. When my grandpa died, it took me a couple months to actually get up to the house, so maybe someone was squatting in the empty house? And now that I'm here, they might just leave on their own accord?		30/10/2018	03:00
G-043	It was starting to get dark so I reluctantly headed back to the house. I walked up the stairs leading to the back of the house, but right before going inside I got this weird chill. I made up my mind that I absolutely did not want to stay in the house overnight.		30/10/2018	03:00
G-044	I decided to go get my car and drive into town to find a motel for the night. The house was all locked up and I already had my keys, so I went back around the house and toward the path that led to the driveway.		30/10/2018	03:00
G-045	And that's when I saw her. The figure from before, standing right in the middle of my front lawn, staring straight at my		30/10/2018	03:00

	house. I froze in place, completely in shock. I was practically right next to her, but it was almost as if she didn't see me.			
G-046	Then it hit me. She COULDN'T see me. Because she had no eyes. SHE HAD NO FUCKING EYES. Just shiny skin over where her eyes should be. And she had almost no hair at all. I wanted to run but I felt like if I moved even a little, she'd hear me.		30/10/2018	03:00
G-047	As quietly as I could, I went for my phone. I needed some sort of evidence to show the cops. It all felt like it was happening in slow motion. I feel sick to my stomach as I'm writing this. But I was able to get it on video.		30/10/2018	03:00
G-048	My heart is racing just thinking about this. I haven't been able to watch it since I recorded it. But here it is:		30/10/2018	03:00
G-049		[Video] A woman in a black hoodie with scars in place of her eyes stands still looking to the left. She turns to face the camera	30/10/2018	03:02

		causing the person film to run away		
G-050	I ran back around the house and got inside. I scrambled upstairs and looked out my bedroom window at the front yard, but she had vanished. Remembering it now, it feels like it didn't really happen. Like it was a nightmare or something.		30/10/2018	03:03
G-051	I called the cops and explained what had happened. I'm sure I sounded crazy, but they said they'd send someone by in the morning and to keep my doors locked. So that's where I am now. Alone in the woods freaking out.		30/10/2018	03:03
G-052	I know I won't be able to sleep tonight. I feel light headed and nauseous. I don't know what's going to happen. I'm scared shitless.		30/10/2018	03:03
G-053	The past couple days have been really strange. I also have shitty reception up here, so I'm sorry for not updating. They sent a police officer up yesterday morning		31/10/2018	23:26

	but I feel like it didn't accomplish anything.			
G-054	I explained everything to the cop, and even took him out to the clearing where I found the stuff, but it was all gone except for the notebook. And since the notebook is empty, it was basically useless. I feel like the cop didn't believe me, anyway.		31/10/2018	23:27
G-055	I showed him the photos I took of the stick things, and he said at worst it counted as vandalism, but without physical evidence of trespassing they couldn't do anything. Even when I showed him the video he still acted really skeptical.		31/10/2018	23:27
G-056	He kept asking if I knew the person in the video. I think he thought I was pranking him or something. I ended up just getting frustrated. The cop said to call the station if something happened.		31/10/2018	23:28

G-057	After he left I went back and got the notebook from the clearing. Maybe there's a way to figure out what was written on the last page? I don't know.		31/10/2018	23:28
G-058	Anyway, the cop drove away and I was alone again. It's so damn quiet up here. All I want to do is leave but I feel like I can't. I'm so far away from home that I can't even invite a friend up here to keep me company. And even if someone did come, it would take them a couple days.		31/10/2018	23:29
G-059	I haven't seen the woman from before. But I feel like she's still out there. And other weird things are happening too. I took a walk around the lake yesterday because I wanted to get a look at the other houses in the area. Maybe see if someone else has noticed anything weird.		31/10/2018	23:29
G-060	But they're all empty. Every house is totally dark and there are no cars in any of the driveways. I haven't seen a single person at all, except once. Well,		31/10/2018	23:30

	sort of. After I came back from my walk, I was out on the deck and saw a boat in the water, way off in the distance.			
G-061	They weren't moving. They stayed there all afternoon. I feel like they were...watching me.	[Image] a small fishing boat in the distance. Two figures are on board	31/10/2018	23:31
G-062	They actually stayed out there in the same place until it got too dark to see them anymore. Normally I'd think they were just fishing, if it weren't for what happened the day before. And the fact that all these houses seem empty. Where did they come from?		31/10/2018	23:31
G-063	The boat was gone this morning, so who knows. I microwaved some oatmeal for breakfast and took it down to the dock near the water. It's weird but I sort of feel safer down there. The water makes me feel less stressed, I guess.		31/10/2018	23:32
G-064	I kind of feel like time goes by faster when I'm by the lake. It's, like, meditative or whatever.		31/10/2018	23:32

G-065	Anyway, I was actually starting to feel a little better about everything this morning, if it wasn't for what happened next. I had finished my oatmeal and I was starting back toward the house when I noticed something in the water.		31/10/2018	23:33
G-066	It was in this little inlet by the shore. It was small and white, and at first I thought it was a brightly colored rock, but I wasn't sure. It seemed too round.	[Image] a shallow rocky pool with a small white spherical object below the water	31/10/2018	23:34
G-067	Probably against my better judgement, I took off my shoes and went into the water to retrieve it.		31/10/2018	23:35
G-068	It was an eyeball. A fucking eyeball.	[Image] Greg holding a out his hand filled with variously sized pebbles and a bloodshot blue eye	31/10/2018	23:35
G-069	This has to be from an animal, right? Please tell me this is from a big fish or something.		31/10/2018	23:36
G-070	I threw it back in the water and hustled back up to the house. I washed my hands in the sink and then sat on the couch for a long time. I don't know what's going		31/10/2018	23:37

	on. I can't believe I picked that up out of the water. I still feel gross.			
G-071	And to make matters worse, the boat is back out there. It showed up again this afternoon, and it's just sitting there, in the same place as yesterday. Are they watching me from that boat?		31/10/2018	23:38
G-072	I keep hearing things at night. I stand out on the deck and I feel like I can hear things moving through the trees. It's probably just deer or something, but I can't help imagining it's something else.		07/11/2018	02:27
G-073	I'm sure I'm making it out to be worse than it is. Are deer nocturnal? I see them out on the road sometimes, when I'm driving into town. I try not to think about it.		07/11/2018	02:28
G-074	But last night it was worse. I heard...screams? That sounds so stupid to say but I don't know what else to call it. I was brushing my teeth and heard something out the		07/11/2018	02:28

	bathroom window. I'm sure it was an animal, but my toothbrush was buzzing so I can't be sure.			
G-075	And then this morning I found the bloody remains of...something, RIGHT in the middle of my yard. It was literal intestines, and they were fresh. I feel like I can't even post something like that to Twitter.		07/11/2018	02:29
G-076	Like is it gonna get flagged if I post it? I don't know what to do... Maybe I can upload it separately and share the link or something.		07/11/2018	02:29
G-077	Fair warning, this is pretty gross, so don't look if you're squeamish. I'm sure it's an animal, but what did this? And why was it left right in front of my house? https://i.imgur.com/3ZHKhb5.jpg	[Image] The carcass of a unidentifiable feathered animal, a swarm wasps can be seen on the remains.	07/11/2018	02:31
G-078	Yeah, sorry, it's disgusting. Anyway, I scooped it up with a shovel and flung them into the woods a ways away from the house. I dunno if bears are up here but I couldn't leave it. And besides,		07/11/2018	02:32

	animal guts are the least of my worries right now. I have other things on my mind.			
G-079	I've been trying to figure out what's written in this notebook from the woods. I've had it for a couple days and I can see faint letters but I can't make them out. A bunch of people replied and told me to do a pencil or charcoal rubbing, but I didn't have anything like that.		07/11/2018	02:33
G-080	I found a bunch of pens but no pencils, so I had to go back into town. It was actually really hard to find charcoal. I finally had some luck at this little hardware store. The box didn't even have a price tag on it, so I feel like it had been sitting on the shelf for years.		07/11/2018	02:34
G-081	It seems like people in town are starting to recognize me. I don't like it. I didn't plan to be here that long, but it looks like I might not have a choice. People are nice enough, but it seems like the kind of town where		07/11/2018	02:34

	everyone knows everyone, and I definitely don't belong.			
G-082	When I was in the hardware store, these little kids were following me around giggling and making fun of me. I think they were twins. I couldn't really hear what they were saying but I'm sure they were making fun of me because little kids are jerks.		07/11/2018	02:35
G-083	On the way out of town I stopped at the grocery store, but they were out of some of the things I wanted. It seems like they're always out of stuff. They've been out of eggs for a couple days so I just got some pop tarts and stuff and left.		07/11/2018	02:35
G-084	Anyway, the notebook. I've actually been putting it off for most of the afternoon because I wasn't sure I wanted to find out what that woman was writing in it. I can't ignore it forever. I'm gonna eat dinner and then I guess I'll try the charcoal. I'll be back in a bit.		07/11/2018	02:36

G-085	Jesus. So I did a charcoal rubbing over the most recent page in the book, like people were telling me to. I'm not sure what I was expecting, but it wasn't this. I'm sort of freaking out.		07/11/2018	03:41
G-086		[Image] two pictures of a charcoal rubbing from a torn notepad. The words "THEY TOOK MY EYES" are written over and over again in increasingly distorted handwriting	07/11/2018	03:42
G-087	What even is this? What the fuck. I feel like I'm gonna throw up. I need to go sit down. What the hell is going on?		07/11/2018	03:43
G-088	I called my mom yesterday. I wanted to see if she knew anything about this place. She said I've actually been here before, when I was really young. I don't remember any of that.		10/11/2018	01:11
G-089	I tried to ask her again why she never got along with my grandfather but she's so cagey about it. She grew up in a town nearby, and my grandfather didn't		10/11/2018	01:12

	move into this house until after my mom left for school. I guess she never really came back.			
G-090	We talked for a little bit, but my reception here is spotty. She asked me if there's still wine in the cellar and I told her there wasn't a cellar, but she said there is. Down in the basement, off to a corner. After she hung up I went downstairs to look, and she was right.		10/11/2018	01:15
G-091	There's a bunch of old antique stuff in the basement, and behind some filing cabinets there's a dusty little wine cellar. I can't believe I missed it at first. It's full of wine, and some of it is really old.	[Images] 2 images of shelves of dusty wine bottles, an image of a wine barrel, and a large wooden crest mounted on a brick wall	10/11/2018	01:16
G-092	There were also these weird wooden wine stoppers all over the place.	[Image] two images of novelty wooden wine stoppers	10/11/2018	01:17
G-093	From the looks of this, it seems like nobody's been down here for a while. Poor guy.	[Image] the badly decayed remains of a small rodent	10/11/2018	01:18
G-094	And look at some of these bottles. I don't know anything about wine. I wonder if they're good?	[Image 1] a bottle of 1864 Calvados apple brandy from Bellows & Co. Inc [Image 2] a 1934 bottle of table wine	10/11/2018	01:18

	Anyway, at least I have a surplus of alcohol down here to take my mind off how weird things have been lately.	from Rolar Imports Inc. and Whitwham & Co. Exports LTD. with 'Mis en Bouteille au Chatueau' printed in red across the label		
G-095	This house keeps surprising me. I keep finding weird shit around the property. Like there's a collapsed shed in the back, a little ways through the trees. It's not that strange, I guess. But I can't help overthinking everything I see now.	[Image] Pictures of rusted piles of discarded metal parts, one image shows a blue 'BERMUDA' sign within a triangle of branches and metal poles.	10/11/2018	01:19
G-096	A little ways away from the shed, I found this in the middle of a clearing. What is this?	[Image] two pictures of a badly aged rabbit statue overgrown with vines and plants. Much of the paint has flaked and deteriorated but it appears to have white fur and a blue shirt.	10/11/2018	01:20
G-097	None of it makes sense. And there's something else I found that I can't stop thinking about. There's so much junk around the house, and I'm trying to clean it up. Partly because it'll help this place sell faster, but also to keep my mind off things.		10/11/2018	01:22

G-098	I was sorting through some debris and found these old rusty letters in a pile on the ground, partly under the foundation. I could see some nail holes on the side of the house so I think they were on the house at one point?		10/11/2018	01:22
G-099	I know sometimes people give lake houses names. I can't figure out what they might've said, though. I brought them inside and laid them all out on the kitchen floor to see if I could make sense of them, but no luck so far. Maybe someone else can figure it out?	[Image] A collection of rusted metal letters reading "A L E W D P H A T E C E R P"	10/11/2018	01:24
G-100	Sorry for not updating in a while. The reception up here is terrible and I haven't been able to get Twitter to load all that often. At least there's lots of wine in the cellar, so I haven't been too bored.		22/11/2018	03:20
G-101	I've mostly been trying to keep busy getting the house in shape to sell. A realtor is supposed to come up here next week to help me formally list it, which is good		22/11/2018	03:20

	because I'd like to get out of here.			
G-102	But there's something weird about the town down the road that I can't figure out. I've been getting cabin fever pretty bad, so the other day I drove into town to have breakfast and wander around a little bit to get my mind off things.		22/11/2018	03:21
G-103	There's only one restaurant in the whole town from what I can tell. I went in there to eat and the whole experience was...sort of bizarre? I'm not really sure how to explain it.		22/11/2018	03:22
G-104	Anyway, I ordered the eggs benedict off the menu. The waitress had a pretty chilly attitude but nothing out of the ordinary. But then she brought out my food.		22/11/2018	03:22
G-105	They'd totally forgotten the eggs on my eggs benedict. It was just ham and hollandaise.	[Image] A serving of eggs benedict without the eggs	22/11/2018	03:22

G-106	I called the waitress back and told her she'd forgotten my eggs, and all she said was, "We don't have that." I asked how a diner could be out of eggs, especially early in the day. She just said "sorry" and walked away. It was so weird.		22/11/2018	03:24
G-107	I was confused so I took a second look at the menu. I realized the description doesn't actually list eggs in the benedict. And then I realized eggs aren't listed ANYWHERE on the menu. Even in the sides.	[Image] two pictures of a 'Homestead Diner' menu	22/11/2018	03:25
G-108	What kind of a diner doesn't have eggs at all? That might make sense in a vegan restaurant or something but they have meat all over the menu. I can't figure it out.		22/11/2018	03:25
G-109	Also, on my way out, there was this family in a booth sort of watching me leave. They were all being really quiet in a sort of obvious way. They had two twin girls with them. I'm definitely not coming back here.		22/11/2018	03:26

G-110	I was thinking about it the whole way home. There are too many things that don't make sense, and I don't feel any closer to figuring it out. But one thing seems clear: I'm not welcome here.		22/11/2018	03:27
G-111	When I got home, I found something folded up and wedged in my front door near the handle.	[Image] a piece of paper folded and tucked into a door frame	22/11/2018	03:27
G-112	Someone clearly wants me gone.	[Image] A small piece of paper with "leave" written in messy handwriting	22/11/2018	03:28
G-113	It was written on the back of a tag of some sort? I suspect it was that eyeless woman from before. I haven't seen her but I think she's still out there.	[Image] a typed list of instructions reading "1. Clean and dry repair area thoroughly. 2. Cut patch larger than repair area. 3. Remove paper backing, place patch over hole, and PRESS DOWN FIRMLY. 4. Do not inflate for 30 minutes." then translated into several languages.	22/11/2018	03:28
G-114	I think something bad is coming. I'm gonna go pop another bottle of wine. I don't know what else to do right now.		22/11/2018	03:29
G-115	I saw something out in the woods today.		30/11/2018	01:16

G-116	I've been trying to not spend all my time at the house, since being cooped up all the time makes me feel crazy. Even though it might not be super safe to be out alone in the woods, it still feels better than being home all the time.		30/11/2018	01:16
G-117	God, I can't believe I just referred to that place as home. I've been here too long...		30/11/2018	01:17
G-118	Anyway, I was taking a walk today. These woods would be so pretty if I didn't feel like someone was going to murder me out here. I was almost enjoying myself when I stumbled into a clearing and found something strange.		30/11/2018	01:17
G-119	There was a single filthy chair, overlooking a ledge.	[Image] A white wooden chair, covered in mud positioned to overlook a sharp incline	30/11/2018	01:18
G-120	It didn't seem that creepy at first, but I got this funny feeling so I took out my phone and pulled up my maps app. And sure enough, the chair was pointed in the exact direction of my house. I was		30/11/2018	01:18

	probably a mile away from the house at that point but it was still weird.			
G-121	It made me feel queasy and I didn't want to stick around, so I hustled out of there. But I'd barely walked 30 feet when I found something else. Something way worse. I don't even know how to describe it.		30/11/2018	01:19
G-122	What the hell is this?	[Image] two pictures of a large rock, with an animal skull, small white shells and black charcoal markings, aranged in a triangle	30/11/2018	01:20
G-123	I took a video of it too. It freaked me out, but I was mesmerized by it at the same time. I couldn't stop staring at it. I felt like I was in a daze.	[Video] a beetle climbing on skull	30/11/2018	01:23
G-124	It seems like every day there's something new but I'm not closer to understanding what's happening out here. Or why.		30/11/2018	01:23
G-125	I finally pulled myself away and practically stumbled away for the rock. I felt dizzy walking away. I just wanted		30/11/2018	01:24

	to go back home. I started back in the direction of the house, and that's when I saw her. That woman from before.			
G-126	She was standing up on a hill, seemingly staring at nothing. I darted behind a nearby tree, but luckily I don't think she saw me. I hadn't seen her in weeks but I knew she was still out here.		30/11/2018	01:25
G-127	I took a video from behind the tree. I don't even know why. It's not like it'll do any good, but at least I have proof that I wasn't imagining any of this.	[Video] A woman in a black hoodie staring at the ground, standing amongst the trees.	30/11/2018	01:27
G-128	Eventually she left the hill and disappeared into the woods. Once I was sure she was gone I left the tree and practically ran back home. The whole way back I kept expecting her to appear again and attack me or something.		30/11/2018	01:28
G-129	I don't understand what she's doing out here. Is she a witch? That sounds so stupid. But I don't know how to explain any of this. Those weird stick artifacts and now		30/11/2018	01:28

	this thing on the rock. It feels like fucking witchcraft or something.			
G-130	And who's on that boat I keep seeing out there on the lake? Why is everyone in town so weird? At this point I just want answers. And I feel like I'm getting close to getting them. I'm just scared of what they might be		30/11/2018	01:29
G-131	I found out what those letters spell.		11/12/2018	22:54
G-132	I'd basically forgotten about it after finding them outside the house. I put them in the back of the closet and pretty much stopped thinking about them.		11/12/2018	22:55
G-133	But yesterday I found something else. There's this little alcove upstairs with built in shelves and a bunch of old books. Sort of a mini library. I was flipping through some of them looking for something to read when I came across this little book about wine.		11/12/2018	22:56
G-134	Tucked inside were a couple of old polaroid photos.	[Image] picture of a red leather bound book titled "Notes	11/12/2018	22:57

	They were pretty faded so it was hard to make out what they were.	on a Cellar-Book George Saintsbury" inside is a black and white polaroid picture of the woods		
G-135	The first one was pretty unremarkable. It looks like it's just photos of the trees outside.	[Image] A black and white polaroid picture of the woods	11/12/2018	22:57
G-136	The second one was even blurrier. For a minute I didn't know what I was looking at. But then I realized it was of the house, and the letters I found on the ground a couple weeks ago. The photo was super fuzzy so it took me second, but I was able to make it out.		11/12/2018	22:59
G-137	Deepwater Chapel.	[Image] A blurred black and white polaroid of a sign for "Deepwater Chapel"	11/12/2018	23:01
G-138	This is so weird. I've never heard that name before. Was my house a church or something? I spent the afternoon going through all the other books in the library but didn't find any other pictures.		11/12/2018	23:02
G-139	I don't know what to make of this. I'll let you know if I find anything else,		11/12/2018	23:03

	but... yeah. I don't know.			
G-140	She was here. That woman was in my house.		13/12/2018	06:01
G-141	Sorry, I'm getting ahead of myself. I can barely type. Sorry. I'll try to explain.		13/12/2018	06:02
G-142	Alright, so. I was in the woods out back yesterday when it started pouring. It happened really suddenly and even though I wasn't far from the house I got soaked anyway. It rained most of the evening. I left my clothes by the fireplace to dry and ended up going to bed early.		13/12/2018	06:03
G-143	Or I guess it was today. Sorry. I'm still not really awake yet.		13/12/2018	06:04
G-144	Anyway, I had this awful dream tonight. Sorry if I'm rambling a bit. I'm still trying to collect my thoughts. Sorry. My hands are shaking.		13/12/2018	06:05
G-145	In the dream I was on the deck outside with a bunch of friends from back home. We were all sitting in a circle. My friend Eric was there, talking about how creepy the woods were.		13/12/2018	06:06

G-146	He was saying how the trees were just big black silhouettes and anything could be out there watching you and you'd never know it. He was sorta freaking me out but I was trying not to show it. I'm all, "I know what you're doing, and it's not gonna work. You're not gonna scare me."		13/12/2018	06:06
G-147	And Eric sort of narrowed his eyes at me, and says, "I bet I can scare you." Something about the way he said it made me uneasy, and I was like, "Alright, very funny. You can stop now." But Eric wasn't smiling anymore, he was just staring back at me.		13/12/2018	06:07
G-148	The whole mood seemed to shift at that point. Nobody in the circle was talking anymore, and it suddenly got really quiet. No sound except the wind and the lake down below.		13/12/2018	06:08
G-149	Any trace of joking has disappeared from Eric's face. After a long minute he slowly cocked his head to the side a bit and said, "Is there someone here		13/12/2018	06:09

	with us right now who shouldn't be?"			
G-150	All of a sudden I was too scared to break Eric's gaze, afraid I'd see something I didn't want to. For a long time we just stared at each other. Nobody said anything. Then, very softly, Eric said, "Is there somebody watching you sleep right now, Greg?"		13/12/2018	06:10
G-151	That's when I bolted awake. It was the middle of the night. I was alone in my room, but I had this weird feeling that someone had just been there in the room with me. I laid there in bed for a minute, too terrified to move. Too scared to breathe, even.		13/12/2018	06:11
G-152	And then I heard something downstairs. At least I thought I did. This house is always making sounds, so I couldn't be sure. I hesitated for a second, then crept out of bed and went down the hall, trying to be as quiet as possible.		13/12/2018	06:12

G-153	From the second floor landing I could see the living room and part of the kitchen. Everything seemed normal. I could hear the wind blowing pretty loudly outside, so I figured maybe I hadn't heard anything after all.		13/12/2018	06:13
G-154	I tried to calm myself down. I was wide awake at that point and too shaken to go back to bed, so I went downstairs to get a snack or some coffee or something. I walked into the kitchen, then stopped dead in my tracks.		13/12/2018	06:14
G-155	There's a door in the kitchen that leads outside, and it was wide open.	[Image] a white door open onto a pitch black garden	13/12/2018	06:15
G-156	I know I locked it. I lock all the doors every night. And even if I forgot to lock it I KNOW I wouldn't leave the door open like this.		13/12/2018	06:16
G-157	The whole kitchen floor is wet with rain.		13/12/2018	06:16
G-158	I'm calling a locksmith first thing in the morning to come change the locks. Shit.		13/12/2018	06:17

G-159	I want to leave but I don't even know where I'd go. I'm alone out here. Should I find a motel?		13/12/2018	06:18
G-160	And I just realized my wet clothes are gone. She fucking stole my clothes. I'm not spending the night here.		13/12/2018	06:19
G-161	I didn't even think of this. I left but I'm still freaking out a bit. I'm trying to find a hotel or something.	[Tweet] Now deleted Tweet	13/12/2018	06:43
G-162	I'm sorry I haven't said anything in a while. I've been staying in a motel about an hour outside of town. When I left the house that night, I just kept driving until I felt like I was far enough away to feel safe.		24/12/2018	01:40
G-163	I called a locksmith but they weren't able to come out right away, and there was no way I was going back to the house without new locks. So I've been waiting it out here until I can go back. Basically doing nothing. Jumping at every little sound and feeling crazy.		24/12/2018	01:41

G-164	Finally, a couple days ago, the locksmith called back and said he'd come out, so I checked out of the motel and got in my car to drive home. It was a pretty long drive back, and the closer I got to the woods the worse I felt.		24/12/2018	01:42
G-165	In my head I knew going back was wrong, but I can't just leave for good. I don't know. I can't explain it. I can't leave. I don't expect anyone to understand. I don't even understand.		24/12/2018	01:42
G-166	Anyway, I drove past town and reached the woods, where the roads get worse and harder to drive on. They get twisty as you drive up to the house, and you have to be careful not to hit deer. I almost always see a dozen or so deer on my drive, but today there were none.		24/12/2018	01:43
G-167	Not a single deer in sight. In fact the woods seemed a lot quieter than usual. I could've been imagining it, but something definitely seemed off. I was almost ready to turn around when		24/12/2018	01:44

	something darted across the road.			
G-168	It was so fast that I wasn't sure I saw it at all. I panicked and swerved off the road and into a deep groove by the roadside. By the time I realized what had happened the thing was gone.		24/12/2018	01:44
G-169	I have no idea what it was—it was just a blur. But it wasn't a deer. It was red. Red like blood.		24/12/2018	01:44
G-170	Worse, my car was stuck. It's my mom's old car, this weak little two wheel drive, and I couldn't manage to get it out of the groove. I sat there for a long time trying to figure out what to do.		24/12/2018	01:45
G-171	I knew it wasn't a good idea to walk the rest of the way but if I didn't, I'd miss the locksmith and I'd have to either spend the night in the house with old locks, or go back to the motel, which I couldn't afford.		24/12/2018	01:46
G-172	I wasn't too far from the house, so it made the most sense to walk the rest of the way and		24/12/2018	01:47

	call a tow truck from home. I needed to meet the locksmith, anyway. So I got out and started walking.			
G-173	Once I was outside, I realized I'd been right about the woods seeming quieter than usual. I couldn't even hear any birds. It was dead silent. My footsteps seemed so loud. Every twig that cracked under my shoe sounded like a bone breaking.		24/12/2018	01:47
G-174	I was periodically checking my phone's GPS to make sure I was heading the right way. I had just rechecked my route and was about to put my phone away when I saw something that made my heart sink.		24/12/2018	01:48
G-175	It was another one of those artifacts. Like the ones I'd seen on my first day here. But it had one of my gloves tied to it, from the rainstorm last week. When I left my clothes by the fire to dry, there was a pair of gloves with them.	[Image] a triangle made of twigs with a green glove hung in the middle with twine	24/12/2018	01:49

G-176	I knew that woman had taken my clothes that night, and this just confirmed it. I also knew I'd find the rest of my clothes before I even saw them. And sure enough I found more of those artifacts not far from the first.		24/12/2018	01:49
G-177	I found my other glove, my socks, and a bandana. Everything from that night except for a sweatshirt I'd been wearing.	[Image] three more triangle twig arrangements, with a glove, sock, or bandana inside.	24/12/2018	01:51
G-178	I left them alone this time. I didn't want to touch them. All I wanted to do was get back to house, get the locks changed, and call a tow truck. I started jogging a bit, wanting nothing more than to get away from those stick things.		24/12/2018	01:51
G-179	But after a while I started to think that I should've been home already. I slowed my pace and took out my phone, but it wouldn't calibrate this time. It couldn't seem to locate me in the GPS.		24/12/2018	01:52

G-180	Still, I could hear the lake off to my left, which meant if I kept walking alongside it I should get to my house eventually. So I kept moving and tried not to think about getting lost.		24/12/2018	01:53
G-181	I must've gotten turned around because I was walking for what seemed like ages. I found myself in a part of the woods that seemed unfamiliar. I had no idea where I was. And then suddenly I saw something off in the distance.		24/12/2018	01:53
G-182	Something bright white, almost seeming to glow against the dark trees.	[Image] dense woodland with large white objects in the distance	24/12/2018	01:54
G-183	I couldn't figure out what it was from a distance, so I went closer, trying to be as quiet as I could. When I actually got close enough to see what it was, my mouth literally fell open.		24/12/2018	01:54
G-184	It was eggs. Huge eggs. All in a cluster, like a nest.	[Image] a cluster of large eggs amongst dense woodland	24/12/2018	01:55
G-185	They were enormous. It's hard to explain their size, but you can sort of see them in	[Image] Closer image of the eggs compared to Greg's foot scale, the width of each egg	24/12/2018	01:56

	relation to my boot here.	is almost twice the size of his foot.		
G-186	I felt like I was dreaming. Before I even knew what I was doing, I touched one. I couldn't help myself. It was warm. I had a sudden urge to smash it and see what was inside, but then just as quickly decided against it.		24/12/2018	01:58
G-187	I felt sick, like I was going to throw up if I didn't leave right away. I left the clearing and tried to listen for the lake, then headed in that direction.		24/12/2018	01:59
G-188	I got to the lake shore and felt a little better. Since I was out of the trees I had a better view of my surroundings, and I was able to pinpoint my house a ways down the shore. I never thought I'd be so happy to see it.		24/12/2018	02:00
G-189	The rest of the way back I felt like I had vertigo. I couldn't make sense of everything that had just happened. I still can't. I reached the house and		24/12/2018	02:00

	somehow felt a little better once I was inside.			
G-190	The locksmith arrived a little bit later and changed out the locks. I watched him work in a daze. I also had him install deadbolts. I called a tow truck and they got my car out of the ditch. But now I'm alone again and I can't stop thinking about what I saw.		24/12/2018	02:01
G-191	I can't figure any of this out. I don't know what's happening. I know I should leave but I just can't. I can't. At least nobody can get inside tonight. At least I'm safe inside.		24/12/2018	02:02
G-192	I heard something. Someone was outside.		29/12/2018	05:25
G-193	I was in the kitchen washing a glass and I heard...something outside, on the deck. A scratching sound. And then it stopped. I thought I imagined it, but then I heard footsteps.		29/12/2018	05:25
G-194	And for some reason I just ran outside without thinking. I don't know what's wrong		29/12/2018	05:26

	with me. I don't even know if I'm scared anymore, I just want answers.			
G-195	I can't be sure, but I think it was her. I saw someone running into the woods. I'm sure it was her. But I couldn't catch her in time.		29/12/2018	05:26
G-196	I thought about chasing her into the woods, but decided against it. I don't want to get lost out there at night. I turned around to go back inside, and that's when I saw what she'd been doing on my deck in the first place.		29/12/2018	05:27
G-197	I shouldn't still be surprised by these artifacts, but this one was huge—taller than me. And it had my sweatshirt from the storm tied in the middle.	[Image] a trangle made of branches roughly 4ft long, with a black jumper hanging in the middle. "Fear the New Moon" has been scrawled on the exterior of the house	29/12/2018	05:28
G-198	Honestly I was just going to leave it there. I'm sick of this. I was about to go back inside when I noticed there was something written on the wall behind the artifact. I hadn't even seen it before.		29/12/2018	05:29

G-199	"Fear the new moon." What the fuck does that mean? I don't know where that woman got a fucking marker and I don't like how fucking familiar she feels around my house and property.		29/12/2018	05:30
G-200	I hate that I consider this my house now. That this feels normal now. I'm losing it. I want this to end.		29/12/2018	05:31
G-201	Whatever this new moon shit is, it feels like something's coming. Fuck this.		29/12/2018	05:31
G-202	I guess the next new moon is January 5th...	[Tweet] G-R113	29/12/2018	05:36
G-203	It says there's gonna be a storm tomorrow...		05/01/2019	03:21
G-204	The new moon is tomorrow too. I should be fine if I just stay inside.		05/01/2019	03:22
G-205	It's been storming all day, and into the night. Thunder and everything. I've stayed inside all day. Nothing has happened yet. Maybe nothing will happen.		06/01/2019	02:23
G-206	Still, I'm nervous. I've been freaked out all day. Maybe I shouldn't have stayed. I don't know what's wrong		06/01/2019	02:23

	with me. I should leave tomorrow.			
G-207	I'm not even really sure what I'm saying. I just need to occupy myself with something. Writing this makes me feel less alone. It's like I'm talking to someone.		06/01/2019	02:24
G-208	I can't do this anymore. I'm leaving tomorrow. First thing in the morning. I don't care about selling this house anymore. I just want to go home.		06/01/2019	02:24
G-209	I just need to make it through the night. I'll be fine if I stay inside. The locks are new and nobody can get in. I'll be fine. I'm going to go get some wine and stay in the upstairs bedroom tonight. It'll be ok.		06/01/2019	02:25
G-210	She's here. She was in the cellar.		06/01/2019	02:37
G-211	Fuck. I practically ran right into her. She didn't even hear me because of the thunder outside.		06/01/2019	02:37
G-212	Her back was to me and she was standing dead still in the middle of the room. Just...staring at the wall.	[Image] the eyeless woman staring at brick wall in the wine cellar	06/01/2019	02:40

G-213	I couldn't move. I was petrified. All I could do was stand there like a fool and stare at the back of her head.		06/01/2019	02:42
G-214	And then she turned around. And she...spoke to me.		06/01/2019	02:42
G-215	She said she won't hurt me. She said she'd explain everything.		06/01/2019	02:43
G-216	I'm sorry, this is all happening so fast. She's sitting in my living room now. I can't believe this is happening.		06/01/2019	02:45
G-217	Sorry, I'm just trying to make sense of this. She said she'll tell me everything. I'll be back.		06/01/2019	02:45
G-218	OK, so. I'll try to relay everything she said, but there was so much of it. I can barely keep track of it all. I'll start at the beginning.		06/01/2019	04:57
G-219	First, she says she made the stick things for my protection. She says it's dangerous out here, and she was trying to protect me. When I asked what she was trying to protect me from, she was quiet for a long time.		06/01/2019	04:58
G-220	When she finally replied, I could barely hear her.		06/01/2019	04:59

	"There are things in the water."			
G-221	I didn't really believe her, but I didn't have any rational explanation for the things I've seen. So instead I just listened. Here's what she told me.		06/01/2019	05:00
G-222	A long time ago, something came from the sky and landed in the lake. It brought something with it. Something ancient and strange.		06/01/2019	05:00
G-223	The people who lived here began to commune with it. They protected it from the outside world. Devoted their lives to it. And in return, the thing gave them a gift.		06/01/2019	05:01
G-224	The people were blessed with abnormally long, healthy lives, and many children. But it all came with a price.		06/01/2019	05:02
G-225	I had so many questions, but didn't know which ones to ask. So I just sat there in silence and took it all in. The woman continued.		06/01/2019	05:03
G-226	In the beginning there was just the one. It spent most of its time deep in the lake,		06/01/2019	05:04

	slumbering. But over time it made more. Instinctively I asked about the eggs I saw in the woods. The woman nodded.			
G-227	"There are so many of them now," she said. "They come from the water to lay eggs, and the people take care of them. Hide them away until they hatch. But when they hatch, they need to feed."		06/01/2019	05:04
G-228	At that point I was starting to put two and two together. I thought about all the twins I've seen in town. She must have sensed my understanding, because she spoke again. "I told you there was a price."		06/01/2019	05:05
G-229	"The people in this town are blessed with many children, but they don't get to keep them all. When the eggs hatch, the people must bring one of their own to the woods. The creatures need to eat." She was quiet again then. "They start with your eyes."		06/01/2019	05:06

G-230	I asked her how she knew all this, but I already knew the answer. "I know because it happened to me," she said. "When I was a girl, my father brought me into the wood with the others. Offered me up to the newborns."		06/01/2019	05:07
G-231	She turned her head toward the window, like she was gazing into the distance. "They took my eyes."		06/01/2019	05:08
G-232	I waited until she was ready to speak again. It was a long time before she did. She told me how she was led to one of the eggs, how she watched it break open. How something came out of it.		06/01/2019	05:09
G-233	And before she knew it, something was on her, burrowing into her eyes. She wasn't sure what happened next. She only remembers the searing the pain, and then suddenly she was free.		06/01/2019	05:10
G-234	She doesn't know if she managed to push the creature off or if someone helped her. But she got away, and ran into the woods. She ran until she		06/01/2019	05:10

	couldn't breathe anymore.			
G-235	She was too scared to go home, so she stayed in the woods. Eventually the forest became her home, and she's been there ever since.		06/01/2019	05:11
G-236	I felt completely bewildered. None of this made any sense to me, but at the same time it did, somehow. I had so many questions I wanted to ask, but I couldn't sort my thoughts.		06/01/2019	05:11
G-237	I couldn't figure out what to say. Finally I asked, "Why are you telling me this now, after all this time" The woman didn't say anything at first. She took a long, labored breath.		06/01/2019	05:12
G-238	"It's the same every year," she said. "They come out of the water in the fall. Lay their eggs. A few of them begin to hatch early. They feed on animals in the woods. They need strength to make it back to the water."		06/01/2019	05:13

G-239	"But most of them hatch when it's darkest." She turned to me. Even without eyes, I felt like she was staring right at me. "Tonight is the new moon," she whispered. "Tonight is the ceremony."		06/01/2019	05:14
G-240	My stomach began to sink as realization set in. Realization about what was happening out there in the woods. At that very moment.		06/01/2019	05:15
G-241	"We have to do something to stop it!" I blurted out. I started getting out of my chair but she just shook her head.		06/01/2019	05:16
G-242	She said there was nothing we could do. "It happens the same way every year. We can't stop it."		06/01/2019	05:16
G-243	But I wasn't listening anymore. I don't know what came over me but I jumped up and ran out the door. Ran into the woods. I don't even know where I was going.		06/01/2019	05:17
G-244	At some point the rain had stopped. It was dark and I couldn't see anything. But I could hear things all around me.		06/01/2019	05:18

	Things moving through the trees. And I could see lights in the distance. Fire, or flashlights. I don't know. I had no idea where to go or what to do.			
G-245	More than once something ran by me in the trees. I was using my phone as a flashlight and tried to take pictures of the trees, trying to see what was out there, but everything was happening so fast.		06/01/2019	05:21
G-246	I don't know what these are.	[Image] Two pictures showing a bloodied humanoid figure hiding amongst tall grass and bushes	06/01/2019	05:21
G-247	This is the clearest shot I could get. They all moved so fast.	[Image] a blurred image of a bloodied face emerging from bushes	06/01/2019	05:22
G-248	I ran for what seemed like an eternity. Ran in circles. I had no idea where I even was.		06/01/2019	05:23
G-249	And then, somehow, I was back in that same clearing where the eggs had been. But they were gone now. Nothing but bits of shell left on the ground.	[Image] three pictures of cracked egg shells on the ground	06/01/2019	05:24

G-250	It was over. I was too late. It had already happened and they'd cleaned everything up. I was too late.		06/01/2019	05:24
G-251	I stood alone in the clearing. The lights in the distance were disappearing. It was getting quieter. And just like that I was running again. Running toward the lake.		06/01/2019	05:26
G-252	I don't even know why. I couldn't do anything. Branches scraped my face as I ran blindly through the trees		06/01/2019	05:26
G-253	I reached the water, but there was nothing there. I saw some faint ripples out on the black water, but besides that it was silent. It was over.		06/01/2019	05:27
G-254	I was too late.		06/01/2019	05:27
G-255	I'm back at the house now. The woman is gone. It's so quiet.		06/01/2019	05:34
G-256	I don't know what to say right now. I'm going to leave in the morning.		06/01/2019	05:34
G-257	I'm sorry. I just don't know what else to say. I'm sorry.		06/01/2019	05:35
G-258	I'm still here. I'm alive. I left the house after that night.		16/01/2019	20:04

G-259	I decided not to sell it. I don't think anyone would buy it, anyway. I locked the doors and I got in my car and I left. I'm home now, trying to process everything.		16/01/2019	20:04
G-260	The morning after, it was so quiet and peaceful in the woods. It was like nothing had happened at all. I'm still not sure what to believe. It sort of feels like it happened to someone else. Or like I dreamed it, maybe.		16/01/2019	20:05
G-261	Sorry it took me so long to update. I wasn't sure what to say. I still have so many questions. I might never have all the answers.		16/01/2019	20:05
G-262	But something happened out there. I can't explain it. And I don't know if I could've done anything to stop it.		16/01/2019	20:06
G-263	But whatever it was, I can't let it happen again. That's why I'm not selling the house.		16/01/2019	20:06
G-264	That woman said this happens every year. If she was telling the truth, then maybe there's something I can do next time. I have to try.		16/01/2019	20:07

G-265	So I guess that's all for now. I'm heading back to school next week, so hopefully that will take my mind off things. I need some sense of normalcy again.		16/01/2019	20:07
G-266	I'm not sure when I'll tweet again. I need to take a break and get my head together. But I'll be back. I have to go back. I won't let it happen again.		16/01/2019	20:08
Tweet ID	Tweet Text	Attachment Description	Date	Time
G-R001	Is this a real story?		19/11/2018	13:06
G-R002	I'm gonna assume this isn't real but a horror story thread someone created to "scare" other people. Like the thread; @TheSunVanished .. ALTHOUGH I can't be too certain.. ya know? I'm just trying to use common sense as best as possible. Although it is pretty horrific so far.		02/02/2019	02:14
G-R003	Does it truly matter? Either way, just enjoy it.		25/11/2018	02:03
G-R004	chekhov's egg		25/06/2019	08:20
G-R005	it's an ARG, i don't think he's trying to fool anyone lol		29/12/2018	19:13
G-R006	what's ARG?		11/07/2020	03:33

G-R007	Alternate Reality Game. So, in this case, imagine a creepypasta coming to life. It's really just a story, it's not true, but it's like an interactive story. Lonelygirl15 and The Sun Vanished are popular ARGs as well as (maybe) Marble Hornets. Night Mind has videos on this.		11/07/2020	03:51
G-R008	I'm intrigued to see whether you've been foreshadowing yourself by tweeting a normal plate of eggs benedict now that you're mysteriously eating in diners which don't serve eggs! [Smiling face with open mouth and cold sweat]		22/11/2018	12:29
G-R009	I mean... It's getting very silly now but I still enjoy the idea of using Twitter to tell stories! I'm guessing you were following @moby_dickhead 's Dear David too?!		02/12/2018	14:16
G-R010	Significance of the triangle?	[Image] 4 images from 'ThoughtCo' describing triangle symbolism	28/11/2018	04:56
G-R011	Please be careful with those, they are devil traps. They are used to keep demons/evil spirits		22/11/2018	18:00

	enclosed in a specific area.			
G-R012	I'm 98% sure the bottom one is a finger bone still attached to a metacarpal. Sweet dreams!		22/11/2018	01:46
G-R013	Absolutely no clue. I just recognize it because I'm an archaeologist who studies violence and disease in ancient human remains.		11/07/2020	03:17
G-R014	looks like the blair witch project		02/11/2018	16:07
G-R015	The artefacts looks like the ones in the "Blair witch project"		23/12/2018	00:18
G-R016	se parece demasiado a esto	[Translation] looks too much like this [Image] Two pictures of the wooden figure from <i>The Blair Witch Project</i> (Myrick & Sánchez, 1999)	05/11/2018	16:07
G-R017	Shade the paper with the pencil to find out.		31/10/2018	01:21
G-R018	Colour it in and find out what it says		30/10/2018	23:36
G-R019	could be the eyes of that thing ... go back to the place take them and save it and if you happen to be the other one keep it too		04/11/2018	00:29
G-R020	And... If it's the woman eye...?		04/11/2018	01:03

G-R021	Dude, maybe the eyeball is from the person it's watching you all this time In your house, she doesn't have eyes, so.... i don't know, it's a supposition, and all the stuff you find maybe is from the person, you should put cameras on your house.		06/11/2018	23:13
G-R022	Fun fact, your eyeball is attached to fatty tissue, vessels, etc. If that was a Real eye itd have much more tissue and not look like it was a ping pong ball lol		02/12/2018	22:38
G-R023	Bruh its just a story chill		04/01/2020	13:06
G-R024	Loving this thread but this is the fakest eyeball I've ever seen [Face with tears of joy]		13/12/2018	06:41
G-R025	It has no blood vessels, therefore it is fake		04/11/2018	01:51
G-R026	I don't think many animals have irises like that, Greg.		31/10/2018	23:36
G-R027	For the notebook you should try drawing with a pencil on the page where you can see that something what written on it the words will not be drawn and you'll be able to read		02/11/2018	23:59

G-R028	I don't see why they'd need a boat when that chick was literally 10 feet away from you. Has to be some explanation as to why they're out there and not in the yard anymore		01/02/2018	00:15
G-R029	Maybe it's different people? Meaning the boat people might not be connected to the girl from the yard? Idk, but you're right, it would seem weird if they were part of the same group and doing that.		01/02/2018	03:14
G-R030	Right? The girl also has no eyes. Maybe they're the one taking the eyes? He did find an eye in the water.		01/02/2018	03:18
G-R031	Ooh, that's a good theory. I hadn't even considered that... I wonder why he feels safer closer to the water, too, especially since they're out there (possibly collecting eyes). What if they're waiting for him to wade out far enough so they can take his?		01/02/2018	03:22
G-R032	Like some creepy sirens?		01/02/2018	04:39

G-R033	Posiblemente se trate de algún tipo de secta o culto o tal vez algo mucho más oscuro que le puede estar pasando a @gr3gory88 ya que desde que falleció su abuelo, esa casa estuvo vacía, pero posiblemente ellos estaban habitandola para esos actos oscuros que realizan!!!	[Translation] Possibly it is some kind of sect or cult or maybe something much darker that may be happening to @ gr3gory88 since since his grandfather passed away, that house was empty, but possibly they were inhabiting it for those dark acts they carry out !!!	06/11/2018	07:46
G-R034	It could've been a fox! They scream and it's pretty unnerving when u hear it. I get them by my house every once and a while		15/11/2018	21:55
G-R035	Coyote?		11/11/2018	23:02
G-R036	If this turns out to be fake or something I'm gonna look so stupid lmao, but if it's not just please get away from there, cults are really not that weird and it seems like one, they're trying to hurt to		07/11/2018	12:30
G-R037	In some forest tribes statues of animals are placed near their villages to protect certain evil spirits that come to cause destruction		11/11/2018	19:03
G-R038	Someone please tell me that it's just my mind making	[Image] Zoomed in Screenshot of G-096	13/11/2018	09:23

	things up... (I see a face)			
G-R039	Interesting point about the human psyche is that it is great at recognizing patterns. Its why most people will remember faces before names. Its also why we can see thinga in clouds and the stars. So the bark of the tree being removed can indeed look like a face.		22/11/2018	02:11
G-R040	It looks like a „target“ for 3D Bowhunting		18/11/2019	17:54
G-R041	Looks like a peter rabbit statue		10/11/2018	01:22
G-R042	It's Peter Rabbit from the stories ❤️		10/11/2018	01:44
G-R043	Estas en el país de Alicia...? De Alicia en el país de las maravillas...!! ahí he visto tales conejos...!!!	[Translation] Are you in Alice's country ...? From Alice in Wonderland ... !! there I have seen such rabbits ... !!!	10/11/2018	03:03
G-R044	This is what I vould figure out, there are some letters left out, maybe from another word	[Image] a screenshot of G-099 with "delaware" written above the now partially crossed out letters and t,e,c,p,h,p,e written below.	10/11/2018	01:33
G-R045	Nothing obvious at least	[Image] screenshot of anagram-solver.net search results for 'Alewdphaiecerpe'	10/11/2018	01:34

G-R046	Maybe you should try to find the shape of the letters, or the order of them with the nail holes on the house... Just saying :v Or maybe we could help a little more if you have a picture of the wall where the letters were placed		10/11/2018	01:36
G-R047	I think it says 'Deepwater Chapel' Might be wrong.		10/11/2018	01:40
G-R048	Guys	[Image] Screenshot of G-099 with the letters crossed out and "Deep Water Chapel" written above	10/11/2018	01:56
G-R049	this is all i could find	[Image] Screenshot of DuckDuckGo search results for "Deepwater Chapel"	10/11/2018	02:12
G-R050	Maybe were three different people Caleph Wade and peter?		10/11/2018	02:01
G-R051	You might be on to something with Peter! Bc the rabbit he found in the woods honestly reminded me of Peter Rabbit (I read the books growing up. I'll include a picture.) @gr3gory88	[Image] a screenshot of the "Beatrix Potter the World of Peter Rabbit and Friends" (Potter & Jackson, 1992) DVD cover.	13/11/2018	02:27
G-R052	GREG WEVE MISSED YOU!!		22/11/2018	03:20
G-R053	Spill the tea		22/11/2018	03:20

G-R054	HES BACK!	[Gif] A woman sitting up looking shocked	22/11/2018	03:22
G-R055	You said they've been out of eggs... grocery store too.		22/11/2018	03:23
G-R056	The scariest question here is how they made the hollandaise sauce without eggs. [Thinking face]		22/11/2018	03:28
G-R057	Just wasted 5 minutes of my life looking up vegan hollandaise sauce recipes. (Spoilers: it's possible, but the odds of a traditional diner having tofu on hand specifically so they can make a sauce is a bit out there.) Truly spooked.		22/11/2018	03:37
G-R058	Hasn't the store been out of eggs to? I think you did say that. Maybe the whole town is going through an eggless situation.		22/11/2018	03:25
G-R059	Eggs look sort of like eyes... maybe the whole town has something against eyes?		24/11/2018	03:34
G-R060	That's how it's fucking prepared, Greg.	[Quote Tweet of G-105]	22/12/2018	23:19
G-R061	De echo es la misma (tipografía o caligrafía) que en estos escritos de el libro que encontraste antes, las letras están trazadas	[Image] Cropped version of G-086 [Translation] In fact it is the same (typography or calligraphy) as in these writings from the book you	22/11/2018	03:41

	exactamente igual. Seguramente quien escribió eso también quiere que te vayas.	found earlier, the letters are drawn exactly the same. Surely whoever wrote that also wants you to leave.		
G-R062	@eldiariodedross Ya puedes actualizar la historia y mira ese dato que encontré, la nota y los escritos en el libro contienen letras trazadas exactamente igual. Se puede ver el ejemplo claro con la letra "E" qué está en ambas hojas	[Translation] @eldiariodedross Now you can update the story and look at that data I found, the note and the writings in the book contain letters drawn exactly the same. You can see the clear example with the letter "E" which is on both sheets	22/11/2018	03:43
G-R063	Wait but its talking about patching/inflating something... which makes me think of the boat.....???		22/11/2018	03:30
G-R064	It's a paper from a patch kit for something inflatable		22/11/2018	03:30
G-R065	Eso es de un parche para pinchaduras de bicicleta	[Translation] That's from a bike puncture patch	22/11/2018	03:34
G-R066	This might sound insane, but maybe she's trying to help him? Like get him to leave to keep him from being killed by the boat people		24/11/2018	02:30
G-R067		[Image] an screenshot comparing the note in G-113 to an label from INTEX	27/11/2018	18:52

		titled ' 6cmx6cm Repair Patch'		
G-R068	Spellwork????		30/11/2018	01:20
G-R069	The triangle, it's that same as the wooden artifacts		30/11/2018	01:21
G-R070	Deer skull with some pebbles and black chalk = that something that somebody put to get someone killed		30/11/2018	01:21
G-R071	Coyote skull in some sort of ritualistic pattern...		30/11/2018	01:23
G-R072	As a witch my self it looks like a ward or aspell of some kind . Id strongly advise you NOT to touch it.		30/11/2018	01:24
G-R073	That my dear friend is a shrine to the cow gods		30/11/2018	01:21
G-R074	I can tell you it's not witchcraft. Because I'm a witch and I can't do that. Not only me, but I know many, many witches and nobody can do that. To be honest, you could be caught in a different dimension/parallel universe with all of that "weird" stuff ur experiencing.		30/11/2018	01:51
G-R075	literally everyone knows it's fake. we are interacting like it's real, it makes it more fun		30/11/2018	01:42

G-R076	Here's my 2 cents: Feathers, crystals and bones were on the triangles. Feathers may have to do with the lack of eggs. Crystals may symbolize eyes, connected to the "they took my eyes" thing. I have no clue what the bone pieces are, any thoughts?		30/11/2018	01:32
G-R077	So, I don't know if this is a true feed or a fictional story, but I am a witch. A white witch. I would love to offer you some tips for protection against this dark magick- because that is definitely an evil witch you are dealing with- so please feel free to msg me directly.		30/11/2018	15:23
G-R078	Those don't look "old." I have polaroids from the early 2000's that the white border is yellowed		11/12/2018	23:15
G-R079	That book looks pretty new too considering it was supposed to have been there a while.		12/12/2018	09:45
G-R080	I seen the women in the white but I can kind of see one in the black now someone else has pointed that out Thinking face	[Image] A copy of G-135 with black and white circles drawn over two blurred masses	11/12/2018	23:07

G-R081	If you look very closely in the upper right hand corner of the picture, what looks like a man who's hair is in the shape of horns running behind the trees		15/12/2018	19:30
G-R082		[GIF] a gif of <i>The Colbert Report</i> (2005) showing Stephen Colbert pointing at a sign reading 'I TOLD YOU SO!'	11/12/2018	23:02
G-R083	I called it sis		11/12/2018	23:02
G-R084	People have been saying this since you first posted the pic of the letters, you should have seen this coming lol		11/12/2018	23:02
G-R085	It's 1 am good Sir I don't know if I'm prepared for Eyeless Becky right now		13/12/2018	06:02
G-R086	Now that we have a name her we need to start w/ merch		13/12/2018	06:12
G-R087	Greg you couldn't have done this during the daytime???		13/12/2018	06:02
G-R088	ITS TOO LATE FOR THIS I'm gonna have nightmares		13/12/2018	06:02
G-R089	NOTIFICATION GANG!!!!		13/12/2018	06:02
G-R090	I can't believe I have notifications on for this		13/12/2018	06:02
G-R091	just calm down... I know its hard to but try your best.		13/12/2018	06:05

G-R092	I was about to go to sleep when you started this and if I have nightmares tonight of Eyeless Becky and Staring Eric I'm gonna be pissed bro		13/12/2018	06:12
G-R093	Greg bruh don't do that		13/12/2018	06:12
G-R094	THAT'S THE MISTAKE THAT EVERYONE MAKES IN HORROR MOVIES YOU SHOULD KNOW BETTER		13/12/2018	06:13
G-R095	ARE YOU OUT OF YOUR MIND?		13/12/2018	06:13
G-R096	GDI eyeless Becky has no freaking manners		13/12/2018	06:15
G-R097	Erick: "I bet I can scare you" Greg: "Alright, very funny. You can stop now" Erick: "There's not a single egg in this town" Greg:	[Image] Shocked Pikachu meme	13/12/2018	16:46
G-R098	Notification team are you there??		24/12/2018	01:41
G-R099	Skinwalker?		24/12/2018	01:45
G-R100	Maybe the lady is a skin walker, changing into a human to try to get closer to him [Loudly crying face]		24/12/2018	01:46
G-R101	When I read this the only and first thing that came to my mind was skinwalker		24/12/2018	01:46
G-R102	ALTERNATE DIMENSION		24/12/2018	01:52

G-R103	SHE PULLED YOU INTO THE POCKET DIMENSION MY GUY		24/12/2018	01:53
G-R104	i mean they look like balloons to me but ok		24/12/2018	01:56
G-R105	It looks like balloons		24/12/2018	01:55
G-R106	The first sign of eggs in this creepy town and they're freaking Dino eggs??? Heck no [Face with tears of joy]		24/12/2018	01:56
G-R107	Try introducing those eggs to that restaurant. They might find eggs make a great breakfast food		24/12/2018	01:56
G-R108	I think that's related to the whole non existence of eggs in that village		24/12/2018	01:56
G-R109	Nothing about that says nest. Theres no structure to it. It looks like they were just plopped right there and nature doesn't do that. And they're too clean looking. Fake.		24/12/2018	01:58
G-R110	BREAK ONE BRO		24/12/2018	01:56
G-R111	that'd make a hella good omlet		24/12/2018	01:55
G-R112	SMASH IT		24/12/2018	01:58
G-R113	AWW HOW SWEET, A CHRISTMAS PRESENT FROM EYELESS BECKY [Heart with ribbon]		24/12/2018	02:49

G-R114	Becky's got an aesthetic you gotta give her that		29/12/2018	05:28
G-R115	Bros, the blood moons is in January this year		29/12/2018	05:29
G-R116	the new moon is from jan 3rd to the 6th		29/12/2018	05:29
G-R117	Witches tend to craft mean things in new moon		29/12/2018	05:29
G-R118	The eggs are gonna hatch??		29/12/2018	05:29
G-R119	Definitely trying to protect you		29/12/2018	05:29
G-R120	Take her advice		29/12/2018	05:29
G-R121	Just gonna share this again	[Image] Screenshot of calender-365.com listing the moon phases from Sept 24th 2018 to April 12, 2019. "New moon January 5th 2019" is underlined	29/12/2018	05:31
G-R122	yeah but eyeless becky told u to fear it		05/01/2019	03:22
G-R123	Reading the comments is less fun now because people keep saying it's fake. It's an ARG my dudes. Obvi		06/01/2019	03:08
G-R124	THANK YOU I haven't read the whole thing yet but everyone saying it's fake is making me so mad it's literally an arg. FICTION		06/01/2019	03:11
G-R125	film it		06/01/2019	02:45
G-R126	record it dude we need the tea too		06/01/2019	02:45
G-R127	Go live		06/01/2019	02:45
G-R128	BRUH NOTIF SQUAD		06/01/2019	04:57

G-R129	Then who's eyes did he find in the river back then?		06/01/2019	11:22
G-R130	WHAT ELSE GREG WAS UR GRANDPA ONE OF THOSE MONSTER THINGS OR SOMETHING		06/01/2019	05:33
G-R131	Or maybe the no-eyed lady is his aunt, the grandpa's daughter that he gave up to the monsters and never spoke of again? Maybe that's why his mom wouldn't say what she knew about the house, and why the no-eyed lady is so familiar there and was able to get into the house...		06/01/2019	06:02
G-R132	okay it's obviously fake now but like damn sis.. u a good writer		09/01/2019	01:12
G-R133	Maybe she's always around your house, protecting you, because she's actually your aunt. And that's why your mom hates talking about your grandpa or that house becausebiys painful for her		06/01/2019	13:26
G-R134	You writing this like it's a Wattpad story and I'm here for it		06/01/2019	05:16

G-R135		[Image] a road sign reading "Listening to the eyeless woman who suffered" road straight ahead and "not listening and basically tries to kill himself anyways" turn right. A blue car labeled "Greg" is veering to the right	06/01/2019	05:19
G-R136		[Image] edited version of G-246 with glowing eyes and text reading "Mom says it's my turn on the human sacrifice"	07/01/2019	06:06
G-R137	Looks like styrofoam 😊		06/01/2019	05:24
G-R138	bro ... that's styrofoam ...		06/01/2019	05:24
G-R139	That Lowkey look like styrofoam but Imma believe that's an egg shell		06/01/2019	05:26
G-R140	THEY HATCHED IM SCREAMING GREG RUN		06/01/2019	05:24
G-R141	GREGORY, GO BACK TO THE DAMN HOUSE		06/01/2019	05:24
G-R142	RUN WHAT ARE YOU DOING		06/01/2019	05:25
G-R143	Honestly those seem like mordeo it's a monster that is commonly hidden in the forest they look like a weird deer human hybrid with no skin just bone but I never heard of an aquatic one best to do research so far by the videos I watch		06/01/2019	05:27

	there is no way I've seen to kill them			
G-R144	She played you b		06/01/2019	05:34
G-R145	yes we all miss her now back to the story		06/01/2019	05:34
G-R146	don't apologize it's ok what's important is that ur safe xx		06/01/2019	05:35
G-R147	K BUT FIND OUT ABOUT THE BOAT TOO		06/01/2019	05:36
G-R148	don't apologize just be safe and leave asap		06/01/2019	05:35
G-R149	be back in a year [Skull]		16/01/2019	20:08
G-R150	ITS BEEN A YEAR		16/01/2020	20:16
G-R151	You better be back soon.		16/01/2019	20:08
G-R152	The end? I guess not... (hopefully [Loudly crying face])		16/01/2019	20:10
G-R153	Spring break at egg woods my dude.		16/01/2019	21:20

Appx 1.3 the Sun Vanished

Tweet ID	Tweet Text	Attachment Description	Date	Time
SV-001	Help.		30/04/2018	14:24
SV-002	It's late in the morning and still dark outside.		30/04/2018	15:44
SV-003	I can hear the tornado sirens in the next county over, but the weather radar is clear.		30/04/2018	17:15
SV-004	Where is the sun.		30/04/2018	19:02
SV-005		[Video] a shaky video of a dark room with a CNN news report playing on the TV. The broadcast, titled "RIOTS BREAK OUT AFTER SUN DISSAPEARS" features a female announcer assuring the public the event will pass, comparing the event to "New England's Darkest Day" in 1780. A loud guttural sound is heard off camera causing the camrea person to turn around.	30/04/2018	19:26
SV-006	The power keeps going out and I keep hearing noises outside. Sometimes far away, sometimes close.		30/04/2018	21:08
SV-007		[Video] An almost entirely black screen with three flashing lights in the distance, a sound similar to an	30/04/2018	22:33

		areoplane can be heard		
SV-008	I can't sleep. I think the noises outside are gunshots.		01/05/2018	05:40
SV-009	It is still dark. The news said it would be back to normal by now, but it isn't.		01/05/2018	16:46
SV-010	Now the news isn't even coming in.	[Image] A dark room with a TV screen displaying the words "NO SIGNAL" over static	02/05/2018	00:37
SV-011	Been trying to conserve battery life since the power keeps cutting out. I'm worried it will go off and never come back on.		02/05/2018	00:55
SV-012	TV signal is gone, the noises keep happening outside, and I can barely keep track of the time anymore. I am honest to God terrified.		02/05/2018	02:46
SV-013	Some of it I'm pretty sure is gunfire. The other noises though, I'm not sure.		02/05/2018	02:50
SV-014	I am so tempted to go outside. Should I?	[Twitter Poll] 299 Votes: Yes: 79.6% No: 23.1%	02/05/2018	03:17
SV-015	I went outside. I saw something out there I can't really explain, but I can show you.		02/05/2018	05:30

SV-016		[Video] Sunny walking though woodland using a torch. There's a loud bang followed by Sunny turning off the light, a repetative clicking sound then a red flashing light in the distance	02/05/2018	05:40
SV-017	I thought I saw some figures close by, but it is so dark I feel like my mind is playing tricks on me. I don't have much food stocked up, but after this experience with being outside for only a few minutes, I do NOT want to drive into town for supplies.		02/05/2018	06:57
SV-018	I looked for stars or planets as you all suggested, the sky was absolutely pitch black. Could be because of clouds, or something else.		02/05/2018	05:50
SV-019	Still shaken from the short time I was outside. I don't know what that flashing light was, but it was following me.		02/05/2018	07:25
SV-020	Day 3. Still no sign of daylight. It is getting colder.		02/05/2018	16:41
SV-021	I've tried, all I get is a busy tone. This twitter is the only way I know how to		02/05/2018	16:51

	contact the outside world.			
SV-022	A person just ran by on my street. Two of the same flashing lights I saw yesterday were following him. They were gone by the time I got my phone out to record.		02/05/2018	21:25
SV-023	Sorry everyone. Reception went out yesterday. I was worried it wouldn't come back on		03/05/2018	16:17
SV-024	No signs of activity outside. Come to think of it, it has been a while since I heard a gunshot...		03/05/2018	16:26
SV-025	The power is not out right now, I'm just keeping all of my lights off as a safety precaution.		03/05/2018	16:54
SV-026	The only lights on are the walkway lights near my front porch, and maybe a few house lights down the road.		03/05/2018	16:52
SV-027	Something just flew over my house.	[Video] The screen is entirely black, but a rustling sound then a deep humming sound can be heard	03/05/2018	18:35
SV-028	I couldn't see it, too dark outside, but a wave of heat just came over me. Feels like the temperature increased by like 10 or 15 degrees.		03/05/2018	18:44

SV-029	<p>Just compared the sound of this video to the sound of the helicopter footage I posted a few days ago.</p> <p>Whatever this was, it was definitely not a helicopter.</p>		03/05/2018	20:11
SV-030	<p>Oh THANK GOD. One of my friends is still alive. He just texted me.</p>		04/05/2018	00:35
SV-031		<p>[Image] Screenshot of a text conversation between Sunny and Danyon. 6:25pm Danyon: Dude please tell me you are still alive Sunny: Yes I'm alive. Where the hell have you been? Why did it take you this long to reach me after I called you like 40 times? Danyon: Im sorry but my phone was died and I was just now able to start charging it Danyon: Ur still at ur house right Sunny: Yes. Danyon: Ok good im still a 2 days drive away but im coming to you</p>	04/05/2018	00:36
SV-032		<p>[Image] Screenshot of a text conversation between Sunny and Danyon. Danyon: Ok good im still a 2 days drive away but im coming to</p>	04/05/2018	00:43

		you Sunny: I'm not really sure if that is a good idea or not. Danyon: why Sunny: What have you seen? Danyon: lol dude you have no fucking idea		
SV-033	Now we have another problem.		04/05/2018	01:02
SV-034		[Image] a dark path lit only by a few small garden lights, a person stand awkwardly in the center	04/05/2018	01:07
SV-035	This guy has been standing completely still with his back towards me. I have no idea how long he has been standing there.		04/05/2018	01:10
SV-036	He's still standing there. Hasn't moved.		04/05/2018	02:54
SV-037		[Image] Screenshot of a text conversation between Sunny and Danyon. Sunny: Image SV-034 Danyon: GET AWAY FROM THE WINDOW. KEEP ALL THE LIGHTS OFF. DO NOT TALK TO THEM OR LET THEM IN. Danyon: and if you see any flashing lights, hide.	04/05/2018	03:33
SV-038	Whoever was standing outside is gone now.		04/05/2018	04:28
SV-039	I didn't.		04/05/2018	04:28

SV-040	SHIT		04/05/2018	04:34
SV-041		[Video] dark video of a white door. Someone on the otherside is knocking and twisting the doorknob	04/05/2018	04:36
SV-042	To those of you asking, I am doing alright. Hiding in my room and waiting this out.		04/05/2018	06:01
SV-043	I haven't heard any more knocking, but I don't want to get anywhere near the front door to check.		04/05/2018	18:02
SV-044	And don't worry, I have a way to defend myself if worse comes to worst	[Image] A baseball bat	04/05/2018	20:41
SV-045	If anyone knows ANYTHING about what is going on, please message me. 911 and other emergency lines are not responding and the only radio I have is out in the car, so I'm trying to gather as much information online as I can.		05/05/2018	00:36
SV-046		[Image] Screenshot of a series of Twitter Direct Messages Unknown: hey brother i am from british columbia I dont know much but I do know that you should never look into the red light EVER if you do you become like	05/05/2018	05:19

		the guy who was at your door. 11:17pm		
SV-047	To be completely honest, I have no idea how to explain this	[Image] Screenshot of a tweet reading "@TheSunVanished I don't get it, its sunny where I am:" followed by an image of some trees against a bright but cloudy sky	06/05/2018	00:46
SV-048	Not. Good.	[Image] Screenshot of a text conversation between Sunny and Danyon. Danyon: Soooo I have good news and bad news Sunny: Uh oh. Danyon Good news is Im closer to you now Bad news is im out of fuel there are noe active gas stations anywhere close to me, all of the power is down, and all of the gas stations near by are electric gas pumps Sunny: Oh no.	06/05/2018	03:39
SV-049	He isn't even that close.	[Image] Screenshot of a text conversation between Sunny and Danyon. Sunny: How far away are you? Danyon: Probs still 8 or 9 hours away	06/05/2018	03:56

SV-050	I'm really conflicted. Some of you say I should go, some of you say I should stay. What should I do?	[Twitter Poll] 425 Votes: Stay safe at home: 54.1% Drive 9 hours to Danyon: 45.9%	06/05/2018	04:02
SV-051	Someone is screaming outside.		06/05/2018	05:43
SV-052		[Video] almost entirely black screen except for a blurred streak of light, in the distance a man can be heard screaming	06/05/2018	05:48
SV-053	I am really, REALLY not sure about leaving now.		06/05/2018	06:33
SV-054		[Images] Screenshots of three tweets. Tweet 1: "After hearing that, traveling at all seems like a terrible idea." Tweet 2: Wll if you were thinking of driving 8 hours before I think your answer is quite clear now" Tweet 3: "Clearly you need to stay where you are! Forget about leaving your friend though should try to make it to you since he's already out and about. Ask him how he's avoiding detection."	06/05/2018	06:34

SV-055		[Image] Screenshot of a text conversation between Sunny and Danyon. Sunny: How are you avoiding detection? Danyon: im just staying in the car its locked and off atm after I catch a few winks im gonna try to take a look around Sunny: Alright. Stay safe. Danyon: always bud. you too.	06/05/2018	06:44
SV-056	It's been really quiet today. I noticed it warmed up after that thing flew over my house again last night.		06/05/2018	21:01
SV-057		[Image] Screenshot of a text conversation between Sunny and Danyon. Danyon: don't worry about me dude, ill find a way to get to you eventually I walked around for a couple hours and havent seen anyone human or otherwise on the highway so im p sure ill be safe here while i figure out what to do Sunny: Do you have enough food and supplies? Danyon: yea I have enough even if im stranded here for a while don't worry about me. worry about yourself	07/05/2018	06:26

SV-058	I'm really surprised the power has stayed on for this long. Only a few outages here and there, but I'm still extremely paranoid that it will go out permanently any time now.		07/05/2018	21:28
SV-059	You all have been bringing up the solar lights outside. They actually aren't solar, I have them on a timer outside and I can't turn them off without leaving the house.		07/05/2018	22:31
SV-060	I feel exhausted all the time now. I think my internal clock is completely screwed up.		08/05/2018	03:03
SV-061	I can see a faint light outside my bedroom window. Going downstairs to check it out.		08/05/2018	05:30
SV-062		[Video] video of a pitch black room, outside there's a white rapidly flashing light and a mechanical pulsating sound. As the light source approaches the window, Sunny gasps and ducks out of view. At the 00:30 mark the light stops before turning red.	08/05/2018	05:48
SV-063	I cannot fucking believe I'm still alive.		08/05/2018	05:54

SV-064		<p>[Image] Screenshot of a text conversation between Sunny and Danyon. Danyon: you didnt look directly into the red light right Sunny: Yes. Danyon: you are absolutely sure. Sunny: Yeah. I'm sure. Danyon: what street did we both live on when we were kids Sunny: Why? Danyon: answer the question. Sunny: Frazier road. Danyon ok we are good Sunny: Damn it, don't scare me like that.</p>	08/05/2018	06:14
SV-065		<p>[Image] Screenshot of a text conversation between Sunny and Danyon. Danyon: [Image of graffiti reading: BEWARE OF HEADLIGHTS] I was looking around and just found this no earthly idea what it means</p>	08/05/2018	07:23
SV-066	Sometimes I feel like I have a good handle on this whole situation and am thinking rationally and logically, but other times I feel like bawling.		08/05/2018	07:24

SV-067	<p>Day 9. Sorry about that tweet last night, what happened at the window got to me a bit.</p> <p>Anyway, I'm currently in touch with a couple of people with some experience and some info on what's going on. Details soon.</p>		09/05/2018	01:06
SV-068		<p>[Image] Screenshot of a series of Twitter Direct Messages Tucker: 12:16: So to give you some background, my name is Tucker. I live in Virginia. I was working a night shift when all of this shenanigans went down, just about to clock out for the day when I realized that the sun wasn't up like it normally was when I clocked out.</p> <p>12:19: I kinda shrugged it off at first but after a few hours I was getting really worried. I lived close to a relatively large city, so you can imaginewhat I had to go through when the riots started.</p> <p>Long story short, when I was heading out of town to get away</p>	09/05/2018	06:47

		<p>from the mess, I met a guy named Flynn who was talking about these things that hunt people down.</p> <p>12:26: At this point I didn't believe him. But I started to notice that the crowds and traffic congestion on highways started slowly dissipating. Before you know it, the roads were completely empty. Terrifying shit.</p> <p>Flynn and I started traveling together after that. We had been finding dark places to hide, enough food and water to stay alive, we were doing pretty good for the first week.</p> <p>12:33: But then just a few days ago, he came back inside after taking a leak and started losing it. Kept going on and on, just talking nonsense. It went on for days, and I was worried that all the stress from this situation got to him.</p> <p>12:35: But one day it all stopped and he wouldn't speak, wouldn't even acknowledge me. He just stood like a statue for probably a full 12 hours.</p>		
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		<p>Then, he attacked me out of nowhere. I tried and tried to keep him away but he just wouldn't stop. 12:36: I had to stop him, there was nothing else I could do. 12:39: Anyway. I've been living on my own for the last couple of days. It has been tough, but thankfully I found an area with power and Internet, which is why I can talk to you. Sunny 12:41: Thank you for sharing your story . I'm sorry to hear about Flynn. Tucker 12:45: Please share my story. I want people to know about what happened. Sunny 12:45: of course.</p>		
SV-069	While I've been trying to collect info online, I completely forgot to check in on Danyon yesterday. He still hasn't responded to any of my texts.		09/05/2018	19:52
SV-070	I am hearing noises outside again.		10/05/2018	03:09
SV-071		[Video] an almost entirely black screen with a series of unintelligible noises	10/05/2018	04:28
SV-072	I swear to God it sounds like someone is banging on my door, but		10/05/2018	04:30

	there is no way in hell I'm going downstairs to check.			
SV-073	It got in I don't know how but it got in I am hiding		10/05/2018	04:50
SV-074		[Video] Dark shaky footage of Sunny opening a door, behind it is a hallway and a second door, through which we see a white flashing light	10/05/2018	05:30
SV-075	I'm sorry if I am gone for a while I have to stay hidden and keep my phone off it produces light I am so sorry		10/05/2018	05:36
SV-076	It's finally gone. I think I'm safe now.		11/05/2018	00:46
SV-077	I have no idea how, but the front door is unlocked and WIDE OPEN . The alarm never came on either, I guess it got reset during one of the blackouts?		11/05/2018	01:12
SV-078	Some good news for once, Danyon is back. Before you all ask, he seems to be in his right mind.		11/05/2018	04:02
SV-079	I need to get serious about securing my house.		11/05/2018	17:05
SV-080	It's primitive, I know, but it's a first step. And apparently more reliable than my alarm system. Let me know if you all	[Image] Dark image of red plastic cups stacked in a pyramid shape, next to a door	11/05/2018	17:12

	have other ideas to keep my house secure.			
SV-081	My windows don't have curtains. I'm gonna have to find a creative way to block out any light coming from outside.		11/05/2018	18:09
SV-082		[Image] Dark image of two tin cans tied to a door knob with string	11/05/2018	20:24
SV-083	It's getting colder again.		12/05/2018	05:41
SV-084	I'm running low on food and water. I feel like I could sleep for a week.		12/05/2018	06:40
SV-085		[Image] Screenshot of a text conversation between Sunny and Danyon. Danyon: I found a car with a decent amount of gas in the tank. all I need is a syphon don't worry bud ill be there soon	12/05/2018	15:01
SV-086	I have a confession to make. I've been keeping something from you all.		13/05/2018	03:53
SV-087	Over the course of the last week, I've been increasingly paranoid about someone or something coming into my house while I'm sleeping. And I don't think it's one of those lights, it feels different. I can't		13/05/2018	03:58

	explain it, but I can sense it.			
SV-088	And last night, after I put cans on door handles, I've been waking up to clanging sounds. But I'm not certain if it's real or just my imagination.		13/05/2018	04:02
SV-089	So now it's time to put my paranoia to the test.	[Image] White powder spread in a line next to a door	13/05/2018	04:05
SV-090	If the flour is disturbed, we will know.		13/05/2018	04:07
SV-091	The person from British Columbia who messaged me earlier just sent me this.	[Image] Screenshot of a Twitter Direct message picture showing a partially obscured humanoid shadow figure. Sent at 9:52	14/05/2018	03:58
SV-092	I had a nightmare about that picture. Just woke up to more screaming outside.		14/05/2018	17:39
SV-093	The screaming isn't like last time. Very sporadic. I can't tell where it is coming from. The flour is untouched.		14/05/2018	18:12
SV-094	I keep trying to record the screaming when I hear it, but the microphone isn't picking it up.		14/05/2018	23:36
SV-095	I think the screaming is		15/05/2018	05:06

	coming from the neighbor's house.			
SV-096	This has been on my mind lately.	[Image] Screenshot of a text conversation between Sunny and Danyon. Sunny: Just curious, what year did we graduate high school? Danyon: lol what? Sunny: Nevermind.	15/05/2018	20:06
SV-097	I know you all don't trust Danyon, I've been reading your tweets and messages, but I just can't bring myself to confront him. He's my friend. I don't have an abundance of those right now.		16/05/2018	04:38
SV-098	The person who sent me the picture a few nights ago hasn't responded. The flour test hasn't worked yet. The reoccurring screaming outside. I'm about ready to snap.		16/05/2018	04:54
SV-099		[Image] Screenshot of a text conversation between Sunny and Danyon. Danyon: im a couple hours away . Whats your adress again?	16/05/2018	03:03
SV-100	I can't believe I'm doing this. Should I trust Danyon?	[Twitter Poll] 13,044 Votes: Yes: 25.6% No: 74.4%	16/05/2018	17:56
SV-101		[Image] Screenshot of a text conversation between Sunny and	17/05/2018	04:56

		Danyon. Danyon: dude where are you ive been waiting		
SV-102		[Image] Screenshot of a text conversation between Sunny and Danyon. Sunny: Answer my question. What year did we graduate high school? Danyon: bud we don't have time for this Sunny: Answer my question. Answer my question. Danyon: are you okay? Sunny: I'm fine. Danyon: im sorry to say this but im not sure I trust you Sunny: Likewise. Danyon: welp ... i guess thats it then	17/05/2018	05:23
SV-103	<p>Since you all won't stop DMing me about updates, here's updates for you:</p> <p>I haven't slept since the screaming, ran out of bottled water days ago, been drinking from the faucet, very close to running out of food too, and I hope losing my only close friend will be worth it.</p> <p>Happy?</p>		17/05/2018	06:16

SV-104	I just woke up and came down stairs to this. Oh my God.	[Image] 4 dark pictures of smudged lines of flour	17/05/2018	15:44
SV-105	I don't know if it is Danyon, I don't know if it is someone else, but I don't plan on sticking around to find out.		17/05/2018	18:17
SV-106	It's not safe here anymore. I'm packing up, and I'm leaving.	[Image] two backpacks filled with supplies	17/05/2018	21:54
SV-107	It's been in the back of my mind for a while, but I'm heading out to the neighbors house where I've been hearing the screaming. Wish me luck.		18/05/2018	03:18
SV-108	I'm staying low and staying away from streetlights and other light sources. Using my flashlight sparingly.		18/05/2018	03:59
SV-109	This is where I heard the screaming. I'm sure of it.	[Image] dark image of a house	18/05/2018	04:19
SV-110		[Video] Sunny knocking on an open door, before pushing it open and entering the house, repeatedly saying "Hello". The house is empty and all lights are off.	18/05/2018	04:46
SV-111	I found fresh food and water here. Checked every room to be sure I'm alone.		18/05/2018	05:32

SV-112	It's not just in my head. I KNOW I heard screaming. It was ongoing. And I'm glad I came to investigate because now I have food, water, and a safer place to stay.		18/05/2018	07:03
SV-113	There have been no signs of activity outside whatsoever.		18/05/2018	08:21
SV-114	I've been taking a break from the internet for a bit. Trying to recuperate myself. My mind is much clearer now than it was before. I don't know what the catalyst was, but something changed when I left my home.		20/05/2018	14:37
SV-115	What's going on @thmadjoy ? Please message me.		22/05/2018	05:13
SV-116	I think I discovered something interesting. I need to do an experiment to make sure. Details soon.		23/05/2018	23:04
SV-117	The glass of water is from the neighbor's house I've been staying at. The bottle is from my house about a week ago. Is it just me, or is the water from my house darker?	[Image] Image 1: a glass of water next to a bottle of water. Image 2: a close up of the bottle	24/05/2018	20:29

SV-118	I feel terrible for what I did and said to Danyon.		24/05/2018	22:50
SV-119	It's too quiet. I don't like this.		26/05/2018	05:44
SV-120	I was walking past the coffee table and I noticed this sticking out from under a couple magazines. I'm gonna hang on to this.	[Image] Folded piece of paper reading: Remember - Don't look into the light. -Don't move. They see motion. - Don't produce light. They will see. THE STROBE???	26/05/2018	22:19
SV-121	Makes me wonder if there's anything else around the house. Notes, papers, anything. I'm gonna check and poke around.		26/05/2018	22:29
SV-122	Found nothing yet. And still no response from Danyon OR Tucker. I feel so isolated.		27/05/2018	04:26
SV-123	FYI, it is sort of a sensitive subject, but I don't have any family to contact. So you all can stop asking.		27/05/2018	06:39
SV-124	Guys, Danyon is still alive. He just texted me.		28/05/2018	04:12
SV-125		[Image] Screenshot of a text conversation between Sunny and Danyon. Danyon: listen. i know you don't trust me and I don't trust you. But if you are still you, you have to get low. Get out of	28/05/2018	04:13

		sight, whatever it takes		
SV-126	I've taken Danyon's advice, but I haven't seen or heard anything yet. Still deathly quiet.		28/05/2018	20:53
SV-127	Whatever flew over my house before is back. But this time it isn't leaving.		29/05/2018	01:44
SV-128	This thing is making sounds I've never heard before. The vibrations are shaking the house.		29/05/2018	02:41
SV-129		[Video] The screen is entirely black, but a loud deep humming noise can be heard, then a long scrape sound alongside rattling noises	29/05/2018	02:45
SV-130	I couldn't see anything out the window, but I quickly snapped a few pictures just in case before taking cover. I can't believe what I'm looking at.	[Image] Dark image taken through a window of a large diamond shaped object hovering above the houses	29/05/2018	03:09
SV-131	Day 30. It's still there. Still making noise. I've locked myself in the bathroom, where there's no windows. Trying and failing to sleep.		29/05/2018	14:05

SV-132	I just woke up to this.	[Image] a blue light peaking though a doorframe	29/05/2018	22:41
SV-133	I just heard yelling, but this time it sounded like the person was in agony. It's just quiet now. The blue light is still here.		30/05/2018	00:29
SV-134	The blue light finally disappeared, and that thing flew off and left.		30/05/2018	22:33
SV-135	Should I leave the bathroom now or stay put for a little while longer?	[Twitter Poll] 31,560 Votes: Leave: 54.1% Stay: 45.9%	31/05/2018	03:41
SV-136	I left the bathroom. I'm trying my best to stay calm as I type this, but I think there is a dead body in the middle of the street.		31/05/2018	21:43
SV-137	There's no way I'm taking a picture of a dead body. This is too gruesome. I'm just going to try to avoid it.		31/05/2018	21:58
SV-138	To take my mind off of what is outside, I dug deeper into the piles of books and papers scattered around the house, and I found something intriguing.	[Image] a purple Mead Five Star notebook	02/06/2018	05:04

SV-139		<p>[Image] Lined notepad entry reading; I regret my decision to stay. It has gotten incredibly lonley, and I have come to terms with the fact that I may never see Martha or my grandkids again. I pray to God that thou, at the very least, are safer than I am. I have noreal caution or regard for my own life anymore. I can only hope that what I gather from my near-suicidal experiments can be useful to someone else at a later date. I either die and be a peace or I get more information. Both outcomes sound favorable.</p>	02/06/2018	05:08
SV-140		<p>[Image] Lined notepad entry reading: Experiment notes I placed several flashlights around the perimeter of the house, testing them at different intensities (the control being no light at all) I believe the entities are more attracted to the flashlights than myself. <--- why? I got back inside before any permanent damage was done. Entry 2:</p>	02/06/2018	05:14

		<p>Blue lights appeared after day 6 in the dark <--- significance?. Light sources do not seem to attract their XXXXXXXXXX presence. Unlike the entities producing white/red flashing lights, the blue lights are higher in elevation and also seem to come from a different entity altogether. I believe the blue lights may also be more likely to move in unison, however there is no way to know for certain until they return. If they return at all</p>		
SV-141		<p>[Image] messy lined notepad entry reading: It finally happened. I was being reckless and I looked into the light. The red light I feel empty inside The sun is back</p>	02/06/2018	05:39
SV-142	<p>Yes, the sun is still gone. I have no clue what this journal is talking about. Seems like the same "talking nonsense" Tucker was talking about with his friend Flynn.</p>		03/06/2018	02:23

SV-143		<p>[image] screenshot twitter direct messages with Tucker. Tucker: Sorry I was gone so long. Power went out where I was so I've relocated. Trying to slowly work my way towards the west coast, so my reception is a bit spotty. I saw the picture of the thing in the sky. If you ever see one of those again GET AS LOW AS YOU CAN. And if you see the blue light, DO NOT let it shine on you. Sunny: I'm so glad to hear from you. Are you okay? Danyon texted me saying to stay low too. Tucker: Yeah I'm doing okay considering what I've been through.</p>	04/06/2018	03:57
SV-144		<p>[image] screenshot twitter direct messages with Tucker. Sunny: Why should I not let the blue light shine on me? What happened that makes you say that? Tucker: Well when I got out I saw someone running away, and when the blue light shined on them they uh well</p>	04/06/2018	04:14

		suffice to say it wasn't pretty.		
SV-145	The body is just gone. Didn't see what happened to it, but it's not in the street anymore.		06/06/2018	06:59
SV-146	The water from this house is dark now. Thankfully I filled up my bottles with clean water, but I won't be able to stay here much longer after I run out.		08/06/2018	20:20
SV-147		[Image] Screenshot of a text conversation between Sunny and Danyon. Sunny: Danyon I'm sorry for what I did. Please respond	10/06/2018	07:23
SV-148	20 hours later, still no response.		11/06/2018	04:08
SV-149	Thankfully there's been no activity to take note of. I'm worried about Tucker though.		14/06/2018	08:24
SV-150	Guys. Someone is at the window.		15/06/2018	04:56
SV-151	It's too dark to make out anything, I just hear frantic knocking.		15/06/2018	05:05
SV-152	It could be Danyon, or it couldn't be. I guess there's only one way to find out.		15/06/2018	05:18

SV-153		[Video] Black screen with a knocking sound	15/06/2018	05:23
SV-154	They are still there at the window. I don't know what to do.		15/06/2018	06:47
SV-155	The person is still standing at the window, but they aren't making noise anymore.		16/06/2018	00:26
SV-156	Oh god nevermind, they are banging on the window now. I think with their head?		16/06/2018	02:00
SV-157		[Video] Black screen with a, Sunny is breathing rapidly, there's a loud repetitive banging sound, then glass shattering	16/06/2018	02:11
SV-158	They are in the house now. They are looking for me.		16/06/2018	02:50
SV-159		[Image] Photo taken from underneath something, on the other side is a foot	16/06/2018	04:08
SV-160	Been hiding for 20 hours, I think they're gone? I need to check the house first.		17/06/2018	01:10
SV-161	Where should I check first?	[Twitter poll] 15,625 votes: Upstairs: 60.4% Downstairs: 39.6%	17/06/2018	01:10
SV-162	I'm heading upstairs.		17/06/2018	05:51
SV-163	The person has definitely been up here.	[Image] A bloody handprint on a wall	17/06/2018	06:42

SV-164	They are still there upstairs. Just snapped this before getting out of there.	[Image] A tall figure standing in the dark	17/06/2018	07:24
SV-165	Staying low, staying safe.		17/06/2018	08:16
SV-166	She seems to be in a trance? She was trying to track me down before but now, even if I'm right in front of her, she doesn't react.		18/06/2018	04:00
SV-167	I don't think she's a threat anymore. I locked her in the room where she's standing.		19/06/2018	16:23
SV-168	Holy shit. I woke up to find the door busted open.		19/06/2018	16:32
SV-169	Oh god she's here		19/06/2018	17:02
SV-170		[Video] Suuny hiding under something, the brainwashed woman walks past, stops next to him and reaches under to grab him. A car horn goes off distracting her.	19/06/2018	17:09
SV-171	After the car horn, I heard a gunshot.		19/06/2018	17:20
SV-172		[Image] Screenshot of a conversation between Sunny and Danyon. Danyon: I found your twitter Sunny: Is that you honking outside? And the gunshot? Danyon: yep	19/06/2018	17:24

SV-173		[Image] Screenshot of a conversation between Sunny and Danyon. Sunny: So we have the same problem as we had before. Can I trust you? Danyon: at your 11th birthday party I gave you a batman lego set is that good enough? Grab your stuff. Let's go.	19/06/2018	17:30
SV-174		[Video] Sunny running to a waiting car, Danyon is inside waiting with a gun	19/06/2018	17:31
SV-175	I'm finally back. There's so much that I have to catch you all up on. You won't believe what I've seen.		08/07/2018	03:43
SV-176	After the last video I tweeted, Danyon and I drove a ways into the boonies to stay away from where all the activity is in town. He brought camping gear, so we've stayed in a tent out in the woods for the last couple weeks.		08/07/2018	03:56
SV-177	It wasn't long before we were out of range from any cell towers, but I made sure to still document anything significant.		08/07/2018	04:22
SV-178	On our way out of town, we noticed what looked to be a star in the sky. But	[Video] Dark grainy video of a light in the sky,	08/07/2018	04:40


	almost as soon as I pulled my phone out, the star disappeared.	after 10 seconds is dissapears		
SV-179	<p>Once we got far enough away where we couldn't see the city lights anymore, we set up camp. It was actually sort of peaceful for a bit, and it gave Danyon and I plenty of time to catch up.</p> <p>But unfortunately, there was some rising conflict between us.</p>		08/07/2018	05:26
SV-180	<p>Danyon isn't a fan of me broadcasting my situation to the internet, he thinks it's dangerous. My philosophy is that I have a chance to reach other people who might be in the same situation as I am.</p> <p>But suffice to say he hasn't been in a hurry to get back to reception.</p>		08/07/2018	05:55
SV-181	At this point we had been arguing for days on what to do next, until our decision was made for us. A storm rolled in and we saw this.	[Video] A lightning storm illuminates an otherwise black sky. Each time the sky lights up a diamond shaped craft can been seen hovering above the trees	08/07/2018	06:16
SV-182	So with the activity getting closer to our campsite, I finally convinced	[Image] dark image of a cell tower in the distance.	08/07/2018	06:44

	Danyon for us to pack up and drive towards the closest cell tower.			
SV-183	Do I trust Danyon? Yes. Do I trust his judgement? I'm not so sure.		08/07/2018	07:00
SV-184	We've been camping out next to the cell tower. Danyon took the car and left few hours ago to find more fuel to siphon.		12/07/2018	23:05
SV-185	While Danyon is gone, I'm free to answer any questions you all have.		12/07/2018	23:29
SV-186	Haven't seen anything yet thankfully. Fingers crossed.	[Image] Twitter Direct message reading: How close is the activity to your campsite	12/07/2018	23:28
SV-187	Without knowing your situation, all I can say is to stay low. If you are inside, stay away from windows and doors. Good luck to you and your survival guide.	[Image] Twitter Direct message reading: Hey TSV, I'm Nat. I have survived 2 months now thanks to the info you've accumulated and shown us. I owe you. I want to make a guide for survival, pick up where the news outlets left off. I have been trying to collect anything I can from other survivors out there and was wondering if you have any tips?	13/07/2018	00:30

SV-188	No, not since the video I posted a few days ago.	[Image] Screenshot of SV-R114	13/07/2018	00:59
SV-189	I honestly have no clue. There's a lot of speculation and theories floating around, but I'm more focused on staying alive and out of trouble.	[Image] screenshot of a now deleted tweet asking "Why do you think the sun went out?"	13/07/2018	01:20
SV-190	I just woke up and Danyon is still gone.		13/07/2018	17:31
SV-191	No response in close to 12 hours.	[Image] Screenshot of a conversation between Sunny and Danyon. Sunny: Where are you?	14/07/2018	04:36
SV-192	I'm stuck here with no car, no gun. Just a tent and the essentials.		15/07/2018	01:05
SV-193	I only have 38 hours of battery left if I Danyon doesn't come back with the car.	[Image] Screenshot of a phone home screen. "12:24 38h 1m remaining Battery power 65%	15/07/2018	06:26
SV-194	Guys, we have a new problem.		17/07/2018	00:33
SV-195	I can't see anything but I can hear someone walking around my tent.		17/07/2018	00:43
SV-196	Oh god nevermind, now I can see.		17/07/2018	01:02
SV-197		[Video] a flashing light shown through the blue fabric of the tent. Each flash is accompanied by a clicking sound	17/07/2018	01:05
SV-198	This one is different from the others. It's just wandering aimlessly and		17/07/2018	01:34

	flickering at random intervals.			
SV-199	I'm fighting the urge to go check it out, I know it's too risky... but I have only 5 hours of battery left, not a single sign of Danyon returning, and not much else to lose.		17/07/2018	02:12
SV-200	...	[Twitter Poll] Votes: 39,383. Stay in the tent: 44.1% Investigate outside: 55.9%	17/07/2018	02:18
SV-201	I'm leaving the tent to investigate outside.		17/07/2018	04:30
SV-202	Quickly snapped this photo and got the hell out of there	[Image] Silhouette of tall grass and humanoid figure	17/07/2018	04:41
SV-203	I followed it into the crops to get a good look at it. The crops we're about 6-7 feet high, so that gives you a good idea of how much taller it was.		17/07/2018	04:46
SV-204	Less than 2 hours of battery left. I'm powering down my phone for now. Wish me luck.		17/07/2018	05:52
SV-205	Two years. It's been exactly two years since the day all this started.		01/05/2020	02:08
Tweet ID	Tweet Text	Attachment Description	Date	Time
SV-R001	Out of curiosity I look up the event on google and there's no trace of CNN reporting this chaos		27/05/2018	16:25

SV-R002	That's probably because nobody has reported the incident. We all think it's fake. Some of us might think it's real, but they wouldn't be able to help.		30/05/2018	18:20
SV-R003	It's not an ARG. ARGs have you interact with them.		07/12/2018	23:50
SV-R004	I knew it! I posted on fantastic daily about it being a clover field unique advertising I knew it! I posted on fantastic daily about it being a clover field unique advertising @FD_HeyFolks		01/05/2018	04:36
SV-R005	What if this is just another ARG for a cloverfield movie AFTER overlord		01/05/2018	17:19
SV-R006	Gente esse ARG é bem louco recomendo	[Translation] Guys this ARG is really crazy I recommend	07/05/2018	21:54
SV-R007	Let's image for a second that is alternative universe, can you tell whom belong the voice who read the news? Why that guy survive so long with no sun, pressingly no food supply and riots on the street? Why isn't freezing cold outside?		20/05/2018	23:05
SV-R008	I just tried to find the news article. I can't find anything.		31/05/2018	05:28

SV-R009	Has anyone checked into the fact that the news mention New England's Dark Day in 1780 that's an actual event		09/06/2018	19:49
SV-R010	You will be getting a ton of followers due to some spotlight being brought to your account from a UTube channel		01/05/2018	00:09
SV-R011	What YouTube channel? Saw this on reddit.		01/05/2018	17:16
SV-R012	Did you move to a different universe entirely, hu? I mean I barely see the sun thanks to Britain's on usual weather but nothing stops that orange ball from reaching me.		29/09/2018	20:34
SV-R013	Depending on what happened to the sun, something is blocking it and the earth is still orbiting the gravity well of the sun or the sun is really gone and Earth is flying out of the solar system. It's getting cold...	[Link] [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rltpH6ck2Kc] Link to a Vsauce YouTube video titled "What If The Sun Disappeared?" (Stevens, 2013)	01/05/2018	01:51
SV-R014	Its probably the national guard patrolling could just be warning shots.		01/05/2018	06:22
SV-R015			19/05/2018	17:16

SV-R016	Did you also see that Nasa lost contact with the ISS and other spacecraft as well? It's getting really cold where I'm at. This is 2 pm where I live, it's so quiet out right now. The news says if it stays like this, the temp will be below zero by the weekend.	[Image] Several snow covered houses and a dark sky	01/05/2018	19:33
SV-R017	I can't believe I found others.. I have been hiding since April after I awoke to what used to be my husband tried to kill me. It is so dark and I had lost hope.		29/01/2019	08:04
SV-R018	tell us were do you live and we will mange an emergency to help you,, :)		27/05/2018	22:58
SV-R019	Are the sounds getting closer? Is it safe to go outside to see if you can see the stars?		02/05/2018	02:47
SV-R020	It sounds like something is powering up, that and the flashing (skull? Or is that me?)		02/05/2018	06:12
SV-R021	Screenshots i took:	[Image] 3 screenshots of SV-016, showing what looks to be a red skull	10/05/2018	03:35
SV-R022	that is the red light reflecting off the tree.		15/05/2018	02:47

SV-R023	Maybe the earth is encased in a sphere perhaps		09/05/2018	02:54
SV-R024	Perhaps a giant air craft?		02/05/2018	05:52
SV-R025	Your area was transported to an alternate reality where there aren't any stars or planets.		29/05/2028	16:21
SV-R026	Are the cell towers still good? Can you call anyone? If you have service you should try to reach out to your friends or parents or someone.		02/05/2018	12:49
SV-R027	Stay safe my brother. Does calling 9/11 or the National Guard help? Are you able to contact anyone else besides us on twittet?		02/05/2018	16:43
SV-R028	can you see light anywhere? Like house lights or car headlights?		03/05/2018	16:27
SV-R029	Gonna guess that ain't a boeing 747		03/05/2018	20:53
SV-R030	Almost reminds me of the Vulcan Howl.		12/05/2018	21:57
SV-R031	Bruh that's a space ship		13/05/2018	10:47
SV-R032	If you've read it all you'd know that he feels waves of warmth after a ship passes over		08/07/2028	06:56
SV-R033	Theory is that the aliens are trying to take the planet and kill the humans but they still want the planet to survive so		31/03/2020	13:29

	they use their ships to keep it warm.			
SV-R034	The ships, or something, has been flying around, warming the atmosphere.		09/07/2018	04:31
SV-R035	Maybe the flicky Bois can only function in hot climates		01/10/2020	06:10
SV-R036	Is there any family members or friends you know that use Twitter? You could talk to them.		03/05/2018	19:35
SV-R037	Prob best to ask a question only they would know and make sure it's actually your friend ...		04/05/2018	00:42
SV-R038	Did you see them leave		04/05/2018	04:28
SV-R039	Don't answer it in any way, and GRAB A BASEBALL BAT!!!		04/05/2018	04:37
SV-R040	It's just a theory but if this is real does anyone else think that he might be on another planet or dimension were there is a human like spices that has grown the same amount as us, and he thinks he is talking to the people on his world. Or could he be from the future		08/05/2018	21:00

SV-R041	Well there is only one planet i know of that is just like earth and where humans can survive which is Kepler 22b but there hasnt really been anything on there like cars and many houses for people to live in so i know kepler 22b isnt it		18/06/2018	21:11
SV-R042	The sky is dark because an explosion destroyed the sun. X@-7 is the code to reset. Please use before it is dark forever. Secret agent 47 save us. You can only use this code once.		05/05/2018	03:47
SV-R043	WAIT Are those numbers?	[Image] Zoomed in screenshot of SV-065	08/05/2018	07:24
SV-R044	4 9 1 1(not sure?) 5?		08/05/2018	07:25
SV-R045	4345 maybe? I wonder if that means anything...	[Image] Zoomed in and filtered screenshot of SV-065	08/05/2018	07:33
SV-R046	Have we seen any other numbers at any time? Maybe putting them together could make a phone number or coordinates		08/05/2018	07:34
SV-R047	thought the same 4785? 1785?		08/05/2018	11:53
SV-R048	Looks like it says 'dave' to me	[Image] Zoomed in and filtered screenshot of SV-065	08/05/2018	10:01

SV-R049	Your friend is becoming more and more suspect. "No earthly idea what that means" Have you spoken to him over the phone yet?		08/05/2018	07:25
SV-R050	What if those Headlights like a bacteria that developed her own form from not having the sun light ? Or even worse they could transfer from a host to host by that light you saw ? And try be careful of D boy he's starting to speak weirder and weirder each minute		08/05/2018	07:41
SV-R051	A group of us following you have decided to look into researching the differences between our universes we have created a discord if you decide to join it and the link works, trying to test if twitter is the only crossing between our worlds		08/05/2018	07:30
SV-R052	Rig the house up home alone style. Greased floors. Heated door handles. The works.		11/05/2018	17:12
SV-R053	Trip wire paint cans potentially??		11/05/2018	17:12
SV-R054	Spikes		11/05/2018	17:13
SV-R055	If you have any cardboard that'll work		11/05/2018	18:09

SV-R056	Place a dresser or some sort of furniture in front of the windows to block out as much light as possible		11/05/2018	18:09
SV-R057	Bedsheets, my guy		11/05/2018	18:09
SV-R058	I'm sorry :(how's the flour doing and are you okay emotionally?		14/05/2018	17:39
SV-R059	SOMEONE ENHANCE		29/05/2018	03:10
SV-R060	I ain't liking this	[Image] three brightened and versions of SV-130	29/05/2018	03:20
SV-R061		[Image] Black and White brightened and versions of SV-131	29/05/2018	03:13
SV-R062	Looks like some kind of aircraft	[Image] Zoomed in and brightened and versions of SV-130	29/05/2018	03:12
SV-R063	I have three possibilities for what that thing is: 1. Spaceship (mothership?) 2. Atlas-like entity 3. A hole/tear in whatever Dyson Sphere covers the Earth		29/05/2018	14:05
SV-R064	It's aliens, I bet		29/05/2018	03:10
SV-R065	We got an alien invasion boyos		29/05/2018	03:10
SV-R066	What is an atlas like entity?		29/05/2018	14:09
SV-R067	I believe if it's to our definition it can actually be a machine to graph the world he's in.		29/05/2018	14:39
SV-R068	it's the sims diamond guys. Chill		29/05/2018	03:10
SV-R069	I just see a sims plumbot wtf????		29/05/2018	03:11

SV-R070	are you in the sims by chance		29/05/2018	03:11
SV-R071	I think the whole thing with the sun vanishing is actually supposed to be a Dyson sphere-like object around earth If it where around the sun he would be able to see stars, planets, ect. I don't think that thing in the last post is the sphere It might be trying to heat the planet.		29/05/2018	16:06
SV-R072	Pics or it didn't happen [Sneezing face] [Sneezing face]		31/05/2018	21:43
SV-R073	Oh shit maybe looking into the light brings the sun back?		02/06/2018	05:40
SV-R074	What if the "sun" is a hallucination before you enter that trance like state or get taken over? Looking into the light is not a good idea. It obviously has adverse effects.		02/06/2018	17:07
SV-R075	Hey, what if you're stuck in some weird reality,and the lights (maybe just the red ones) are the way out? Food for thought.		02/06/2018	05:43
SV-R076	I ship it		04/06/2018	03:57
SV-R077	Omg low-key		04/06/2018	04:01
SV-R078	The fridge		17/06/2018	01:11

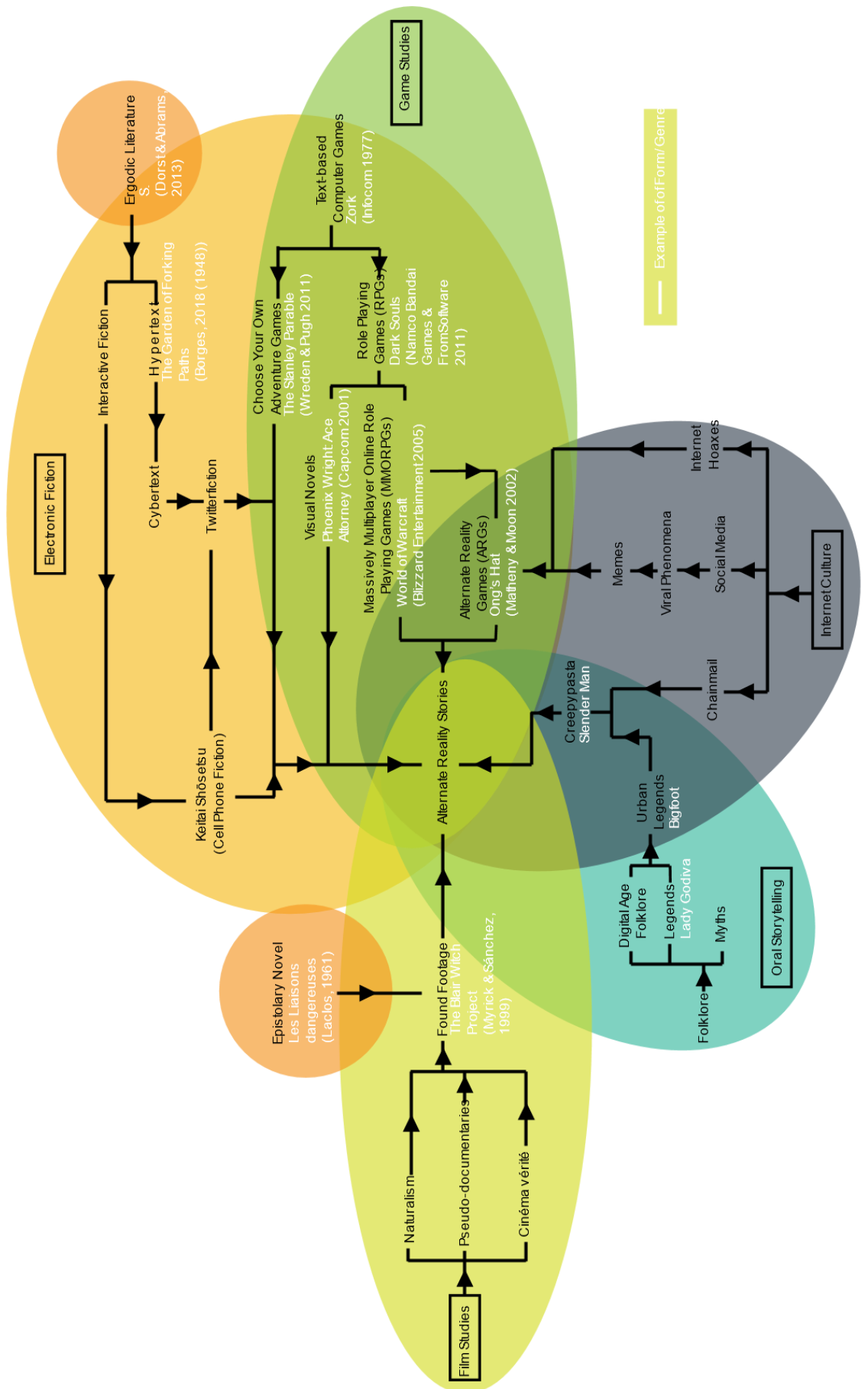
SV-R079	I would go somewhere there's a weapon at		17/06/2018	01:11
SV-R080	Check whatever floor you are on first		17/06/2018	01:11
SV-R081	Closets, beds, bathroom(s) be systematic close each cleared room.		17/06/2018	01:11
SV-R082	And if what you are experiencing is the photonic belt?		19/06/2018	17:09
SV-R083	The Photonic Belt is a spiritual belief linked to some parts of the New Age Movement. It postulates that a belt or ring of photons is going to envelop the Earth, cause a cataclysm and/or initiate a spiritual transition, with the time period leading up to "the Shift."		19/06/2018	17:18
SV-R084	ITS FREAKING DANYON		19/06/2018	17:10
SV-R085	شكله خويه Maybe your friend danyen trying to help	[Translation] Its shape is free	19/06/2018	17:11
SV-R086	IS DANYON THE GUY ON THE CAAARRRRRRR RRRRRRRRRRRR RR		19/06/2018	17:10
SV-R087	I'm almost 1000% sure that it was Danyon in the car and I'm so scared tbh		23/06/2018	05:29
SV-R088	He dont post nothing yet, im scared.		25/06/2018	17:21
SV-R089	Trust him		19/06/2018	17:30
SV-R090	DONT DO IT		19/06/2018	17:30

SV-R091	Go to him and don't look back		19/06/2018	17:31
SV-R092	Fair enough if that's true then go		19/06/2018	17:31
SV-R093	He may have transformed but kept his memories... You can never be too careful, be ready for a backstab at any moment		19/06/2018	17:31
SV-R094	That gun though		19/06/2018	17:32
SV-R095	Nice gun, Dan	[image] screenshot of SV-174	19/06/2018	17:34
SV-R096	Waayyy out that common 4 days without posting tsv never posted more than 2-3 days apart		23/06/2018	21:25
SV-R097	Oh really!! So here the story ends		19/06/2018	17:33
SV-R098	I lowkey dont want the story to end oof		19/06/2018	17:33
SV-R099	What if it ended right there, and it's up to the reader to decide if he got shot by his friend or taken by the aliens or whatever?		19/06/2018	18:13
SV-R100	What really happened	[Image] a drawing of someone angrily shooting the sun. the sun ha a sad face.	08/07/2018	05:55
SV-R101	TEA		08/07/2018	05:55
SV-R102		[Gif] clip from <i>The Wendy Williams Show</i> (Williams, 2008) showing Wendy Williams dipping a teabag in a mug. The caption reads: The tea is exceptionally good today.	08/07/2018	05:56
SV-R103	give us the tea, sun		08/07/2018	05:26

SV-R104	WHY IS EVERYONE SAYING TEA		08/07/2018	05:55
SV-R105	Please enlighten me on why the hell people are spamming tea?		08/07/2018	07:58
SV-R106	Spill the tea' is something people say when they want to know more of a story. Something like spill the beans		09/07/2018	07:14
SV-R107		[Image] a retro-wave text meme reading: Alright WHOSE HIDING THE SUN	08/07/2018	06:17
SV-R108	The grinch think he slick	[Image] A copy of <i>How the Grinch Stole Christmas</i> (Seuss, 1957), the word "Christmas" has been replaced by "The sun" and a smiling cartoon sun is now featured on the Grinch's bag	08/07/2018	06:44
SV-R109	U know i got those notifs on [Call me hand] [Call me hand]		12/06/2018	23:06
SV-R110	\$5 says he's gone forever		12/06/2018	23:06
SV-R111	HE LEFT WITHOUT YOU?!?!		12/06/2018	23:06
SV-R112	he ain't coming back chief		12/06/2018	23:06
SV-R113	Wait is this shit real? I thought this was a joke, is this only in America or parts of America? Ever thought that where ever there is no sun is just covered in q dark dome		13/06/2018	00:32

SV-R114	Did you see that thing in the sky again?		12/06/2018	23:29
SV-R115		[Image] Someone sitting at a desk with the sign: Danyon isn't coming back. Change my mind	13/07/2018	01:04
SV-R116	It's Morse code		17/07/2018	01:35
SV-R117	I was looking at the last one and someone decoded it, it said see		17/07/2018	01:40
SV-R118	He is one of them but he wants to come back and say I love you		17/07/2018	01:35

Appx 2 Defining inspirations and context of Alternate Reality Stories



Glossary

- AAA Games** – Pronounced Triple-A is an informal but widely accepted term for video games with a high development budget or produced by major publishers. These are opposite of indie games.
- Alternate Reality Games (ARG)** - Playable puzzles or interactive narratives that blur the fiction/ reality paradigm.
- Augmented Reality (AR)** – A form of interactive media that supplements computer generated information into real world environments.
- Bots** – Short for robot, is a slang term for computer programs designed to simulate human activity.
- Branching Storylines** – An example of a Non-Linear Narrative, where multiple possible timelines exist, and the narrative diverges on due to decisions made by the player.
- Butterfly effect** – A conceptual notion linked to the study of chaos theory, that suggests small causes can have large effects.
- Cell phone Fiction (Keitai Shousetsu)** – Electronic literature written in the form of text messages, often written on mobile phones or instant message computer programs, originally popularised in Japan.
- Chain Mail** – a letter that attempts to convince recipients to make a number of copies of the message and forward them to other users.
- Choice and Consequence** – Based on decisions or choices having impacts later in the game. In games with branching storylines this mechanic is often used to direct the player onto a different path.
- Choose Your Own Adventure** – Narratives in which the reader assumes the role of the protagonist and makes choices determining the character's actions, effecting the ending of the story.
- Cinéma Vérité** – a subgenre of documentary filmmaking combining improvisation from subjects and observational camera techniques.
- Creepypasta** – Internet-based short form horror stories that rely on 'copy and paste' sharing in order to create more immersive and suspenseful narratives. One example of this medium is the popular Slenderman urban legend (Surge, 2009).
- Curtains/ The Curtain** – A reference to The Wizard of Oz, the ARG curtains are the wall of anonymity between the players and the puppet masters. The mechanics and inner workings of the ARG should always remain behind the curtains in order to maintain the immersion.
- Cybertext** - A form of Ergodic Literature where the user has an active role in how they consume the narrative and can experience different narratives based on how they participate.

- Digital Age Folklore** – The communication of stories and cultures through the internet.
- Digital Fiction** - Fictional stories that exist in the digital space and would lose something if read in print.
- Electronic Literature** - Digital-born literature that is designed to be read electronically.
- Epistolary Novel** – Fragmented narratives written as a collection of documents or entries.
- Extended Experiences** – ARGs produced as a tie-in to an established film or television property, designed to further the narrative or used as a competition for viewers. These ARGs often have very little effect on, and exist outside of, the original piece.
- Found footage films** – A cinematic subgenre featuring films made from supposedly discovered multimedia recordings, edited into a narrative.
- Game Story** - The narrative within a game, i.e., the events that the protagonist (or playable characters) are a part of, and the additional in-game lore/history.
- Grassroots ARG** – ARGs made with little to no budget, that are used purely for entertainment rather than marketing purposes.
- Hypertext Fiction** - A fragmented form of storytelling where sections of the narrative are interlined via a network of hyperlinks.
- Indie Games** – Short for independent games are video games produced by a single developer or small team. These are opposite of AAA games.
- Interactive Fiction** - Literary works in which the narrative is not predetermined and requires actions from the reader such as entering commands, making decisions, or following non-linear paths, in order to tell a unique story.
- Internet Hoax** – Digital fabrications often intended as a practical joke or to incite cultural change, or for marketing purposes. The term is occasionally used in reference to urban legends although this usage is debated by folklorists.
- Let's Plays** – Videos or live streams documenting the person's playthrough of a video game, often accompanied by an audio commentary.
- LOLspeak** – A form of internet slang and interactive written discourse that uses the deliberate misspelling of words, or imitation of child speech patterns, in conjunction with initialisms for comedic effect.
- Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Game (MMORPG)** – A video game that combines aspects of role-playing games and online multiplayer games, to produce large scale persistent worlds for an international player base.
- Meme** – A concept or behaviour that spreads via replication and imitation from person to person. They often carry a symbolic meaning linked to a cultural idea or practice. In relation to the internet are often images, jokes or trends spread via social networks.

- Multi-Player Games** – Video games in which more than one user can control characters within the same environment either locally or online. This is the opposite of Single Player games
- Naturalism (film and theatre)** – Theatrical movement that attempts to create an impression of truth.
- Non-Linear Narratives** – A narrative technique in which the plot or narrative events take place out of order, or in a non-traditional pattern.
- Open World Games** – A virtual game, with a non-linear or unstructured gameplay that allows players to approach the objectives in any order.
- Persistent World (PW) or Persistent State World (PSW)** – A real-time virtual world accessed via the internet that exist in a continuous state regardless of player activity. These are also known as MUDs (Multi-user dungeon, with later variants including multi-user dimension and multi-user domain).
- Players** – ARG players are the individuals interacting with the game. Often ARG players act as a community to play the game, rather than as an individual experience.
- Point-and-click adventure games** – Video games wherein the play controls a character or environment by using a computer mouse and user interface.
- Proto-hyperfiction**- Examples of hyperfiction where interconnected but fragmented narratives from multiple perspectives form a print novel.
- Pseudo-documentaries** – film productions that mimic the format of documentaries despite portraying fictional events.
- Puppet Masters** – The individual(s) producing or orchestrating the ARG. PMs are responsible for the creation of puzzles, narrative elements, and resources for the ARG.
- Puzzle** – a game or problem designed to be solved by testing the player’s ingenuity or knowledge
- Puzzle game** – a wide-ranging genre of video games centred on problem solving mechanics.
- Rabbit Hole** – In reference to Alice falling down the rabbit hole and entering Wonderland, in *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* (Carroll, L., & Steadman, R. 1967). Often the rabbit hole is the first artefact posted by the PM, with the aim of drawing in players.
- Role-Playing-Game (RPG)** – Games in which players assume a fictional role of person or persons within the game’s world.
- Secret Ending** – Narrative conclusions (or sometimes extensions) that require ‘unlocking’, through the use of cheat codes, puzzle solving or following a specific story branch.
- Seeds/ Seeding** – The act of planting PM controlled accounts or personae within the player community. This can be used to redirect player focus or to build immersion.

Single-Player – Video games in which one person controls one or many in-game characters. This is the opposite of Multi-player games.

Social Media Fiction - The fourth generation Digital Literature, where Twitterfictions and Facebook Fictions employ the aesthetics of their platforms to further a narrative

Sock puppet account – False online identities created with the intent to deceive or trick other users into thinking they someone else.

Tabletop Games – games played on a flat surface, examples include xcard games, board games, dice games, tile games, and miniature war games.

This is Not a Game – A phrase used by ARG enthusiasts to describe the nature of ARGs never revealing that they are an ARG.

Trailhead – Similar to rabbit holes, trailheads are the first posts within an ARG, often representing the beginning of the narrative.

Transmedia Storytelling- Literature that details its narrative over a range of mediums or continues the narrative in a new way through a different platform.

Urban Legends – contemporary folklore spread from person to person as true accounts, often told as a tale of caution or for entertainment purposes.

Video Game- Electronic games that require interaction from the player or user, to manipulate digital images or computer programs on an electronic device/console.

Viral Phenomena – Social and cultural trends spread by word of mouth. In reference to digital spaces this includes internet specific memes such as, jokes, images, themes, or sensations.

Virtual Reality (VR) – Simulated experiences separated from the real world. This often facilitated by VR technology like headsets, for entertainment or educational use.

Visual Novel (ビジュアルノベル) – Interactive fiction video games that mimic mixed-media literature often accompanied by interactive sprites, dialogue, and interface.

Walking Simulators – Games with little to no combat and limited player interaction, focused instead on the characters, environments, and narrative. The term began as an insult to games deemed ‘boring’ or ‘low-action’, however it has recently been reframed by independent game developers.

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