

Genesis Athena Padilla

Professor Ramirez

ENGL 2307

1 February 2023

### The Orange Tree

The magical aura pulled my attention to the single glowing orange tree in the middle of the courtyard, surrounded by the vibrant colored leaves that crunched under my feet. I reached for an orange and watched it shatter into a billion carnelian pieces in my hand, but when I looked down at the ground to find the crystals, a fresh breeze hit me from the wings of monarch butterflies flying up and into the sky. The view of the beautiful insects waving like flames in the orange sunset robbed me of my breath before slowly disappearing into nothing but sparkles falling to the earth.

I looked back at the orange tree and reached for another orange hoping to see the butterflies once more, but instead, I looked at my hand and noticed a tiny jack-o-lantern smiling back at me with a menacing smile. I accidentally dropped the pumpkin to the ground and watched it roll away. As it spun away grimly, it began to sprout legs and ears before a furry tail appeared. The fox trotted away from me before turning slowly to stare at me with his deep, ginger eyes as if to warn me of what was to come.

As soon as the fox was gone, I hesitantly reached for the last orange on the tree. Immediately I felt fear and dread as I pulled the orange off the tree and noticed a simple fruit in my hand. I sigh of relief before peeling the skin off the snack, then I went pale white with the sight I saw. I dropped the fruit and backed away in horror, tripping on a root from the tree. A tiger stood in place of the once orange and as it sniffed the air to breathe in the fumes my skinned

hand released. Its tangerine eyes focused on me as it slowly stalked toward me, and my eyes began to water. The striped beast, inches from my face, drooled a pool down my shirt before showing me its sharp, deadly teeth. I shut my eyes tightly, expecting the worse, before noticing the silence comforting my panicked self. I opened my eyes, and my eyes were met with a carrot-colored tabby cat curled on my lap and an orange fruit in my hand.