

## 2. CONCEPT OF CREATIVE WORK

### 2.1 Modes of Expressions

The genre of this novel is dystopian. A dystopian world is the opposite of the heavenly utopia, in which dystopia, on the contrary, shows the society enormously miserable and wretched where inequality and injustice prevail (Zhukorva et al., 2019). This genre will mostly be used in the background as the setting, where the characters (humans) in my story are oppressed by the government (aliens) without actually realizing that they are. In my story, the aliens have taken over the world and taken charge of 'taking care' of the children without actually knowing how to raise a human child. This leads to the children growing up to think such oppression is normal despite the truth.

For this story, I will be using a third person omniscient point of view. The third person omniscient narrator, according to Martin (1986), "has "access to consciousness" [and] can look *through* a character's mind" (p. 16). This point of view will allow me to explore all the characters' thoughts and how they perceive the world after being raised with the absence of parents by the supposedly-important figures in their lives. As the main character navigates through his journey with his friends whom he grew up with, this point of view will also help the readers understand the kind of world they are put through; absent, away from a good role model, and a world where harm is constantly in their way. This way, showing the effects will be easier to expose and the characters become easier to understand.

Not just using a third person omniscient point of view, I will be using a little flashback technique and a time skip technique in this novel. A flashback will act as a scene that interrupts the chronological sequence, which is the present story, to showcase what unfolded in the past for the readers. (Griffin, 2023). In the story, flashbacks are used to show what causes the children to act and think the way they are, which will greatly help the readers understand where certain characters are coming from. Meanwhile, time skip technique is spacing out the story into different days, weeks, months, or years apart (Walia, 2021). Time skips come in different forms, as stated by Walia (2021):

A small skip that is generally only a few minutes, hours, or days and a large skip, which occurs over weeks, months, or years. Depending on how big of a gap there is going to be, the game of division comes into play. Small skips are where scenes or chapters

change. It is a writer's way of avoiding making their story sound like "a day in the character's life" and keep it interesting (para. 3-5).

The use of time skip to space out between days and months are used a few times in this creative work.

Additionally, I will use a couple of symbolism in my story. Symbolism refers to the use of representational imagery by using an image to imply its meaning without telling it directly to convey complex ideas (Glatch, 2023). To use symbolism, I will be using symbols to represent different things or matters in my story. The readers will be able to discover the meanings of these symbols through contextual influences which create those symbols (Abbar, 2023). To be more specific, an example would be using the color red in scenes, not because it is aesthetically pleasing, but rather to represent passion or anger. In my story, the main symbolism would be using the aliens, who are the absent caretakers of the children, to represent absent parents in real life. Aliens represent the unknown, the distant, and the powerful, which maps well onto how children might perceive absentee parents and how different they perceive the world.

This creative work is heavily inspired by the Japanese manga *Darling in the Franxx*, written by Code:000 and illustrated by Kentaro Yabuki (2018). *Darling in The Franxx* is a hard science fiction story which is set in a dystopian future where children are to pilot robots named FRANXX to defend the remnants of civilization. In *Darling in The Franxx*, the story focuses on the main character, Hiro, and his relationship with a hybrid female human named Zero Two. To pilot these robots, each robot needs a female pilot (Pistil) and a male pilot (Stamen). The children are severely detached from adults since their childhood, and know their sole job is to learn how to pilot robots and nothing else. This is because they have been separated from their parents since birth and have been living in separate areas. This manga inspired me in a way it is interesting to see how children and society came to be when there are barely human and natural resources around them, despite the benefits they think they have provided for the children. I will be using this inspiration for world building in my story, which will help further explain the effects of the awful environment towards the children.

While *Darling in the Franxx* and my creative thesis share some similarities, their approaches and focuses have differences significantly in terms of narrative and character relationships. The similarities between *Darling in The Franxx* and my creative thesis is that the children will be living in a designated place for them to live and they live in groups. The premise where adults are detached from the children will also be the same. When it comes to differences, my creative work, unlike *Darling in The Franxx*, will focus on the cause and effect of

these kinds of treatments from the aliens, rather than the romance between the characters. In *Darling in The Franxx*, they use hard science fiction to explore their story and adventure. But, my creative thesis, though there are elements of the science fiction props and characters, will be focused on the children's development as they are growing up in this environment.

This creative work is also inspired by a web series called *Alien Stage* created by Vivinos and Qmeng (2022). *Alien Stage* is about children who grew up as aliens' children and/or pets, but later put against each other to sing on stage as a survival program. Whoever loses will be killed right then and there. As a web series, *Alien Stage* tells their story using music and animation. The influence of complicated emotional and relationship dynamics in stories with the absence of good parental figures, such as *Alien Stage*, directly inspired the development of my creative thesis. Though *Alien Stage* only tells their stories through their music and animation, the relationship between the characters are very deeply looked into rather than the world building itself. Due to this, the effects of the aliens' treatment in *Alien Stage* affects the characters negatively. The similarities between *Alien Stage* and my creative thesis is the symbolism used in their storytelling without directly telling the characters' feelings. *Alien Stage* also uses a lot of flashbacks in their animation, which helps showcase and provide context to the characters' actions and feelings. The difference between *Alien Stage* and my work is that my creative work will be in the form of a novel, it will not have music nor animation. In addition to that, background characters in my creative thesis will have a more significant role in the story, and even become one of the pushing devices for the main characters' motives and goals.

Last but not least, another work that inspired me for this creative thesis is a novel called *Lord of the Flies* written by William Golding (1954). This novel tells a story of a group of boys who were stranded on an isolated island during a wartime evacuation. As they were only in the middle of their childhood, trying to survive and hunt was difficult for them, and even led the boys to be separated due to different beliefs. This story inspired me to create a world where children live without adult supervision. In comparison to *Darling in the FRANXX*, *Lord of the Flies* focuses more on the children's lives and shows how they are managing to survive while being stranded, away from humans. In my creative work, it will be similar in terms of the character relationship where friendship and beliefs are what was mostly at stake instead of romantic feelings. However, what differentiates *Lord of the Flies* and my creative work would be the setting of the story. The kids in my story will still be provided with a facility, just not enough adult supervision. While *Lord of the Flies* are set during war time, my creative thesis

will not. Instead, it follows the story of the children who live a 'peaceful life' to the chaos they themselves created.

## 2.2 Genre codes and Conventions

In this section, I will be discussing the genre codes and conventions of the dystopian genre. I obtained the details of dystopian genre conventions mainly from a book called *How to Destroy the World: An Author's Guide to Writing Dystopia and Post-Apocalypse* by Angelina Trevena (2020).

Table 2.1

Story Elements	Conventions of Dystopian Novel	The Conventions in My Creative Work
Characters	Characters in dystopian novels are usually someone who usually has a goal that requires them to break the law, though not always.	My story will have six main characters, Jay, Karin, Lia, Micha, Noir, Pearl, with the focus on Noir, who wants to be free from the world they live in despite the obstacles the aliens gave them.
Settings of Place	The place in dystopian novels can vary, one of them being a real place with an alternative future such as using a changed earth.	The setting of my story will still be on earth, with changes such as the advancement of technology and the different society created by aliens. Though the place specifically is unspecified due to the humans having no knowledge of history and the world has changed, it is implied to have taken place somewhere in Japan and South Korea. The story takes place in the future, where Japan and South Korea are much closer to each other than they are now.
Setting of Time	Dystopian novels usually take place in the future, where the future is unknown and all is up to the author's	My story will take place 1200 years into the future, where aliens have invaded earth

Story Elements	Conventions of Dystopian Novel	The Conventions in My Creative Work
	speculation, which includes its technology.	and technology has advanced greatly.
Events	There are many events that can occur in a dystopian novel. The events that usually happen when there is a dystopia caused by alien invasion is that they have the power and certainly like to abuse it, and when they make it seem that the world is perfect, when in truth, it is not. They are usually arranged by introducing the society first to get readers familiar with it, then slowly reveal the reason for the main character’s motivation and goal.	My characters will be facing problems mostly created by the world where aliens have invaded earth, while also trying to make decisions against their beliefs and their own thoughts—such as, but not limited to, going against the law which they had always abided by. The story begins with an introduction of the society they call Eden, then will slowly introduce the reason why the characters want to escape, because of the society the aliens created to suppress them.

### 2.3 Outline of the Creative Work

In the next part, I will break down the outline of my creative work, which includes the theme, plot, characters, and the story’s conflicts.

#### 2.3.1 Theme

The central theme of my creative work is that in the absence of caring parental or caregiver figures, children may suffer emotional and psychosocial harm—but healing and personal growth are possible, even in the most unlikely or adverse environments. In this creative work, Noir and his friends are living in a world where aliens hold the governance over humans. This leads to a world where a lot of human necessities are not met, simply because the aliens do not understand it, and a lot of the humans before the ‘new’ era were eradicated. Noir and his friends, though given a house, food, and other humans to interact with, grew up without a proper figure to look up to in their life. This leads to them barely having any positive emotional development and not knowing what we usually find morally right or wrong. Not knowing the truth of the world as it is all hidden, the children still decided to fight back after getting a glimpse of what the world before the new era is supposed to be. However, they are

faced with the conflicts which stem from the absent parenting done by the aliens, such as feeling helpless, needing attention, or detaching emotionally. The story delves into how children, deprived of proper care, struggle to regulate their emotions and form attachments and healthy relationships as they grow up.

### **2.3.2 Plot**

In the beginning, the six children of Plantation 13—Noir, Jay, Karin, Lia, Micha, and Pearl—are running away from their facility called Eden into an unfamiliar forest. However, it is obvious that they are lost amidst the tall trees against their short figures. Not long after, they are guided to a cave by a familiar lullaby of their other friend—Isla. They are relieved to know that their friend is okay, but to their horror, Isla is singing the lullaby to the dead body of their dearest friend, Oliver. He died because he is infected by a virus, though the name of the virus is unspecified. Oliver's face is cracked like that of a broken porcelain doll, and through those holes are thorns and flowers. It will be revealed that the virus is fatal to both humans and aliens; however, aliens die immediately, while in humans, death takes time due to their immune system. In a hurry, Isla tells Noir everything she knows about the world before the alien invasion. After that, the aliens drag the kids back to Eden; they leave Isla behind due to her being infected by the virus. The conversation between the aliens will also reveal that humans are kept by the aliens as children. This will serve as an introduction to the characters and the world Noir and the other children are living in.

The next day, there will be a rise in action in the story as the children return back to their plantation house. The six children avoid children from other plantation houses, refusing their offer to play and not answering their questions. Later, the government officer named Urah, called "Mother", comes to Plantation 13 to pick Noir up. Due to physical contact with Isla, he has to get checked up at the medical room. Thankfully, Noir comes out uninfected. After Noir's turn, Jay, Karin, Lia, Micha, and Pearl get their turn. While being in the main facility, Noir explains to his friends what Isla told him. There will be a flashback of their conversation. Isla told Noir that there is a small red disk to steal from the control room. She also told him that the world Earth belongs to humans, but it has been 1200 since the alien invasion, so they never know of the real human history. Karin meets her previous mama alien who used to take care of her and becomes an emotional mess. Then, Urah takes them to the physical test room as the children suddenly become obedient by wanting to take the test. This is because the children are sure that, by being obedient, they can gain the aliens' favor so they can roam around the

facility freely. Another alien named Umnatha also appears to be Urah's brother, and is previously Micha's papa alien, whom he had a strained relationship with. Their meeting after a while almost caused a scene, as Micha continuously rejects Umnatha's approach.

The children return home and have a conversation with each other about their plan to escape and what they are supposed to do. Fast forward to a few months later, Micha comes home tired and exhausted from all the tests and experiments he had to go through. Then a fight breaks out between Lia and Pearl. Pearl thinks that it is okay to find comfort in the aliens they get close to, but Lia finds it dangerous, and that she misses the time the children spend together instead. This fight will serve as the climax of the story. Noir, as someone who is not emotionally well too, has difficulties trying to calm the fight. He just sits there in silence and confusion. Lia walks out of the room to calm herself down as Pearl cries. In hopes they become united again, Noir sings the lullaby they always sing together. After the situation subsides, the group come together again with a clearer mind and open up about their past. They each talk about their alien parents, revealing how all of them were barely there to support them. Some were busy, some were sick, some just completely did not care about them. This serves as the falling action.

Fast forward to the near future, the children finally execute their plan to steal the small red disk from the control room. However, they are here without Jay, who suddenly decides he wants to stay with Mother. They feel betrayed, but they do not have more time to waste. They know Isla is somewhere out there waiting for them. Thankfully, today is the inspection day, where almost all aliens are out of their workplace to get checked by Urah. With the control room empty, they manage to steal the red disk. Unfortunately, an alien sees them when they are leaving, so Urilah pushes the emergency button and all the alien guards point their guns at the children. They are cornered, so Noir dares to comply and give them back the memory card. Thankfully, a gunshot is heard, which turns out to be Jay and Urah. With Urah on their side, the children finally escape the guards and leave Eden with Jay. They are finally back out in the forest and run straight to find a village. There, an old man spots them, and he tells Isla that there is someone here for her. This is the resolution of the story.

### **2.3.3 Major Characters**

- Noir (AE0602)  
Age: 15 years old

Noir is a quiet kid in situations where he is not needed. However, you will not find him missing out on group activities that his friend participates in. When the group is in need of more opinion or participants, he is willing to be part of the plan. Overall, Noir is one of the smartest kids in the group, often offering ideas. He is not usually one to give up easily, however, Noir is very self-aware of his capabilities and limitations. He knows when to give up when the goal is too far out of his reach, which often leaves his friends with the impression that he is pessimistic. This leads him to be someone who prefers to be in the shadows. He does not like to lead, though sometimes the situation forces him to. However, Noir is also known as someone patient, and that can easily help Noir and the other kids to reach their goal during their faults. He thinks that honesty is the most important thing to tell others, so he holds others high in honesty. Noir is 162 cm tall with a bowl cut, raven black hair. His eyes are slightly slanted like that of a fox. His skin is fair and everyone often says he has a baby-like face.

- Jay (AX2004)

Age: 15 years old

Jay is a mature kid for his age. He is 168 cm tall with dark brown skin. His hair is bundled locks on top and short buzzed sides. Jay is often found not taking part in playgroups and prefers to read and be alone. His friends from other plantations also called him a lone wolf, but the friends he is closest with—the friends from Plantation 13—know that Jay is just more comfortable with being around the people who understand him. With that, Jay can actually be very loud and cheerful with the kids in Plantation 13. He was very close with Isla when she was around, which helped him with his mature side.

- Karin (BB2807)

Age: 15 years old

Karin is known to be very cheerful on days where they are doing nothing. She often cracks jokes and is very naive. Due to this, she dislikes conversations that require her to think too much and often leaves the function when it does. However, she does not mind it as long as there is someone from Plantation 13 with her. She found comfort in the people she was closest to. Karin is one of the shortest ones in Plantation 13, at 140 cm. She has shoulder-length brunette hair with freckles on her tanned skin due to playing outside a lot.

- Lia (AI2208)

Age: 15 years old

Lia is known to be smart and she makes sure that everybody knows that. With a height of 162 cm, she often towers over the other kids from other plantations. She has proven herself to be knowledgeable a lot of times. Yet, this often leaves others to not have a great impression on her. She is hard headed and her words are always sharp. In Plantation 13, the other kids are already used to those words of hers despite not liking it either. But, they still try to justify her actions when other kids find it rude. Her hooded brown eyes add the impression that she is often bored while playing with other kids, which may or may not be the case at all. Her hair is tied into low pigtails with tiny pink ribbons.

- Micha (EH1704)

Age: 15 years old

Micha is very brass with his words. Unlike Jay who knew his limits and is still considered mature, Micha often makes mean comments without considering one's feelings. He likes to start fights, especially with the children of Plantation 13, but deep down he cares a lot about them. Surprisingly, he was the one who remembers everyone's birthday, everyone's favorite food, and more. Micha's nature comes from his childhood days where other kids would make fun of his green and brown heterochromia eyes. He grew his hair out just to cover it. Until he is assigned to Plantation 13 where nobody thought negatively about his eyes. That was when he began to tie his hair up more often due to the confidence he gained.

- Pearl (JM1412)

Age: 15 years old

Pearl has a caring nature which she learned from Oliver, but she also became a very funny person to be around because of him. Despite this funny side of hers, she is actually very sensitive to the things around her. The jokes that might seem funny might end up hurting her, which makes the other kids have to be so careful of their words around Pearl. Though, even if that happens, Pearl is a very great forgiver. She keeps relationships with her friends as close as possible and hates being apart from them. Pearl is one of the special cases for the aliens—often getting extra examinations due to her albinism. She has long white hair with very pale skin. She also wears glasses to help her nearsighted eyes. She is 157 cm tall.

### 2.3.3.1 Minor characters

- Isla (AA2810)

Age: 17 years old

Isla is one of the oldest kids in Plantation 13, making her the most *'reliable'* figure for the younger ones. She stands tall at 169 cm with fair skin and black hair. Her hair is often tied up in various ways. Sometimes they are up in a ponytail, low bun, and also a side braid. No matter which one it is, she always has a red ribbon tied around it—a dear gift from Oliver. She is the one who usually takes care of the other kids and is labeled as *'mother'* by the aliens. However, in reality, Isla is still a 17-year-old who did not have a great figure to look up to growing up. Despite her making mistakes while helping the other children, she is unaware of these mistakes, as it has never been addressed before, nor did the other children know that it is wrong. Regardless, Isla is still very caring and really tries her best to be a great role model.

- Oliver (AB0712)

Age: 17 years old

Oliver, despite dying earlier in the story, left quite a great hole in the other children's hearts and lives. As one of the older kids in the plantation, he, along with Isla, takes care of the other kids very well. Emotionally, he is the most available. He provides great support for the other kids. Oliver has fair skin with short, slightly wavy, and blond hair. He is the tallest at 173 cm. He has muscles on his arms from carrying heavy stuff (and playing with the children) often.

- Urah

Age: Unknown

Urah is one of the leading governments of the current society, and Urah is identified as a female. As the leading government of Eden, they refer to her as "Mother". She appears to the children to be strict and final, but she actually has good intentions towards them that the other aliens are not aware of. Implied to be Noir's mama alien, she shows favoritism towards Noir and wants him to be free from Eden. Therefore, her decision to help him.

- Schreve

Age: Unknown

Schreve is an alien known to be the parent of Lia, and like Urah, she is also identified as a female. Schreve is one of the kinder aliens, and other children think she is giving

special treatments for Lia, while in reality, she has not, and she only adopted Lia to harvest her later, knowing her knowledge can bring her fortune. At least, she is still trying to make connections with her.

- Umnatha

Age: Unknown

Umnatha is one of the working identified male aliens. He is also the former parent of Micha. Due to the nature of his work, he is harsh and rarely shows up for his children anyway.

#### **2.3.4 Conflicts**

My creative work will have three types of conflicts that go into the story. The first conflict is Man vs. Self. This conflict refers to the internal struggles of the characters and is often used to make complex characters. This struggle often involves a character having to choose between two opposing obligations confronting their weaknesses and fears, or accepting their own nature (Yang, 2022). In this creative work, Noir and his friends are fighting their own ideals, which have been instilled in them since the beginning. For example, aliens living on Earth, humans being kept as children of the aliens, and aliens holding power are all typical. Since they also grew up without a proper role model, they are also trying to patch their unavailable emotional support.

The next type of conflict is Man vs. Society. This type of conflict showcases the conflict between men against society, where the characters are shown to struggle against the ideas, practices, or customs of others or the rulers (Kenney, 1966). In this creative work, Noir and his friends are fighting against the society created by the aliens for them. They live in a world where aliens are regarded as higher and have taken over the earth. The aliens have created a society in which the characters are fighting against.

Last, but not least, behind every messed up society is the messed up people who rule the government. My last conflict is Man vs. Man, which means the clashing relationship between two or more characters and it serves as the basis for many of the stories we have enjoyed throughout our lives (Reedsy, 2024). In this creative work, Noir and his friends will fight against the aliens who try to suppress them, and the aliens, as individuals, will often try to stop Noir and his friends from getting what they want: freedom.