

**ART AND LITERATURE PROJECTS BY NCU STUDENTS (2024/2025):
REVISITING *HAMLET*
WRITING DETECTIVE FICTION**

The courses in “Intertextuality and Adaptation” and “Detective Fiction” (English Studies, BA programme, 2nd year) invite their participants to devise their own artistic projects as part of the course assessment. Some of the last year’s creative writing and art are presented in this year’s edition of the Students’ Corner.

The projects devised for the 2024/2025 course in “Intertextuality and Adaptation” use various art forms to demonstrate a range of attitudes to Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*. A majority of last year’s projects comment on the representation of the character of Ophelia, focusing on her madness and death and referring not only to the original play but also to the rich and centuries-long pictorial tradition.

Short stories and scripts rewriting the genre of detective fiction combine theoretical knowledge of genre characteristics and typologies with creative re-imagining of the familiar (and unfamiliar) spaces of the university campus.

We hope that you will find as much pleasure viewing and reading these projects, as their creators had working on them.

Edyta Lorek-Jezińska

OPHELIA'S MONOLOGUE

(script and stills from the original short film)



A slow shot of the Vistula River can be seen, before cutting abruptly, showing Ophelia, who sits on the riverside holding a flower, as she appears to be lost in thought.



OPHELIA, *while picking petals from a flower*: To be... not to be...to be...not to be...to be...

Ophelia sighs at the sight of the last petal remaining.

OPHELIA: As the world is blinded by its own sorrows, I remain unchanged in my woes. For holy vows of heaven do not grant mercy for the living, but only dread...of something after death.

OPHELIA (*resigned*): Thus, only remembrances remain in this mortal world. Be it a moment of great despair, or a blood stained cloth.

She picks the last petal and blows it away.

Camera shot changes, showing Ophelias face from the front.

OPHELIA: Pray thee, whose sins in my orisons be all remembr'd. Pray, for those whose weeping of shame still echoes through the chambers of their hearts. Pray, for those left with indignation instead of anguish. Pray for thyself.

She laughs gently.

OPHELIA (*with increasingly sharp tone*): For thy loss thy honor and nobleness may sustain. But alas, what a work of art is a man whose own madness persists to carve a chasm into the rotten heart of Denmark. O woe is them, those who perished by the serpent's tongue. O woe is them, who perished by noble mind o'erthrown.

The camera cuts to another shot, showing Ophelia from the back.



OPHELIA (*with melancholy*): The nymphs of the water...they call to me! They speak of the flow of water...which shall wash me clean. As the sun washes its beautiful flowers, lying among everlasting gardens.

Ophelia sighs.

OPHELIA (*sadly*): They deceive me. For warden to my very soul gated up at my heart, as my body holds the weight of sorrows unbearable. May it resist; to continue living, I shall not allow it. My rightful place is by my father. And as the time forces its god-given powers upon the castles' walls, the same power...shall lead me into the eternity...I long for.

Ophelia suddenly shifts her position, now facing the viewer.



OPHELIA: Did you weep, Hamlet?

HAMLET (*quickly, off-screen*): I did not, fair Ophelia.

Ophelia laughs.

OPHELIA: Ah...so my hope in vain remained.

Kornelia Mazurkiewicz-Kloc



Simal Dogan & Sofiiia Shpak





Julia Siminska



**Helena Ledzińska &
Konrad Kwiatkowski**



To be, or not to be?

START! You are a prince of Denmark, grieving the loss of your father. Roll the dice.

3. BOO!! You see the ghost of your father. Now you have to listen to him talk about how your uncle murdered him. You decide to avenge his death, but the talk took a long time. You miss one turn.

10. Oh no! You decided to start pretending that you've gone mad. Unfortunately, this delays you. Take the longer path using the yellow tiles.

17. To be, or not to be? Roll the dice. If it falls on 1,2,3, or 5 you can keep playing. If it falls on 4 or 6 - you are out of the game.

22. Got you! You came up with a plan to stage a play which helps you confirm that your uncle indeed killed your father. This allows you to move forward with your plan of revenge. Roll the dice again.

27. Whoops! You killed your lover's father, thinking it was your uncle. Move back four spaces.

31. Bon voyage! You got sent to England with an order for your execution. Fortunately, you manage to escape, but it is a significant obstacle on your way to avenge your father. You miss two turns.

32. Yippie! Despite the delay, your forceful journey to England has made you more determined to get revenge. Move forward two spaces.

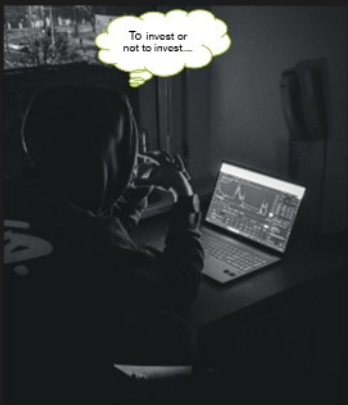
35. Goodbye my lover! Your lover, devastated by her father's death, dies. As a punishment for causing her death, go back to start.

FINISH! In a fight with your lover's brother, you get struck by a poisoned sword, but before dying you manage to kill your uncle and avenge your father. Congratulations, and rest in peace!

Matylda Skolimowska

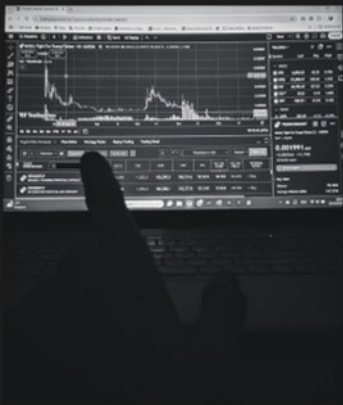
To Invest Or Not To Invest

Literature project based on
Shakespeare's Hamlet.

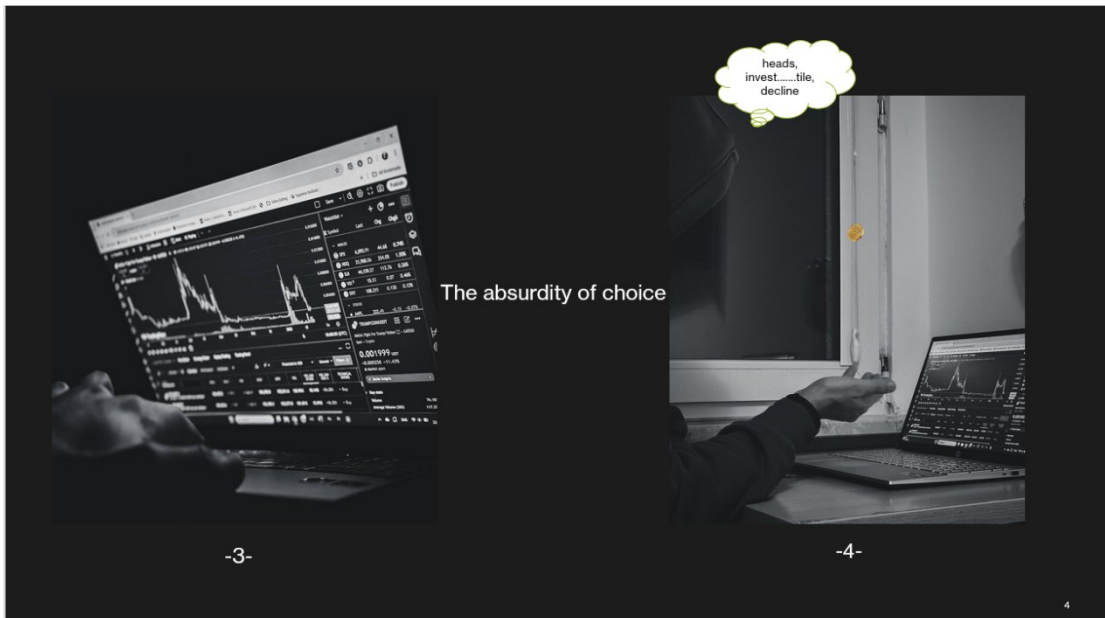


-1-

That is the question....



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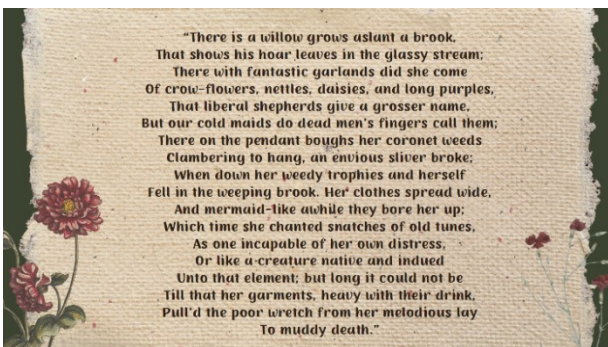
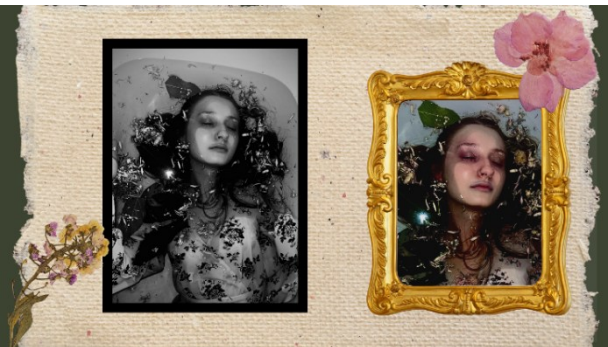
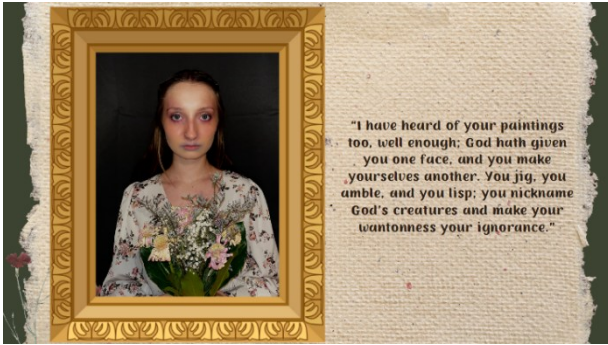


"To invest or not to invest"

- To invest, or not to invest: that is the plight,
Whether to risk in Trump's bold coin of might,
On the Coin's promise of gold gain,
Or guard my purse from potential pain.
- If I dare invest and prices soars to the skies,
I'll reap rich profits, a treasure in disguise.
But should it falter, it is a fleeting jest,
My hopes and wealth will come to rest.
- I flipped a coin, my future to divine,
Heads to invest, tails to decline.
The coin spun high, its fate unclear,
A gambler's whim, caught twixt hope and fear.
- For in this game of chance and lore,
Who knows what profits lie in store?
No charts to guide me, no graphs to discern,
The coin is new; its secrets yet to learn.
- Still, hope and story pull me toward the brink,
Narrative stronger than logic's sober link.
Thus, with my toss, the question dies,
And fortune's call in chance relies.



Souhaib Hriz (poem written with B. K. Lamine)



Patrycja Kwapińska & Marika Zawacka

BROKEN GLASS

Scene 1 (the only one)

INTERIOR, A ROOM IN DORMITORY NO. 4—EVENING

The room with two beds is filled with trash and clearly not cared for. It is located on the first floor of an apartment building surrounded by a concrete plaza with broken glass of all kinds spread on the pavement. The window of the room on the floor above is shattered.

A student, Connor, looks through the window and sighs heavily. He is dressed in a white shirt and a tie. On the desk there is a laptop with notes.

Then, his roommate, Jean, enters the room and starts unpacking.

CONNOR: Back from the uni so soon?

JEAN: Skipped the french culture class, don't need it anyway.

CONNOR: Could do you good. Maybe you'd learn to clean up your mess.

JEAN: Maybe you should learn to stop caring about the messes of other people.

CONNOR: Why? They bother everyone. It's just that somebody has to keep the order.

JEAN: It's a shame you can't study for a janitor, then. You think criminology's gonna make you into a detective? That why you wear a trenchcoat when it's thirty degrees outside?

CONNOR: It's stylish. Besides, it doesn't matter who I want to be. It only matters who the people need.

Jean opens a bottle of beer he took out of his backpack.

JEAN: If I say I need a normal roommate, will you stop playing Sherlock? Anyway, how's your case, detective?

CONNOR: I still don't think it's an accident.

JEAN: It's because you weren't here when it happened, and I was. It's not so unusual that a drunk guy falls out of a window. It happens in the other dorms, too. Probably happened three times this year.

CONNOR: Possibly. But after the poor fella landed, a bottle landed on his head. Sent him to a hospital. Why'd his friends do that to him?

After posing a question, Connor sits at his desk and starts writing on his laptop. He is sharing his thoughts on the dormitory group chat.

JEAN: I don't know. The guys on the second floor like to get stupid. It's a miracle they haven't been kicked out earlier. Good riddance, spares us from the noise.

CONNOR: Besides, there is one detail that everybody overlooks. Those guys never bought alcohol in glass bottles. For as long as I can remember they've been buying the stuff in the plastic ones. I'll share that with the others.

JEAN: Unless they invited a friend over, who happens to prefer properly bottled drinks, so there goes that theory. Besides, why even bother with this incident? Nobody cares anymore. It's been two days. In the next few days another group is gonna move in, and another guy is gonna fall out of the window. That's just the natural order of things in here, man!

CONNOR: I thought you were interested in the case.

JEAN: I was making fun of you. There is no case, just your delusions!

Suddenly, a knock at the door can be heard. Jean springs from his seat and rushes over to open, but his face turns pale upon seeing the visitor. In the doorway, there stands another student, Kamil, visibly angry.

KAMIL: You be Connor?

CONNOR: Connor? That would be me.

KAMIL: Could you please stop spreading lies about me?

CONNOR: Lies? What lies?

KAMIL: I live on the top floor and had nothing to do with it. I don't even drink alcohol!

JEAN: Man, chill, Connor's just being silly.

KAMIL: You chill! You still owe me fifty bucks, and here I am being accused!

CONNOR: Nobody's accusing you of anything. I just said it couldn't have been the partiers on the second floor.

KAMIL: And everybody's going to think it's me who smashed the bottle on his skull, on account of the fact that I was the one to tell them to shut up when they were too loud. Thanks a lot!

CONNOR: I'm sorry you feel that way, but the truth must come out, and sooner or later—it will.

KAMIL: You know what? You're right.

JEAN: No, wait a second, he's just fascinated with the books.

KAMIL: No money is worth disturbing my peace and quiet. I know, what really happened.

CONNOR: Oh yeah?

JEAN: Oh no...

KAMIL: It was a Monday night like any other with the group on the second floor drinking and shouting. It's true that one of them fell out of the window by his own doing. But that is not what led to his injury. I was opening my window, preparing to shout at them to keep quiet, when I saw him landing on the floor. Next thing I saw was the glass bottle flying from YOUR window and landing straight on the bastard's head. Here's your case.

Connor slowly turns to look at Jean with disappointment in his eyes.

JEAN: At least it's peaceful now, eh?

CONNOR: You're an actual moron.

JEAN: So what, now you're gonna report me? Be the man who got rid of the dormitory's unsung hero? That's how it's gonna be?

CONNOR: No. Now you're gonna tell the truth to everyone. I'm not gonna clean up your mess. Grow up and do it yourself.

Igor Radomski

UNSEEN

Nobody seemed to notice my presence, even though I was right next to the body. The two policemen were pacing around the vandalised room, searching for any clues among the scattered papers and broken furniture that would help them identify the culprit. The inspection of the crime scene lasted for two hours and thirteen minutes until they decided to head back to the police station. Only the head librarian remained more annoyed than concerned about the event. Muttering to himself about the burdensome work that was awaiting him the next day and the severe pain he was experiencing, he left the room, leaving me alone to process the events of last night.

If I were to describe the hours before the crime, I would pick the word “mundane.” Nothing appeared to be out of the ordinary—the quiet whispers of students’ learning, the buzz of a dusty, worn-out lamp, and the occasional screeching of chairs being dragged across the room. It was when the sun set and the room got empty that things took a dark turn. We stayed up late at the library, long past its closing hours. My colleague, worn out from working all day, entered a deep sleep. I, on the other hand, was doing some tasks when suddenly—I heard a bang.

Then another.

Then another.

The glass protecting the library from the rest of the campus shattered.

An unknown figure holding a crowbar entered the room, looking around nervously. At first, I thought they were a burglar, searching for valuables to sell off. I was mistaken. Not moments after, the intruder started swinging their weapon rapidly, hitting the nearest objects. The books, placed before on sturdy

shelves, were now lying on the ground. Another series of swings destroyed the windows, followed by pots with plants sitting on the main library desk. In their rage, the figure didn't even notice the harm they caused to themselves—although they were wearing gloves, a dark crimson stain could be seen.

Then, their eyes were set on us. I tried to wake my friend up, but it was no use. No sound came out of me, as if I was muted; the vandal rushed towards him, who was still unaware of the danger, and dealt a blow so powerful that in an instant they ended his life. But it was not enough. The figure tore the body apart, pulled at veins, and shattered what was left into something barely recognisable. I knew I was going to be next; no matter how hard I tried to scream, there was nobody who could hear me, who could help me. Suddenly, a strong voice could be heard, and a beam of light would light the scene. It was hard to figure out who the voice belonged to, but one thing was certain—whatever he was—he meant trouble for the culprit. The terrified criminal swung his crowbar one more time, breaking the window, and then they jumped out.

As the voice got closer, I recognised the university's security guard. But his eyes passed over me, sliding across me like light on dust. As if I were part of architecture. The guard spoke into his device and left. But today, the inspection of the crime scene by the police truly proved their incompetence and helplessness. They hadn't even covered what was left of the body. I suppose the assumption was that he didn't need that kind of respect, but my friend deserved every bit of it. He took pride in what he did—though you wouldn't know it from the way the students muttered about his age and ability to work. There are so many things that they missed. But I saw it. A single piece of hair under the body of my colleague. A drop of blood hidden among the scraps of paper. I knew that without evidence, the police would treat this crime as just more paperwork to put into an already full drawer. So, I took it all upon myself, pushing my limits for hours just to find any footage that would undeniably prove the identity of the culprit.

I *know* who broke him.

They will find out eventually. Or they won't. It makes no difference. I have stored the evidence. Indexed it. All compiled into a neat report on the desktop.

So, I'll wait.

Until I'm finally seen again.

Kornelia Mazurkiewicz-Kloc

THE FLOWER WREATH

It was only at the sixth time the man started to feel the warm sensation of melting down in his stomach. At this point his mind stopped racing with images; now, it was still and blank, as if barren of light. Three more times and the blade stopped persisting. The only thing left to do in this predicament is to fall down on the floor and bathe in the crimson pool. And so the man did, with a perfect execution worthy of an award. First, he dropped on the knees, hands hanging down, one of which was still holding the perpetrator for dear life. Then, the torso lost its balance and along with the head came crashing into the floor. Finally, he used the last strengths of his muscles to extend his left arm and point with the finger at the picture leaning against the wall, giving a final nod to the audience and selfishly leaving them perplexed.

The detective was immensely disappointed with such a boring case. One look at the scene was enough to brand it as suicide. Nine stab wounds to the abdomen. The shape of the crevasses, now dry as a bone, clearly indicated the workings of a sharp blade. What a surprise it was to find a knife in the hands of the victim. And even a bigger one when the fingerprints on it matched that of the lifeless body. How many years has it been since the detective started out in this field of expertise? 'Must have been almost twenty,' he thought to himself. Yet, he has never been called out for an obvious predicament of terminal self-harm. Why even bother the detectives who specialize in homicide by troubling them with something a third-rate policeman could do? To reach the answer, the detective would have to interrogate his younger assistant, the one responsible for calling him in the middle of a gleaming Sunday to come to the crime scene for a major breakthrough in the case.

'There is no case. He killed himself.' The tone of the Detective showed irritation at the performative nature of his younger colleague, who was too invested in crime fiction. The detective hated those stories. They were ridiculously unreal.

'The finger? It bothered me from the very beginning. Why is it positioned like that? Is this even possible to naturally set itself like that due to gravity?' The Assistant was unfazed by the visible resignation of his superior. He was glowing with engagement and excitement, completely oblivious to the rather serious and drastic environment he was in.

'It's a part of his spectacle. He did so deliberately to mock us and make us waste time on useless speculation,' The Detective sat down on the bed and lit a cigarette, all the while looking at his co-worker who was crouching next to the body with puzzled expression on his face.

'That's too abstract. It may be more substantial. Let's re-enact the scene,' The Assistant stood up and took off his jacket. He placed himself parallel to the laying body.

'Judging from the bruise on the forehead, he hit the ground pretty hard. The impact of the stabbings may have had some influence on the way the body dropped.' He extended his arm and with a vibrant, completely overdone force started hitting himself in the stomach, pretending to hold a knife. 'One, two, three...' The Assistant counted. It was only at the sixth time the Detective started laughing from disbelief. Once the countdown reached nine, the Assistant fell to his knees and hit the ground. And he hit it with an impact powerful enough to chase away the smile on the Detective's face. It went to the other host, whose eyes were shining proudly with joy at discovery. The whole scene looked uncanny. Two completely opposite entities occupying the same space.

'Look. My hands naturally placed themselves perpendicular to the body.' A fresh injury on the Assistant's forehead was being illuminated by the sun coming from the window.

'It was his intention then, to consciously make the adjustment.'

'Yes, it was. And I already told you that he's merely fucking with us.' What a waste of time for the Detective.

'A suicidal person wants to leave the world, not to meddle with it further.' What an opportunity to shine for the Assistant.

He got up and walked over to the wall on the other side of the room. He crouched to get a good look at the picture. The grand clue to the identity of the murderer. The painted woman was dressed in a white gown and a flowery wreath. She was surrounded by wild bushes and spring trees.

'And now you're gonna check the painting, see if it has any writing at the back or if the person depicted is someone the guy on the floor knew.' The Detective stood up and walked over to the victim. 'And then you're gonna be disappointed because there is no writing on the back of the painting and the person depicted never even existed.' The Detective started searching the pockets of the punctured guy. He took out a lighter and a pocketknife. 'And then these would be your new clues.'

The Assistant didn't pay any attention to the Detective. His eyes were fixed on the dead center of the painting. A light touch on the eyes of the woman told him all he needed to know.

'There's a hidden camera in here.' The Assistant, full of pride and hope, looked over to the Detective.

There was no sound in the room. The person on the screen was pointing at both of the actors within his play. The Assistant reached over to the laptop and paused the video.

'I gotta give it to you. You replicated his suicide perfectly,' said the Detective, still looking at the screen.

The Assistant seemed absent. He got up, completely ignoring the remark of his superior, and walked over to the body lying on the floor. There were two coroners wrapping it up in a body bag. One of them noticed the Assistant and

asked 'Yes? You still want to examine something?' Upon saying that, the coroner moved away, leaving the scene open for the main character.

It was only at the sixth time that the Assistant was finally pulled away to the side and pinned down by the Detective. The face of the victim was unrecognizable. The skull got fractured, the teeth lost their place, and the eyes sank down like pearls at the bottom of the ocean. All you could see in the eyes of the Assistant bruised in blood and purple from the rage was pure insanity.

THE END

Bartosz Rutkowski

It was a very gloomy evening in Toruń. The rain had not stopped even for a moment, not making it any easier for Lily to get to her destination. The fog, combined with the heavy sound of rain and wind, felt sinister—almost as if it were trying to scare her away. Lily thought about turning back, of course, but she has already gone too far. She had to overcome her fear; this was her only chance to pass the American Literature test. She opened the enormous, heavy steel door and entered the building with caution. She was walking through the eerie corridors of Collegium Humanisticum in order to find the place of her execution—that is the test, of course—when she suddenly heard a noise. Familiar, yet strikingly grotesque. As it grew louder, shivers ran down her spine. She moved closer, hearing the uncanny sound more and more clearly. Suddenly, the noise stopped. Lily figured it must have come from the classroom her lecturer had booked for the test. She opened the door with caution and instantly felt the ominous atmosphere. She stood frozen for a few seconds, shocked by what she saw. Her lecturer was sitting limply in a chair, his head resting on the desk. The desk was now covered in blood, which dripped onto the floor. She stepped closer and checked his pulse, just in case. The teacher was dead.

Lily thought to herself that this day must be cursed as she searched her bag for her phone to call the police. When she finally found it, it turned out the battery was dead. Terrified, but determined, she decided to conduct a mini-investigation until she could find someone with a working phone. She searched the whole building, but it seemed that nobody was there. Suddenly, she heard a noise of something being dropped. Despite her fear, she decided to investigate. Turning a corner, she found a cleaning lady silently cursing the mop. Lily

approached her and said with a shaky voice, "Do you have a phone? The professor is dead...", "What?!" the cleaning lady gasped, and they both started running down the hallway.

When they reached the classroom, the cleaning lady called the police and an ambulance. Suddenly, a phone rang, its sound reverberating through the room. Lily cautiously moved towards the sound coming from beneath one of the desks. "Whose phone is this?" she wondered. "Why is it here?" She turned on the phone, hoping to find a clue about the owner. When she saw the wallpaper, she gasped. "No, it can't be true... No, no, no!" The phone belonged to her boyfriend, Jack, whom she had met during their first year. As Lily began to run out of the classroom, she chest-bumped someone. It was Jack.

Now Lily had no doubt. He must have done it. She was in love with a murderer. She looked at him with tears dripping down her cheeks, then started pushing him against the wall, shouting, "HOW COULD YOU?! WHO ARE YOU?!... HOW COULD YOU?!" Jack managed to stop her and shouted, "What are you talking about?!" As they spoke, it turned out to be a coincidence. Jack had simply dropped his phone during class and was now looking for it.

Finally, the police arrived, secured the area, and questioned everyone: Lily, Jack, and the cleaning lady. They all had an alibi, so they were free to go. Lily and Jack left the building, traumatized and trying to comfort each other. They were heading to Jack's car when they both looked at a vehicle parked at the end of the lot.

"That's the dean's car I think..." Jack said. He recognized it because it was very eye-catching: a new Mercedes the dean was quite proud of. Lily and Jack looked at each other but said nothing. They didn't want to believe what they were thinking. "Do you think..." Lily began. Jack understood and answered, "It's impossible." They decided to split up. Lily went to inform the police, while Jack went to take a closer look. What he saw shocked him—a knife lying next to the dean's car. At that moment, Lily returned with the police. Officers called for

support and began searching the campus. Since NCU is surrounded by woods, that was the obvious place to look.

Our brave couple decided to stay and help with the search. As they ventured deeper into the woods, the police dogs suddenly began barking and running. The officers, Lily, and Jack followed. Lily hoped she was dreaming as they reached the figure restrained by the dogs. It was the dean. The dean was the murderer.

Patrycja Kwapińska & Daria Domagalska