

- katemacCarthy.com
 - kate.maccarthy@outlook.com
 - www.linkedin.com/in/katherine-maccarthy
-

Included below are some of my writing samples. For brevity's sake, I've cut the longer versions down to a shorter, more accessible size, but all of them can be found in full at <https://katemacCarthy.com/writing-samples>.

Lisander Dust Background

A character I created in a Creative Writing class who turned out to be too big for the short story I made him for. Lisander features in several of my writing samples.

Lisander Dust hasn't always had the surname reserved for the orphans and bastard children of the Mud District. Of all the last names in Spirea, *Dust* is the one most commonly spat out in disgust. With a name like that, he'd be lucky to get a job in the drainage trenches, trying to extract enough water from the ground to keep the Mud District from sinking into it. It's pitched as a noble profession—as noble as a muddie can be—and the pay is good enough to put food on the table at least three nights a week, but with the constant trickle-down of used water from higher districts, it's ultimately a futile one. When Muddies die on the street, their bodies often simply sink into the mud before anyone can be bothered to pull them out and identify them, but Dusts often seem to simply disappear, as if they never were to begin with. Dust to dust.

Lisander was born Lisander Alabaster; a mouthful of a name for a child still learning to spell. His mothers were determined that he grow up wanting for nothing, and as a result he had to live up to their expectations early. He learned how to act and sing, paint with watercolours and toil away for hours at needlework. He would fence and ride horseback during the daylight hours and then the three of them would read literature in the evenings before retiring. He lived a charmed life, but it was a life built over a shadow. Over the mud that was slowly sinking its foundations and eating at the floors.

Lisander Dust Level Barks

I imagine Lisander existing in a stealth series like *Thief*, and in this level he is trying to escape a mansion after robbing it. For full details and design, please refer to the document on my website.

Level Start: "Dogs. Someone figured out I'm here. If I can get to the river I'm home free, but I'm in trouble if they catch me. Sprinting'll make too much noise; I have to be even quieter than usual." Lisander steps down from the windowsill and the level begins.

Part 1 (The Field) Midway Point

Undetected: "So far so good. They have no idea I'm here."
Detected, Low Danger: "Good dogs. It's nicer over there, isn't it?"
Detected, Medium Danger: "I have to be more careful."
Detected, High Danger: "Gahh. I do *not* want to be dog food tonight."

Part 1 Complete

Undetected: "Did they get the discount guard dogs, or am I just this good?"
Detected, Low Danger: "Nice. Time to disappear into the woods."
Detected, Medium Danger: "This shouldn't be too hard. Now I head to the river."
Detected, High Danger: "Damn. If I get chased up a tree, I'm a goner. I've got to move."

Part 2 (The Forest) Start: "The trees are thicker here. They won't be able to spot me as well, but I can hardly put my foot down without stepping on twigs. I have to tread carefully and make it to the river; then they'll lose my scent."

Midway Point

Undetected: "This is a nice garden, minus the dogs. Wherever they are."
Detected, Low Danger: "These trees are great cover. So far, so good."
Detected, Medium Danger: "They're too close. I have to be more careful."
Detected, High Danger: "How good're their ears? Thought I was quieter than this."

In Her Orbit

A friend asked me to write a continuation of League of Legends' Star Guardian story *The Slumber Party Summoning*, by Ariel Lawrence, found [here](#). The characters are not my own, but the content was written all by me based on the original.

"Do you braid each other's hair, too?" Was all Sarah'd said. Definitely part of her master plan. Utterly diabolical. Things had been going so smoothly before that, too. The whole pajama party was ... well, it wasn't the craziest party I've ever been to, which is probably a good thing, but it definitely got wild.

Lux invited us, of course. Lulu had been the one to actually text us about it, but I'm sure that Lux was just using her as a cover. To invite me, I mean.

I believed that right up until Lux slammed the door in our faces. Then I wasn't really sure of anything except for how cute the startled expression on Lux's face had been when she saw us. We stood on the porch for a moment while I pondered her adorable oven mitts. Very cute. Eventually, Lux let us in, and soon I was heroically vanquishing the void creature that'd snuck through my 'arcane shortcut to another dimension'. I was waiting for the thunderous acclaim when Lux rushed into the kitchen with the weirdest expression on her face. Sarah followed a moment later while Jinx just stared through the doorway, probably waiting for something to explode. Smoke billowed out of the kitchen, and the rest of us began opening windows as Janna summoned up a breeze to clear the air. I wondered what the place looked like from the outside with plumes of smoke billowing from it, then decided it was probably a bit like when I cook back home.

"Ez." Soraka's ever-gentle voice interrupted my attempts to open a particularly stubborn window next to a framed picture of Lux and Jinx. In the photo, Jinx had her arm around Lux's shoulders, both of them with brilliant smiles, and the sight made my stomach twist with an emotion I don't like to admit to. Jealousy. Well, maybe not jealousy. Probably just sick from the smoke. Totally.

The Boys and Bombolini

The original story was written by Jared Rosen at Riot Games for pride month [original found [here](#)], but I rewrote this version for several LGBTQ2SIA+ friends who found the original to be offensive and disappointing.

They always have a plan, or at least part of a plan, or have spoken briefly about how they need to have a proper plan before they jump headlong into the next heist, but after two decades and nearly every nation on Valoran, they both know how likely it is that their plans will work out nicely. They always go in with a plan, but it's when things start to go sideways that they do their best work. It just looks a bit grim right now, but bear with them. Surely it'll work out.

What "working out" currently looked like was a wharfrat-infested warehouse tucked just South of the Slaughterdocks—that's the good side, in case you can't tell the difference—crawling with the kind of vastaya who crawled out of the sea onto the Serpent Isles and eventually made their home in Bilgewater Bay. That, and two nervous-looking conmen with their backs pressed against one of the boxes loaded with gunpowder and explosives. "Who keeps all this in one place, anyway? It's just askin' for trouble."

That last bit was said by Malcolm Graves, possessor of bad taste and several of the aforementioned explosives that he'd tucked away some of his many pockets. He turned to the man next to him, a man with a hat that's too damn fancy for a job like this and a beard that's almost as impressive as Graves'. Twisted Fate gave no indication that the fish-people bothered him at all as he flipped over the top card in his hand and set it on a nearby box, shook his head, shuffled it back in, and repeated the process. He'd been doing this for a good five minutes now, and it was making Graves downright twitchy. The only thing that kept him from taking aim and firing at as many fish-people as he could get in range of was the way Twisted Fate chewed the inside corner of his lip. Twisted Fate didn't really have tells—he was a conman and a card shark, after all—but when it was just the two of them, when he didn't have to put on an act, Graves could just tell. This was important. So he clutched Destiny close to his chest and parked himself right there next to his partner, and waited for the cards to tell him something. Anything. And soon, please.

"Seriously. One spark and," Graves filled his cheeks with air and let it out, miming an explosion with his hand. "Fishsticks."