

## **The Mad Scientist's Husband**

Finalist, Inception Contest

Novel by Eric Roe

His name was Charlie Rabin. He was a photographer for KBHI News Portland, but his lazy-afternoon dream was to make an epic feature film of St. George and the Dragon. He believed that the lush forests of the Tualatin Mountains, near where he and his wife lived, could serve as a surrogate for the woods of England (he'd never been to England), and on solitary hikes he imagined the dragon crashing through the old-growth trees in its furious attempt to devour St. George and his white horse, who were impeding the dragon's intended meal of the lovely Princess Sabra. But Charlie Rabin would be remembered for something else entirely: He was the husband of Catherine C. Rabin, MD, PhD; he at first collaborated with her on the project that would make her infamous and then, after he changed his mind, tried and failed to stop her.

They met courtesy of a paper mill mechanic whose arm was caught in a machine and turned into a gory horror movie prop. Charlie's news team covered the story when the accident occurred, and they came back for a miracle-of-modern-medicine follow-up. "First doctor wanted to amputate, all the way up at the shoulder," the mechanic said. "I wasn't having that. They finally sent me over to Marquam. They bring in Dr. Rabin, and I tell her, Look, I need my arm for work. I can't lose my arm. She just gives it a once-over and says, Okay."

painting. An interest in society and American Studies led her to examine the ways we live in the world today. Her style evokes the attractive, illustrative yet disturbing style of Rene Magritte while the subject matter places her in the world of contemporary social realist painters.

**Sidney Muntean** is a high school student in the creative writing program at Orange County School of the Arts. Her work has been recognized with second place in the Freedom to Read Art & Poetry Contest, and has been published in *The Phoenix* and *The Loud Journal*. When she's not writing, she's probably dancing up a storm. She firmly believes she was a ballet dancer in a past life because the routines she'll come up with in the rain feel like a distant dream.

**Mitchell Nobis** is a writer, teacher, and adoptive dad in Metro Detroit where he lives with his family. His poetry has appeared in *Exposition Review*, *Hobart*, *The Wayne Literary Review*, *English Journal*, and others. His poetry manuscript was a runner-up for the 2019 Hopper Poetry Prize, and he coauthored the teaching book *Real Writing: Modernizing the Old School Essay*. Find him at @MitchNobis or mitchnobis.com.

**Hayley Patterson** is a New York artist with a portfolio that displays achievements in both analog and digital media. Hayley's knowledge of art history as well as current trends is reflected across all animated and illustrative work. In the coming year, other illustrations will be published by Flying Ketchup Press and *Meat for Tea: The Valley Review*. A recent college graduate who finished summa cum laude, Hayley spends most of her time doodling and working and doodling some more, looking for the next challenge.

**Barb Reynolds** spent twenty-two years as a child abuse investigator. Her chapbook *Boxing Without Gloves* was published by Finishing Line Press. Her poems have been published widely, and she founded & curate the Second Sunday Poetry Series in Berkeley, CA.

**Eric Roe** has won *Chautauqua's* 2018 Editors Prize and *The Bellingham Review's* 2015 Tobias Wolff Award for Fiction. Work has also appeared in TulipTree's *Stories That Need to Be Told* anthology, the Best American Fantasy anthology, *Petrichor* (forthcoming), *The Tishman Review*, *South 85, december*, *Redivider*, *Barrelhouse*, and other literary journals. Eric lives in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, and serves as the editorial assistant at UNC's Marsico Lung Institute.