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6-2 Microburst Writing Assignment: Speculative Fiction
Professor Heather Demetrios – Fehst
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“Hunters”: Graphic Novel
Opening Scene in Story Form

Two smoke trails make their way through the deserted landscape. The blood-red sun descends from the Heavens as they race towards Dead Man’s Gulch. Deep within Death Valley, the buildings ran along the edge of a canyon. Flashes of lightning spark from beneath the cloud of sand being kicked up by the vehicles traveling inside the dust covering.

Entering the town, they skid to a stop outside the local saloon. The Tesla coils fire a cool blue as the turbines wind down. The smoke clears, revealing a power bike and a military-style Hummer.

Aislynn Vanhelsing climbs off the cycle, her red hair hanging from under the WWII pilot's helmet-like wings, framing her face, and wearing a stressed leather bomber jacket zipped up in the front. The setting sun gleams off the silver crosses lining the sides of her pants. Aislynn lifts the round goggles off her eyes as the hummer's doors open.

Amberlynn Vanhelsing steps out of the driver's side. Standing taller than her twin, her trench coat circles around her, and she tilts her head to peer out from beneath the brim of her worn-out cowgirl hat. Two blonde French braids are falling over her shoulders. The enormous gothic cross sewn into her corset reflects the fading sun as she walks to the back of the vehicle.

Billy steps out the passenger side. Due to his age, the girls call him Kid. The boy's light brown hair is wild, curls sticking from under his bowler cap in every direction. Slipping off his corduroy jacket, he chunks it back in the Hummer. Now wearing a buttoned-up olive green vest over a tan long-sleeve shirt. Pulling his pistol and spinning it around, he pops out the cylinder. Billy runs his finger over the bullets before flipping it back into place.

The three gather their weapons, “I'm gonna take the high ground,” says Aislynn as she slides the strap of her sniper rifle over her shoulder.

"Gotcha, sis."

"What ya need?" says Billy, pushing the tiny Tesla coil on the round disk over his left ear. Sparks arch off the tip while the circular piece rises. A metal band shoots across the back of his head, cuffing over his right ear. The pupils' glasses go clear, and a thin blue line surrounds the edges.

"Hey, kid, take the back door."

Amberlynn loads a cylinder with six spikes into her sawed-off shotgun. Closing the back of the Humvee, she slides her weapon into the case on her back.

"Aw, man."

"Gotta have someone watching the rear, buddy," says Aislynn. "Remember to keep those eyes and ears open, pal." And continues her climb up the ladder to the water tower.

"Funny, guys," says Billy. "Ha, Ha, laugh it up." Kicking the sandy ground and grumbling, "Why is it always the kid waiting out back?"

Amberlynn steps up in front of the saloon, and her shadow flows over the wooden planks of the floor when she walks through double doors. Everyone stops and faces her. A lone female stands behind the bar. Three men play cards at a table in the center of the room while the remaining two shoot pool off to the side.

"Gotta bounty here, for one, J.J. Buckhanon," says Amberlynn as she hooks her duster on her gun holsters.

The two guys at the pool table stop and walk her way as one says, "No Buckhanon here, little girl."

The other taps his stick across his palm and says, "Let's move it along now, chickee."

Tipping up the brim of her hat, she smiles. The barmaid drops below the counter. Spinning, she crosses her arms and retrieves her pistols from under her coat.

Amberlynn's left-hand hand pulls the trigger, releasing a single silver slug from the barrel; pulling the trigger with her right hand, she lets another silver projectile exit the barrel. The first bullet flies to the right, shredding through the closest enemy in the heart.

The other round goes left over the bar and ricochets off a hanging frying pan. Now, heading toward the poker table, it rattles off the dinner bell before shifting in a new direction and piercing the heart of the second guy.

All of this happens together and in a blink of an eye. Both slugs bounce off a metal pole and stop in the bullseye of the dart board on the wall behind Amberlynn. The two men burst into flames, and within seconds, nothing but a pile of ashes on the floor.

Two men at the table jump and pull their weapons, preparing to attack.

“Wait.” The two guys freeze.

“Sit back on down, boys.”

The third man lifts his head, revealing red. Glowing eyes and fanged teeth.

“Let us take her out, boss?” says the minion on the man’s left.

“Hey, Jessie.”

Amberlynn flips her guns around and slips them back into their holsters.

Jessie stands, pulls his hat off, and takes a bow. “The infamous Jessie James in the flesh,” he says before fixing his hat back on his head. Tapping his pointed nails while giving Amberlynn a once-over. “A bit young to be a bounty hunter, aren't you sweet?”

Amberlynn smiles back at him in silence.

The minion to the left slams his hands down on the table and laughs.

“This is the wrong place for a little girl to be alone.”

“What makes ya think I’m by myself?”

Aislynn taps a button on the side of her HUD, the Tesla coil on the back starts to spark. Several mechanical arms begin to move up and down, each containing an optical lens. Staring through the scope of her sniper rifle as the lenses move in front of her eye. She clicks switches on the side of the rifle, with each new lens the picture became close or far away. Zooming in the gun's sights fall over the man’s chest as she takes a deep breath and releases it. A finger squeezes the trigger, firing a long silver spike, leaving her rifle's barrel in a flash of blue sparks.

The window shatters, spraying glass in every direction. A projectile whistles as it crosses the room and rips through his heart. In a flash, he catches fire and burns to ash.

“Brother!” the man on J.J.’s right growls. Fangs bared and nails sharp, he leaps at Amberlynn.

The scopes picture grows large as Aislynn squeezes the trigger again. The grooves cause the spike to spiral while speeding through the air. The man is struck in the chest, and the cylinder bores its way into his heart in midair. Bursting into flames, his ashes fall at Amberlynn’s feet. Aislynn shifts her rifle to line up her sights on Jessie.

"Come on now, J.J., don't make this hard."

"Not a chance."

With eyes glowing red and his fangs protruding. Jessie zips off in a blur. Heading him off she pushes a switch in between her thumb and for fingers. Two silver blades shoot out of the leather bracers on her wrists.

She slices with one blade as Jessie moves through the room. The tip catches his shoulder, the metal burns through skin and meat while goblets of blood are caught in his air stream making the liquid look like floating bubbles.

Amberlynn ducks as he dives over her.

"Heading out the back, kid," says Aislynn through their coms unit.

"About time the kid finds some action," says Billy.

"Don't have a swollen head over it," says Amberlynn.

The rear door of the bar bursts open as Buckhanon flies outside. The moon hung high in the sky. Shining bright enough to reveal Billy standing in his way. The two Tesla coils on Billy's earphones spark blue. Causing his glasses to pulse, sending out an audio wave which rolls straight into Jessie before bouncing off. A figure of a man appears inside Billie's mind. Taking his sawed-off shotgun and pulls the trigger.

The first chamber releases a metal spike wrapped around a Tesla coil, which leaves the barrel; the tip opens, making four claws and a thin silver needle. Hitting Jessie in the chest, it slides through the meat. Stopping a millimeter from his heart as the claws dig in.

The Tesla coil sparks blue, sending an electrical current throughout his body, immobilizing him. Jessie's heavy sack of bones hits the deck, jumping and jerking as the device fires electricity through him. Billy pulls his arms over his back and clamps the electromagnetic cuffs over the man's wrist.

Amberlynn steps out the back door as the bartender hides behind her. Aislynn glides around the corner with a small cart following her. Stopping beside him, Amberlynn grabs the vamp and tosses him on the wheeled machine.

"Was helpful, right?"

"Oh God, Amber, we've created a monster."

All three start laughing as they take their prisoner to the Humvee.

