

Endaris in the style of Charles Dickens

by Michael J. Hollows

The royal court, home to the godly, powerful, and undying king, sat in the heart of Endaris; where the houses lined the city in rows, short, thin, and narrow, like precessions of match sticks, although the inhabitants seldom matched; great grass courtyards grew in splendid colours, like the grasping tendrils of the forest that lay to the south, but controlled and trimmed, synonymous with the populace of the city. Those in power lived in mansions, around the houses, housing the round. They longed for the decorative comfort of indoors, past shuttered doors, and jealous stares.

One such man was Rao, the councillor of councillors, and he shut the door behind him, the door that resembled a wooden face. The hallway was closed-in, like a burial chamber, and claustrophobic in its likeness; where the surfaces were covered in blood, but not the blood of men, rather, merely the suggestion that blood had, could, or would be spilt, as the flickering candle of illumination cast its red-orange hue on the stone steps that led, threateningly, up towards the audience chamber, like the steps of a throne, towering above lesser men. Rao ascended the steps, though his heavy heart passed the other way, ever towards the audience and his doom,

through blood-casting candles, and through rooms filled with judging portraits, he continued, forever up.

In the court, the room overflowing with people, like a lake in midwinter, water rushing away, free to its path, his erstwhile colleagues, less erstwhile than colleagues, laughed and joked at Rao's expense, but he would have the last laugh.