

Astrid Korkeamäki
The Debut of Cressida MacCarthy
Digitaalinen taide/Weegee
Ohjaaja: Nina Sarkima



ESPOON KUVATAIDEKOULU
Kuvataiteen perusopetus
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Contents

1. About me
2. Description
3. Of the idea
4. Work process
5. Progress
6. Cut content
7. Closing words

About me

My name is ~~not important~~ Astrid and I've been a creative person since I was little (or so I'm told). I'm a first year physics student and in my free time I do a lot of creative work, like crocheting, cross stitching, drawing, and sewing. I like to think I use all that creative stuff to balance out my studies.

Description

The Debut of Cressida MacCarthy is a collection of scenes and panels from a story I've been working on for a while now. It tells the story of Cressida, who is almost killed by her brother Orion and ends up working under a less than upstanding owner of a local tavern. After discovering a new side to herself and her best friend falling out of the sky, Cressida decides to go back home to rekindle old friendships and finally finish what Orion started.

Of the idea

The character of Cressida actually dates back to early 2018. Although back then she was Queen Cressida who could manifest and quell plagues through a staff that the ruling member of the royal family possessed. From there I started to expand and think of more characters and even in-universe mythos. Eventually I started to think of different situations and scenes for them. Originally I wanted the story to focus more on power struggles between siblings and history repeating itself over four generations (that being Cressida, Lily, Eleanor, and Ruby MacCarthy, pictured on the right, top to bottom). However due to time constraints I had to scale the story to only one generation and that ended up being Cressida.

Work process

Making of the scenes were all rather similar. I'd start out with an idea of what I wanted to happen, what characters were involved, and what the characters went through during the scene. After that I'd either start writing down what each of the characters would say or do, and how, much like a script for a movie scene. When I felt I had enough to work with I would start drawing the panels. Sometimes the script for the scene would change as I drew the panels and other times I would stick to the script



almost religiously. All of the panels were drawn in my sketchbook and later scanned and enhanced a little bit

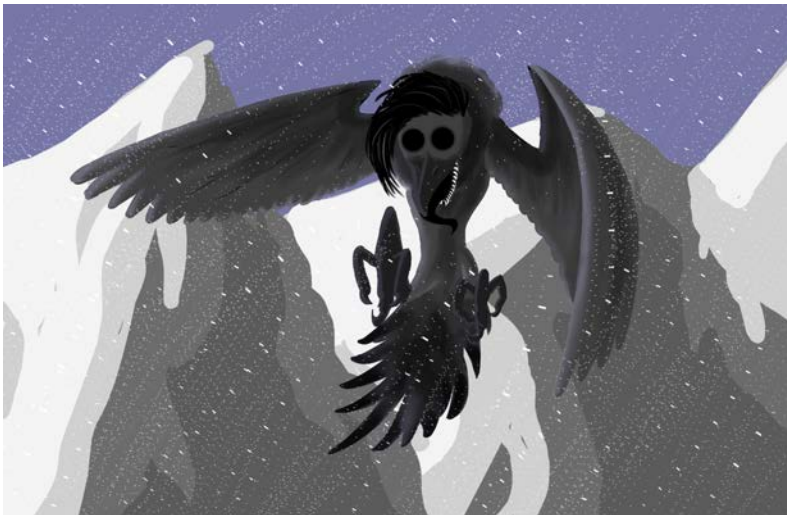


Pictured three deities that unfortunately never really made the cut, Polaris, the embodiment of the north star, lady lightning, and Onnetar, the sovereign of justice

Influences

As with almost anything creative these days, my work has also been influenced by a ton of other works and ideas. Magical powers and siblings fighting are hardly new ideas. To get more specific, a woman who was presumed dead coming back to finish what was started is very reminiscent of Kill Bill, and a world where some people have power over a specific element (be it the natural elements, flesh, or even the mind) is probably a familiar idea to many from shows like Avatar the Last Airbender. Although I hope to have put a unique spin on both of those concepts.

The character design has also been widely influenced by basic medieval fantasy (or maybe just the dresses have), the four kings of Carthylage were inspired by the descriptions of the four horsemen from the Book of Revelation. (war, pestilence, death, and conquest) both in visuals and personalities. I would also come to realize later on that Opal's monster form is visually pretty similar to Dolf from Alfred J. Kwak.



Even though it's not a direct influence, music has been a big part of creating some of the scenes and characters. For example the inspiration for Monster-Opal came from the soundtrack of Dark Phoenix and the ends of the epilogues were pushed along by the end credits theme of Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind

Cut content

As I've already no doubt made clear, a lot of the ideas and lore had to be cut out to keep my workload reasonable. These would have included a more in depth look into Cressida traveling the world and seeing other cultures, her family roots in the deep north would have been a very isolated and little known realm by the time the story takes place, her life with Arina, and before she was pushed off a cliff, such as her very loving and close relationship with her grandmother Eleanor, a quick look into Eleanor's youth and the effect of her mother waging a war and drafting her children into it, and being a very powerful necromancer and seemingly being valued because of that alone, would have on her.

There would have also been a repeating theme of the younger children doing horrible things and manipulating their way to the throne. With Ruby's war being rooted in the will to have a kingdom to rule. And Eleanor marrying the man who was supposed to marry her sister, whom Eleanor sweet talked into eloping, and then killing her other sister to inherit the throne. All before Orion tried to kill his sister.

There was also a pantheon of gods and deities who would have been real in-universe. These would have included Polaris, Revo, the god of the sun who set Polaris' coat ablaze in an attempt to kill her, after being manipulated by Mora, the goddess of animosity, and Elo the goddess of living nature (animals and humans), who wears a golden bear fleece that preserves life. I would also have liked to include more about Opal's struggles with a power she couldn't control, and her heightened spirituality after being cleansed by Elo.



Closing words

The best part about this whole process was getting to do a deep dive into a project that I've had hanging for a while now.

It's hard to say what I'd do differently if I tried again. There are so many different ways to go about a massive project that has so much potential.

In the beginning it was fun to work on a project that's not just a one-off but after only a couple months of doing the same thing it became very monotonous. Changing what scene I worked on when one got dull made it a little easier to bear but in the end it was still the same project for the whole time and I felt it. I was kind of disappointed to have to cut so much out but in the end I am glad to have even a small part of the whole thing pieced together in a coherent way.

